



## *Reading Mannoni's Prospero and Caliban Before Reading Black Skin, White Masks*

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**Abstract:** In chapter four of his *Peau noire, masques blancs (Black Skin, White Masks)* (1952), Frantz Fanon criticizes Octave Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (1950). This article argues that Mannoni's book presents a more cogent examination of European colonization than either Fanon or most subsequent critics suggest. A result of Mannoni's explorations in psychoanalysis after twenty years of residence and work as a colonial functionary in French controlled Madagascar, his book needs to be read as a critique of European colonialism. Although he is best known for his application of the terms "dependency" and "inferiority" to the consideration of the effects of colonization on its victims, I argue that Mannoni's more meaningful premise is that colonization can be described and understood as a process of psychological projection—that it is the European, who goes forth seeking compensation for the "inferiority complex" that accompanies the struggle of the autonomous individual typical of modern European society and who then "projects" his desires and fears on the people he colonizes. This results in relationships that lead to the racism, exploitation, and violence that characterize colonization. This article examines this premise while responding to and reconsidering Fanon's, and others', readings of Mannoni's book.

*Errors in the detail must thus be explained by analyzing the colonial mind rather than the 'mentality' of the Malagasy.*

—O. Mannoni

In chapter four of his *Peau noire, masques blancs (Black Skin, White Masks)*, Frantz Fanon criticizes Octave Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*. Mannoni's book preceded Fanon's by several years (1950, 1952). It was written in the aftermath of a 1947 rebellion by the Mala-

gasy against the French colonizers and the colonial government. The French response had been brutal. Fanon (84) says 80,000, and Maurice Bloch (v) says "nearly 100,000," Malagasy were killed. Mannoni "head of the information services of the colony" (Bloch v), as well as an "ethnologist" had lived in Madagascar since 1925 (Lane 131). By 1947 he had returned to the island after a three month sojourn in France where in 1945 "he had begun analysis with [Jacques] Lacan" (Lane 131). In his first Au-

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thor's Note to the English translation, Mannoni recalls: "I had interrupted this analysis to make a further short stay in Madagascar when the 1947 rebellion broke out. A veil was torn aside and for a brief moment a burst of dazzling light enabled one to verify the series of intuitions one had not dared to believe in" (5-6). His "intuitions" led him to consider all that he had learned in Madagascar in retrospect of the rebellion. In his Introduction, Mannoni writes, "...I became preoccupied with my search for an understanding of my own self, as being an essential preliminary for all research in the sphere of colonial affairs" (34). His study was not to be a political tract or an analysis of economic exploitation, rather his book is an extended meditation on his insights about himself learned from psychoanalysis and the application of those insights to his experiences in Madagascar. The result is a book that differs from what its critics, including Fanon, say it is.

Fanon tells us he had looked forward to Mannoni's book after the appearance of several of his articles on colonial relations in a Francophone journal *Psyché*. Following respectful remarks about Mannoni, he launches into a critique of Mannoni's analysis of relations between French Colonizers and their Malagasy subjects. Fanon's chapter title, "The So-Called Dependency Complex of the Colonized," expresses the skepticism, perhaps the animus, with which he approaches Mannoni's book. To characterize his ambiguous argument in a few of his own words, Fanon suggests that because Mannoni has lost the "real" perspective on these relations, his psychological analysis misses their "true coordinates" (67). His chapter concludes: "...Mannoni seems to us to be unqualified to draw the least conclusion concerning the situation, the problems, or the possibilities of indigenous peoples ["autochthones"] at the current time" (87). Before detailing his complaints, Fanon tempers his criticism. He credits Mannoni with going beyond the

"objective conditions" of colonization to consider the attitudes of its victims and of its perpetrators and with identifying the conflict between the two as a pathology (68). This ambivalence toward *Prospero and Caliban* directed the approach of the readers that followed. Indeed, it appears most of them turn to Mannoni after having read Fanon's critique.

