

人文研究 大阪市立大学文学部紀要
第47巻 第11分冊 1995年115頁～133頁

Empire, Demarcation, and Home in *Dombey and Son**

Takanobu Tanaka

Nina Auerbach, in her essay concerning the schism and confrontation between the masculine and feminine spheres in *Dombey and Son* (1846–48), contends that “unlike other overweening institutions in Dickens’ novels — Chancery in *Bleak House*, or the Circumlocution Office in *Little Dorrit* — *Dombey and Son* is defined in terms that are sexual and metaphysical rather than social.”¹ I think this perception arises from her exclusion of the British empire as a social reality in the novel. It is true that *Dombey and Son* is, like other major mid-nineteenth-century fiction, a “domestic” novel in which the empire, though not ignored, remains largely an offstage reality. But is her utter disregard of social elements justified?

In fact, *Dombey and Son* often contains mention of the colonies in politico-economical connection with Britain. In the first place, the existence of the House itself is closely related to colonial trade. It is clearly shown in the facts that the merchant Dombey’s name is widely known and revered in the “British possessions abroad” (127),² and the junior clerk Walter Gay is sent off to Barbados, the site of

* This essay is a revised version of part of the lecture given in the great autumn meeting of Japan branch of the Dickens Fellowship (Oct. 9, 1993; College of Culture and Communication, Tokyo Woman’s Christian Univ.).

considerable controversy since the emancipation of the slaves there in 1833, the fall of sugar production during the 1830s and 1840s, and the Sugar Equalization Act in 1846, which removed protection on sugar from the West Indies. Besides, many overseas territories are referred to in the novel. Master Bitherstone is sent into Britain for education from his father's place of appointment, Bengal. Major Bagstock's career introduced by Miss Tox suggests how the Indies were exploited by the British military strength: "...I *know*,' ... 'that he is wealthy. He is truly military, and full of anecdote. I have been informed that his valour, when he was in active service, knew no bounds. I am told that he did all sorts of things in the Peninsula, with every description of fire-arm; and in the East and West Indies, ...I really couldn't undertake to say what he did *not* do'" (129, n.1; Dickens' italics). Walter and Dombey's daughter Florence, immediately after their marriage, embark on a trading voyage to China, which was forcibly included in Britain's economic bloc by the British-Chinese Opium War of 1840-42.³ The spatial spread entails some nonwhites' appearances. A black cook is on board the prophetically named "Son and Heir" on the way to Barbados. The Major has a "dark servant" (86, 362) in his service.

Are these varied and heterogeneous places and races within the empire merely pushed away to the background? We should take notice that they are situated around the central world, Britain. Britain and her colonies form the relation of the strong and the weak, as in the cases of gender and class. In this essay, first of all, I will focus on the Native, the Major's servant, hitherto hardly discussed in spite of his frequent appearances, and then I will grasp the significance of his existence as the racial "other." Through this way, the relation of the sexual other to patriarchy can be read from a new viewpoint, and also the limitation of Dickens' knowledge of "otherness" will be made explicit.

The Native submits tamely to his tyrannical despot Bagstock. But before this relationship of master and servant is concretely

examined, let us see Dickens' racial ideology lying at its basis. His opinion speaks for the public attitude toward the nonwhite in the 1840s. In "The Great Exhibition and the Little One," which appeared in *Household Words* on 5 July 1851, the "Stoppage" of the East is criticized in contrast to the "Progress" of the Western civilization. As to the Romantics' image of noble savages living freely and happily without civilized European interference, he repudiates this flatly in "the Noble Savage": "My position is, that if we have anything to learn from the Noble Savage, it is what to avoid. His virtues are a fable; his happiness is a delusion; his nobility, nonsense. We have no greater justification for being cruel to the miserable object, than for being cruel to a WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE or an ISAAC NEWTON; but he passes away before an immeasurably better and higher power than ever ran wild in any earthly woods, and the world will be all the better when his place knows him no more."⁴ His reaction to the Niger Expedition should also be remarked. This was planned as a first step toward the introduction of Christianity and "legitimate" commerce to west Africa, but it ended in disaster because of its imperfect plan and many European participants' death of malaria. In his essay "The Niger Expedition," he attacks the aims of philanthropists and decrys Africa as a continent not fit for civilization — one best left in the dark: "Between the civilised European and the barbarous African there is a great gulf set....To change the customs even of civilised ...men...is...a most difficult and slow proceeding; but to do this by ignorant and savage races, is a work which, like the progressive changes of the globe itself, requires a stretch of years that dazzles in the looking at."⁵ According to his opinion, there are far more appropriate and urgent problems, piled mountain-high, at home than the reclamation of dirty, subhuman Africans. Their domestication is a problem to wrestle with only after the work at home is thoroughly completed. He too, like Carlyle and many other Victorians, sympathized with the poor at home but not with the exploited

