White Skin, Yellow Masks?

-A case study of a merge from a postcolonial perspective-

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Abstract

Hence the power relation between East and West is challenged the purpose of this thesis is to problematize the postcolonial critique through a case analysis of a merger between an Eastern and a Western organization. We have investigated if the postcolonial lenses can be reversed where it is not necessarily East who is subject to these experiences and additionally we have problematized the postcolonial critique. The research methodology is a qualitative study inspired mainly by hermeneutics, poststructuralism and postmodernism in which the empirical data is collected through semi-structured interviews. Our findings show that traditional colonial experiences such as representations, mimicry and hybridity are not exclusive for one side. We argue that the traditional power relations are challenged and our findings therefore add to, problematize and challenge much of current postcolonial literature. We argue that Postcolonial scholars must recognize that the world is not so easily defined, but rather heterogeneous and should therefore modify its approach to modern times.

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/David Persson and Josefine Uddenäs

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Introduction

The world today is a very complex place where the Western world has played a significant role in shaping the contours of the world as we know it (Prasad, 2003). Power has been employed by countries which has brought us a debate on how this exactly has changed and continue to influence countries and populations. Foucault (1982) once argued that power is never neutral and the truth must always be questioned as it is generally the one in power that has monopoly on spreading this so called "knowledge". This Foucauldian argument is closely related to the postcolonial perspective which is employed as the basis of this Master thesis. Although this thesis draws upon postcolonial arguments it offers a different view of postcolonialism as it tries to avoid the equally narrow mindedness in the assumption that the power relation are fixed between 'the West and the Rest'. The common perception is that through globalization the West still colonizes the East. We do not disagree with that, however, think this is a simplified description of the relationship between East and West. We argue that Postcolonial scholars must recognize that the world is not so easily defined, but rather heterogeneous and should therefore modify its approach to modern times.

The research that has previously been conducted in postcolonial management studies is rather new and modest (Prasad, 2003) although it has come to occupy a salient position in the intellectual climate of our times (Westwood and Jack, 2007). Organizational theorists tend to neglect the postcolonial critique with a few exceptions (Banerjee and Linstead, 2004). The scholars that have conducted research on the management field from a postcolonial lens have mainly focused on the critique of hegemony in Western Management thinking and the critique of Eurocentric or Americanized international management discourse in general (e.g. Westwood and Jack, 2007; Özkazanc-Pan, 2008; Frenkel and Shenhav, 2006).

In the early 20th century European countries had used their advanced resources and power to colonize great parts of Africa, Asia, and The Caribbean Islands. Colonialism was a highly lucrative commercial operation, bringing wealth and riches to the Western nations through exploitations of the given colonized countries (McLeod, 2000). Also, what separates Western colonialism from previous forms of colonization is the

economic dimension (e.g. the Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire and the Byzantine Empire). It linked the West and its colonies in a complex structure of unequal exchange and industrialization that made colonies economically dependent upon the Western colonial countries. Western colonialism is also different in the fashion that it attempted to subjugate its colonies in the realm of culture and ideology, where a particular value system were taught as the best and truest worldview. The ways of the colonized are deemed as lacking in value, 'uncivilized' from which they need to be rescued. Prasad (2003) concludes when stating that Western colonialism represents a unique constellation of complex and interrelated practices sought to establish Western hegemony not only politically, economically and militarily, but also culturally and ideologically (Prasad, 2003; McLeod, 2000).

The 20th century has been the century of decolonization where the colonized countries have regained their independence for the most part (McLeod, 2000), but colonialism as an ideology is very much alive. Postcolonialism has emerged as a powerful critique and intellectual practice applied on a range of discourses. It tends to identify with the subject position of anti-colonial activists and the colonized (Young, 2001). It starts from the recognition that the world-order of our times is extremely unfair and unjust and human freedom is indivisible. Achieving true freedom and justice can only be achieved through global decolonization culturally, politically and economically (Prasad, 2003). It is by no means a homogenous perspective as it is almost impossible to adequately define it. This can partly be explained by its cross-disciplinary nature (Loomba, 2005; McLeod, 2000; Prasad, 2003), but the general idea is to reveal the persistence of the colonial project in contemporary modes of knowing and acting (Westwood, 2004). The material and imaginative legacies of both colonialism and decolonization remain essential elements in a variety of domains such as anthropology, art, economics, global politics, mass-media (McLeod, 2000; Young, 2001) and - as we are going to explore in this essay – international business.

The strength of the postcolonial perspective is the multiple lenses it presents (Özkazanç-Pan, 2008), where *Orientalism*, *Mimicry* and *Hyrbidity* are some of these. Orientalism is a systematic examination of power relations between East and West based on cultural representations of the discursive Orient versus the "real" Orient. 'Said (2003) defines it as a ´´Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority

over the Orient'. Orientalist and Western writings have always indulged in parody, ridicule and pastiche whether to belittle or create frightening demons. It is a system of representations where East is described as unable to change, fixed in time, mysterious, inferior, and feminine in contrast to the West (Sardar, 1999; Said, 2003; Özkazanç-Pan, 2008). Colonial mimicry was introduced by Fanon and Bhabha which highlights a great loss of authority and control for the colonized. The colonized are forced to internalize the norms and values as well as the stereotypical attributes in order to be accepted. When construing the colonized as both similar and '*other*' to the colonizer it ends up never being one or the other. It results in a colonized condemned being at war with himself. Mimicry is also described as a possible threat to the colonial power by acting in a way that resembles the colonial as it threatens to disclose the ambivalence of the discourse of colonialism. They challenge the representations which attempt to fix them and define them (McLeod, 2000). Hybridity is somewhat related to mimicry and refers to people living border lives in between countries whereas the consequence yet again is not to belong to one or the other. The subject is not firmly rooted in a secure place which creates a hybrid identity (McLeod, 2000; Loomba, 2005). We are going to employ these postcolonial lenses later in the analysis when exploring if traditional colonial experiences can be reversed.

Colonialism is the conquering and control over other people's land and possessions (Loomba, 2005), and neocolonialism came into use after the period of decolonization took place in the middle of 20th century which resulted in the formal political independence. However, the former colonies continued to be economically dependent on the colonizers and the term neocolonialism refers to the continuation of the western colonialism by nontraditional means. Neocolonialism does not just involve economical and political dimensions but a dimension of Western cultural control (Prasad, 2003). Western modern colonialism continues to influence the non-West through globalism (Prasad, 2003; Williams and Chrisman, 1994). Critiques of globalization can take many forms. Ritzer (2007) recently wrote about the relationship between globalization and consumption and the globalization of 'nothing' instead of 'something' in a postcolonial style. He is in other words very critical of what the States is exporting as genuine things are being replaced with a less interesting one. Postcolonial studies draw attention to and critique the Western epistemological claims about the 'other' (Özkazanç-Pan, 2008). These are issues that are going to be the basis for our thesis, but we are going to have

another take approach on the field as we intend challenge postcolonialism which we argue have a somewhat simplified perspective of the power relation between the West and East.

In this thesis we intend to investigate how the colonial discourse is represented in a global knowledge intensive firm. The company which we are going to refer to with the fictive name TCom, is a joint venture since nearly ten years ago. It is in many ways two contrasting cultures, mentalities and ways of seeing organizational life that is merging, namely the Swedish and the Japanese. As mentioned and described above postcolonialism is not a homogenous perspective and Loomba (2005) argues that restricting ourselves to one perspective on decolonization would in reality erase the term's nuances. Postcolonialism is useful to indicate generic structures that have global common characteristics, but detached from specific contexts the postcolonial cannot be studied in a meaningful way. Rather than to expose and identify unfair and unjust realities it will contra productively cloud it. Acknowledging this we have found it interesting to investigate how colonial remnants are represented in a Swedish-Japanese bi-national company. This is a very important and interesting study of a merger of two companies from cultures that are often referred to as the West and the Rest (e.g. Özkazanc̦-Pan, 2008) in orientalist and postcolonial writings. Having merged ten years ago and being a relatively new joint venture TCom is still trying to find its way and its own identity so a very interesting process is indeed there for us to analyze, and especially from a postcolonial perspective.

One may spontaneously assume that in traditional colonial fashion this bi-national company will not be as equal as one may hope. From a postcolonial perspective it is interesting to examine how the Japanese managers perceive the likely non equal power relation with the westerners, in what ways they imitate and internalize the westerners' norms and values in order to be accepted, how they tackle their new hybrid identity and what psychoanalytical implications and frustrations that come out of it and in general how the western leaders talk about 'the others' and keep them subservient within this organizational context. The traditional postcolonial critique is indeed legitimate to make in this case study, however our findings turned out to show a more complex reality.

Traditionally it has been the West that has dominated the economic activities of our world, but the world is changing and this position of hegemony is now challenged

(Prasad, 2003). Morley and Robins' (1997) writes about how Japan, which constitutes one part of the merger of TCom, has become associated with technological prowess and additionally been claimed to be the future. It is also argued that West fear that Japan and its culture may overwhelm the Western "reason and universalism" which has lead to a new form of Orientalism, the so called techno-Orientalism. Japan, which traditionally has been regarded in Orientalist writings as inferior are no able to put their ideas into action. It is this modern and powerful Japan that constitutes one part of the bi-national company TCom. The ballgame is somewhat changed and makes this merger between East and the West in the organizational and postcolonial discourse an interesting object of study.

Purpose

Hence the power relation between East and West is challenged the purpose of this thesis is to problematize the postcolonial critique through a case analysis of a merger between an Eastern and a Western organization. The research questions will be defined as follows:

Can the postcolonial lenses be reversed where it is not necessarily East who is subject to these experiences and if so how can we problematize the postcolonial critique.

Structure

The following part will be a description of the methodology that this thesis is based on. We have conducted a case study of a joint venture with semi-structured interviews based on a qualitative interpretive approach to analyze how the new world order has come to challenge the traditional perspective of postcolonialism. After the methodology we will present the traditional postcolonial perspectives as well as the more alternative approaches. We are going present the case analysis which will be followed by a more detailed discussion in which we will reflect upon the empirical data. Finally, we will give a summary of our results and present what our contribution is.

Methodology

We have chosen to conduct a case study based on a qualitative interpretive perspective. A qualitative approach enables a more in-depth analysis of a person, group or organization (Bryman, 1988). Furthermore to engage more critically in TCom, which is a fictive name of the company, we conducted the analysis based on a postcolonial perspective. This starts with the recognition that the neocolonial world today is unfair and unjust. Moreover it is based on the conviction that justice and human freedom are indivisible, and to achieve this, necessitates a genuine global decolonization at political, economic and cultural levels (Prasad, 2003). More specifically, we conducted semi-structured interviews with five Japanese managers who are working in Sweden and five Swedish managers who have experience of managing Japanese employees.