Scholars have meditated on the validity of Fanon's examination of Mannoni and on the validity of Mannoni's work. Few, if any, have been outright dismissive of Mannoni's book even when they have favored Fanon's critique. Irene Gendzier writes: "Mannoni...has produced what might charitably be called an ambivalent analysis of the colonization enterprise" (58). But then she adds, "Mannoni's book deserves a careful reading and selections cited here [in her chapter on *Peau noire*] are perhaps the most flagrant" (59). Hussein Bulhan concludes, "In the end, Mannoni rationalized and defended colonialism" (113), yet his analysis engages what he calls Mannoni's "bold insights" (112). Others trace a troubled but definitive relation between Mannoni and Fanon. Jock McCulloch writes "It was only with the publication of Mannoni's *Prospero and Caliban* that the point was reached at which an independent and authentic ethnopsychiatry became possible" (17), such as that, he demonstrates, taken up by Fanon. More recently, Nigel Gibson recapitulates and affirms Fanon's criticisms (52-60).

In a detailed response to these kinds of critiques, Christopher Lane argues for a reconsideration of Mannoni in retrospect of Fanon, carefully teasing a method out of it, drawing it into the entirety of his career, claiming that "Mannoni's mature work is ultimately the more useful" (129) for understanding the psychology of colonialism. For almost sixty years, *Prospero and Caliban* has retained its resilience, not only because Mannoni welcomed debate and correction, but also because the book's vexations and

fascinations have to do with Mannoni's resistance to hardening his singular perspective. The colonist, he says, can "only bring the [colonized] to life through the stuff of [his] own consciousness, and to be objective in these circumstances is to arrange as best we can, and to some extent to organize our own feelings and fancies in the presence of the other person" (Mannoni 31). These "feelings and fancies" make much in his and other colonists' understanding of the colonial experience that Mannoni himself regards as "imaginary" and consequently open to question (31).

Along with Fanon, Maurice Bloch most clearly expresses the critical ambivalence toward Mannoni's book. In his New Foreword to *Prospero and Caliban* he credits Mannoni's innovations: focusing on "the colonial experience" in the study of "traditional African societies," insisting that in such studies attention to the colonizer should be equal to that of the colonized, and premising his work on the effect of the investigator's "personality and emotions" on his observations of his subjects and his conclusions about them (vi). At the same time, Bloch says that Mannoni was an "apologist" for the French "colonial power" (vii). He accuses him of accepting "tendentious myths concerning the revolt" of 1947 (vii). An anthropologist "with considerable experience of Madagascar" (vi), Bloch avers, "I do not believe that Mannoni had any real basis for his evaluation of the psyche either of the French colonials or of the Malagasy..." (xiii). Bloch doubts the application of psychoanalysis to the subject at hand, concluding, "Mannoni disguises his ignorance of Malagasy motives only by substituting other motives deduced from theories originating in the highly specific intellectual tradition of his own culture" (xix). Finally, Bloch's succinct, convincing refutation of Mannoni's explanation of Malagasy society and its traditions (see the section "The Evidence" xii-xix) leaves the reader asking what is cogent about Man-

noni's book, or how one may engage it.

*Prospero and Caliban* is an exposition in psychological language and methods. Now, whether psychology goes more "deeply" into human affairs than historical, political, anthropological, or other analyses more obviously social is impossible to answer. To get anything out of this book one has to appreciate the premises of classical psychoanalysis, especially: that there is an unconscious; that dreams translate reality as they reveal and counterpoint it; that the mind in inarticulate ways moves people to their actions and understandings; that the family and childhood are the primal, definitive experiences in a person's life; that life through social and sexual experience develops as a sort of homology to those primal moments; and, maybe most importantly for understanding Mannoni, that individuals unknowingly "project" their own desires and fears onto other individuals and see those others and explain the behavior of others according to those "projections." Essential to his argument, Mannoni explains this phenomenon. In his introduction he writes, "In any such act of projection the subject's purpose is to recover his own innocence by accusing someone else of what he considers to be a fault in himself" (20). Toward the end of the book, after many elaborations of what this means along with its ramifications for studying the psychology of colonization, he reiterates, "errors of perception in colonial matters, may well be, as Jung suggests, the result of the projection onto the object of some defect which is properly attributable to the subject" (198).