abroad. In *Bleak House* (1852–53), the reason why he blames Mrs. Jellyby's Borrioboola-Gha mission on the banks of the Niger is that she puts her mind on the outside problem of less importance and disrupts through her negligence the home in which a woman should fulfill her domestic mission. In short, Dickens regards white men's superiority as self-evident and takes little interest in racial others.

Few nonwhites are therefore portrayed in his novels. Even if done, they are not characters but only imaginative or fanciful exhibits. In *Dombey and Son*, "gorgeous princes of a brown complexion sitting on carpets, with their slippers very much turned up at the toes" (36) are some bizarre exhibits associated with the wealth of the East India Company. The Sultan and thirty thousand dancing girls at the beginning of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870) comprise the exotic parade the opium-eater sees in a dream. Each of them is an exhibit attracting the viewer's eyes like an African in "The Noble Savage."

The Native's portrayal as one character is an exceptional case. So why is he portrayed? For one thing, it is in order to show comically and contemptuously both barbarism and grotesqueness of the nonwhite, in accordance with the purport of "The Noble Savage" and so on. Is there any other reason? At least in this novel, Dickens' other attitude to the nonwhite seems to be included. I will make this point clear by analyzing the Native's figure in his relation to the Major.

It is an absolute master-servant relationship that is embodied between the Major and the Native. This is based on middle- and upper-class Victorians' desires for possession and power. They considered the nonwhite to be commodities without any characteristics, and possessed them for servants to flaunt the wealth and power of the empire and to steep themselves in self-satisfaction. Their names and nationalities do not deserve even the slightest notice, as is evident from Miss Tox's ignorance: "Miss Tox was quite content to classify [the Major's dark servant] as a 'native,' without connecting

him with any geographical idea whatever" (86). As to those Victorians' lust for power over the nonwhite, Patrick Brantlinger mentions the historical context of the disappearance of a "pliable, completely subordinate proletariat" and the resulting "nostalgia for lost authority."⁶ At home, culture might often seem threatened by anarchy, which middle- and upper-class Victorians thought such a working class movement as Chartism would bring down, but abroad, in the colonies, the culture of the conquering race seemed unchallenged, for in imperialist discourse the dominated almost have no voices except their silence. So the Native submissively answers to "any vituperative epithet" (269) the Major, whose complexion is "Imperial" (269), might choose for him. His only function in the text is to serve the Major and receive his gratuitous abuse. The fact that he is an "expatriated prince" (362) only serves to reinforce the Major's imperial power and glory, for it testifies to the latter's possession of a servant born in the purple. His subordinate position is emphasized in non-human terms. For example, he is likened to a "shrivelled nut, or a cold monkey" (279), or a "delicate exotic" (403). At one point the Native is so smothered under the weight of the Major's cloaks and greatcoats that Dickens represents him, in a conspicuous oxymoron, as a "living tomb" (272). The Native is not permitted to live as one independent man. This utter negation of the colonial subject is summed up in a striking image of dispossession as the Major appropriates even the shade of the Native's body: "...he ordered the Native and the light baggage to the front, and walked in the shadow of that expatriated prince:..." (362). Dickens does not give the Native an inner life but depicts his predicaments merely in a comical vein without any critical penetration. Thus he seems to have no doubt about the power relation itself.

But it is also true that Dickens sympathizes with the Native. Such adjectives of some effect as "unfortunate" (272, 775) and "unhappy" (362) are attached to the Native when he is exposed to the Major's brutality. While Dickens does not develop any anti-

imperialist arguments through, or on behalf of the Native, his depiction of the Major as the “incarnation of selfishness and small revenge”⁷ is so unremittingly and persistently negative that the latter’s exercise of power over the Native becomes an illustration of the corruption of power. .

