AMERICAN LITERATURE
Prof. Fiorenzo Iuliano
(MA Programs: Modern Languages and Literatures, Translation Studies)
2022/2023

Passages to India, 1
India and the US literary imagination in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries

The module will focus on the representation of India in U.S. literature. We will read texts in which India is portrayed as either the embodiment of an exotic and unreachable East, a land still attached to its barbaric and even cruel traditions, or a place of spiritual regeneration. We will first focus on the image of India that Transcendentalists constructed during the Nineteenth century; we will then move to India as the U.S. (countercultural) 'heterotopia', and we will finally concentrate on the perspective provided by an American Indian author.

Texts:
- Ralph W. Emerson, "Indian Superstition" (1856)
- Louisa May Alcott, *The Fate of the Forrests* (1865)
- Walt Whitman, "Passage to India" (1871)
- Allen Ginsberg, *Indian Journals* (1970)
- Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999)

Secondary readings:
- Edward Said, "Introduction", in *Orientalism*, Penguin, 1978, 2003, pp. 1-30
- Rajender Kaur and Anupama Arora, "India in the American Imaginary, 1780s-1880s", in Anupama Arora and Rajender Kaur, eds, *India in the American Imaginary, 1780s–1880s*, Palgrave, 2017, pp. 3-40
- Kenneth Walter Cameron, "Young Emerson's Orientalism at Harvard", in Ralph W. Emerson, *Indian Superstition*, Dartmouth, 1956, pp. 13-48
- Raj Chandarlapaty, "Indian Journals and Allen Ginsberg's Revival as Prophet of Social Revolution", *ariel: a review of international English literature*, 41 (2): 2011, pp. 113-138
- Raffaella Malandrino, "Atti di traduzione culturale. La diaspora indoamericana in *Interpreter of Maladies* di Jhumpa Lahiri", *Ácoma*, XIV, 2007, pp. 104-119

Indian Superstition.

Cushioned on golden clouds, there are, who sail,
And clad in splendour, ride the summer gale,
Who sweep the atmosphere on painted wing,
Swell their rich music, & adore their king;
Whose silver lutes at sombre twilight play
A soft farewell to all the pride of day.—
Not these we seek,—yet from its cavern low,
We fain would pluck the book of Prospero,
With sterner Spirits hold communion high,
And scan their natures with adventurous eye.

Far oer the East where boundless Ocean smiles,
And greets the wanderer to his thousand isles,
Dishonoured India clanks her sullen chain,
And wails her desolation to the main.
To her dark land the banded fiends resort,
And Superstition crowds his haggard court.
The bloated monster gluts his hellish brood,
Gorging his banquet with the people's blood.
Loud on the wind the shrieks of anguish rang,
From victims writhing to his lion fang.

Lured by their frantic cry fell Rapine came,
With scorpion whip & faulchion edged with flame,
And the poor victim urged his bloody toil,
For tyrants spurning at the wretch they spoil.
Oer man the car of fiends tremendous rolled,
On high the laugh of demons scared the bold;
A cry from heaven pealed awful on their ear,
And woke no echo, save the scream of fear.
The shouts of joy, the burst of proud applause,
Hope's happy song, the Victory's tale of wars—
Were hushed to whispers of the stifled breath
Still as the marble lineaments of death.
Sunk in the grim abyss of misery,
Crushed with the loaded wrath of earth & sky,
Men bowed them down to slavery & chains,
And labour's crimson drops came bursting from their veins.
The maddened mother clasped her shuddering child,
And flung him to the wave with accent wild,
Despair's low moan arose while Rapine prowled,
And maniac Horror clapped his hands, & howled.

The wealth which toiling ages proudly piled,
To build an ark of honour undefiled,
Where distant times might lift the song of praise,
And men commend their sires in loud-voiced lays
Was vainly hoarded on the plundered plains
Where guilty gods have reared unholy fanes.

In such wild worship to mysterious powers
The Indian stands in Ganges' holy bowers
On the hot sands where human nature fails
With Vishnu's aid he braves the fiery gales.

His cany hut on beds of lotus reared,
The groves of palm where Brahma was revered,
Soft though they seem to fancy's cheated eye,—
These yield no shelter to the brave that die.
Bewildered fancies in his scriptures tell—
'No faint oblations soothe the gods of hell,
'Go snuff the Dragon's breath, whose monstrous coil
'Girdles the world with everlasting toil;
'In the fierce ardour of the noon-tide sun
'Drink in the blast, for patient penance done,
'Else,—seek thy doom, and find it with the dead,
'And Yemen's vengeance revel on thy head!
'They sleep a sleep the thunder will not wake,
'They thirst with thirst which Ocean cannot slake,
'Not Brahma's self can quench the burning storm,
'And Seeva's red right hand our promise shall perform.'

*And vain the ambitious toil by hope led on
To match proud Grandeur on his blazoned throne,
In the mid path to Honour's glittering shrine,
Stands the stern Bramin armed with plagues divine,
Whose wrath outgoes his daemon's yelling storm,—
Scoffs at the prayers which kneeling hope can form,
Due to presumption claims a forfeit life,
And lifts with taunting gibe the consecrated knife.
No crown of glory sheds its light for him,
No raptured trance reveals the cherubim,
Nor heaven nor earth contain a hope to save,
And wan Despair doth mock him in the grave.

*The following paragraph alludes to the degradation of the lowest caste in India and the punishment which attends an attempt to alter their condition. [Emerson's note.]

How long shall anxious ages roll away,
Unblest with promise of approaching day,
Ere India's giant genius strongly wake,
Stretched in dark slumber oer Oblivion's lake,
Snatch from his heaven, aspiring to be free,
The crystal cup of Immortality?
Oh who can tell what joy creation owns
Through all her myriad Powers on sunbright thrones,
When crushed by all the plagues which blast the earth,
A nation struggles into godlike birth.
Such have been written on the page of time,
And thou sad land mayst read the tale sublime,
Once, wreathed in light, a peerless maiden shone,
High on her mountain-girdled land, alone;
Round the bright summit, in the distant sky
The far clouds mustered, & the storm drew nigh.
The growling thunderclouds of death rolled on,
And hid the sweet light of the golden sun.
That maid's majestic eye beheld serene
The gathering terrors of the hostile scene;
While oer her head the Storm's black legions closed,
And launched the bolt which all the fiends composed,
Fate snatched her scatheless from the impending blow,
And wove the laurelled lightnings round Columbia's brow.
Oh once illustrious in the elder time!
Young muses caroled in thy sunny clime;
When maids of heaven the flowers celestial curled
To twine the pillars which sustain the world,
When Brahma, for thy land, in distance viewed,
Abandoned his empyreal solitude;
Serene the Father veiled his glory mild,
Crowned thee with joy, & blest his favourite child.

Fair Science pondered on thy mountain brow,
And sages mused—where Havoc welters now.
The dazzling crown was thine, which soothed the brave
Gathered in their rich glory, to the grave.
Alas! thy wreath is sear, thy banners stained,
Thy faith perverted, & thy shrines profaned.
The cormorant sits lonely in thy walls,
The bittern shrieks to Ruin's echoing halls,
Robbed of its ancient pride, thy brow appears
Sad with the sorrows of unnumbered years.

What choral burst awakes the startled deep?
What visions strike Oblivion's iron sleep;—
Gaze on yon parting cloud's refulgent shew!
Revealing angel forms to men below,—
The maids of empire come, whose awful sway
The prostrate nations of the world obey.
The cloud pavilion purples round the throng,
Whose sweeping folds give echo to their song.
India, they come to see thy shackles riven,
To throw thy thraldom to the winds of heaven.
The holy cherubim in heaven shall bow,
The archangel's trump ring out its triumph now,
Whose raptured note sounds out for aye farewell,
To Superstition & the hosts of hell.

First in that throng—gathering her Eagle's food,
Land of our pride! thy guardian angel stood;
Flushed from her strife in Freedom's conquering cause,
She holds the charter of sword-sanctioned laws;
Fair as the dayspring, clad in burnished mail,
Queen of the East! she hastes to bid thee hail.