Among the difficulties of Mannoni's reliance on the concept of "projection" is how he uses the word "primitive." His explanation gainsays Fanon's and Bloch's claims about him on this point. Bloch acknowledges Mannoni's dissatisfaction with the word, but adds "he cannot do without it and merely isolates it in inverted commas" (ix). Mannoni does more than "merely iso-

late it.” Likewise, without comment on Mannoni’s considered use of the word, Fanon quotes from *Prospero and Caliban*, retaining Mannoni’s quotation marks (“inverted commas”) leaving the reader to infer that Mannoni uses this word at its face value: that he is condescending and discriminates between the “civilized” and the “primitive” (Fanon 68). Mannoni’s book persistently questions and qualifies such nomenclature so that it reflects back on those who apply it. Mannoni declares that the idea of “*primitivism*” has impeded the ability of Europeans to understand the colonized, “There is no question of our discussing the scientific value of the concept, for it has already been discarded” (21, author’s emphasis). At the same time, he admits that using the word in “inverted commas” while perpetuating the illusion that “we no longer really believe in it” (21) begs the question “how scholars could in the first place have believed in something which did not exist” (21). Scholars, freebooters, settlers, bureaucrats, and all the rest, assume that their victims are inferior or “primitive.” His book attempts to expose the psychological roots of that assumption, but as Mannoni explains, this assumption is accompanied by a confusion in terminologies which he clarifies:

...the word ‘primitive’ is used by the psychoanalysts to mean archaic, infantile, or instinctual. This...is a rather unfortunate use and one which gives rise to misunderstandings, for we are inclined to superimpose the meaning formerly attached to the word in ethnography upon the meaning now attached to it in psychology. The reader will realize that this is a temptation which I believe should be resisted at all costs. (22)

Psychologically speaking, colonial trouble begins with the European’s projec-

tion of his own “infantile thinking” (22), that is, one’s personal primitivism on others, then using ethnographic claims to explain colonial attitudes and behavior: “This tendency may teach us a good deal about ourselves but can tell us precious little about the ‘primitives!’” (22).

Mannoni’s most salient example of projection is his reading of Shakespeare’s *Prospero and Caliban*, well known protagonists of *The Tempest*. According to Mannoni, the relationship of Prospero to Caliban is a fantasy (Mannoni makes a parallel argument about Defoe, Robinson Crusoe, and Friday), but not in the obvious sense of something that their author deliberately imagined. Maybe because he knew that this is one of Shakespeare’s last plays Mannoni errs in saying that he “wrote it in his old age” (99). In fact the playwright was in his mid-forties, not elderly even by 17<sup>th</sup> century standards, when *The Tempest* first appeared. In any case, he writes, “we can be sure that Shakespeare had no other model but himself for his creation of Prospero” (99). The model is not merely an author manipulating his creations. Nor is it merely an example of the relationship between two characters, the colonizer, Prospero—self empowered and appointed lord of his isle—and Caliban, original inhabitant of the island, enslaved by Prospero. It expresses a relationship that exists entirely in the European mind precedent to any colonial adventure. It evidences the “unconscious complexes” (98) the colonizer brings to and projects upon the colonized. There’s no mistaking the Freudian premises of Mannoni’s argument: “These complexes are formed, necessarily in infancy; their later history varies according to whether they are resolved, repressed, or satisfied in the course of closer and closer contact with reality as the age of adulthood is reached” (98). In short, the disposition to be a colonist exists before becoming one, and the reality of colonization offers an opportunity for the expression of “these complexes” in a

way that leads to the colonial relationship. Or to put it another way, if the European treats the original populations of their conquered lands as so many Calibans, it is because before any encounter occurs the development of the "inner structure" (108) of the European psyche has already defined the way any ensuing encounter will proceed. The native becomes the victim of the accompanying fantasy: "The typical colonial is compelled to live out Prospero's drama, for Prospero is in his unconscious as he was in Shakespeare's" (108).

The claim for a psychological examination of colonialism, a claim that applies to particulars of *Prospero and Caliban* is that it undertakes to explain political, economic, and emotional responses that without psychology might be limited to reasoning that, at least to the psychologist, can appear tautological. For example, Mannoni points to ways to think about unconscious desires and projections that express themselves as racism. Or similarly, what is so obvious and yet so difficult to reconcile with common sense and our finer expectations: the nearly unspeakable cruelty and violence that erupts with so much of human endeavor. Christopher Lane writes, "But while Fanon's and Bloch's arguments point up many weaknesses in Mannoni's thesis, they cannot explain the ferocity of the French authorities' retaliation for the Madagascar revolt, or account for a genocide incomprehensible within even the twisted, paternalistic frame of French colonialism" (135). The flaws in his argument notwithstanding, Mannoni articulates a rhetoric for the psyche, using the terms, that irked Fanon and subsequent critics, "dependence" and "inferiority" to characterize the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. I will examine these subsequently, but there is more than this to his argument. It takes its direction from its starting point: "I saw that the problem for human beings, however much they differed from one another, was to acquire not the ability but the