Dickens not only sympathizes with the Native. The humorous representation of him sometimes seems to include Dickens’ and many other Victorians’ fears and apprehensions of the nonwhite. They are found in the Native’s figure of undecidable and shifting doubleness/duplicity. Take notice of his muteness, for instance. We must suppose that he can speak the English language imposed on him by the colonizer since he is used by the Major to deliver messages and collect gossip. He nevertheless does not once protest against the Major’s abuse and cruelty. Such a kind of description as “[t]he unfortunate Native, expressing no opinion, suffered dreadfully; not merely in his moral feelings...but in his sensitiveness to bodily knocks and bumps” (775) is repeated. His humble obedience is stressed. It never comes about that he criticizes his surrounding world from the outsider’s standpoint. But this does not necessarily mean his lack of observing eyes. He is neither blind nor deaf. Intimately bound as he is to the Major like a “shadow,” he is a witness not only to the Major’s affliction with gout, and his plottings and machinations, but he is also the privileged spectator of the activities of main characters. He can take upon himself the role of a calm observer of British society.

It is when the Native’s doubleness occupies the opposite categories of “civilization” vs. “barbarism” that Dickens’ apprehension is most fiercely provoked. Generally speaking, one practice of colonization was the imposition of colonizers’ culture on subject races in disregard of the latter’s customs and manners. It was a necessary means to strengthen the ruling system abroad. The purpose of colonial administration was to turn colonial others into programmed near-images of Europe’s sovereign self. Even Dickens,

who took an indifferent attitude toward the nonwhite abroad, regarded this policy as proper once they were brought into British society if by force. As its evidence, an English servant's livery is forced upon the Native, as well as the English language. But however elaborately his outward appearance may be Europeanized, his essential differences remain conspicuous. The incongruousness of his clothes is too clear: "...the Native...on whom his European clothes sat with an outlandish impossibility of adjustment — being, of their own accord, and without any reference to the tailor's art, long where they ought to be short, short where they ought to be long, tight where they ought to be loose, and loose where they ought to be tight — ..." (278–79). His grotesque appearance is an inevitable consequence of mimicry. Mimicry at once increases his comicality and menaces society silently. We might then wonder at a "pair of ear-rings" (278), probably a folk ornament, in his dark brown ears. Are they worn as a sign of resistance to an image of pseudo-white man?

The Native's doubleness of western clothes and eastern earrings easily changes to that of obedience and transgression. He takes, even if unconsciously, an action the central world looks upon as his transgression of the limits of the permissible. It is clearly evinced in the scene where he receives the middle-aged Miss Tox's fainting form in his arms as he enters. She, having had a secret desire to marry Dombey, has been so shocked to hear from Mrs. Chick of his proposed marriage to Edith. He, though embarrassed, stealthily feels sexual pleasure: "...this afflicted foreigner remained clasping Miss Tox to his heart, with an energy of action in remarkable opposition to his disconcerted face..." (403). He, for the first time, reveals the lively figure of a sexual male. The feminine elements implicit in his servile role vanish for a moment. He has animalistic energy and naturalness in striking contrast with middle-class white men's reserve, polish, and ostentation. Even sexual intercourse is suggested in the sentence "that poor lady trickled slowly down upon

him the very last sprinklings of the little watering-pot" (403). It is made clearer when we notice the similarities between this fainting scene of Phiz's illustration[see fig. 1] and the black man's flirtation with the white woman in Hogarth's *Four Times of Day—Noon*(1738) [see fig. 2]. Leaving the detailed analysis of the latter to David Dabydeen,⁸ now I have only to point out that the spillage from that fondled woman's plate on the left side indicates ejaculation. Indeed Dickens' attitude toward the nonwhite is not the same as Hogarth's, nor does Miss Tox belong to the same class as the white woman. She and the Native is, however, essentially placed in the same relationship as Hogarth's couple. Dickens only moderates Hogarth's broadness by drawing the Native's embrace humorously. Such a threat of the Native toward white womanhood is brought up again when he, among the company of servants at Dombey's wedding, is said to be "tigerish in his drink" (434) and "alarms the ladies... by the rolling of his eyes" (434). It seems to us that he has enough potentialities to rebel against the Major.

But the Native's potentialities do not turn into actual rebellion in the novel. They are only hinted through comical depiction. Of course Dickens' suggestion of them demonstrates his fear and apprehension. So far as he knows, however, the rebellion of subject races cannot actually happen. A hierarchy of races is absolute. Even when the Native's insubordination is enacted, it is deflected by comedy and irony: "The Major, by saying these latter words aloud, in the vigour of his thoughts, caused the unhappy Native to stop, and turn round, in the belief that he was personally addressed. Exasperated to the last degree by this act of insubordination, the Major... instantly thrust his cane among the Native's ribs, and continued to stir him up, at short intervals, all the way to the Hotel" (362).