A qualitative research approach urges for more in depth interpretation and understanding and goes beyond what the positivists call "objective knowledge" This approach instead challenges objectivity (Fairbrother, 2007). Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000) argue that the trick is to interpret, reflect and control the theories without letting them control you. The chosen course of the thesis is that we are challenging the traditional view of postcolonialism, that of it being equally 'narrow minded' and due to this, we think the distance to the theory is there. We did a case study to be able to do a deeper and more detailed analysis, which is basically to answer questions of 'how' and 'why' (Rowley, 2002). By using interviews we have to be aware of that the answers from the respondents are not theory-free data (Silverman, 2006). Instead it is seen as "knowledge that can be used to enhance the human condition" (Kvale, 1996:11) and it is the respondent's relation to the subject that we as researchers then have to analyze and interpret. Objects cannot be separated from subjects or the knowledge phenomenon from the knower. This, in our view, has enriched our empirical material as the respondents have been able to fully explain their point of view. Given the research question we would argue this is important in order to adequately answer it. This is in line with what Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000) argue in their book *Reflexive Methodology –New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* With a stringency of using a qualitative methodology it is possible to guarantee a good research result. When interpreting a

social phenomena through human beings as their behavior, attitudes and how they act in the specific social situation, which we aim to do in this thesis.

Before writing the interview questions we studied the postcolonial theory to get an understanding of the field. As the empirical material grew with the number of interviews we continued reading up on postcolonialism. Interesting topics came up that we wanted to add to the interview questions. The analysis therefore worked in a spiral fashion where the empirical data gave us a deeper understanding of the theory, and where the respondents' answers also influenced to deeper knowledge about the topic. The analysis is based on what Alvesson and Sköldberg (2000) call a reflexive approach, which can be compared with Mingers' (2005) concepts about being critical. In an everyday language the word "critical" has a negative connotation without constructive motives or attitudes. But in academic research critical thinking is necessary to be able to make interpretations in especially a qualitative analysis. Having a critical approach can be described as being reflective and reflexive. A qualitative analysis is not just about interpretation of language, it is also reflection of cultural and theoretical aspects which make sense for the result (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000). Initially we wanted to investigate how a traditional postcolonial discourse was represented in a global company. As time progressed we understood that the postcolonial critique is in many ways simplified as the reality proved to be more heterogonous than much of the theory recognizes which we made our main focus for this thesis. We expected to be able to do a typical postcolonial critique, but ended up with the conclusion that the perspective itself needs to be revised. A traditional postcolonial critique could definitely be employed on the case study, but the postcolonial lenses could also be reversed where East is not necessarily subject of these experiences.

Interviews

The research process was initiated in the beginning of January where it was quite clear from the start that we wanted to conduct research in diversity management, which also became our research topic. After several discussions about how we could study diversity from a broad and more general perspective we ended up employing the postcolonial perspective to study a knowledge intensive firm, or more precisely a merge of a Swedish and a Japanese company. We contacted the HR department and got an internal

supervisor which helped us find respondents from both an Eastern and a Western perspective. We wanted to interview Swedish managers with experience from Japan and Japanese managers who have been working in Sweden. Both Japanese and Swedish managers were interviewed so that both sides would have their say which we believe is essential. This enabled us to identify a more complex relationship between East and West analyzed from a postcolonial perspective, which also became the main focus of our thesis.

We selected TCom because it is the ideal company to investigate if a colonial discourse is represented in an organizational context as it is a unique merge between a Swedish and a Japanese organization. The bi-national company is in other worlds a merger between East and West which is of interest from a postcolonial perspective as the power relation between the two blocks has a long colonial history. Postcolonialism starts from the notion that the world-order of our times is extremely unfair and achieving true freedom and justice can only be achieved through global decolonization culturally, politically and economically (Prasad, 2003). We are going to investigate if the postcolonial lenses can be reversed where it is not necessarily East who is subject to these experiences and additionally problematize the postcolonial critique. This merger therefore becomes very interesting as it can symbolize how the two blocks go head to head.

Due to unique contacts it gave us the opportunity to interview Japanese and Swedish top managers with experience of working in both Japanese and Swedish settings which was very important for our cause. These perspectives are otherwise normally rather difficult to get access to.

The purpose of this thesis is to problematize the postcolonial critique through a case analysis of a merger between an Eastern and a Western organization. We have done a single case study with interviews as the only unit of analysis (Rowley, 2002) which means that we have studied one specific case by using exclusively interviews as research method. Given our research question a single case study is the best approach in order to reflect and get a deeper understanding of the respondents' personal experiences. This method gives us a deeper and a more reflexive view of the study. Alvesson (2003) discusses how to address interviews with its complicated nature of tensions between different logics. He addresses the romantic technique of interviewing which is supposed to create a more genuine human interaction based on trust and commitment between

the interviewer and interviewees. This is regarded important in order to be able to explore the inner world or experienced social reality. The technique of romanticism has also been subject to some critique as it is claimed that when interviewers are participating in the interview it may affect the direction of it and will not necessarily represent the objective reality. In order to create an atmosphere of trust and explore their social reality we asked showed curiosity and openness when asking about how they had experienced, felt about and perceived different situations and topics which we think helped us to gain such trust that romantic technique advocates. Since our thesis revolves around topics such as power, identity, culture and representation it can be regarded as sensitive subjects to talk about and therefore we let us be inspired by this approach. We for that reason tried to have general questions and waited until the end of the interviews to ask the more direct and concrete questions on the topic. We wanted to create an atmosphere where they felt comfortable to open up to us and talk about their inner world and experienced social reality, experiences which constitutes the basis of our thesis. We would like to argue that the openness and neutrality were very important for us and not taking any side. The purpose of our thesis is to challenge the traditional postcolonial perspective and to do so it was necessary to be very open to different voices and create an atmosphere where they were willing to share these.

Our selection process of respondents were based on the criteria that it should be Japanese and Swedish managers who had experience in working at the other parent's site from their respective perspective. We interviewed five of each nationality and our supervisor at TCom helped us to find suitable respondents. We carried out all the interviews over a period of two weeks. The interviews with the Japanese respondents were conducted in English and the interviews with the Swedes in Swedish. The quotes from the Swedish that are used in the thesis are translated into English. The first interview was with a Swedish manager and was conducted in his private apartment due him not working, but on parental leave. The following nine were all conducted at TCom where two of them were held by phone.

Our internal supervisor, due to her experience, gave us information about what she believed to be important when interacting with Japanese, which can be compared with what Kvale (1996) calls ethical codes for interviewing. This can also be connected to the

romantic technique used in interviewing as we wanted to build trust and rapport and the information we got contributed to this.

We used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions and all were audio recorded and later transcribed. We started interviews by shortly describing the purpose of the study and then as an introduction we asked questions about the respondent's background in form of education and work experiences and not attacking the subject the first thing we did. One of the reasons was to create a more genuine human interaction based on trust and commitment which is in line with the romantic technique (Alvesson 2003). As mentioned above we conducted ten interviews, each lasting between one and two hours,

We have in our thesis used a reflexive approach to the interviews which Alvesson (2003) argues for. This means working with a set of potential lines of thinking and theoretical ideas for how to understand a subject matter. This is in contrast to using a definite theoretical formulation and privileged vocabulary for grasping it. This in turn means opening up and acknowledging the uncertainty of all empirical material and knowledge claims. A reflexive approach does not privilege a particular ontology, but can be combined with various paradigms and theories and thereby offer alternative lines of interpretation for how to use the empirical material in thoughtful and creative ways.

In line with this approach we have been influenced by mainly postmodernism, hermeneutics and poststructuralism when interpreting our interview material. We are in our thesis investigating how the respondents experience the power relations between East and West in an organizational context and thereafter challenging the postcolonial critique as we argue it has a somewhat equally narrow-minded view. The poststructuralist perspective is somewhat skeptical about the theoretical frames of reference and emphasizes what is concealed as the result of a certain form of representation. This is closely related to our findings as we argue that much of the postcolonial critique do not acknowledge the heterogeneous nature of our world where it is not necessarily West that is colonizing West anymore. We have been influenced by the hermeneutics as it is argued that the meaning of a part can only be understood if it is related to the whole. In our thesis we explore our respondents' experience which we use in order to problematize the power relation of East and West. Finally we analyzed how

the empirical material can unveil discrete concepts or meanings which are in line with a postmodernist perspective (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2000).

In our thesis TCom is a symbol for how the power relation between East and West can be challenged, but it is important to acknowledge that the two parents are not necessarily representative for East and West as the world is more heterogeneous than so. We furthermore need to recognize that the respondents are not necessarily representative for East or West, their native country or TCom as a whole, but for themselves and their own feelings and social realities. What are finding show is that the world order is not easily defined and experienced realities may not always be tied to a colonial discourse.

Postcolonialism - a literature review

As stated by Loomba (2005), postcolonialism is by no means a homogenous perspective, but has different lenses from which the critique is made visible. This can be explained by that the world by the 1930s was covered to 85 percent by Western colonies and ex colonies. The geographical span and heterogeneous effects for four hundred years make postcolonialism difficult to generalize on (Loomba, 2005; McLeod, 2000; Prasad, 2003). This is also argued to be the strength of the Postcolonial perspective as it presents multiple lenses of the multiple effects of colonialism (Özkazanc¸-Pan, 2008). Different terms are used in the literature and it is important to know how to distinguish between them. Postcolonialism is a theoretical perspective which represents "an attempt to investigate the complex and deeply fraught dynamics of modern Western colonialism and anticolonial resistance, and the ongoing significance of the colonial encounter for people's lives both in the West and the non-West" (Prasad, 2003:5). The argument is therefore that discriminating and repressing effects is still experienced but it is now taking different forms. It differs from the term post-colonial as the latter refers more specifically to the period after colonialism, namely decolonization, and what comes after it. So in other words, postcolonialism is better understood as a reaction against colonialism rather than something that comes after colonialism (Prasad, 2003; McLeod, 2000; Williams and Chrisman, 1994).