No Indra thunders in Columbias sky,
No "man-almighty" grasps at destiny,
Bold were the arm whose rash presumption strove,
To tamper with the Power whose law we love,—
Look through the land! in every lonely glen
Fair Freedom starts, amid the huts of men,
Girds her bright armour round the limbs of Health,
And mounts the marble battlement of wealth;
Wide through the nations is her watchword known,
Her spear uplifted, and her bugle blown,
That sound went out with power across the globe
To rend the idol and the royal robe;
India hath caught it, where her ample moon,
Rose to the music of the loud monsoon;
Its latest echo woke the Italian shore,—
It shall not sleep till Time shall be no more.

Apr. 14th 1821.

Commentary on "Indian Superstition" [1]

1ff. Suggest Ariel, the sylphs and the gnomes in Pope's *The Rape of the Lock.* These opening lines were apparently intended as a partial frame for the bulk of the poem.

7, cavern. Shakespeare's Prospero promised to *drown* his book, but E. may have remembered the gloomy Cave of Spleen in Pope's *Rape.*

8, Prospero. See *The Tempest,* V, i, 54-57. E. refers to Prospero in *Journals,* I, 357.

9, sterner Spirits. Sterner than the sylphs and gnomes? than Prospero's Ariel? Cf. King Saul's communion with Samuel through the agency of the Witch of Endor (I Sam. 28:3-20).

12, thousand isles. Probably suggested by Grant's ll. 246 ("unnumbered isles") and 589 ("Queen of many Isles").

13, sullen chain. Grant, l. 584, makes India's fourfold chain refer to the caste system.

15ff. Influenced by Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* Book I.

16, Superstition. The number of Hindu gods was estimated at more than 330,000,000. See Woodhouselee, *Elements,* p. 257; Anonymous (3); and Anonymous (9), pp. 383-388. (See E.'s paraphrase of the last in *Journals,* I, 304.)

18, people's blood. On exposure of children, see *Kehama,* p. 364. On the immolation of slaves and of widows with their deceased hus-

[1] References in these notes are considerably abbreviated, especially when drawn from the bibliography of Emerson's reading in Appendix C.

bands, see Anonymous (3) and (6); and *Kehama,* pp. 5, 8-10, 222, 271-277. See notes on ll. 25 and 117, *infra.*

20, to. Corrected in pencil to *in,* possibly in E.'s hand.

20, lion fang. See Grant, l. 70: "And tore, with lion fangs, the tyrant breast." The fourth Avatar or incarnation of the Deity was half lion and half man.

22, scorpion whip. Possible allusion to I Kings 12:11-14.

23, poor victim. He volunteered for penances or sacrifices under tyrant Hindu priests, who had no regard for those who offered themselves.

24, tyrants spurning. E. recalled the tyrannies on Ladurlad. See *Kehama,* pp. 17ff., 80.

25, car of fiends. On the Juggernaut, see Anonymous (1), (2), (3), (4); see *Kehama,* pp. 143-155, 349-353, esp. p. 351: Many "will offer themselves as a sacrifice to this idol, and desperately lie down on the ground, that the chariot-wheels may run over them, whereby they are killed outright; some get broken arms, some broken legs . . . and by this means they think to merit heaven. . . . They sometimes lie down in the track of this machine a few hours before its arrival, and, taking a soporiferous draught, hope to meet death asleep."

26, laugh of demons. On fiends of the air, see *Kehama,* pp. 88-90, 112, 224-226.

30, hope. E.'s poem contrasts despair and optimism. See ll. 67, 72, 77-78, etc.

33, abyss of misery. Visitors to Juggernaut for the annual festival of the Butt-Jattra totaled 700,000. The number of deaths in a single year, caused by people's voluntarily placing themselves in the idol's path, by imprisonment for nonpayment of the demands of the Brahmins, or by scarcity of provisions, was incredible. Human bones covered the streets. Slavery was involved in carrying water from Hurdwar to the temple for religious libations. See *Kehama,* pp. 349-350.

35, slavery and chains. The heavy Juggernaut was eagerly pulled through the streets by human beings. For details concerning temple prostitution—"marrying the god"—see *Kehama,* pp. 351-353.

37, See Anonymous (9): "It is a practice in some parts of India to sacrifice their children to the Ganges, by drowning them in the stream. A child is often sacrificed, by hanging it up in a basket upon a tree, where it dies in two or three days, being generally destroyed

by ants or birds of prey. . . . Other modes of immolating the children are, by burying them alive, and by throwing them to the alligators." See also Noah Worcester's "Human Sacrifices"; *Kehama,* p. 222; and Anonymous (5) and (8).

42, ark of honour. For other examples of E.'s Hebraic imagery, see ll. 76, 124, 131-132, 136, etc.

44, commend their sires. Very little respect for ancestors as such appears among the East Indians, beyond the fact that sons are careful and dutiful regarding burial rites of deceased parents. Since the soul is believed to have no personality, there is no ancestor worship. E. may have been thinking of the cult of Lingam, Priapus or the phallus. See *Encyclopaedia [Britannica]* (Dobson's ed.) (18 vols.; Phila., 1798), VIII, 515: "This deity is adored the more fervently, as they [the Hindus] depend on their children for performing certain ceremonies to their manes, which they imagine will mitigate their punishment in the next world."

45, plundered plains. Possible reference to the despotic persecutions and conquests of men like Aurungzebe, described in Grant's lines (13-56), but E. was probably thinking of the mulcting activities of the Brahmin priests.

46, unholy fanes. See Anonymous (9) for details about the abominable sensuality of Hindu shrines, the cult of lingam, temple prostitution, money raising by deceptive oracles, the crushing political power of the Brahmins, their gluttony and selfishness.

47, mysterious powers. This and the next two lines appear in the rough draft of E.'s earlier poem, "Improvement," an excerpt from which appears in the introductory essay. See passage from William Robertson, quoted in the introductory essay, and its accompanying note (38).

48, holy bowers. Grant (l. 25) mentions the "consecrated bowers" in which Aurungzebe spent his youth.

49, human nature fails. On E.'s reaction to Eastern austerities discussed in Southey's "British Monasticism," see *Two Unpublished Essays,* pp. 38-39.

50, with Vishnu's aid. The harrowing experiences of Ladurlad and his daughter, in *Kehama,* were braved through the indirect help of Vishnu (or Narayena), the second member of the Hindu triad. As "the Preserver," Vishnu had frequently entered the phenomenal world

to rescue his worshipers from oppression. Southey implies how impossible it is for man to escape from these supernatural forces, unless aided by them. See Grant, p. 8, and Edward Moor, *The Hindu Pantheon* (London, 1810), pp. 15-34, 72-82.

51, lotus. See note on l. 105.

52, groves of palm. See *Kehama,* p. 113.

52, Brahma. For two other references to Brahma in this poem, see ll. 65 and 107, and notes. For Brahma's struggle for pre-eminence with Siva, see *Kehama,* pp. 205-206. See also Edward Moor, *op. cit.,* pp. 1-14.

53, fancy's cheated eye. Note "Bewildered fancies" in l. 55. On the delusiveness of the phenomenal world or the mind's Maya, see Grant, ll. 233-296, quoted in the introductory dissertation, and the excerpts from the *Bhagavadgita* in *Kehama,* pp. 362-363.

54, no shelter. E. recalled the episodes at the hut of Ladurlad, under the banyan tree, and at Mount Meru. See *Kehama,* p. 31, where Ladurlad says of the Rajah: "He is Almighty then! . . . Air knows him, Water knows him; Sleep / His dreadful word will keep; / Even in the grave there is no rest for me, / Cut off from that last hope, the wretches *[sic]* joy; / And Veeshnoo hath no power to save, / Nor Seeva to destroy." On the curse which caused the very elements to flee from Ladurlad, see *Kehama,* pp. 18-19, 27.