Then we wonder why the Native's doubleness is so often evoked. Is there any other reason than the manifestation of Dickens' latent fear of colonial others? In order to know this, we should



FIG. 1.—The Eyes of Mrs. Chick are Opened to Lucretia Tox



FIG. 2.—Four Times of Day—Noon

take notice of the inferior situation of sexual others, women in Victorian patriarchal society. The colonial mentality of the “white man’s burden” (my italics) was easily transferred into the need to control them. In the novel, almost all female characters are oppressed under the patriarchal order with Dombey as the ruling figure. The Native is therefore a “catalyst” for impressing strongly upon readers those women’s doubleness of submission and rebellion.

Such a connection between race and gender is reflected by the representation of women, like conquered races, as economically valuable commodities or slaves within the empire. Especially in the case of Edith, Dombey’s second wife, her role is ordained by him in relation to overseas trade. He regards her as a “bargain” (381) and utilizes her as an exhibit which redounds to the credit of the House with his customers, “sundry eastern magnates” (489). His first complaint against her is her cool reception for a director of the East India Company. He judges that she does not fill her obligatory role of a “lady capable of doing honour, . . . to his choice and name, and of reflecting credit on his *proprietorship*” (618; my italics). What he seeks to establish with her is the same absolute master-servant relationship as between the Major and the Native. It is natural for him to demand her to accept in public the power and greatness of the “Colossus of commerce” (353): “. . . I must have a positive show and confession of deference before the world, Madam” (542).

Edith’s subject position is emphasized in comparison with the Orient. At that time it was discussed in terms of its actual or potential need for western men’s control and authority because of its perceived feminine characteristics, that is, irrationality and emotional extremes, with which men of the period endowed females. Edith frequently refers to herself as a slave in the context of the Victorian marriage market, and compares herself to a slave at auction: “There is no slave in a market: . . . so shown and offered and examined and paraded, . . . as I have been, . . .” (382); “I suffered myself to be sold, as infamously as any woman with a

halter round her neck is sold in any market-place'”(724). Here the category of devalued racial and sexual otherness is embraced. Furthermore, when she is tied to the slave market, her body, hitherto a “badge or livery”(376), is sexualized. She is no more an exhibit at a short distance from men, but submits to the “*licence of look and touch*”(382; my italics). The degree of her subordination is heightened. This incarnation of sexuality is associated with the Oriental female slave market — a favorite subject of the European artists who found eroticism in the “feminine” Orient — in which the body ceases to be the surface of sexuality and becomes its form, the fleshly object of the licentious touch and gaze. The vaunted superior status of the British woman is repudiated. She is no more liberated than the Oriental woman. It is endorsed, for example, by the comparison of Dombey, the buyer of Edith, to a “Bashaw”(417). The equation between the Victorian marriage convention and the Oriental sexual/slave trade is thereby made explicit.⁹

Edith attacks such an androcentric society as looks upon the woman only as a commodity appeasing the man's sexual appetite. Her attack is conspicuously shown in the famous melodramatic scene of “The Fugitives”(Ch. 54). Until then, she and Carker have vied for power with each other through their gaze. Carker is a man who illicitly loves her, taking advantage of his master Dombey's trust, and feels sadomasochistic pleasure. His unseen bared teeth are often described. They indicate his inward wicked pleasure and craving.¹⁰ It is the same with his eyes. Since the eye is a substitute for the penis in dreams, fantasies, and myths,¹¹ his gaze at Edith expresses his sexual appetite for her body. He indulges in sensual pleasure through visually admiring the beauty of her body: “He had never thought Edith half so beautiful before. Much as he admired the graces of her face and form, and freshly as they dwelt within his sensual remembrance, he had never thought her half so beautiful”(577). It is because she perceives the meaning of his eyes that she stares back scornfully. This cold conflict