The postcolonial perspective is an interesting and important perspective for management scholars as it can help to examine and understand the influences of colonialism in producing and constituting contemporary discourses of management. Scholars in the field of organization and management have had a tendency to ignore this theory and criticism, but it is highly important to recognize how the managerial discourse is still shaped by colonial experience (Prasad, 2003). Still there are scholars who have addressed colonial issues such as Dennis Kwek (2003) who questioned cross-culture studies arguing that it has become tools of colonizing of thought (e.g. Kwek, 2003), and Banerjee (2000) who studied how Western organizations exploit natives and their land. Postcolonial theory and criticism can therefore be fruitful in developing insight about power, control and resistance in organizations (Prasad, 2003), a reality which is strongly connected to the Foucauldian argument: Michel Foucault (1980)

contends that power is relational, and becomes apparent when exercised. It is employed at all levels in the organization and through many dimensions and do affect everyday lives. Western management has traditionally been regarded as the universal norm where the non-Western management practices, which are absent in the West, are seen as inefficient and ineffective. The mechanisms of power which Foucault is talking about are here made visible in an organizational and colonial context. The West has traditionally dominated the economic activities, but is gradually losing this position as the East, with countries such as China India and Japan, is playing a much greater and important part (Prasad, 2003). Japan, which constitutes one part of the bi-national company in our study, has become associated with technological prowess through global enterprises such as Sony, Toshiba, Toyota and Panasonic and has generally become a force to be reckoned with in the world. This change is something that we will look further into and will constitute the basis of our thesis.

We will in this part examine and explain the different lenses and academic scholars who have helped to define the heterogeneous nature of the postcolonial perspective. The "traditional" view of the field is going to be described through writings of iconic names such as Said, Fanon and Bhabha. Thereafter we are going to present the alternative view through Morley and Robins, Greenville and Ueno whose concepts such as techno-Orientalism, Occidentalism and the cyborg we are going to use when arguing that the power relation between the two blocks can be challenged.

The Colonial Discourse - Edward Said and Frantz Fanon

Edward Said (2003) is regarded as one of the key figures in postcolonial studies and his *Orientalism*, in which he explains colonialism at the level of representation, is considered to be one of the most influential books of the late 20th century (McLeod, 2000; Özkazanc-Pan, 2008). Through *Orientalism* postcolonial critique has also been transformed into an accepted area of serious study (Williams and Chrisman, 1994). Said is exploring the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized where it is the former which represents the subject of interest rather than the latter. It is a study of how the Western powers (i.e. Great Britain, France and North America) wrote about and represented the Orient in order to deal with it which in turn helped continually to justify their subjugation, or as Said himself explains it: "dealing with it by making statements about

it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it" (Said, 2003:3). Through travelling reports, governmental documents and literary theory 'knowledge' was produced about the colonized country and its people. Orientalists were seldom interested in to actually learn about, or from, the natives but instead tried to prove "the validity of these musty truths by applying them, without great success, to uncomprehending, hence degenerate, natives" (Said, 2003:52). The commonly held assumptions about the Orient were that of place of mythic exoticism, moral laxity, sexual degeneracy and so forth.

Said (2003) uses Foucault's notion of discourse in order to define Orientalism. He argues that only through examining Orientalism as a discourse one can understand "the enormous systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment" (Said, 2003:3). He argues that due to Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought and action. He shows how the Orient is represented as backward, unable to change, inferior, and feminized whereas the West is referred to as rational, virtuous, mature and "normal".

Said (2003) describes Orientalism as an ultimately political vision of reality where the representations present a fictionalized view of the Orient which tries to illustrate and emphasize the differences between the East and the West. He sheds light on how Western academic discourse represents the Orient which he argues is not disinterested, but intentional. Özkazanc-Pan (2008) believes that this is one of Said's greatest contributions to postcolonial studies. According to Said (2003) the Western power over the Orient is taken for granted and the representations of the Orient as having a status of scientific truth. The emphasis on differences and portraying the East as inferior to the West, functions to legitimize the West to control, govern and contain the East. One of the main critiques directed towards Said concerns that he presented Orientalism as an unchanging, mainly male oriented discourse, whereas in truth it expresses a whole range of voices. Said's reduction of this diversity and heterogeneity results in Occidentalism, a stereotyping in reverse (Sardar, 1999).

In *Black Skin and White Masks* Frantz Fanon (2008) also writes about the divisive relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, but in contrast to Said (2003)

from the perspective of the colonized. Fanon shows on a psychological level the feelings of dependency and inadequacy in the colonized experience. He looks at what the individual goes through due to colonialism and the colonial discourse. He explains the consequences of identity formation of the colonized that are forced to internalize the colonial discourse. He is expected to behave like a white man.

Fanon (2008:178) writes; "the black man wants to be like the white man. For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white". It is in other words a question of Western universalism based on the notion of superiority. He speaks of how the colonized has lost their native cultural originality and embraced the culture of the colonizing country, but as in reality never is accepted on equal terms. So what Fanon argues is that colonialism and colonial discourse is not just about economical and military issues, but also psychological issues are very much apparent and influential.

Language and group are connected to each other as he argues that "to speak a language is to take on a world, a culture. The Antilles Negro who wants to be white will be whiter as he gains great mastery of the great tool that language is" (Fanon, 2008:25). Language is therefore very important and powerful and a key that can open doors according to Fanon.

Fanon writes about how the colonial discourse affects our reality and to really break free from colonialism or the Western universalism we have to, as Fanon writes, "analyze it to destroy it" (Fanon, 2008:5). Fanon is not anti-universal, but when it is based on the notion of superiority as it is in the case of Western colonialism it has to be analyzed and talked about in order to move in a positive direction.

Fanon (2008) and Said (2003) both discuss how colonialism has changed the way we see the world, but from different angles. McLeod (2000) writes that overturning colonialism is therefore not just about West handing back land and power, but also about dominant ways of seeing the world and representing reality which do not replicate colonialist values.

Ambivalence, Mimicry and Hybridity - Homi K. Bhabha

Of the postcolonial scholars Bhabha is the one that is most closely identified with concepts such as ambivalence, mimicry and hybridity (Prasad, 2003). Bhabha's (1994)

writings are greatly inspired by Fanon (2008) as he draws upon the psychoanalytical examination of the consequences of the internalization of the colonial discourse. Similar to Said (2003) he is concerned with problematizing the dichotomy of the colonizer and the colonized. Orientalists emphasize the differences between the colonizer and the colonized where the non-West is described as unable to change, undesirable, and inferior. The racist stereotypical discourse makes the constructed differences visible which lends authority to the mission of colonial power (Bhabha, 1994). The concept of fixity in terms of differences (e.g. race, culture, history) is very important in the ideological construction of 'otherness' (Bhabha, 1994). According to Bhabha the colonial discourse can be described as ambivalent as it simultaneously is regarded as desirable and has the ambition to civilize and modernize the native (Bhabha, 1994).

Mimicry has been seen as a proof of the hegemony of the West. The miming and imitation is a sign of the inappropriateness of non-Western ways and a desire to appropriate the 'other' into the 'right' form. This behavior works unconsciously to define the colonized in the image of the colonizer where Western norms and values are internalized (Bhabha, 1994). This is in line with Fanon (2008) who argues, as stated above, that "the black man wants to be like the white man. For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white". In order to be accepted the colonized has to imitate the Westerner, but by doing so and trying to be two things at once, he ends up with a tension of meaning and being. The colonized can never be entirely westernized though as he is constantly reminded of being 'other' to the norm. The stereotype, as Bhabha expresses it, "is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always in place, already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (Bhabha, 1994:94-95).

The concept of mimicry is also according to Bhabha (1994) a loss of authority and control on the part of the colonizer as it is disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse. Bhabha therefore argues that it is a sign of strategy or resistance and therefore a threat to the colonial power. The differences between the cultures are being washed out, but it is only a partial form of mimicry as the colonized are not transforming into identical forms of the colonizers, or as put in Bhabhas (1994:127) own words; "almost the same but not quite".

Hyrbidity is somewhat related to mimicry as it is referring to the cultural appropriation of the colonized subject. The concept of hybridity implicate people who live border lives 'in-between' countries which the colonized is forced into. It entails often people who have migrated and thereby do not have the sense of belonging to any culture. The colonized does not belong to his homeland or the new country. As stated above the colonized is condemned to be at war with himself as he can never be entirely westernized. A fixed identity cannot be claimed as it is subject of constant negotiation. The identities exist in a state of constant ambivalence and can never be categorized or determined despite the efforts by colonizers to do so. Identity of culture is never homogenous or fixed but always a fluctuating movement full of instability (Bhabha, 1994).

Techno-Orientalism and the Japanese as Automated Other – Morley and Robins'

We are in this thesis investigating what can be said about how the colonial discourse affects a Swedish and Japanese bi-national company. The traditional critique of postcolonialism is as we have learned how the West through globalization continues to colonize the East. How the Japanese imitate, absorb and reinterpret Western ideas is well documented, as it was 'its destiny'. The Western absorption of the East though has rarely been talked about and analyzed. That is exactly what Morley and Robins' (1997) do in their book *Spaces of Identity* and a view we are going to base arguments on later on in the analysis.

The relationship between the two cultures was never that of between equals. That reality is now long before gone as Japan is now a force to be reckoned with due to its vast technological advances. Technology and industry have been essential for the West's hegemony in the past. This is something that Japan was very well aware of from the 19th century and on. The focus was a very deliberate strategy as they understood that the country would be colonized if they did not adapt to the modern age. High technology is therefore now associated with Japan (Morley and Robins', 1997). Due to their technological superiority it is claimed that Japan is the future and that the Western universalism and their basis of identity is pulled into question. Traditionally the West has signified the positional superiority of Europe and then also of USA in relation to the

Orient. The unthinkable question has now been raised that it is time for the West to learn from Japan, which is to Orientalize itself in order to be economically competitive in the future. If this indeed is the future, what constitute the relationship and distinction between East and West is problematized. Japan can no longer in Orientalist fashion be stereotyped as the Orient and be marginalized, but taken seriously (Morley and Robins', 1997).

Japan is described as very unique and of homogenous nature and there is a fear that "Japan's irreducible difference will remain aloof from, and impenetrable to, Western reason and universalism. A fear, too, that Western culture might itself be overwhelmed by the Oriental Other" (Morley and Robins', 1997:162). This has led to seeing Japan as a problem where the West is defeated at its own game. Morley and Robins' therefore argues that it is an 'Orientalism in reverse´ which is also referred to as 'Occidentalism'. They may now have the power to actually put its ideas into action and what all this leads to is Orientalism and Occidentalism battling it out for who is to be the natural point of reference. Morley and Robins ask the question of who will occupy the 'centre' in relation to which the other must define its particularity and marginality? (Morley and Robins' 1997)

As the Western culture can no longer be said to dominate as done in the past the postmodern technologies has become structured into the discourse of Orientalism. We have therefore started to talk of techno-Orientalism. Morley and Robins' (1997) argue that there is a very resentful and racist side of the techno-Orientalism. Due to that the Japanese is associated with technology this serves to reinforce the image of a culture that is cold, impersonal, and machine-like. Within the unconscious of the West Japan has come to be regarded as empty and dehumanized technological power which represents a very unfortunate evolution of capitalism which provokes both resentment and envy. It is believed that Japanese are more adapted to survive in the future and which culture the West will be forced to absorb and imitate.