56ff. "No faint oblations . . ." Ll. 56-65 appear to be Emerson's. I have not found them in any of the Hindu scriptures. E. has Southey's poem chiefly in mind at this point. The passage suggests the two possibilities open for the Indian. He may make a "faint" effort to follow his religion and, like most mortals, encounter death, judgment, and punishment under Yama (Yemen), or he may make heavy penances the preoccupation of his life. A Hindu like Kehama, through his austerities, might reduce Brahma, Yama, Siva (Seeva) and other high deities to servitude or co-operation. (See *Kehama,* pp. 291-292.) For the terrible penances assumed in order to avoid Yama's vengeance, see the *Laws of Menu,* Bk. XI, and the *Institutes of Vishnu,* sections lxvi-lvii. For the stern ascetic of Hinduism in general, see *Institutes of Vishnu,* sections xcv-xcvi. On the hells or punishments after death because of sins not atoned for, see *Institutes of Vishnu,* sections xliii-xliv, and the *Vishnu Purana,* Bk. II, ch. vi.

57, Dragon's breath. For the great serpent of the sphere, which

winds its enormous folds around seven continents, and for dragons in Indian folklore, see *Kehama,* pp. 361, 332; also 105, 120-123. E.'s symbol suggests the egregious penitential system of Hinduism.

62, Yemen's vengeance. Yama judged departed souls as they reported to him at Yamapur immediately upon leaving the body. After receiving a just sentence, the soul either ascended to the Swerga (i.e., the lowest heaven) or was drawn to Narac, the region of serpents, or on earth entered some animal, vegetable, or mineral prison. See *Kehama,* pp. 365-367, 212, 224, 236ff., 249; Moor, *op. cit.,* pp. 303-310. Yama was the subject of many poems. See, for example, the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register,* VII (January-June, 1819), 599-600: "The Road to the Judgment Seat of Yama," "The Appearance of Yama," and "Yama's Address to the Souls of Wicked Kings."

65, Not Brahma's self. See also ll. 52 and 107. See *Kehama,* p. 103. The meaning appears to be that a human being's heavy austerities can prevent Brahma from action and force Siva to capitulate. *Kehama,* pp. 50-51, explains how the infamous Rajah has forced Vishnu to "turn his face in doubt toward Seeva's throne." Indra trembles and turns pale. Kehama's penances wrest from Siva "power so vast, That even Seeva's self, the Highest, cannot grant and be secure."

66, Seeva. See Moor, *op. cit.,* pp. 35-71. Siva, the third deity of the Hindu triad, is Time, Justice, Fire, Creativity, and Destroyer. He also personifies reproduction. He has three eyes, but only one head. A serpent is coiled around his neck. See *Kehama,* pp. 56, 69, 74ff., 94, 103, 205ff. Emerson was fond of drawing serpents or snakes in some of his earliest journals.

66, red right hand. Plate 13 in Edward Moor's *The Hindu Pantheon* shows Siva, one of whose two right hands is raised and contains a rope for strangling. Since fire is Siva's element and destruction is his province, the murdering hand should be red. I suspect that E. knew Henry Kirke White's hymn, "Divine Sovereignty," and the following stanza:

> He smiles, we live,—he frowns, we die,—
> We hang upon his word:
> He rears his *red right arm* on high,
> And ruin bears his sword.

66, our promise. *Our* originally read *my,* suggesting the utterance of a Kehama or earthly despot.

67 (footnote), degradation of the lowest caste. See Woodhouselee, *Considerations,* I, 116ff., 122ff., 246ff.—his chapters iii and iv, heightened by E.'s reading of *Kehama.* See also William Robertson, *An Historical Disquisition.*

70, stern Bramin. Kehama.

71ff., daemon's yelling storm. See *Kehama,* p. 90, for the demon Arvalan's cruelty to Ladurlad:

> Anon the Spirit wav'd a second hand;
> Down rush'd the obedient whirlwind from the sky,
> Scoop'd up the sand like smoke, and from on high
> Shed the hot shower upon Ladurlad's head.
> Where'er he turns, the accursed Hand is there;
> East, West, and North and South, on every side
> The Hand accursed waves in air to guide
> The dizzying storm; ears, nostrils, eyes and mouth,
> It fills and choaks, and, clogging every pore,
> Taught him new torments might be yet in store.
> Where shall he turn to fly? behold his house
> In flames! uprooted lies the marriage-bower,
> The Goddess buried by the sandy shower.
> Blindly, with staggering step, he reels about,
> And still the accursed Hand pursued,
> And still the lips of scorn their mockery-laugh renew'd.

73, Due to presumption. See also l. 143. E. deals with pride and with presumptuous men in his early poem, "Improvement" (1820).

74, consecrated knife. On oriental massacres of slaves and enemies, see *Kehama,* p. 311, but note that consecrated or sacrificial knives are *not* mentioned. E. was probably thinking of the sacrifice of the "consecrated horse" or *Aswamedha,* as in *Kehama,* 307-309. On the slaughtering of animals (but not human beings) for sacrifices, see the "Code of Menu" in Sir William Jones's *Works* (13 vols.; London, 1807), VII, 248-253, VIII, 81-121.

76, trance . . . cherubim. See the prophet's famous vision in Isaiah 6:1-13. On E.'s Hebraic imagery, see note on l. 42.

81, India's giant genius. E.'s hint for India as a sleeping giant may have come from Indian folklore. See *Kehama,* pp. 292-294; also 119, 129, 170. I suspect that he was thinking of Milton's *Areopagitica*: "Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing her-

self like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth. . . ."

82, Oblivion's lake. See also l. 122. E. might have remembered here Satan and his angels lying stunned on the burning lake in *Paradise Lost,* I, 50ff., 283-329.

84, cup of Immortality. On the beverage in the Amreeta cup and its origin, see *Kehama,* pp. 370-376. Yama, the judge, had charge of the cup. See *Kehama,* pp. 71, 195, 199, 214ff., 253-268. Southey (*Kehama,* p. 259) has the line: "The Amreeta-cup of immortality."

90, sad land. India.

91, peerless maiden. The goddess of the United States, Columbia. See l. 102.

92ff., mountain-girded . . . summit. Obvious reference to the Appalachian and Rocky Mountains. Some of the mountain imagery is traceable, I think, to Southey's Mount Meru, the source of the Ganges (*Kehama,* pp. 93-109).

94, storm drew nigh. American Revolution.

97, maid's majestic eye. On the eyes of the goddess Independence and of George Washington in E.'s poem, "Independence," ll. 43 and 47, see *Letters,* VI, 331.

101, Fate. Appears also in the poem "Improvement" (1820). See note on l. 142.

102, round Columbia's brow. She appears as heroine also in E.'s "Lines on Washington" (1814), *Letters,* VI, 329. E. got a hint for the lightnings from the head of Indra in *Kehama,* p. 70.

103ff., illustrious in the elder time. Reference to the idyllic Vale of Cashmere, much lauded in early Indian poetry. See Broughton, *passim,* as well as Murray, Grant, and the introductory essay.

105, flowers celestial. The lotus. See l. 51 above, and *Kehama,* pp. 135, 342. See William Ward, *A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindoos* (2 vols.; Serampore, 1818), I, 5ff.: Before Creation, Vishnu was sleeping on the waters of the deluge, and from his navel sprang the lotus. Out of it came Brahma, who in the form of Narayena, gradually created our world.

106, pillars which sustain the world. See Grant, ll. 247ff., and attendant note, in the introductory essay.

110, favourite child. I.e., India, in her early history.

111, Fair Science pondered. For India's golden age of learning and great teachers, see Grant, pp. 1-8.

117, cormorant sits. See notes on l. 18 *supra.* For the vultures and other birds of prey which attack the dead and dying devotees, see all accounts of the Juggernaut. Vultures and "winged plunderers" appear in *Kehama,* pp. 35 and 83.

125, maids of empire. Apparently E. drew from Germanic mythology for this figure. Cf. the Valkyries and Thomas Gray's "The Fatal Sisters." See *Journals,* I, pp. 32-33.

131, holy cherubim. See l. 76 and note on l. 42.

135, Eagle's food. Columbia, guardian angel of the U.S., kept and provided for the American eagle.