*will* to understand each other. It is as difficult to see something of one's self in all men as it is to accept oneself as completely as one is" (34, author's emphasis). Mannoni urges steps beyond the impasse between colonizer and colonized which the Europeans' ignorance of their own motives brings about. Because the European mind projects itself onto the colonized, it requires the psychologist to explain what the terms of the engagement reveal about the European psyche. At the same time, moving toward what in the last chapter he calls "The Unity of Mankind," Mannoni proceeds by a method that not only insists on the complementarity of oppressor and oppressed but on the fundamental unity and equality of victimizer and victim in primal psychic experiences.

Fanon's indignation at Mannoni seems palpable—he aims well at Mannoni's interpretation of Malagasy dreams (Mannoni 89-93, Fanon 81-86) exposing his explanations of them as too literal Freudian-styled nightmares which evidently have less to do with familial and sexual fears than with terror of physical threat and violence from the Senegalese enforcers of French colonial power. Alluding to one of Freud's famous remarks, Fanon writes: "The rifle of the Senegalese sharpshooter is not a penis, but in fact a rifle..." (86). Compound Bloch's demonstration of Mannoni's limited knowledge of Malagasy society with his evidence for the dubious sources of the dreamers' recollections (xv) and it then appears that Mannoni reads these dreams backwards, as it were, as though immediate fears mask Freudian archetypes. More significantly, Fanon (as does Bloch) questions why Mannoni ignores the economics and politics of the situation in Malagasy. Dissatisfied with Mannoni's approach, Fanon approvingly cites a Marxist: "The economic and social conditions of the class struggle explain and determine the real conditions" for sexuality and dreams (Pierre Naville qtd. in Fanon 86, see note

31). Mannoni indeed gives little information about the material relations between the Malagasy and the French, and nothing about the political parties or formations behind the rebellion. Arguably, his approach deflects his study from attention to the political and economic aspects of the situation.

Apart from speculation about the behavior of Malagasy rebels and the French opposition during the 1947 rebellion, Mannoni does not detail these matters and leaves it to his readers to trace the lines between his analysis and public events. But he does not ignore or belittle their importance, "We must not, of course," he says, "underestimate the importance of economic relations, which is paramount;" but the "abuses" of the colonial system "are not to be explained solely in terms of economic interest and exploitation" (32). In his Note to the Second Edition of *Prospero and Caliban*, he responds to criticism of his book by the Communists: "it is not enough to denounce the colonial situation as one of economic exploitation—which of course it is. One must also be willing to examine...the way economic inequality is expressed, how, one might say, it is embodied....(8). Whereas Fanon believes analysis includes the importance of relating an individual's coming to consciousness of unconscious desires to action to change the "social structure" (80, 81), Mannoni limits his method to the individual psyche: "...it may be that the best way to approach certain problems of collective psychology is, instead of studying the social group from the outside, to seek its inner reflection in the structure of personalities typical of the group" (26).

As the title of Fanon's fourth chapter indicates, Mannoni's chief provocation to him is his paired concept of dependency and inferiority. Before considering, along with Fanon's critique, what Mannoni means by these words, it is important to note that Mannoni himself became dissatisfied with his examination of colonization

and with these terms. In his Author's Note to the 1956 edition, he writes, "At that particular time [while writing *Prospero and Caliban*] my own analysis had not got very far and I rashly employed certain theoretical concepts which needed more careful handling than I realized at the time" (6). In his Note to the Second Edition, Mannoni goes so far as to admit that in designating "dependence," for "a phenomenon that is strikingly noticeable in a colonial situation yet" which occurs, "everywhere" if in "more discreet form, particularly on the analyst's couch," he used "a badly chosen word" (8). This mention of his undergoing psychoanalysis along with his misgivings about a key word in his book suggest Mannoni's ultimate subject---his own and the European psyche as manifest in colonialist behavior. The humbling of the colonist and his pretensions to superiority, the concomitant recognition of his disruption to the life of the colonized, these are necessary to the success of decolonization. For the colonist who wields power, the first step of this process is to acknowledge in the colonized "a type of mentality so different from our own" (Mannoni 42).