Morley and Robins' (1997) connect to Said's (2003) work on the Middle East as they find it interesting when looking at the construction of the Far East. It is argued that what is said about West's relationship with the Middle East cannot be done with Japan as it is very different on a number of levels. Japan never became a colony of any Western country and the Orientalists production of knowledge and representations that Said

talks about never experienced the naked authority over Japan. Nor did Japan wait for the west to discover its past, its history and identity. Rather, the most widely read books on Japan in western languages were written by Japanese (Morley and Robins 1997:160). The stereotyping and never being able to see Japan directly is very much still a reality though. There is still a need to consolidate old mystifications and stereotypes, but it is no longer possible to see Japan as simply an imitator or mimic of Western ways. The question that has to be asked is that if Japan has become postmodern what is then distinctive about the West? Where, what and who are West now? (Morley and Robins', 1997)

Cyborgs, Japananimation and Techno-Orientalism –Greenville and Ueno

Bruce Greenville (2002) is in *The Uncanny: Experiments in Cyborg Culture* exploring our society's deep cultural fascination with machines and technology. It is an examination of the cyborg, which is the concept of a man-as- machine in the popular culture. He explains how throughout its history the cyborg was contained within the narrative of the human/machine and the dichotomies developed by its link to notions of the mind/body, good/evil, and fear/fascination. The cyborg is trapped within a utopian impulse and is doomed to failure. Grenville explains how the conceptualization of the machine and its role in the world has also changed in recent times. He refers to Japan which has a different relation to the machine and technology. While America produces negative and frightening entities the Japanese portray a more positive view as the cyborg is regarded as helpful, protective, and intelligent and so forth.

To strengthen his argument, Greenville (2002) refers to Toshiya Ueno's (2002) essay *Japanimation and Techno-Orientalism* which describes how the world has started to get interested in Japanese subculture, an evolvement he calls "Japanimation". People who once asked what Zen was are now instead asking what Otaku is which can be explained as an effect of globalization and information capitalism. He argues that before the Fordist economic system of the past, globalization was nothing more than an export of American culture to the rest of the world. This reality has for some time been challenged as Japan has shown that also Eastern countries can make an impact and export culture to the rest of the world. What Ueno does though, is to challenge the Western notion of

Japan as a nation of automatons and techno-geeks. As much as the West has constructed the Orient to reaffirm its own religious, linguistic, economic and cultural beliefs, so has they invented the Techno-Orient as a land of the future. West's view of Japan represents everything that is problematic in the Western conception of technology and thereby Japan becomes the new cyborg, an object of both fear and fascination.

Case Analysis

TCom is a joint venture of a Swedish and Japanese company which since the beginning of the 21th century been working with tele- and communication. The focus of the two entities is split, whereas the Swedish organization focuses on software development the Japanese organization is more aligned towards hardware development. In the merge Sweden contributed with expertise in "platform" technology and Japan contributed with consumer expertise. The main headquarter is located in a European capital city with the main reasons that it should be a neutral place and at the same time be a place close to other multinational companies. TCom has R&D (research and development) headquarters in a number of leading industrial countries. The company is by Swedish standards relatively big but small by internation§al standards with a few thousand employees. Of these are about 80-100 expats from Japan working on international assignments. Beside expats from Japan TCom's headquarter in Sweden employs Swedes and expats from China, India and USA. The headquarter in Japan employs about 1000 people and some of them are expats from Sweden working on international assignment.

The working language in the company is English and most of the work documents are provided in English, at least in the Swedish office. The English skills in Japan are at a much lower standard than in Sweden whereof the communication between Japanese and Swedes becomes difficult and demanding. Meetings in Sweden are conducted in English even if there is only one person present who cannot speak Swedish. That is not the case in Japan, as you as a foreigner have to fight to get the meetings in English. This of course creates lots of communication problems between Swedes and Japanese. The Japanese who are on international assignment in Sweden have more often than not better English skills than Japanese in general. Because of the education system in Japan, where the focus is on learning on how to write and read English, and not on how to speak and listen, the Japanese are in general good in writing English, but not as good as Swedes in speaking.

A merge and a vision

When it was decided that Japan was going to constitute one part of the merger it was clear that they were there to "help" the Swedish mobile industry and with a vision of a

more distinct and deeper focus on the consumer perspective. In the beginning of the merge the mission was to have cross-culture training for the two cultures to be as highly intergrated as possible. TCom had a vision of becoming "one" company. Some of the Swedes had the view that the Japanese parent came and "saved" the Swedish mobile industry and one of the Swedish respondents said:

…it was probably 50:50 at that time if you look at the number of positions, but the key positions to run the company were held by the Japanese parent, and a new culture was formed where the best Japanese were brought in to fix this company that had been run in a way that would lead to its extinction. So it was a through and through Japanese leadership and the discussions that were held was primarily in Japanese. After decisions were taken the new directives were spread to the rest of the company.

As mentioned above, the different levels of English skills in the organization were seen as one of the main problems in the merge. The Japanese English skills were not as good as Swedes in general, which the Swedes had to accept and be patient when communicating with Japanese. The Japanese English skills have become much better since the merge but there is still a gap to the Swedish level. The Swedes do not think the different language skills affects the balance of power but instead efficiency in many situations, in for example decision making in a mixed group of Swedes and Japanese.

In the beginning of the merge the communication from the CEO where in general clear and it talked about a "duality". It was not expressed as takeover from the Japanese parent, instead the Japanese CEO talked about gathering the Japanese and Swedish culture and how to get out the best from each of them. Many of the Swedes thought of the merge as exciting and a chance to be part of something new, but at the same time an element of fear of what was to come.

It was poor English skills that dominated the top management team and thereby had huge problems to integrate the whole company with the new process for communication and decision making. The Japanese top managers had parallel meetings only for Japanese in Japanese, which Swedes were not invited or welcome to participate in. This created suspicion, frustrations and fear from the Swedes, especially because it was believed that they did important decision making in these meetings. The comprehension that Japan "took over" the Swedish industry raised frustrations as the Swedes way of work changed to adapt to the Japanese way of working.

Many were irritated that there were parallel meetings just for the Japanese to which the Swedes were not welcome. And instantly you got very scared, a lot of the decision making was done in that constellation. I really do not know to what extent, but I also believe that it was needed to in order to operate and function. With lacking language skills and sitting there expected to make critical decisions and afraid to lose your face, then you want to be in a situation where you feel comfortable.

Influences from both parents were regarded as being important to build a successful company. Some influences were seen as edifying for the company and some others with resistance. When the Japanese parent tried to implement discipline the Swedes reacted very heavily. The Swedes were not used to follow step-by-step directives, that someone told them what and how to work. There was a majority of Japanese in the top management and the main task for them was to change a R&D technological organization to a more consumer oriented organization. In the beginning of the merge the Japanese implemented processes which focused on application, handiness and accessories to the main products. But the whole set-up of "How We Work" is with a more Swedish touch. The technical platform is also implemented from a Swedish base which been decided after a critical research of both the Swedish parent and the Japanese parent's platform and technical experiences and possibilities.

As mentioned above, even if it was lots of frustrations from the Swedes, in the beginning of the merge, there was also a positive approach, in form of excitement and a feeling of "being selected" of the Swedish parent to be part of the new company which is interesting when connected to the metaphor of the cyborg which we are going to elaborate on in the discussion part.

Changes in the company

The company was from the beginning a "duality" and then developed to be more as one committed company with a new common "DNA". One of the respondents indicated that TCom is going in a Japan dominated direction again, even though the new CEO is Swedish. On the other hand it is now Sweden which tries to implement and export their working processes to Japan which is met with resistance from the Japanese. In the same way as Swedes do not like discipline, Japanese does not like to follow processes. Japanese does not have clear job descriptions such as Swedes, instead they have a more

group oriented approach where they help each other in a much bigger extent than Swedes do.

If we compare to Japan, Swedes are more organized, very document driven, process driven, defines process clearly and follow them very honestly. While Japanese have no clear definition of process but everyone work and think the total picture so that naturally is something. It might be old style in this Westernized culture […] but my opinion is defining the process meaning anybody can do that job, meaning anybody competitor can do same thing, […] Work process mean very standardized process which is equal to other companies or other competitors.

Other things which has been changed by the time since the merge it is that the company has a much shorter lead time than before the merge, but if this is because of the Japanese influences, or the quick changing business trends in general, is difficult to say. The company has "grown up" and has become more international in its approach, both in the internal and external communication. The Japanese hierarchical and power distance culture is also in a changing process to be flatter. Instead of the strong Japanese culture where the importance of belonging and being part of a group the Japanese are becoming more individualized.

We are used to value the group or what the organization delivers, not what the individuals deliver in forms of performance output, but nowadays it is more based on individual performance […] but one important thing when you working in a global company is that you may not change fundamentally but you have to learn how to act within different environment by understanding. Something we cannot do without changing.

It is difficult to say what is a specific Japanese culture and what is specific Swedish in the business culture, but over time Japanese culture have moved to be more Westernized in its view of the individual. TCom merged a long time ago and the process of creating a relationship beyond respecting each other have passed. It is now an international company with history and is now moving to the next step.

It is old agenda to talk about mixed culture. Today it is more like one committed organization which is focusing on how to win and how to survive.

In the common working process the company has tools in forms of different processes with working methods to make it easier to communicate and work in same direction – tools to build a committed organization with two different native languages - using same terminology and types of documents is a step forward. Even if TCom has a global "general" working process there are differences between Sweden and Japan, especially

when it comes to how to work in projects. In Sweden the projects are more viewed with a long-term perspective and therefore more abstract while in Japan they are more focused on product development. Japan and Sweden are seen as two different parts in the organization which complement each other into a committed organization. TCom is a merge where 50 percent is owned by a Swedish company and where the other 50 percent is owned by a Japanese company but in reality it is not 50:50 in all parts of the organization. For example one of the divisions only exist in Japan with the motive that the Japanese parent is market-leading on that and thereby no reason to have it in Sweden as well.