137ff., Freedom's conquering cause. War of the Revolution and the War of 1812.

140, Queen of the East. India. E. probably recalled Grant's epithet for Britain: "Queen of many Isles" (l. 589).

141, No Indra thunders. Indra was god of the elements and occasionally employed thunder. See Moor, *op. cit.,* pp. 259-272. Southey was E.'s principal source. Kehama gained control over Indra's realm and the elements, but in America, air, water, fire, etc., are free to all. See *Kehama,* pp. 13, 56, 65-68, 71-72, 74-75, 96, 105, 124ff., 223, 288-289. Ereenia says to Kailyal (*Kehama,* p. 63):

> Come, plead thyself to Indra! words like thine
> May win their purpose, rouse his slumbering heart,
> And make him yet put forth his arm to wield
> The thunder, while the thunder is his own.

142, "man-almighty". This is Southey's principal title for his Rajah. See *Kehama,* pp. 18, 34, 50, 53, 72, 81, *et passim.* Other titles include "Almighty Tyrant," "King of the World," "Tyrant of the Earth," "Enemy of Heaven," "Earthly Almighty," and "Man-God." Cf. Aurungzebe in Grant's poem, ll. 20ff.

142, destiny. See note on "Fate" in l. 101. See *Kehama,* pp. 69, 133, 197-200, 214ff., 232ff., 246ff., 252ff., and 359-360.

144, Power whose law we love. Probably the Hebraic-Christian God and his Commandments.

144. Between ll. 144 and 145 in the MS. are two canceled lines, now illegible.

152, To rend the idol. E., like his contemporaries, had the Juggernaut especially in mind. See note on l. 25. See references to Mariataly's idol in *Kehama, passim.* See marriage to the idol in *Kehama,* pp. 351-353.

154, loud monsoon. Treated especially in Robertson, *An Historical Disquisition.*

155, woke the Italian shore. Reference to the conspiracies and insurrections of the Carboneria in Italy, organized in 1815 after the Allied Powers had restored the old totalitarianism. The Carboneria finally achieved the political and economic resurrection of Italy.

156, till Time shall be no more. The line appears (*ca.* Jan. 30, 1820) in E.'s MS. "The Wide World No. 1." See Henry Kirke White, "Time," ll. 726-727:

> Beyond the stars, and all this passing scene,
> When change shall cease, and Time shall be no more.

This apocalyptic note appears also in Bishop Berkeley's poem, included in the introductory essay. See also *Journals,* I, 74, where he attempts to imitate the rhetoric of Chateaubriand: "The finger of God is pointing out your way. And when ages shall have elapsed and time is no more . . . Man shall come to the presence of Jehovah."

A DOUBLE LIFE

NEWLY DISCOVERED THRILLERS OF

Louisa May Alcott

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
MADELEINE B. STERN

Madeleine B. Stern, Editor
Joel Myerson and Daniel Shealy, Associate Editors

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY • BOSTON • TORONTO

FIRST EDITION

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Alcott, Louisa May, 1832–1888.
A double life.

1. Detective and mystery stories, American. I. Stern, Madeleine B. 1912– II. Myerson, Joel.
III. Shealy, Daniel. IV. Title.
PS1016.S73 1988 813'.4 87-37827
ISBN 0-316-03101-1

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

DESIGNED BY JEANNE ABBOUD

Published simultaneously in Canada
by Little, Brown & Company (Canada) Limited

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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The Fate of the Forrests

PART I

A GROUP OF FOUR, two ladies and two gentlemen, leaned or lounged together in the soft brilliance of mingled moonlight and lamplight, that filled the luxurious room. Through the open windows came balmy gusts of ocean air, up from below rose the murmurous plash of waves, breaking on a quiet shore, and frequent bursts of music lent another charm to place and hour. A pause in the gay conversation was broken by the younger lady's vivacious voice:

"Now if the day of witches and wizards, astrologers and fortune-tellers was not over, how I should enjoy looking into a magic mirror, having my horoscope cast, or hearing my fate read by a charming black-eyed gipsy."

"The age of enchantment is not yet past, as all who are permitted to enter this magic circle confess; and one need not go far for 'a charming black-eyed gipsy' to decide one's destiny."

And with a half-serious, half-playful gesture the gentleman offered his hand to the fair-faced girl, who shook her head and answered, smilingly:

"No, I'll not tell your fortune, Captain Hay; and all your compliments cannot comfort me for the loss of the delightful *diablerie* I love to read about and long to experience. Modern gipsies are commonplace. I want a genuine Cagliostro, supernaturally elegant, gifted and mysterious. I wish the fable of his eternal youth were true, so that he might visit us, for where would he find a fitter company? You gentlemen are perfect sceptics, and I am a firm believer, while Ursula would inspire the dullest wizard, because she looks like one born to live a romance."

She did indeed. The beautiful woman, sitting where the light showered down upon her, till every charm seemed doubled. The freshest bloom of early womanhood glowed in a face both sweet and spirited, eloquent eyes shone lustrous and large, the lips smiled as if blissful visions fed the fancy, and above the white forehead dark, abundant hair made a graceful crown for a head which bore itself with a certain gentle pride, as if the power of beauty, grace and intellect lent an unconscious queenliness to their possessor. In the personal atmosphere of strength, brilliancy and tenderness that surrounded her, an acute observer would detect the presence of a daring spirit, a rich nature, a deep heart; and, looking closer, might also discover, in the curves of that sensitive mouth, the depths of those thoughtful eyes, traces of some hidden care, some haunting memory, or, perhaps, only that vague yet melancholy prescience which often marks those fore-doomed to tragic lives. As her companions chatted this fleeting expression touched her face like a passing shadow, and the gentleman who had not yet spoken leaned nearer, as if eager to catch that evanescent gloom. She met his wistful glance with one of perfect serenity, saying, as an enchanting smile broke over her whole face:

"Yes, my life has been a romance thus far; may it have a happy ending. Evan, you were born in a land of charms and spells, can you not play the part of a Hindoo conjuror, and satisfy Kate's longing?"

"I can only play the part of a Hindoo devotee, and exhaust myself with strivings after the unattainable, like this poor little fire-worshipper," replied the young man, watching, with suspicious interest, a moth circling round the globe of light above his head, as

if he dared not look at the fair speaker, lest his traitorous eyes should say too much.

"You are both sadly unromantic and ungallant men not to make an effort in our favor," exclaimed the lively lady. "I am in just the mood for a ghostly tale, a scene of mystery, a startling revelation, and where shall I look for an obliging magician to gratify me?"

"Here!"

The voice, though scarcely lifted above a whisper, startled the group as much as if a spirit spoke, and all eyes were turned towards the window, where white draperies were swaying in the wind. No uncanny apparition appeared behind the tentlike aperture, but the composed figure of a small, fragile-looking man, reclining in a lounging-chair. Nothing could have been more unimpressive at first glance, but at a second the eye was arrested, the attention roused, for an indefinable influence held one captive against one's will. Beardless, thin lipped, sharply featured and colorless as ivory was the face. A few locks of blonde hair streaked the forehead, and underneath it shone the controlling feature of this singular countenance. The eyes, that should have been a steely blue to match the fair surroundings, were of the intensest black, varying in expression with a startling rapidity, unless mastered by an art stronger than nature; by turns stealthily soft, keenly piercing, fiercely fiery or utterly expressionless, these mysterious eyes both attracted and repelled, with a subtle magnetism which few wills could resist, and which gave to this otherwise insignificant man a weird charm, which native grace and the possession of rare accomplishments made alluring, even to those who understood the fateful laws of temperament and race.

Languidly leaning in his luxurious chair, while one pale hand gathered back the curtain from before him, the new comer eyed the group with a swift glance, which in an instant had caught the meaning of each face and transferred it to the keeping of a memory which nothing could escape. Annoyance was the record set down against Ursula Forrest's name; mingled joy and shame against the other lady's; for, with the perfect breeding which was one of the man's chief attractions, he gave the precedence to women even in this rapid mental process. Aversion was emphatically marked against

Evan Forrest's name, simple amusement fell to his companion's share. Captain Hay was the first to break the sudden silence which followed that one softly spoken word:

"Beg pardon, but upon my life I forgot you, Stähl. I thought you went half an hour ago, in your usual noiseless style, for who would dream of your choosing to lounge in the strong draught of a sea-breeze?"