By "mentality" Mannoni does not mean intelligence or any sort of graded comparison of mental capacities between Europeans and the colonized:

...the structure of reality—that is, the way in which we organize appearances in order to apprehend the things themselves is determined by the structure of our own personalities, or, by the way in which we have arranged our fears and desires in relation to the social environment. (188 n.1)

His argument depends on individual psychology and on self-analysis as the means of knowing things. Without this kind of knowledge it is difficult if not impossible to understand the differences and

the equality between the French colonialists and the Malagasy. For Mannoni, and the European, this knowledge, with more than hints from Descartes and Hegel, presumes that all is mental construct: "We do not know what reality is, essentially..." (191). And yet, social structure precedes the individual, enforcing and perpetuating the particular mentality. The European with ideals of independence, personal autonomy, driven as well by a need to overcome a sense of "inferiority" arrives to disrupt the traditional society organized around mutual dependence. Each European lives with what Mannoni calls "the experimental spirit," while each Malagasy lives with others in a state of dependency, venturing neither figuratively nor literally outside the given realm. Each type represents its "beliefs," which "are the fundamental and vital attitudes" of a mentality (83 n.2). More profound, far less malleable, if malleable at all, than an "opinion," "a belief...is unassailable, and inaccessible to both reason and to experiment" (50). So it seems that a mentality develops according to the given social and historical situation at the same time this development, no matter whether European or Malagasy, follows the same psychic, following Freud's model, pattern.

Yet this common development does not prevent the European and the Malagasy from each being bewildered by the other as they live together in a relationship that defines, for Mannoni, that of colonizer and colonized. According to Mannoni, the lack of analysis from the European side, the sort of self-reflection that defines a European's independence of mind and of being, causes colonial problems: "What the colonial in common with Prospero lacks, is awareness of the world of Others, a world in which Others have to be respected...Rejection of that world is combined with an urge to dominate, an urge which is infantile in origin and which social adaptation has failed to discipline" (108). With the phrase "infantile in origin" Mannoni challenges colonial-

ist attitudes and commonplaces about the people they have colonized. Whatever mistakes in analysis he might have made, and whatever corrections these might require, Mannoni dares to apply Freudian terms to destroy the notion that European superiority and lordship is a fundamental or irreducible fact of life:

Before going on to look for the cause of this 'dependence complex' I should like to make clear the meaning of the term 'infantile' which we are inclined to apply to it. There is a certain amount of justification for our using the word, because such behavior would be infantile in us. But if we allow ourselves to think that it is also infantile in the Malagasies, we are risking imitating the colonials whose paternalist attitudes stems from the belief that 'negroes are just big children.' ...these traits of behavior in the Malagasy *are* infantile, for everything in the adult goes back to childhood. This is borne out by the fact that the Malagasy regards the inferiority behavior of the typical European with his tendency to boast of superiorities which are in part imaginary, as an infantile trait of character, for he sees this kind of behavior in his own group only among children,... (47-48 author's emphasis)

Here is Mannoni's method: his persistent refinement of his definitions and concepts, his condemnation of colonialist attitudes, his puncturing European ideas of European superiority and native immaturity, his describing the awareness and disparagement of European pretensions among their victims, his equalizing the terms on both sides of the colonial equation, using Freudian premises ("for everything in the adult goes back to childhood")

to identify dependence and inferiority as traits belonging to the colonizer as much as to the colonized.