If it is a Japanese or Swedish set-up of a division depends on what nationality the key manager was when they organized it, not where the majority of the employees come from. It was said that it was three or four Japanese on the key positions for one specific division in the beginning of the merge, they decided how to work and what kind of set-up. They did not care if the rest of the division were Swedish, but used a Japanese set-up anyways. It was not until the key persons accepted integration that the Swedish working processes became integrated. This happened especially in a division where the biggest changes and reforms were necessary to be integrated in order to get a good result. It did not work in all divisions, in some cases the working process stayed Japanese with the main workforce being Swedish.

It is not only the Japanese who have changed and become more individualized for example, the Swedes have begun working harder with a more consumer's oriented perspective.

How to adapt to Japan?

For the Swedes to be successful when they work in Japan, either on a short business trip or a long term international assignment, he or she has to understand and adapt to the Japanese culture it is argued. Before the Swedish parent sends a person on international assignment to Japan it offers cross-culture training in form of culture seminars.

In addition to the optional training in cultural differences all employees moving to Japan get a one-day training session about the Japanese culture from TComs Japanese parent. This in order to get a deeper understanding and feeling of the Japanese culture which is

full of nonverbal codes and expressions a foreigner has to know to be able to integrate to the culture.

There are two main issues for Swedes when moving to Japan, namely language and nonverbal interaction. The English skills in Japan have become better since the merge but the general level is still much lower than in Sweden. Japanese people do not want to lose face and make mistakes and the language then creates a barrier where speech is a reason for embarrassment. An example of this is when the Japanese do not speak to foreigners at all because they are afraid to make mistakes and losing face. Another example is from a Swedish manager, as he did not get responsibility for a local budget when he began his international assignment in Japan even though he had a global budget already. After a couple of months he found out the reason, namely that the business controller did not want to speak English with him. Here we have the first culture conflict – language problems. The other big culture conflict when working in Japan for a Swede is to understand the Japanese culture.

Expressions from the respondents who have been on long term assignments in Tokyo, Japan were that you as foreigner have to adapt to the Japanese culture in order to get accepted. You cannot act in the same way as you do in Sweden because the culture is handling social interactions in a different ways.

I changed my entire body language when I met with my Japanese colleagues. I minimize my nonverbal language and try not to be too aggressive in my approach. I try to be a bit more formal when interacting with the Japanese and try in general to act in a way that is not typical Japanese.

One of the respondents felt like an elephant among ants especially because of the different way of communicating in Japan, not only the language, but more how they choose to express themselves and what they choose to say. Compared to the Swedish consensus driven approach with lots of discussions and questioning before action from an employee has Japanese more respect to their manager, it is as a Japanese expressed:

…'shut up' and do, and deliver. I still believe that way is much better than speaking and not doing anything…

It takes a while for a Swede to adapt to Japanese culture because, as mentioned above, there is lots of silent knowledge about the culture which you as foreigner have to understand. As another respondent mentioned:

it is impossible to fully integrate and understand the Japanese culture for a foreigner even though you have lived in the country for many years. But on the other side it is more acceptable to do cultural mistakes,

One benefit of being a foreigner when working on international assignment in Japan is that it is acceptable to do cultural mistakes. Normally Japanese do not leave the office before late in the evening, as Expat it is "okay" to leave earlier as soon as you deliver a good result. One of the respondents used the situation as foreigner and took much longer vacation than normally is acceptable.

It is important in the Japanese culture to build trust and long term relationships which leads to in general it takes longer time for foreigners in Japan to build trust and get accepted. In Japan, adaption to group dynamics where the individual first of all has to be accepted is crucial.

There were many Japanese who tried to wear out my patience through constantly challenging and questioning me…

It is even important to have a good relationship with colleagues outside the office.

It was a goal for me to be accepted through this course of action. Many dinners at first, then after a while people got used of me being around. I was a constant addition and after some time it was not so strange and I was a part of everyday life.

The best way to integrate to the Japanese culture is to respect, accept and not challenge it. Build trust is an important part when integrating with Japanese, which is possible when using a clear and consisting communication and explaining why you act as you do, and first and foremost deliver result. It is about finding a compromise, as long as you deliver results it is seen as okay to not stay at the office until 11 pm although most of the Japanese do that.

As a Swedish manager in Japan you have to change and adapt to the Japanese style to be able to make success. In Japan it is not possible to go in to a meeting with other managers, do a presentation and then in the meeting ask about their opinions, as you can do in Sweden. Instead you hold the presentation and afterwards, you as the presenter, talk to all who are involved one-by-one and then after that the decision is made of record. Then in the next meeting everyone can say "yes". Another frustration for a foreigner in Japan is that Japanese people see risks in everything. They never say it straight to the point, that is something you have to find out by yourself.

..Japanese never say it is bad, they say it is not that good.

Even after years of working and living in Japan it is almost impossible to integrate and understand the culture to 100 percent.

…you have to speak Japanese…

As expat, working in another country for a while, you might see the Swedish culture from another perspective and become a hybridity:

I was travelling home to Sweden quite much and after a while I thought the people here in Sweden were really aggressive and unfriendly towards one another, I remember I was going by bus from Lund to Malmö once and thought it was terrible. This is not how one should behave I thought to myself. But this is not something that I reflect over today as I have moved on. You switch codes quickly […] I thought people had a very strange behavior. So I realized that I had become a hybrid….

Many of the Japanese who have been on international assignment in Sweden, they change their attitude and viewpoint to be more like the Swedes when they are in Sweden. Then when they move back to Japan they sooner or later get back to the Japanese approach and culture again.

Frustrations

It took until 2007 before a Swede got a top manager position in Japan. First, it took six months before she got accepted from Japan to begin the assignment, then she had to work "under cover" in four months before she got her "right" title. To be a manager and leader in Japan it can be really frustrating for a Swede since you have to be more detailed and give directions the whole time. Another frustration is when someone makes a mistake, the whole team/group apologizes and it is really difficult to find the problem.

One of the biggest differences between the Japanese and Swedish business culture is the working hours. Japanese who have not been working in Sweden often have a view of Swedes as not working as hard as them, especially because Swedes leave the office often never later than 5.30 pm while Japanese stay at the office until late.

But it is not only about the time but it is how they work as well […] Japanese people spend lot of energy and time to complete the work to 100 percent […] Japanese people are really keen to reach 100 percent regardless it is needed or not. But in Sweden I think people are more focused on how quickly and how effective how efficiently you reach 80 percent. And then reaching 80 percent is okay and in many cases it is okay and people are not paying to

much attention between 80 and 100 percent. Handle in quick and efficient way. That's make the working hour very different.

Another difference between Japan and Sweden is the way of working. Sweden is at moment implementing a global process in Japan, as been mentioned above, which has not proved easy:

The process of implementation has gone on for two months which has not been so successful, but we know we have to change, it is a requirement and that is final. You keep on fighting for it, but we know it took a while in Sweden as well when we implemented it here. What we have to do is change the mindset of people.

A Japanese expresses his opinion about the Swedish working model:

I do not like this process driven approach, it is good for the stable operation, but again, try to be different this stable operation those not make innovation or creative output, so that, of course I respect this stable portion but I do not want to take this 100 percent stable process driven culture but having this as a base I want to combine this stable and diff way to innovate something. So this portion, I am not saying I not want to take this process driven but it is not everything. I take 50 percent, 50 percent is still group dynamic or individual dynamic to create something new. The X (Japanese parent) culture is creating something new something different otherwise X could not survive the industry because there is a bunch of guys establishing the company. X has to be different to its competitors otherwise there is no space in the industry. Everyone from X has such a mentality. So having clear processes is conflicting the X culture, so that means that we need a balance between that way of work and processes.

To return to the merge, Swedes were frustrated when they perceived it as that Japan came and "took over" but on the other hand it is the same way as...

...Swedes have done many times in the past when setting up enterprises in other countries.

After the merge especially managers who have been working in Japan realizes that the Swedish approach is not perfect and a Swedish respondent comments:

We have different ways of working and solving problems and at the moment is it the Swedish approach dominating. But at the same time I am trying to, from my experiences in Japan, to get my Swedish colleagues to realize that Japanese have another approach with a more local touch

A Swedish respondent comment on how she feels she can use the different cultures as a tool when interacting with the Japanese:

If you do not act according to the norms of what is typical Swedish or Japanese a situation which can be characterized as uncertain and insecure can appear. You can use the different

cultures when you know them very well and depending on the situation choose a side, sometimes being Swedish and sometimes more Japanese.

Discussion - an introduction

In this part we are going investigate how colonial experiences in a Swedish and Japanese bi-national company are made visible. TCom is a joint venture, in which two very different cultures meet, namely the Swedish and the Japanese. Postcolonialism is a theoretical perspective which Prasad defines as "an attempt to investigate the complex and deeply fraught dynamics of modern Western colonialism and anticolonial resistance, and the ongoing significance of the colonial encounter for people's lives both in the West and the non-West" (Prasad, 2003:5). Prasad's definition indicates that the relationship between West and East is one where the former is using its position to subjugate the latter in different forms. Through representations, frustrations, mimicry we will show how these colonial experiences may as well be reversed where it is not necessarily East who is the subject of these experiences. We are problematizing the postcolonial perspective and show how the traditional critique is somewhat narrow minded and needs to recognize that the world is not an easy object to define. The postcolonial critique and theory needs to adapt to the changing times and heterogeneities of our world.

The postcolonial perspective is an interesting and important perspective for management scholars as it can help to examine and understand the influences of colonialism in producing and constituting contemporary discourses of management. Postcolonial theory and criticism can be fruitful in developing insight about power, control and resistance in organizations (Prasad, 2003). Traditionally it has been the West that has dominated the economic activities of our world, but the world is changing and this position of hegemony is now challenged. Japan, which constitutes one part of the merger of Tcom has become associated with technological prowess, thus we find it is interesting to investigate what can be said about the postcolonial critique in the changing world, and we use an organizational context to illustrate it. Morley and Robins (1997) raise a very important question of where, what and who West are now? In this Master Thesis we are addressing these issues and argue that it is indeed a very ambivalent reality which a modern postcolonial critique should also recognize.

The colonial discourse at TCom

The colonial history is very well documented and has influenced the contours of the world we see today. The postcolonial critique recognizes that even though countries have regained their independence colonialism as an ideology is very much alive. The world-order of today is, according to this perspective, unfair and unjust and true freedom and justice can only be achieved through global decolonization culturally, politically and economically (McLeod, 2000; Young, 2001; Prasad, 2003). The power relations between West and East are in other words very clear cut and defined from the postcolonial perspective.