"It is I who should beg pardon for forgetting myself in such society, and indulging in the reveries that will come unbidden to such poor shadows as I."

The voice that answered, though low-toned, was singularly persuasive, and the words were uttered with an expression more engaging than a smile.

"Magician, you bade me look to you. I take you at your word. I dare you to show your skill, and prove that yours is no empty boast," said Kate Heath, with evident satisfaction at the offer and interest in its maker.

Rising slowly, Felix Stähl advanced towards her, and, despite his want of stature and vigor, which are the manliest attributes of manhood, no one felt the lack of them, because an instantaneous impression of vitality and power was made in defiance of external seeming. With both hands loosely folded behind him, he paused before Miss Heath, asking, tranquilly:

"Which wish shall I grant? Will you permit me to read your palm? Shall I show you the image of your lover in yonder glass? or shall I whisper in your ear the most secret hope, fear or regret, which you cherish? Honor me by choosing, and any one of these feats I will perform."

Kate stole a covert glance at the tall mirror, saw that it reflected no figure but that of the speaker, and with an irrepressible smile she snatched her eyes away, content, saying hastily:

"As the hardest feat of the three, you shall tell me what I most ardently desire, if the rest will submit to a like test. Can you read their hearts as well as mine?"

His eye went slowly round the little circle, and from each face the smile faded, as that searching gaze explored it. Constrained by its fascination, more than by curiosity or inclination, each person

bowed their acquiescence to Kate's desire, and as Stähl's eye came back to her, he answered briefly, like one well assured of his own power:

"I can read their hearts. Shall I begin with you?"

For a moment she fluttered like a bird caught in a fowler's net, then with an effort composed both attitude and aspect, and looked up half-proudly, half-pleadingly, into the colorless countenance that bent till the lips were at her ear. Only three words, and the observers saw the conscious blood flush scarlet to her forehead, burning hotter and deeper as eyes fell, lips quivered and head sank in her hands, leaving a shame-stricken culprit where but an instant ago a bright, happy-hearted woman sat.

Before Ursula could reach her friend, or either gentleman exclaim, Stähl's uplifted hand imposed passive silence and obtained it, for already the magnetism of his presence made itself felt, filling the room with a supernatural atmosphere, which touched the commonplace with mystery, and woke fantastic fears or fancies like a spell. Without a look, a word for the weeping girl before him, he turned sharply round on Evan Forrest, signified by an imperious gesture that he should bend his tall head nearer, and when he did so, seemed to stab him with a breath. Pale with indignation and surprise, the young man sprang erect, demanding in a smothered voice:

"Who will prevent me?"

"I will."

As the words left Stähl's lips, Evan stirred as if to take him by the throat, but that thin, womanish hand closed like a steel spring round his wrist and held the strong arm powerless, as, with a disdainful smile, and warning "Remember where you are!" the other moved on undisturbed. Evan flung himself into a seat, vainly attempting self-control, while Stähl passed to Captain Hay, who sat regarding him with undisguised interest and amazement, which latter sentiment reached its climax as the magic whisper came.

"How in Heaven's name did you know that?" he cried, starting like one stupefied; then overturning his chair in his haste, he dashed out of the room with every mark of uncontrollable excitement and alarm.

"Dare you let me try my power on you, Miss Forrest?" asked Stähl, pausing at her side, with the first trace of emotion visible in his inscrutable face.

"I dare everything!" and as she spoke, Ursula's proud head rose erect, Ursula's dauntless eyes looked full into his own.

"In truth you do dare everything," he murmured below his breath, with a glance of passionate admiration. But the soft ardor that made his eyes wonderfully lovely for an instant flamed as suddenly into a flash of anger, for there was a perceptible recoil of the white shoulder as his breath touched it in bending, and when he breathed a single word into her ear, his face wore the stealthy ferocity of a tiger in the act of springing upon his unsuspecting prey. Had she been actually confronted with the veritable beast, it could scarcely have wrought a swifter panic than that one word. Fixed in the same half-shrinking, half-haughty attitude, she sat as if changed suddenly to stone. Her eyes, dark and dilated with some unconquerable horror, never left his face while light, color, life itself seemed to ebb slowly from her own, leaving it as beautiful yet woful to look upon as some marble Medusa's countenance. So sudden, so entire was the change in that blooming face, that Kate forgot her own dismay, and cried:

"Ursula, what is it?" while Evan, turning on the worker of the miracle, demanded hotly:

"What right have you to terrify women and insult men by hissing in their ears secret information dishonorably obtained?"

Neither question received an answer, for Ursula and Stähl seemed unconscious of any presence but their own, as each silently regarded the other with a gaze full of mutual intelligence, yet opposing emotions of triumph and despair. At the sound of Evan's voice, a shudder shook Ursula from head to foot, but her eye never wavered, and the icy fixture of her features remained unchanged as she asked in a sharp, shrill whisper —

"Is it true?"

"Behold the sign!" and with a gesture, too swift and unsuspected for any but herself to see or understand the revelation made, Stähl bared his left arm, held it before her eyes, and dropped it in the

drawing of a breath. Whatever Ursula saw confirmed her dread; she uttered neither cry nor exclamation, but wrung her hands together in dumb anguish, while her lips moved without uttering a sound.

Kate Heath's over-wrought nerves gave way, and weeping hysterically, she clung to Evan, imploring him to take her home. Instantly assuming his usual languid courtesy of mien and manners, Stähl murmured regretful apologies, rang the bell for Miss Heath's carriage, and bringing her veil and mantle from the ante-room, implored the privilege of shawling her with a penitent devotion wonderfully winning, yet which did not prevent her shrinking from him and accepting no services but such as Evan half-unconsciously bestowed.

"You are coming with me? You promised mama to bring me safely back. Mr. Forrest, take pity on me, for I dare not go alone."

She spoke tearfully, still agitated by the secret wound inflicted by a whisper.

"Hay will gladly protect you, Kate; I cannot leave Ursula," began Evan, but a smooth, imperious voice took the word from his lips.

"Hay is gone, I shall remain with Ursula, and you, Forrest, will not desert Miss Heath in the distress which I have unhappily caused by granting her wish. Forgive me, and good-night."

As Stähl spoke, he kissed the hand that trembled in his own, with a glance that lingered long in poor Kate's memory, and led her towards her friend. But Evan's dark face kindled with the passion that he had vainly striven to suppress, and though he tried to curb his tongue, his eye looked a defiance as he placed himself beside his cousin, saying doggedly:

"I shall not leave Ursula to the tender mercies of a charlatan unless she bids me go. Kate, stay with us and lend your carriage to this gentleman, as his own is not yet here."

Bowing with a face of imperturbable composure, Stähl answered in his softest tones, bending an inquiring glance on Ursula:

"Many thanks, but I prefer to receive my dismissal from the lady of the house, not from its would-be master. Miss Forrest, shall I leave you to begin the work marked out for me? or shall I remain

to unfold certain matters which nearly concern yourself, and which, if neglected, may result in misfortune to more than one of us?"

As if not only the words but the emphasis with which they were pronounced recalled some forgotten fact, woke some new fear, Ursula started from her stupor of surprise and mental suffering into sudden action. All that had passed while she sat dumb seemed to return to her, and a quick glance from face to face appeared to decide her in the course she must pursue.

Rising she went to Kate, touched her wet cheek with lips that chilled it, and turning to her companions regarded them with an eye that seemed to pierce to the heart's core of each. What she read there none knew, but some purpose strong enough to steady and support her with a marvellous composure seemed born of that long scrutiny, for motioning her cousin from her she said:

"Go, Evan, I desire it."

"Go! and leave you with that man? I cannot, Ursula!"

"You must, you will, if I command it. I wish to be alone with him; I fear nothing, not even this magician, who in an instant has changed my life by a single word. See! I trust myself to his protection; I throw myself upon his mercy, and implore you to have faith in me."