suddenly changes into Edith's surprising attack on him in Ch. 54. Here she twits him, who believes that they have eloped successfully, with his wickedness and meanness, and forsakes him with the words " 'You have been betrayed, as all betrayers are' " (729). Behind her censure, we can read her perception that he only desires her body. His appeal to her that they are both slaves of Dombey emphasizes the humiliation inflicted upon the sexual and class others, but what he desires in compensation for this is to gratify his self-seeking lust for Edith: " 'Hard, unrelenting terms they were!' said Carker, with a smile, 'but they are all fulfilled and past, and make the present more delicious and more safe. Sicily shall be the place of our retreat. In the idlest and easiest part of the world, my soul, we'll both seek compensation for old slavery' " (722). The choice of Sicily is worth noticing. As mentioned before, Edith's sexuality is incarnated when exposed to the man's lascivious touch and gaze, and then it is associated with the Orient. And Sicily was at that time a place nearest there, located in a line of demarcation between the West and the East. So the choice of Sicily proves that Carker's interest in her is based upon carnal desire. He, like the Oriental men, wants to make her a slave for appeasing his lust. For him, both Edith and his former mistress Alice are commodities not merely different and subordinate, but also desirable and necessary to men. It is because she knows his intention enough that she says contemptuously to him that " 'You have fallen on Sicilian days and sensual rest, too soon.... You purchase your voluptuous retirement dear!' " (728). Her attack on his carnal desire is further elaborated in Phiz's illustration which is ironically entitled "Mr. Carker in his Hour of Triumph" [see fig. 3]. Edith, the incarnation of voluptuousness and fearsomeness, seems to be pointing at Carker's crotch. Her threatening gesture is certainly derisory, but it is a specifically sexual contempt and assumes even castrating power. Phiz quite unerringly interprets the true significance of this scene. Through Edith's rebellion against



FIG. 3.—Mr. Carker in his Hour of Triumph

Dombey and her attack on Carker, Dickens condemns such a view in patriarchal society as regards the woman only as a commodity or a slave in the marriage market.

But, at the end of the novel, the new patriarchal middle-class space with the family of Florence, Dombey, and Walter as the center excludes all extraneous elements. Edith is not permitted to stay in Britain once she openly defies patriarchy and rejects the figure of “the Household Nun” which emblemizes the ideal wife and mother.¹² While Dickens sympathizes with the humiliating situation of the sexual others and calls the readers’ attention to their rebellion, he remains inside the boundary as a Victorian middle-class man. As a punishment for the disclosure of her incarnated sexuality to society through her elopement with Carker, she is banished to the South of Italy near the border with the Orient. Once Dombey wanted too much privacy; he wanted, selfishly, to keep himself to himself. It was due to his fear of invasion. His fear was the perhaps inevitable result of his haughty creed that “[t]he earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in”(2). It seemed to him that his acknowledgment of the existence of other worlds would lead to his own denial of the singleness of the world Dombey and Son. He needed too much privacy because he desired too much power. Though not so extreme as his, the wish for privacy of the middle class is also combined both with the lust for power and with the fear of outsiders. This can be proved by the existence of the above space in the last chapter. Now there is no fear that the outside may invade the inside, but the outside is swallowed by the inside which has excluded every kind of otherness. The world is ruled by its central idea, home. The space has so far spread on an imperial scale. Now it suddenly narrows. The fact that the economy of a home is based on colonial trade is completely forgotten in the new space, as if it were a removable stain. In the novels of the 1840s, when the poor hero goes overseas, the empire is used as a means of bringing wealth to him for his future happiness

at home. In a line with this tendency, *Dombey and Son* sends Walter to China for his success in life. After this single business trip abroad, he is posted to Britain, so that at this point his relation with the empire is broken. But it cannot be denied that he supports his family on his comfortable income from overseas commerce. After the manager Carker's death, his brother and sister anonymously keep Dombey supplied with their inherited money, for it was originally made by Carker's embezzlement from the House. So this money was also earned by overseas commerce. Solomon Gills' reestablishment of trade is owing to his old overseas investment. But all of them do not think that their lives are, more or less, dependent on imperial exploitations. They easily receive money as if it were suddenly from the clouds for them. Dickens' ideal home, namely "the haven of comfort and relaxation,"¹³ is such a homogeneous self-sufficient space, composed solely of the good middle class, where impurities are automatically tabooed. They turn their eyes only inward, and avert them from the outside because of its perceived roughness and ugliness. Even when turned outward, their eyes merely catch the surface of things like Mrs. Skewton's picturesque glance. They themselves will never go out to examine the substance.