Modern international business is not that easy to define. The world is changing and traditional power relations are challenged which we will illustrate through our study of the Swedish and Japanese bi-national company we have chosen to refer to as TCom. The merger of TCom took place at the start of the 21th century and the feeling among the Swedish managers we interviewed was that the Japanese parent was there to "save" the company as they had great difficulties internally and externally in the competitive global market.

Said writes that has West dealt with the East "by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it" (Said, 2003:3). In the case of TCom, it was initially the Japanese parent that in some ways "dealt" with the Western parent. It was said that the new company should be split equally between the two parents, but this was hardly the case in the beginning, and a Swedish manager explains:

…it was probably 50:50 at that time if you look at the number of positions, but the key positions to run the company were held by the Japanese parent, and a new culture was formed where the best Japanese were brought in to fix this company that had been run in a way that would lead to its extinction. So it was a through and through Japanese leadership and the discussions that were held were primarily in Japanese. After decisions were made the new directives were spread to the rest of the company.

This illustrates rather well how the relations between the Japanese and the Western side were initially in the merger. As stated in the quote the Japanese had parallel meetings only for Japanese in Japanese, to which the Swedes were not invited or welcome to participate in. The Japanese can in other words be argued in some ways to be

authorizing views, describing, teaching, and ruling over the Swedish parent. The Japanese were thinking that in order to set things right they had to discuss things within their own group. The language barrier was a topic that was constantly re-occurring in the interviews. English was the language that was to be spoken, but very few Japanese mastered the language fully which initially had effects on the power relations between the two sides. Fanon (2008) argues that group and language are interconnected and emphasize how important it is. In his *Black Skin, White Masks* he argues that the Antilles 'black man' who wants to be "white" will be 'whiter' through gaining mastery of the great tool that language is. Language is in other words a key to open doors with but just as much, as we can see in the TCom case, one to close them as well. The Japanese had to use their own language to be effective, but by doing so they also excluded others, namely the non-Japanese speakers or Westerners. Language became here a symbol of the power relations between the two parents where the Japanese language became the norm for a period of time. A Swedish manager expresses his view of the initial state of the merger:

Many were irritated that there were parallel meetings just for the Japanese to which the Swedes were not welcome. And instantly you got very scared, a lot of the decision making was done in that constellation. I really do not know to what extent, but I also believe that it was needed to in order to operate and function. With lacking language skills and sitting there expected to make critical decisions and afraid to lose your face, then you want to be in a situation where you feel comfortable.

The actual approach was also described where the Japanese parent had a clear idea of how they wanted to handle the initial phase, a Swedish manager comments:

if it was three or four Japanese in the key positions for one specific division in the beginning of the merge. They decided how to work and what kind of set-up to employ, they did not care if the rest of the divisions were Swedes, they used a Japanese set-up anyways.

In Said's (2003) *Orientalism* it is argued that Westerners view Easterners as inferior and backward, whereas they consider themselves as rational, mature and "normal". There is no evidence of the Japanese in any way feeling backward or inferior to the Westerners as they came in with great confidence in their own way of going about things. Instead the Japanese were regarded by themselves and the Swedes as more than rational and mature to teach and rule over the Western parent. Thus it can be argued that Said's arguments is being challenged through this illustration as it was the Swedes that needed the help of the Eastern company in order to survive in the global and competitive market. Another reality is here made visible, a reality where the traditional power

relations are not represented, and where the Westerners need to, in Morley's and Robins' (1997) words, "Orientalize" themselves to keep up in the new world. But this approach by the Japanese was not well received by the Swedes which a Swedish manager gives his view on:

Yes, as always when you come in with the mentality as the Japanese parent did, and as we Swedes have done many times in the past when setting up enterprises in other countries, and think that it is only through Japanese or Swedish ways that things should be done, you thereby degrade and belittle other people and other cultures. It is seldom a good approach. The Swedish parent has handled things this way for many years and now in recent years has been forced to change this philosophy of how to go about it […] but the only way to make it work is though collaboration between the different cultures.

The above quotes illustrate how the Swedish people reacted to the Japanese parent's approach of dealing with the merger. Fanon (2008) writes about the divisive relationship between the colonizer and the colonized from the perspective of the colonized. He shows on a psychological level the feelings of dependency and inadequacy in the colonized experience. He explains the consequences of identity formation of the colonized that are forced to internalize the colonial discourse. But it is highly questionable if the traditional colonial power dynamics are represented in this case as the above comments contradict this critique. It can rather be argued that it was the Swedes who experienced the dependencies and inadequacies that Fanon described. They were very well aware of that something needed to be done to set the company on the right track again, and even understood that the Japanese needed to solve it among themselves due to languages barriers by other things. But it still resulted in suspicion, uncertainties, frustrations and fear from the Swedes, especially because a lot of important decision making took place in these meetings and non-Japanese suspected that the Japanese made "secret" decisions that the Swedes were not a part of. This raised frustrations and the Swedes needed to adapt to the Japanese way of working. This is in line with Morley and Robins' (1997) argument that there is a fear that the West will be overwhelmed by the Oriental "other", something he refers to as an Orientalism in reverse. The traditional power dynamics are pulled into question and the Orient are now more than capable to put their ideas into action. Therefore it can be argued that postcolonialism needs a new approach as the world is not so easily defined nowadays.

In the following part we will discuss how the new power relation has changed how West view the Japanese.

Japan - a problem?

Morley and Robins' (1997) claim that due to the Japanese technological superiority they are regarded as the future and that the Western universalism and their identity are pulled into question. They write that there is a fear that 'Japan's irreducible difference will remain aloof from, and impenetrable to, Western reason and universalism'. There is also as stated above a fear that the West will be overwhelmed by the Oriental 'other'. There are things that the Swedish see as positive about the Japanese people, but also some which are not very attractive and do not at all want to be influenced by. A Swedish manager talks about the relationship:

There are many similarities between Japanese and Swedes, there are some things in their nature that you do not want to be influenced by, there are some things you like about them and there are some things you have in common. I think that Sweden is hierarchical in some respects, but we do not like to be given orders. The first value that the Japanese tried to implement was discipline and I can assure you there was a flaming reaction on that within the teams! That is not how we do it in Sweden. You should not, or you cannot think that you can come and order you around, the whip does not work!

This shows how the Swedes are very critical towards some characteristics of the Japanese culture. There are apparently associations here that are in direct conflict with the way the Swedish respondents see life. The term discipline has very negative connotations where the Swedes seemingly think of inhuman circumstances and machinelike behavior. The Swedes want to be in control of their life and not be told how to act and be. This can be compared and analyzed through the metaphor of the cyborg which is subject of interest to Greenville (2002) and Ueno (2002) by others. People have for a long time been fascinated by machines and technology and Greenville explains the cyborg as a concept of man-as-machine. The concept is tied to dichotomies such as good/evil and fear/fascination. Greenville writes how the conceptualization of the machine and its role in the world has changed where Japan has a more close and positive view of it. This is something that Ueno also addresses as he argues that Japan has become a cyborg, and object of both fear and fascination, a dichotomy that also the above respondent addresses in her comments. There is a fear of what they regard as wrong will constitute the new working life at TCom. The extreme working hours in Japan is something that Swedish managers have experienced when working in Japan and something that is not appreciated, but at the same time also accepted to some degree as they still need to integrate themselves and be looked upon with respect in order to

perform. On the question of how you adapt to that phenomenon a Swedish manager says:

I would prefer to say that I do not, but I do. I cannot change the culture, but instead you have to find a compromise […] everyone knows I am a foreigner so you also have some privileges. […] I go home at 7 pm instead of 9 pm. That is the compromise.

So there is in other words resistance from the Swedes against what they think is too extreme working hours in Japan. Swedish regard themselves to be more family oriented whereas the Japanese's work is often their life and spending time with your family is something for the weekends. A Swedish manager talks about how she interprets life in Japan:

Most Japanese people work very long hours. If you take the Japanese man, the main thing for them is to have a job. You have children and family which you see on the weekends. You come home late when the family is already sleeping and start the new day before they do. The wife takes care of the children or maybe some other relative. […] and if we compare with Japanese who have lived in Sweden, where they have had the time to socialize with their family in the evenings, then they start to appreciate it too.

The Swedes reaction can be read as a belief that their own way is the more humane and rational way. It also seems like the Swedes believe that the Japanese understand this once they have experienced this other side of life. What Ueno does though is to challenge the Western notion of Japan. He argues that as much as the West has constructed the Orient to reaffirm its own religious, linguistic, economic and cultural beliefs, so has they invented the Techno-Orient as a land of the future. The West's view of Japan represents everything that is problematic in the Western conception of technology and thereby Japan becomes a cyborg, an object of both fear and fascination (Ueno, 2002). This representation of the inhumane, machine-like and cold Japanese is in other words according to Ueno just a new way to manifest and consolidate the old colonial power relations. Analyzed with this lens the Swedes are afraid what this new order at TCom means and do what they can to direct it so that it suits their agenda. Morley and Robins also talk about the fear to be overwhelmed by the Oriental Other as it is argued that West cannot match the East and that they hereby are defeated at their own game. Therefore they try to resist these new developments, as can be compared with the respondents' answers, and represent the Japanese culture as inferior or wrong, namely characteristics that is connected to the cyborg.

In the following section we will look into how the Japanese view Swedes and how this differs from the traditional critique.

How the Japanese view the Swedes

Prasad (2003) writes that Western management has traditionally been regarded as the universal norm where the non-Western management practices, which are absent in the West, are seen as inefficient and ineffective. The typical Swedish style is described in the interviews as consensus oriented where a lot of discussions are taking place in order to make well-grounded decisions. There is more focus on the individual that she should make her opinion heard and the managers are described as listeners and visionaries. But the Japanese are not always impressed with the Swedish leadership which is quite different to the typical Japanese way. The Japanese are more group oriented, with strong leaders who are more inclined to decide exactly what their subordinates should do. Several Japanese respondents were frustrated with the Swedish style as they thought that there was too much discussion back and forth in their opinion. One of the Japanese expressed it the following way:

...no I do not think I have changed a lot. I still value the way I have always worked, to just 'shut up' and do, and deliver. I still believe that way is much better than speaking and not doing anything. By showing that I think that colleagues here could learn from that a little bit as well.