With an air of almost pathetic dignity, a gesture of infinite grace, she stretched a hand to either man, and as each grasped the soft prize a defiant glance was exchanged between them, a daring one was fixed upon the beautiful woman for whom, like spirits of good and ill, they were henceforth to contend.

"I shall obey you, but may I come to-morrow?" Evan whispered, as he pressed the hand that in his own was tremulous and warm.

"Yes, come to me early, I shall need you then — if ever."

And as the words left her lips that other hand in Felix Stähl's firm hold grew white and cold as if carved in marble.

With Kate still trembling on his arm, Evan left them; his last glance showing him his rival regarding his departure with an air of tranquil triumph, and Ursula, his proud, high-hearted cousin, sinking slowly on her knees before this man, who in an hour

seemed to have won the right to make or mar her happiness for ever.

How the night passed Evan Forrest never knew. He took Kate home, and then till day dawned haunted beach and cliff like a restless ghost, thinking only of Ursula, remembering only that she bade him come early, and chiding the tardy sun until it rose upon a day that darkened all his life. As the city bells chimed seven from the spires that shone across the little bay, Evan re-entered his cousin's door; but before he could pronounce her name the lady who for years had filled a mother's place to the motherless girl came hurrying to meet him, with every mark of sleepless agitation in her weary yet restless face and figure.

"Thank heaven, you are come!" she ejaculated, drawing him aside into the ante-room. "Oh, Mr. Forrest, such a night as I have passed, so strange, so unaccountable, I am half distracted."

"Where is Ursula?" demanded Evan.

"Just where you left her, sir; she has not stirred since that dreadful Mr. Stähl went away."

"When was that?"

"Past midnight. At eleven I went down to give him a hint, but the door was fast, and for another hour the same steady sound of voices came up to me as had been going on since you left. When he did go at last it was so quietly I only knew it by the glimpse I caught of him gliding down the walk, and vanishing like a spirit in the shadow of the great gate."

"Then you went to Ursula?"

"I did, sir; I did, and found her sitting as I saw her when I left the room in the evening."

"What did she say? what did she do?"

"She said nothing, and she looked like death itself, so white, so cold, so still; not a sigh, a tear, a motion; and when I implored her to speak she only broke my heart with the look she gave me, as she whispered, 'Leave me in peace till Evan comes.'"

With one stride he stood before the closed door, but when he tapped no voice bade him enter, and opening he noiselessly glided in. She was there, sitting as Mrs. Yorke described her, and looking

more like a pale ghost than a living woman. Evan's eye wandered round the room, hungry to discover some clue to the mystery, but nothing was changed. The lamps burned dimly in the glare of early sunshine streaming through the room; the curtains were still wafted to and fro by balmy breezes; the seats still stood scattered here and there as they were quitted; Captain Hay's chair still lay overthrown; Kate's gloves had been trodden under foot, and round the deep chair in the window still glowed the scattered petals of the rose with which Felix Stähl had regaled himself while lying there.

"Ursula!"

No answer came to his low call, and drawing nearer, Evan whispered tenderly:

"My darling, speak to me! It breaks my heart to see you so, and have no power to help you."

The dark eyes fixed on vacancy relaxed in their strained gaze, the cold hands locked together in her lap loosened their painful pressure, and with a long sigh Ursula turned towards him, saying, like one wakened from a heavy dream:

"I am glad you are come;" then as if some fear stung her, added with startling abruptness, "Evan! what did he whisper in your ear last night?"

Amazed at such a question, yet not ill pleased to answer it even then, for his full heart was yearning to unburden itself, the young man instantly replied, while his face glowed with hope, and his voice grew tender with the untold love that had long hovered on his lips:

"He said, 'You will never win your cousin;' but, Ursula, he lied, for I will win you even if he bring the powers of darkness to confound me. He read in my face what you must have read there long ago, and did not rebuke by one cold look, one forbidding word. Let me tell my love now; let me give you the shelter of my heart if you need it, and whatever grief or shame or fear has come to you let me help you bear it if I cannot banish it."

She did not speak, till kneeling before her he said imploringly:

"Ursula, you bade me trust you; I do entirely. Can you not place a like confidence in me?"

"No, Evan."

"Then you do not love as I love," he cried, with a foreboding fear heavy at his heart.

"No, I do not love as you love." The answer came like a soft echo, and her whole frame trembled for an instant as if some captive emotion struggled for escape and an iron hand restrained it. Her cousin saw it, and seizing both her hands, looked deep into her eyes, demanding, sternly:

"Do you love this man?"

"I shall marry him."

Evan stared aghast at the hard, white resolution stamped upon her face, as she looked straight before her with a blank yet steady gaze, seeming to see and own allegiance to a master invisible to him. A moment he struggled with a chaos of conflicting passions, then fought his way to a brief calmness, intent on fathoming the mystery that had wrought such a sudden change in both their lives.

"Ursula, as the one living relative whom you possess, I have a right to question you. Answer me truly, I conjure you, and deal honestly with the heart that is entirely your own. I can forget myself, can put away my own love and longing, can devote my whole time, strength, life to your service, if you need me. Something has happened that affects you deeply, let me know it. No common event would move you so, for lovers do not woo in this strange fashion, nor betrothed brides wear their happiness with such a face as you now wear."

"Few women have such lovers as mine, or such betrothals to tell. Ask me nothing, Evan, I have told you all I may; go now, and let me rest, if any rest remains for me."

"Not yet," he answered, with as indomitable a purpose in his face as that which seemed to have fixed and frozen hers. "I must know more of this man before I give you up. Who and what is he?"

"Study, question, watch and analyse him. You will find him what he seems — no more, no less. I leave you free to do what you will, and claim an equal liberty for myself," she said.

"I thought he was a stranger to you as to me and others. You must have known him elsewhere, Ursula?"

"I never saw or knew him till a month ago."

Evan struck his hands together with a gesture of despair, as he sprang up, saying:

"Ah! I see it now. A month ago I left you, and in that little time you learned to love."

"Yes, in that little time I did learn to love."

Again the soft echo came, again the sadder tremor shook her, but she neither smiled, nor wept, nor turned her steady eyes away from the unseen but controlling presence that for her still seemed to haunt the room.

Evan Forrest was no blind lover, and despite his own bitter loss he was keen-eyed enough to see that some emotion deeper than caprice, stronger than pity, sharper than regret, now held possession of his cousin's heart. He felt that some tie less tender than that which bound him to her bound her to this man, who exercised such power over her proud spirit and strong will. Bent on reading the riddle, he rapidly glanced through the happy past, so shared with Ursula that he believed no event in the life of either was unknown to the other; yet here was a secret lying dark between them, and only one little month of absence had sowed the seed that brought such a harvest of distrust and pain. Suddenly he spoke:

"Ursula, has this man acquired power over you through any weakness of your own?"

A haughty flash kindled in her eyes, and for an instant her white face glowed with womanly humiliation at the doubt implied.

"I am as innocent of any sin or shame, any weakness or wrong, as when I lay a baby in my mother's arms. Would to God I lay there now as tranquilly asleep as she!"

The words broke from her with a tearless sob, and spreading her hands before her face he heard her murmur like a broken-hearted child:

"How could he, oh, how could he wound me with a thought like that?"

"I will not! I do not! Hear me, Ursula, and forgive me, if I cannot submit to see you leave me for a man like this without one effort to fathom the inexplicable change I find in you. Only tell me that he

is worthy of you, that you love him and are happy, and I will be dumb. Can you do this to ease my heart and conscience, Ursula?"

"Yes, I can do more than that. Rest tranquil, dearest Evan. I know what I do; I do it freely, and in time you will acknowledge that I did well in marrying Felix Stähl."

"You are betrothed to him?"

"I am; his kiss is on my cheek, his ring is on my hand; I accept both."

With a look and gesture which he never could forget she touched the cheek where one deep spot of color burned as if branded there, and held up the hand whose only ornament beside its beauty was a slender ring formed of two twisted serpents, whose diamond eyes glittered with an uncanny resemblance of life.