It is too easy, as Fanon seems to do, to consider “dependency” and “inferiority” as static designations that function as a sort of standing insult to the colonized. Mannoni might agree that the colonizer creates his “inferior,” but not in the way Fanon understands it. It is not enough, as Fanon does, to say that making the “indigène” inferior is the correlative of the European’s making himself superior (Fanon 75). Or, to say as he does, that “the Malagasy is left to choose between inferiority and dependence” (Fanon 75). Surely as a psychiatrist Fanon would know that these complexes have nothing to do with choosing because they each manifest a reaction of the unconscious to the given situation. Exemplifying his premise that psychological analysis proves the fundamental equality of humanity, Mannoni prefaces his discussion of “Dependence” by explaining why “the celebrated inferiority complex of the colored peoples...is no different from the inferiority complex pure and simple as described by Adler” (39). Of course, the colonized is not an inferior person. There is no question that the notion drives devastating effects on the lives of millions. But Mannoni argues that social reality determines whether inferiority or dependency predominates among the personality types of a society: “...an adult Malagasy cut off from his normal environment is liable to show signs of inferiority, which is almost irrefutable proof that the complex was already present in him in latent form, but masked by dependence” (64). Malagasies’ lifelong dependency forestalls the development of the “inferiority complex,” which had no place among adult Malagasies until the Europeans disrupted traditional society. European development depends on an individual autonomy which suppresses feelings of dependence at the same time it encourages feelings of inferiority. Both complexes are

latent in every individual in both societies: “Dependence and inferiority form an alternative; the one excludes the other. Thus, over against the inferiority complex, and more or less symmetrically opposed to it, I shall set the dependence complex” (40).

Elaborating this “symmetry,” Mannoni says: “Wherever Europeans have founded colonies of the type we are considering, it can safely be said that their coming was unconsciously expected---even desired---by the future subject peoples” (86). Although Lane says that “Mannoni revised these claims in 1956 and 1964, before rejecting them in 1966 and 1971” (136), they are what Fanon read. For Fanon they affirm the colonialists’, and Mannoni’s, attitude: the Europeans “obeying an authority complex” are the masters, while the Malagasy, obeying a “dependency complex” are their subjects, assuring, Fanon sarcastically remarks, that “everyone is satisfied” with how things are (Fanon 79; Fanon also quotes Mannoni’s passage on this page). What is more, because as Bloch shows in his New Foreword there is much to question about his description of Malagasy society, it is difficult to accept Mannoni’s explanation of dependence and inferiority not only as reasons for the Malagasy rebellion but also as a way to analyze the psychology of colonization. Nevertheless, questionable as some of Mannoni’s assertions may be, his argument should be understood as his attempt to establish that the colonial relationship has two equal sides, showing, therefore, a way of thinking beyond colonialist apologetics and justifications for conquest, exploitation, and cruelty.

Briefly, according to Mannoni, because Malagasy psychology manifests itself in a society that places the individual in a concatenation of obligations oblivious to the bounds that Europeans see between the living and their deceased ancestors, the Malagasy depends for self-confidence as well as moral guidance and sustenance on those



who came before him, along with those, especially his family, around him. This is not in the least way a degraded condition, for the Malagasy this is how the world works. The concomitant is not inferiority, rather it is "abandonment" which afflicts the Malagasy when they are loosed from or lose their familiar connections and dependencies. Capable, because inured to this at the deepest psychological level, of living only within these traditional sorts of dependencies, the Malagasy is unable to handle the autonomy, with its attendant and troubling sense of personal inferiority, that defines and motivates the individual European. Mannoni's is a principled approach: "In the Malagasies...the personality is in no way deformed; it is not *abnormal* but simply *different*. Their deepest convictions and ours cannot be compared with each other, for they exist at different levels" (55, author's emphasis). Mannoni argues what would be very difficult for a colonialist to grasp, that it is Europeans who act out of a sense of inferiority. Forced from the dependence that the family secures, the European must find his own way. Left to his own devices the European cannot return to his source as much as a sense of loss might impel him to do so. Out of this abandonment he makes his career, "only the West has the courage to live out its myths" (56). The difference might be described this way: each European has the opportunity to live for himself the experience of the archetypes and to strive to outdo them, in contrast to a traditional society where each person partakes in the perpetuation of the prevailing mythologies and beliefs without being able to think he can do otherwise. Knowing only dependence, fearing "abandonment," and to prevent exposing himself to "the terrors of a genuine liberation of the individual" (65) the Malagasy makes himself dependent on the colonizers who are, paradoxically, the cause of his unhappiness.