More action and straightforwardness was something that they wanted to teach the Swedish subordinates. This was regarded a necessity given the industry they were in where things are happening very quickly. In other words they viewed the Swedish style as somewhat ineffective and inefficient in an industry which demanded another approach, a way of thinking that is normally not linked to the Eastern cultures.

TCom is an illustration of how the world is changing and an example of why we can start to talk about an Orientalism in reverse. The traditional power relations between the West and the Orient is challenged where the Western universalism and their basis of identity is pulled into question. The merger is a symbol of this and these conclusions are in line with the argument in Morley and Robins' (1997) *Spaces of Identity*. What we are going to analyze in the following section is how the absorption of the Japanese culture may look like, how the concept of hybridity is represented, and how the merger is

functioning now as it has had some time for the two cultures to grow together and mature.

Mimicry and Hybridity in reverse

Morley and Robins' (1997) writes that it is well documented that the Japanese traditionally have imitated, absorbed, and reinterpreted Western ideas, and what has not been talked about is the Western absorption of the East. The concept of mimicry is according to Bhabha (1994) a proof of hegemony. It has been a sign of inappropriateness of non-Western ways. The behavior works unconsciously to define the colonized in the image of the colonizer where the Western norms and values are internalized. What the case of TCom illustrates is a reversed form of Bhabhas notion of mimicry. Several of the Swedish respondents talked about how they in different ways had changed their behavior when moving to Japan and working there as managers to fit in. One of the respondents expressed it the following way:

I changed my entire body language when I met with my Japanese colleagues. I minimize my nonverbal language and try not to be too aggressive in my approach. I try to be a bit more formal when interacting with the Japanese and try in general to act in a way that is not typical Japanese.

This is a case of trying to imitate the Japanese culture and ways. The Swedish people expressed how important it was to try and show that you were one of them, in order to be accepted. This was also emphasized by the company as it before sending a person on international assignment to Japan offered cross-culture training at culture seminars. If you did not try to acclimatize and adapt to their ways you would not be able to be effective in your work. A Swedish manager comments on this issue:

You have to realize that in Japan it is the Japanese culture that is the norm. If you go there with the belief that you are going to change things by telling them that they should think and act in a certain way you will not last long in that country.

This was their turf and it was important to show your willingness to integrate yourself there which meant not to challenge or question them in some way. This can be compared with Fanon (2008) and Bhabha's (1994) argument where they both talk about how the 'other' had to imitate the Westerners in order to be accepted. It is not an easy process to fully imitate and absorb another culture though. Another Swedish respondent had the following to say about this issue:

It is impossible to fully integrate and understand the Japanese culture for a foreigner even though you have lived in the country for years.

The Japanese culture is described by the Swedish respondents as very difficult to understand as it is very different with a lot of nonverbal communication which is not making it easy for a foreigner as it takes time to pick up on these things. This experience is something that Morley and Robins' (1997) acknowledges as well as they write about Japan's unique and homogenous nature and the irreducible differences of the Japanese culture in relation to the West. The difficulties in a total absorption of another culture are something that Bhabha (1994) also writes about, in line with the above experience. The colonized is almost the same but not quite. He is also constantly reminded of being 'other' to the norm. A Swede expresses his view on it:

There were many Japanese who tried to wear out my patience through constantly challenging and questioning me…

Even though this treatment of her became better with time it shows how difficult it is to integrate oneself in the Japanese environment as you cannot always expect to be judged on the same scale, you are in some ways still different or 'other' to the Japanese. The Japanese did not express any frustrations when trying to integrate to the Swedish environment, but this may be explained with their tendency not to express anything that can be interpreted as negative, which is related to the concept of losing face.

Although the concept of mimicry is a proof of hegemony according to Bhabha (1994) he also argues that it is a loss of authority and control on the part of the colonizers. It is disclosing the ambivalence of the colonial discourse which refers to the construction of an otherness and simultaneously trying to modernize the native which results in a colonized subject being condemned to be at war with himself. It can be seen as a strategy and is something that can be compared to what a Swedish manager talks about:

If you do not act according to the norms of what is typical Swedish or Japanese a situation which can be characterized as uncertain and insecure can appear. You can use the different cultures when you know them very well and depending on the situation choose a side, sometimes being Swedish and sometimes more Japanese.

She is in other words very aware of the differences between the cultures, but acknowledges the possibilities this entails as well. She is talking about how you may be

able to work with the differences in order to manage a situation and direct it in a way that suits your agenda.

Mimicry is of course something that also the Japanese do when spending time and working in Sweden. A Japanese manager explains how she has tried to tackle the Swedish culture of discussing issues without paying much attention to hierarchy which is a common feature in Japanese culture:

It has been difficult for me to adapt as we have very different ways of communicating. I understand the way it is done is Sweden, but for me it has been difficult. But when in Sweden I try to adapt because it is the way it is done there.

This can be read as the Japanese also want to imitate the Swedish ways in order to be effective in their leadership. So when Bhabha (1994) describes mimicry as a proof of hegemony one may wonder what exactly this means. When both sides mimic the other culture's ways it can be compared to what Foucault argues, namely that power is relational and becomes apparent when exercised. It could be argued in line with this that what culture is regarded as the hegemony is dependent on where you are, whether it is in Japan or it is in Sweden in the case of TCom. One may also ask if we can actually talk of hegemony as the mimicry is equally divided between the two cultures.

Hybridity is another concept that is closely related to mimicry as it is referring to the cultural appropriation of the colonized subject. It implicate people who live border loves 'in-between' countries and lose their sense of belonging to any culture on the way. This results in an individual which is condemned to be at war with himself as he can never internalize fully the other culture. The identities exist in a state of constant ambivalence. This is something that also the Swedes are subject to:

I was travelling home to Sweden quite much and after a while I thought the people here in Sweden were really aggressive and unfriendly towards one another, I remember I was going by bus from Lund to Malmö once and thought it was terrible. This is not how one should behave I thought to myself. But this is not something that I reflect over today as I have moved on. You switch codes quickly [...] I thought people had a very strange behavior. So I realized that I had become a hybrid.

This illustrates the war an individual can go through within himself when spending much time in another culture and internalizing its values and norms. It is an example of how the concept of hybridity can be experienced in a reverse way where it is the Westerner that is subject to it instead of the Oriental subject. It also show how one is

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able to adapt to different cultures as he changed codes again after spending some time in Sweden where this no longer was an issue.

TCom has gone through a lot of changes since the merger took place and has grown up in many aspects. We cannot talk about a dominant culture, but one that is a fusion of both the Japanese and the Swedish. The company started off as a 'duality', but matured to become a committed company with a common DNA. The idea at TCom has always been to become 'one company' and getting the best out of both cultures. Both sides has contributed and brought different things to the company and influenced each other in various ways. The Japanese wanted to change a technological organization into an organization which understands the importance of the customers out there. The Japanese has brought in the consumer perspective to the company and, as touched upon above, the action oriented mentality in order to survive in an industry that is ever changing and putting out new and unique products. The Swedish parent is traditionally long term oriented, but the Japanese has brought in a sense of urgency. Japanese is being influenced as well as the organizational hierarchical system which has been significant for Japan is also changing somewhat towards the flatter and more individualized culture of Sweden.

We are used to value the group or what the organization delivers, not what the individuals deliver in forms of performance output, but nowadays it is more based on individual performance.

He also acknowledges the necessity of adapting in order to be successful in this merger:

But one thing that is important when you are working in a global company is that you may not change fundamentally, but you have to learn how to act in different environments through getting an understanding which is something you cannot do without changing.

This is also in line with Bhabhas (1994) argument as he also acknowledges the need to change, but at the same time not being able to fully absorb the other culture. What we can say about the TCom is that the company itself has transformed into a hybrid and suffers similar effects that Bhabha attributes to the concept. The company is living a border life 'in-between' countries. It is a fusion of two cultures and thereby do not have the sense of belonging to one specific culture, which is what constitutes a hybrid identity, according to Bhabha. Thereby the company is condemned to be at war with itself as it can never be entirely Swedish or Japanese. A fixed identity of a hybrid cannot

be claimed as it is subject of constant negotiation. The identities exist in a state of constant ambivalence and can never be categorized or determined despite the efforts to do so. There is indeed a lot of negotiation taking place and different forces trying to make their voices count. This can be illustrated through the Swedish initiative of trying to export processes of working to the site in Japan which have not been received with open arms:

Sweden is more inclined to define processes clearly and following that very strictly. Japan on the other hand has no clear definition of the process of work, but everyone is well-aware of the big picture and acts towards the same goal in a more natural way. It may be an older style […] but my opinion is that when you define the process this also means that other organizations can copy it. This means that we do not have this competitive advantage to our competitors.

He further argues that he is not particularly fond of this approach in general:

I do not like this process driven approach, it may be good for stable operations, but when trying to be different this approach does not facilitate innovation or creative output […] then I value the group dynamics or individual dynamics more as it is better when you want to create something new. This is typical for how we have done it in the parent company and that is why we also have been successful in what we have done.

This shows that there is indeed a lot of opinions and contestations of how to go about things in this bi-national company. The war of values and norms connected to the concept of hybridity is unmistakably there. No universalism is here made visible, but the two sides are battling it out on equal terms. It can be compared to what Fanon (2008) writes about universalism which he is against when it is based on a notion of superiority, but this is hardly the case at TCom as the two cultures have their own way which they tend to believe is the right way. The concept of hybridity at TCom can further be compared with what Morley and Robins' (1997) argue that orientalism and occidentalism goes head to head where the two cultures are in contestation with each other. He asks the questions of who is to be the natural point of reference and who is to occupy the 'centre', in relation to which the 'other' must define its particularity and marginality. There is a desire to learn from each other at TCom, but this is not fully applied in reality, but full of power struggles between the two parents of what is to be regarded as right and wrong. A Swedish respondent comment on the implementation of processes in Japan:

The process of implementation has gone on for two months which has not been so successful, but we know we have to change, it is a requirement and that is final. You keep on fighting for it, but we know it took a while in Sweden as well when we implemented it here. What we have to do is change the mindset of people.

This is in other words what happens when a company itself transforms into a hybrid. There is an ongoing negotiation of what is to be regarded the most rational and logic way to going about the business. Global organizations can therefore be connected to the concept of hybridity.

So where does this leave us? – A conclusion

We have in this thesis adopted a postcolonial critique and investigated if the colonial discourse is still influencing and represented in a Swedish and a Japanese global company. It is in other words a merger between East and West which is subject of interest for postcolonial scholars whose critique starts from the idea that the world-order of our times is extremely unfair where West is still colonizing East. We argue that the traditional power relations are challenged and our findings therefore add to, problematize and challenge much of current postcolonial literature. We argue that postcolonial scholars must recognize that the world is not so easily defined, but rather heterogeneous and should therefore modify its approach to modern times.