"And you will marry him?" repeated Evan, finding the hard fact impossible to accept.

"I will."

"Soon, Ursula?"

"Very soon."

"You wish it so?"

"I wish what he wishes."

"You will go away with him?"

"To the end of the earth if he desires it."

"My God! is this witchcraft or infatuation?"

"Neither, it is woman's love, which is quick and strong to dare and suffer all things for those who are dearer to her than her life."

He could not see her face, for she had turned it from him, but in her voice trembled a tender fervor which could not be mistaken, and with a pang that wrung his man's heart sorely he relinquished all hope, and bade farewell to love, believing that no mystery existed but that which is inexplicable, the workings of a woman's heart.

"I am going, Ursula," he said; "you no longer have any need of me, and I must fight out my fight alone. God bless you, and remember whatever befalls, while life lasts you have one unalterable friend and lover in me."

As he spoke with full eyes, broken voice and face eloquent with

love, regret and pity, Ursula rose suddenly and fell upon his bosom, clinging there with passionate despair that deepened his ever growing wonder.

"God help you, Evan! love me, trust me, pity me, and so good-bye! good-bye!" she cried, in that strange paroxysm of emotion, as tearless, breathless, trembling and wearied, yet still self-controlled, she kissed and blessed and led him to the door. No pause upon the threshold; as he lingered she put him from her, closed and bolted it: then as if with him the sustaining power of her darkened life departed, she fell down upon the spot where he had stood, and lay there, beautiful and pale and still as some fair image of eternal sleep.

PART II

THE NINE DAYS' WONDER at the sudden wedding which followed that strange betrothal had died away, the honeymoon was over, and the bridal pair were alone together in their new home. Ursula stood at the window looking out, with eyes as wistful as a caged bird's, upon the fading leaves that fluttered in the autumn wind. Her husband lay on his couch, apparently absorbed in a vellum-covered volume, the cabalistic characters of which were far easier to decipher than the sweet, wan face he was studying covertly. The silence which filled the room was broken by a long sigh of pain as the book fell from Stähl's hand, and his head leaned wearily upon the pillow. Ursula heard the sigh, and, like a softly moving shadow, glided to his side, poured wine from an antique flask, and kneeling, held it to his lips. He drank thirstily, but the cordial seemed to impart neither strength nor comfort, for he drew his wife's head down beside him, saying:

"Kiss me, Ursula; I am so faint and cold, nothing seems to warm my blood, and my body freezes, while my heart burns with a never-dying fire."

With a meek obedience that robbed the act of all tenderness, she touched her ruddy lips to the paler ones that ardently returned the

pressure, yet found no satisfaction there. Leaning upon his arm, he held her to him with a fierce fondness, in strange contrast to his feeble frame, saying earnestly:

"Ursula, before I married you I found such strength and solace, such warmth and happiness in your presence, that I coveted you as a precious healing for my broken health. Then I loved you, forgetful of self — loved you as you never will be loved again, and thanked heaven that my fate was so interwoven with your own that the utterance of a word secured my life's desire. But now, when I have made you wholly mine, and hope to bask in the sunshine of your beauty, youth and womanhood, I find a cold, still creature in my arms, and no spark of the fire that consumes me ever warms the image of my love. Must it be so? Can I never see you what you were again?"

"Never!" she answered, leaning there as pale and passive as if she were in truth a marble woman. "I vowed obedience at the altar, nothing more. I did not love you; I could not honor you, but I felt that I might learn to obey. I have done so, be content."

"Not I! Colder women have been taught love as well as obedience; you, too, shall be a docile pupil, and one day give freely what I sue for now. Other men woo before they wed, my wooing and my winning will come later — if I live long enough."

He turned her face towards him as he spoke and scanned it closely; but no grateful sign of softness, pity or regret appeared, and, with a broken exclamation, he put her from him, locked both hands across his eyes and lay silent, till some uncontrollable paroxysm of emotion had passed by. Presently he spoke, and the words betrayed what the pain had been.

"My mother — heaven bless her for her tenderness! — used to pray that her boy's life might be a long and happy one; it is a bitter thing to feel that the only woman now left me to love prays for the shortening of that same life, and can bestow no look or word to make its failing hours happy."

The unwonted tone of filial affection, the keen sorrow and the mournful acknowledgment of an inevitable doom touched Ursula as no ardent demonstration or passionate reproach had ever done. She softly lifted up the folded hands, saw that those deep eyes were

wet with tears, and in that pallid countenance read the melancholy record of a life burdened with a sad heritage of pain, thwarted by unhappy love and darkened by allegiance to a superstitious vow. Great as her sacrifice had been, deep as the wound still was, and heavily as her captivity weighed on her proud heart, it was still womanly, generous and gentle; and, despite all wrongs, all blemishes, all bitter memories, she felt the fascination of this wild and wayward nature, as she had never done before, and yielded to its persuasive potency. Laying her cool hand on his hot forehead, she leaned over him, saying, with an accent of compassion sweeter to his ear than her most perfect song:

"No, Felix, I pray no prayers that heaven would refuse to grant. I only ask patience for myself, a serener spirit for you, and God's blessing upon Evan, wherever he may be."

Before the words of tender satisfaction which rose to Stähl's lips could be uttered, a noiseless servant brought a black-edged card. Ursula read and handed it to her husband.

"Mrs. Heath. Shall we see her, love?" he asked.

"As you please," was the docile answer, though an expression of mingled pain and sorrow passed across her face in speaking.

He half frowned at her meekness, then smiled and bade the man deny them, adding, as he left the room,

"I am too well content with this first glimpse of the coming happiness to be saddened by the lamentations of that poor lady over her wilful daughter, who had the bad taste to drown herself upon our wedding-day."

"Felix, may I ask you a question?"

"Anything of me, Ursula."

"Tell me what you whispered in Kate's ear on the evening which both of us remember well."

Questions were so rare, and proving a sign of interest, that Stähl made haste to answer, with a curious blending of disdain and pity,

"She bade me tell her the most ardent desire of her life, and I dared to answer truly, 'To win my heart.'"

"A true answer, but a cruel one," Ursula said.

"That cruel truthfulness is one of the savage attributes which two generations of civilization cannot entirely subdue in my race.

Those who tamely submit to me I despise, but those who oppose me I first conquer and then faithfully love."

"Had you made poor Kate happy, you would not now regret the possession of a cold, untender wife."

"Who would gather a gay tulip when they can reach a royal rose, though thorns tear the hand that seizes it? For even when it fades its perfume lingers, gifting it with an enduring charm. Love, I have found my rose, so let the tulip fade — "

There he paused abruptly in his flowery speech, for with the swift instinct of a temperament like his, he was instantly conscious of the fact when her thoughts wandered, and a glance showed him that, though her attitude was unaltered, she was listening intently. A far-off bell had rung, the tones of a man's voice sounded from below, and the footsteps of an approaching servant grew audible. Stähl recognised the voice, fancied that Ursula did also, and assured himself of it by an unsuspected test that took the form of a caress. Passing his arm about her waist, his hand lay lightly above her heart, and as her cousin's name was announced he felt the sudden bound that glad heart gave, and counted the rapid throbs that sent the color to her cheeks and made her lips tremble. A black frown lowered on his forehead, and his eyes glittered ominously for an instant, but both betrayals were unseen, and nothing marred the gracious sweetness of his voice.

"Of course you will see your cousin, Ursula. I shall greet him in passing, and return when you have enjoyed each other alone."

"Alone!" she echoed, with a distrustful look at him, an anxious one about the room, as if no place seemed safe or sacred in that house where she was both mistress and slave.

He understood the glance, and answered with one so reproachful that she blushed for the ungenerous suspicion, as he said, with haughty emphasis:

"Yes, Ursula, alone. Whatever evil names I may deserve, those of spy and eavesdropper cannot be applied to me; and though my wife can neither love nor honor me, I will prove that she may trust me."