Before long it became difficult to keep this self-contained eye. The sexual and class others invaded more fiercely the patriarchal middle-class space. Moreover, it was attacked by the last outsiders Dickens could have thought of during his lifetime. They were varied and heterogeneous races. In *Dombey and Son*, the Native's doubleness suggests that the seemingly absolute master-servant relationship between higher and lower races, in truth, assumes potential fluidity. It does not, however, develop into a serious problem, but rather functions as a catalyst which brings into relief the fluidity of the power relationship between man and woman. It is true that Dickens took notice of the retaliative return of a transported convict to home. In *Dombey and Son*, the British

invasion of foreign countries revives a triumphal myth of the legendary Dick Whittington, and brings colonial wealth by sea to the accumulation-ridden society. On the other hand, the sea is a passage through which Alice, an exile from British society, can return, unobserved. The convict's revenge upon his own country reaches the climax in Magwitch's resurrection from the unquiet grave of Australia in *Great Expectations* (1860–61), an "illegal" return at the risk of life, that ends by implicating and incriminating every institution of the metropolis. But toward the end of the nineteenth century the colonial threat to Britain gradually became presented by the natives themselves rather than convicts' returns. Thus the racial other, so far having occupied the role as servant or performer around the central world, now began to invade this supposedly safe and comfortable space as criminal. This literary tendency developed into one of the main streams in turn-of-the-century popular novels. The "civilized" world was exposed to the danger of colonization by the "savage" (according to the British) force. As a result of her imperial exploitations of "weaker" races, Britain suffered terrible retribution in the form of reverse colonization. In *Dracula* (1897), which belongs to a body of fiction Brantlinger terms "imperial Gothic,"¹⁴ the attack from the outpost of the Orient causes a mixture of blood between Western colonizer and Eastern colonized. The boundary line between the inside and the outside became indistinct, and the former's homogeneity came to an end. Once the dichotomies on which the middle-class perspective rested were exploded, anything was possible. Even home, a last stronghold for maintaining firmly patriarchal authority, was not safe. As patriarchy became more shaken, the empire and home based on it grew to involve more danger of collapse. The establishment of new order constituted the great challenge of the new century.

NOTES

1. Nina Auerbach, "Dickens and *Dombey*: A Daughter After All," *Dickens Studies Annual* 5, ed. Robert B. Partlow, Jr. (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1976) 99.
2. Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son*, ed. Alan Horsman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974) 127. Further citations, in the text, are to this edition. Only page references are given in parentheses.
3. Changing the novel, we may well wonder what Arthur Clennam was doing in China, and whether the selling of opium is not a reason for his guilt and sense of lack of will which the text of *Little Dorrit* (1855–57) cannot quite recognize.
4. Dickens, "The Noble Savage," *Household Words* (June 11, 1853), reprinted in *The Uncommercial Traveller and Reprinted Pieces etc.* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978) 472–73.
5. Dickens, "The Niger Expedition," *The Examiner* (Aug. 19, 1848), reprinted in *Miscellaneous Papers*, 2 vols. (Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1983) I, 133.
6. Patrick Brantlinger, "Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn 1985): 181.
7. Graham Storey and K. J. Fielding (eds.), *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, vol. 5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) 34.
8. David Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth Century English Art* (1985; Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1987) 62–64.
9. Sander L. Gilman adduces Edwin Long's famous painting of 1882, *The Babylonian Marriage Market*, which, while "based on a specific text from Herodotus," displayed in fact the "Victorian scale of sexualized woman acceptable within marriage, portrayed from the most to the least attractive, according to contemporary British standards." See "Black Bodies, White Bodies: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality in Late Nineteenth-Century Art, Medicine, and Literature," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn 1985): 221.
10. What is most disturbing is that ascetic and self-denying Florence is, like Nell who looks upon the sleeping, open-mouthed Quilp, fascinated

by Carker, her eyes “drawn towards him every now and then, by an attraction of dislike and distrust that she could not resist” (494). See also p. 385.

11. Sigmund Freud, “The ‘Uncanny,’” vol. 17 of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, gen. ed. James Strachey (1955; London: Hogarth Press, 1986) 231.
12. As to Edith’s rebellion against Dombey, the father-daughter relationship between Dombey and Florence, and Dickens’ ways of foreshadowing a mere shell of paternal authority in the middle-class family, see my essay “Mother and Daughter in *Dombey and Son*,” *Studies in the Humanities* 46(1994): 63–78.
13. Peter Conrad, *The Victorian Treasure-House* (London: Collins, 1973) 71.
14. Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1988) ch. 8.