Prasad defines the postcolonial critique and theory as "an attempt to investigate the complex and deeply fraught dynamics of modern Western colonialism and anticolonial resistance, and the ongoing significance of the colonial encounter for people's lives both in the West and the non-West" (Prasad, 2003:5). Postcolonial scholars argue that colonial remnants are still made visible in international business which we do not disagree with, but argue it is a somewhat simplified description of the relationship between East and West. We argue that the postcolonial experiences can be reversed which we have illustrated through a Swedish and Japanese bi-national company. Both Japanese and Swedish managers were interviewed so that both sides would have their say which we believe is essential. We have thereby identified a more complex relationship between East and West analyzed from a postcolonial perspective. Traditionally postcolonial research has identified with the subject position of the colonized which has led to a one-sided view of the power relations. Our approach has given us contradicting and heterogeneous findings which has led to us challenging the traditional postcolonial critique. Postcolonialism has a range of lenses (e.g. representation, mimicry hybridity) and we have used these when exploring if traditional colonial experiences can be reversed. We have with the help of these lenses, shown how power relations between East and West is visible in our company of study where it is not necessarily East that is subject of these experiences.

It has traditionally been the West that has dominated the economic activities of our world, but the world is changing and this position of hegemony is now challenged.

Eastern countries are now without a doubt playing a much greater part and Japan, which constitutes one part of the bi-national company of our study, with companies such Toyota, Toshiba and Panasonic highly contribute to the new world order (Morley and Robins', 1997).

When the merger took place the general feeling among the Swedish respondents was that the Japanese parent was there to "save" the company. The key positions of company were initially held by the Japanese who held parallel meetings only for Japanese in Japanese where it was decided how to work and what kind of set-up to employ. We argue that this actually contradicts what Said writes in his *Orientalism* that in order to justify their subjugation of the Orient they were "making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it and ruling over it" (Said, 2003:3). The merger can rather be read as that both Swedes and Japanese regarded the Japanese to be more than capable to 'teach' and 'rule' over the Western parent. In this sense you cannot argue that there are any emphasis on the differences of East and West, as Said argues, where the latter is portrayed as inferior to the West in order to legitimize the control, governing and containing of the East. The merger can be seen as a symbol of why the traditional power dynamics can be pulled into question as West was not in a position where they ruled over East or exercised power in any other way to oppress them. Morley and Robins' (1997) asks the question of what and who West are now and the case illustrates why they cannot be seen as an undisputed hegemony.

Fanon (2008) writes about the divisive relationship between the colonizer and the colonized from the perspective of the colonized. He shows on a psychological level the feelings of dependency and inadequacy in the colonized experience. We argue that it is a somewhat one sided view with regards to the mentality with which the Japanese came in with which led to frustrations from the Swedes that Fanon once ascribed only the colonized. Suspicion, uncertainties, frustrations and fear were some of the feelings that the Swedes experienced which can be compared to Morley and Robins' argument that there is a fear that the West will be overwhelmed by the Oriental "other".

The Swedes reaction can be read as they were afraid of being overwhelmed by the Japanese to whom they had a rather ambivalent relationship to. There were some things that they admired about them and some things that actually scared them as their culture to some extent was viewed as very tough and inhuman. The Swedes regarded the

working hours in Japan as extreme and when the Japanese wanted to implement discipline it had strong reactions from many Swedes as they associated it with inhuman circumstances and machinelike behavior. Therefore the relationship can be analyzed through the metaphor of the cyborg which is the concept of a man-as-machine. Ueno argues that Japan has become a cyborg, an object of both fear and fascination. He argues that Japanese are in some ways regarded as more adapted to the future and almost machine-like in its nature. The metaphor is relevant as the Swedes are both fascinated by and afraid of what this new order at TCom means. The Swedes also do what they can to direct it so that it suits their agenda. Even though the Swedish in many ways tried to adapt to Japanese ways in Japan resistance was also taking place. Resistance was taking place as they were afraid of a future where the culture of Japan would overwhelm their own, a future which is tougher and not as humane according to the Westerners. This is another example of how the power relations between the East and the West have changed since colonial times. It can be argued that the Japanese culture is represented as a something problematic and unattractive as a new way to manifest and consolidate the old colonial power relations that now has been challenged.

Mimicry is another colonial experience that the postcolonial critique ascribes the colonized. The concept of mimicry is according to Bhabha's (1994) a proof of hegemony and it has been a sign of inappropriateness of non-Western ways. The behavior works unconsciously to define the colonized in the image of the colonizer where the Western norms and values are internalized. What the case of TCom illustrates is a reversed form of Bhabhas notion of mimicry as is not exclusively the Japanese who mimic the westerners. It has been described by the Swedes how they needed to mimic their ways in order to get accepted and be effective in Japan. Moreover it was said that if you went there with the belief that you were going to change things you would not last long. It was also acknowledged that it was impossible to fully mimic and absorb the Japanese culture as they were always reminded that they were different in some ways. The mimicking was made in both directions and therefore one has to question what this says about the proof of hegemony that Bhabha argues it is. We draw the conclusion that we therefore cannot talk of any hegemony in the traditional way. It is possible though to use the Foucauldian argument to discuss this phenomenon which contends that power is relational and employed at all levels and through many dimensions. It becomes apparent when exercised (Foucault 1980). Depending on if we are analyzing the environment in

Japan or in Sweden different norms will be apparent. In Sweden the Japanese has to mimic their ways and in Japan the Swedish has to mimic their culture in order to be accepted. We are in other words talking about a very complex and heterogeneous reality which is not that easily defined and this is something the majority of postcolonial critique is not recognizing.

Mimicry and hybridity are closely related and the latter is also a concept which the Swedes were subjects to. Hybrids implicate people who live border lives 'in-between' countries and lose their sense of belonging to any culture on the way. This results in an individual which is condemned to be at war with himself as he can never internalize fully the other culture. The identities exist in a state of constant ambivalence.

It can be argued that the company itself has transformed into a hybrid and suffers similar effects that Bhabha (1994) attributes to the concept. The company is living a border life 'in-between' countries. It is a fusion of two cultures and thereby do not have the sense of belonging to one specific culture, which is what constitutes a hybrid identity, according to Bhabha. Thereby the company is condemned to be at war with itself as it can never be entirely Swedish or Japanese. There is indeed a lot of negotiation taking place and different forces trying to make their voices count. This can be illustrated through the Swedish initiative of trying to export processes of working to the site in Japan which have not been well received by the Japanese who have a totally different approach which they think is unique and sets them apart from competitors. At TCom none of the two parents is calling the shots where universalism is based on any given culture. It is not predetermined which side is the right side or the stronger side, but they are battling it out on equal terms. The concept of hybridity at TCom can further be compared with what Morley and Robins' (1997) argue that Orientalism and Occidentalism goes head to head where the two cultures are in contestation with each other. He asks the questions of who is to be the natural point of reference and who is to occupy the 'centre', in relation to which the 'other' must define its particularity and marginality. TCom is trying to capitalize on the strengths about the respective cultures, but it is not always so easy to determine what strengths are as there may be different takes on that issue. Foucault (1982) once argued that it is generally the one in power that has monopoly on determining what is "knowledge" is and how things should be done. But TCom is, as we have concluded, not so easily defined where someone is

undisputedly exercising power on the other. Therefore, once again, we can talk about a company that has transformed into a hybrid where negotiations are constantly taking place to secure an identity which is condemned to exist in a state of constant ambivalence.

To conclude, representations, mimicry and hybridity are traditional colonial experiences and these are not exclusive for one side, but the reality is more complex and heterogeneous than so, which a modern postcolonial critique should recognize.

Postcolonialism should in our opinion evolve in a similar direction to what we can see feminism is doing at the moment. Calas and Smircich (1999) write that feminist theories have been mostly about how and why the exclusion or oppression of women happens and how to provide remedies for this situation. They explain how scholars have reconsidered the separation of sex from gender, concluding that the anti-essentialist posture also permits inclusion of other forms of oppressions in the analysis. The intersections of gender, ethnicity, race, class and sexuality is well represented. The focus here is not solely on the bodies that constitute these intersections but on the subjectivities that get formed and transformed within these social markers. They explain that the term gender is not necessarily about women anymore and the new approach does not claim to give any permanent or universal answers. The answers are instead narratives, which function as a tool to for changing specific oppressive conditions, experiences that some may be subject to at the present (Calas and Smircich, 1999). The present day postcolonial critique and theory is similar to what feminism traditionally was about as postcolonialism explore the "hows" and "whys" of the exclusion or oppression of the colonized happens, or as Fanon writes: "I hope by analyzing it to destroy it" (Fanon 2008:5). But postcolonialism, as argued, must recognize that the world is changing and that the critique must follow the new times where it is not the colonized that is necessarily subject of oppression. This can be compared to the poststructuralist perspective which is somewhat skeptical about the theoretical frames of reference and emphasizes what is concealed as the result of a certain form of representation.

Limitations

The postcolonial critique is very complex, and the remnants of colonialism are very difficult, if not impossible, to determine. We think it is very important to make it clear that we do not claim to represent the truth here, but to problematize the postcolonial critique and attempt to illustrate its true heterogeneity that it has to acknowledge.

We moreover want to make it clear that the Swedish employees at TCom are not argued to be colonized subjects, but are struggling with the contradiction between the historical (colonial) superiority of West and the present day's technological superiority of Japan. This is why the concept of the cyborg becomes relevant, because their relationship to the Japanese can be described as being both with fascination and of fear.

It has to be recognized that the postcolonial critique is not necessarily representative of the true essence of reality. It is not always colonial remnants which is the reason behind power struggles as there can be other factors which influence and shape the contours of our world. If we take the concept of hybridity you may as well question what not a hybridity is as everything can almost be connected to the concept (i.e. individuals, organizations, countries). It can be argued that all people are in some way a hybrid more or less, namely to be condemned to be in constant war with themselves. Different norms and values are constantly in negotiation which is not necessarily tied to the colonial discourse, but may also be explained by other factors and forces. Much theory makes a too rigid division between an inferior East and a superior West. These power relations are never fixed but relational, apparent when exercised and employed at different levels, as Foucault (1982) once argued. The world continuous to be shaped by colonial experience and history and this should not be neglected in the postcolonial critique, but it should also include other forms of oppression in the analysis which is not necessarily a remnant of the colonial history.

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