In his chapter on "National Independence" Mannoni comes close to saying

outright that the Malagasy feared independence because it threatened their dependence on the French, implying that the rebellion of 1947 was in effect a kind of adolescent tantrum that cried for a dependent relationship despite demands for release. According Mannoni, complications creating the potential for rebellion followed from the European misunderstanding of why and how the Malagasy expressed his dependence. No longer confined to traditional society, exposed to the political and economic demands of an exploitative, modern colonial system, the Malagasy felt abandoned and seeking reassurance in some kind of a new dependent relation formed with the colonists. With national independence looming, although the French were unsure as to their policies, the feeling of abandonment prevailed among the Malagasy: "They felt abandoned because they could no longer be sure of authority..." (136). Colonialism has thrown the Malagasy into a psychic condition that has not prepared him for independence because "Colonial society...gives the dependent person nothing but his dependence" (195). While Mannoni consistently confines himself to psychological analysis, he is certainly aware of the effects of the colonial relationship on its victims:

When confronted with reality he has no feeling of liberation; his tools and his technical knowledge give him no sense of mastery—tools are simply an extension of the master's orders, technique just a set of rules to be obeyed; his hands are still the hands of a slave. (195)

*Prospero and Caliban* needs, finally, to be read as a critique of European colonialism, because Mannoni is throughout arguing that colonialists exploit the psychic dispositions of the Malagasy in order to achieve their own satisfactions: "We Europeans...have cast the seeds of our own rest-

lessness into this tranquil world" (196). Driven by his sense of "inferiority" the result of his lost dependence, the European ventures forth seeking compensation, released from the ideals of liberty and autonomy, the colonist "give[s] up the democratic attitude for paternalism and his faith in experience [European empiricism, the experimental spirit] for Prospero's magic" (196). Exploiting others, he lives, like Prospero, in "unreal" relationships based on his own projections (198, author's emphasis).

Among the most passionate of Fanon's objections to *Prospero and Caliban* is his complaint that Mannoni is one-sided ("unilatérale," Fanon 76), that Mannoni "has forgotten that the isolated Malagasy no longer exists, that *the Malagasy exists with the European*," because the arrival of the Europeans upset the original conditions of the Malagasy (78, author's emphasis). But Mannoni has not done this. His passion is to demonstrate how the reciprocal relationship between colonizer and colonized is not only unjust, not only upsetting, not only disables the colonized from entering the society of autonomous individuals (while requiring the colonized to do so), but that the entire situation results from Europeans' inability to understand their actions and the results of their actions. The colonist creates a colony and his victims in his own image according to his projections. More astute about the European colonists than Fanon claims, Mannoni looks into his mirror to identify European racism and adventurism:

We do not want it said that, like children, we are frightened of the faces we have ourselves made terrifying, so we prefer to maintain that this unpleasant thing stirring to life in ourselves is due to something evil in the black man before us or to some quality inherent in his race or tribe.... On waking to the real situ-

ation they [the European colonizers] will find themselves pursuing a type of colonial life which may lie anywhere between evangelism and sheer brutality.... (199)

If Mannoni appears to slight the economic motives of colonization it is because he highlights factors he regards as more troubling and less amenable to practical or political solution. For Mannoni the evident experiences, economic wrongs, and political injustices of colonization can be readily described. This attitude may account for his political naiveté about how to adjust the Malagasy to national independence when he proposes, as a first step, reviving what he, incorrectly according to Bloch (xi-xii), believes to be ancient forms of Malagasy self-governance (see Part III, Chapter 5, "What Can Be Done?"). But he does not believe that psychology has a practical value for politics: "We cannot draw political conclusions or deduce a method of administration from psychological analysis; they simply do not warrant such use" (165). Alluding to the manipulation and terror characteristic of colonial regimes he warns against the dangers of "colonial administrators" using psychology "with interested motives in mind" (169). When he says "Psychology cannot tell us much about sound reasoning, but it alone can make sense of a delirium" (198) he means the madness of Europeans deluded by their own powers.

Fanon protests that the race problem ("le problème noir") is his problem alone, that Mannoni does not feel "the despair of a man of color confronted by a white man," that he, Fanon, does not want to be objective, indeed that it is impossible for him to be objective (69-70). Just so. Mannoni readily admits his perspective as a colonist, defining and working with the limitations of that view and welcoming response and analysis from the colonized. At the outset of *Prospero and Caliban* he writes, "I often had

my doubts as I asked myself what was lasting and what was transitory in the observations I made; and I consoled myself with the thought that I would have successors who would correct my mistakes" (34).

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