With that he left her, and meeting Evan just without, offered his hand frankly, and gave his welcome with a cordial grace that was

irresistible. Evan could not refuse the hand, for on it shone a little ring which Ursula once wore, and yielding to the impulse awakened by that mute reminder of her, he betrayed exactly what his host desired to know, for instantaneous as was both recognition and submission, Stähl's quick eye divined the cause.

"Come often to us, Evan; forget the past, and remember only that through Ursula we are kindred now. She is waiting for you; go to her and remain as long as you incline, sure of a hearty welcome from both host and hostess."

Then he passed on, and Evan hurried to his cousin; eager, yet reluctant to meet her, lest in her face he should read some deeper mystery or greater change than he last saw there. She came to meet him smiling and serene, for whatever gust of joy or sorrow had swept over her, no trace of it remained; yet, when he took her in his arms, there broke from him the involuntary exclamation:

"Is this my cousin Ursula?"

"Yes, truly. Am I then so altered?"

"This is a reflection of what you were; that of what you are. Look, and tell me if I have not cause for wonder."

She did look as he drew a miniature from his bosom and led her to the mirror. The contrast was startling even to herself, for the painted face glowed with rosy bloom, hope shone in the eyes, happiness smiled from the lips, while youthful purity and peace crowned the fair forehead with enchanting grace. The living face was already wan and thin, many tears had robbed the cheeks of color, sleepless nights had dimmed the lustre of the eyes, much secret suffering and strife had hardened the soft curves of the mouth and deepened the lines upon the brow. Even among the dark waves of her hair silver threads shone here and there, unbidden, perhaps unknown; and over the whole woman a subtle blight had fallen, more tragical than death. Silently she compared the two reflections, for the first time realising all that she had lost, yet as she returned the miniature she only said, with pathetic patience:

"I am not what I was, but my heart remains unchanged, believe that, Evan."

"I do. Tell me, Ursula, are you happy now?"

Her eyes rose to his, and over her whole face there shone the sudden magic of a glow warmer and brighter than a smile.

"I am supremely happy now."

It was impossible to doubt her truth, however past facts or present appearances might seem to belie it, and Evan was forced to believe, despite his disappointment.

"He is kind to you, Ursula? You suffer no neglect, no tyranny nor wrong from this strange man?" he asked, still haunted by vague doubts.

She waved her hand about the lovely room, delicately dainty as a bride's bower should be, and answered, with real feeling:

"Does this look as if I suffered any neglect or wrong? Every want and whim is seen and gratified before expressed; I go and come unwatched, unquestioned; the winds of heaven are not allowed to visit me too roughly, and as for kindness, look there and see a proof of it."

She pointed to the garden where her husband walked alone, never quitting the wide terrace just below her window, though the sunshine that he loved had faded from the spot, and the autumn winds he dreaded blew gustily about him. He never lifted up his eyes, nor paused, nor changed his thoughtful attitude, but patiently paced to and fro, a mute reproach for Ursula's unjust suspicion.

"How frail he looks; if life with you cannot revive him he must be past hope."

Evan spoke involuntarily, and Ursula's hand half checked the words upon his lips; but neither looked the other in the face, and neither owned, even to themselves, how strong a hidden wish had grown.

"He will live because he resolves to live, for that frail body holds the most indomitable spirit I have ever known. But let me tell you why he lingers where every breath brings pain," said Ursula, and having told him, she added:

"Is not that both a generous and a gentle rebuke for an unkind doubt?"

"It is either a most exquisite piece of loverlike devotion or of

consummate art. I think it is the latter, for he knows you well, and repays great sacrifices by graceful small ones, which touch and charm your woman's heart."

"You wrong him, Evan, and aversion blinds you to the better traits I have learned to see. An all absorbing love ennobles the most sinful man, and makes it possible for some woman to forgive and cling to him."

"I have no right to ask, but the strange spirit that has taken possession of you baffles and disquiets me past endurance. Tell me, Ursula, what you would not tell before, do you truly, tenderly love this man whom you have married?"

The question was uttered with an earnestness so solemn that it forced a truthful answer, and she looked up at him with the old frankness unobscured by any cloud, as she replied:

"But for one thing I should long ago have learned to love him. I know this, because even now I cannot wholly close my heart against the ardent affection that patiently appeals to it."

"And that one thing, that cursed mystery which has wrecked two lives, when am I to know it, Ursula?"

"Never till I lie on my deathbed, and not even then, unless — "

She caught back the words hovering on her lips, but her eye glanced furtively upon the solitary figure pacing there below, and Evan impetuously finished the broken sentence:

"Unless he is already dead — let it be so; I shall wait and yet prove his prophecy a false one by winning and wearing you when his baleful love is powerless."

"He is my husband, Evan, remember that. Now come with me, I am going to him, for he must not shiver there when I can give him the warmth his tropical nature loves."

But Evan would not go, and soon left her plunged in a new sea of anxious conjectures, doubts and dreads. Stähl awaited his wife's approach, saying within himself as he watched her coming under the gold and scarlet arches of the leafy walk, with unwonted elasticity in her step, color on her cheeks and smiles upon her lips:

"Good! I have found the spell that turns my snow image into flesh and blood; I will use it and enjoy the summer of her presence while I may."

He did use it, but so warily and well that though Ursula and Evan were dimly conscious of some unseen yet controlling hand that ruled their intercourse and shaped events, they found it hard to believe that studious invalid possessed and used such power. Evan came daily, and daily Ursula regained some of her lost energy and bloom, till an almost preternatural beauty replaced the pale loveliness her face had worn, and she seemed to glow and brighten with an inward fire, like some brilliant flower that held the fervor of a summer in its heart and gave it out again in one fair, fragrant hour.

Like a watchful shadow Evan haunted his cousin, conscious that they were drifting down a troubled stream without a pilot, yet feeling powerless to guide or govern his own life, so inextricably was it bound up in Ursula's. He saw that the vigor and vitality his presence gave her was absorbed by her husband, to whom she was a more potent stimulant than rare winds, balmy airs or costly drugs. He knew that the stronger nature subdued the weaker, and the failing life sustained itself by draining the essence of that other life, which, but for some sinister cross of fate, would have been an ever springing fountain of joy to a more generous and healthful heart.

The blind world applauded Felix Stähl's success, and envied him the splendid wife in whose affluent gifts of fortune, mind and person he seemed to revel with luxurious delight. It could not see the secret bitterness that poisoned peace; could not guess the unavailing effort, unappeased desire and fading hope that each day brought him; nor fathom the despair that filled his soul as he saw and felt the unmistakable tokens of his coming fate in hollow temples, wasting flesh and a mortal weariness that knew no rest; a despair rendered doubly bitter by the knowledge of his impotence to prevent another from reaping what he had sown with painful care.

Ursula's hard won submission deserted her when Evan came, for in reanimating the statue Stähl soon felt that he had lost his slave and found a master. The heart which had seemed slowly yielding to his efforts closed against him in the very hour of fancied conquest. No more meek services, no more pity shown in spite of pride, no more docile obedience to commands that wore the guise of entreaties. The captive spirit woke and beat against its bars, pas-

sionately striving to be free, though not a cry escaped its lips. Very soon her recovered gaiety departed, and her life became a vain effort to forget, for like all impetuous natures she sought oblivion in excitement and hurried from one scene of pleasure to another, finding rest and happiness in none. Her husband went with her everywhere, recklessly squandering the strength she gave him in a like fruitless quest, till sharply checked by warnings which could no longer be neglected.

One night in early spring when winter gaieties were drawing to a close, Ursula came down to him shining in festival array, with the evening fever already burning in her cheeks, the expectant glitter already kindling in her eyes, and every charm heightened with that skill which in womanly women is second nature. Not for his pride or pleasure had she made herself so fair, he knew that well, and the thought lent its melancholy to the tone in which he said:

"Ursula, I am ready, but so unutterably weak and weary that I cannot go."

"I can go without you. Be so good," and quite unmoved by the suffering that rarely found expression, she held her hand to him that he might clasp her glove. He rose to perform the little service with that courtesy which never failed him, asking, as he bent above the hand with trembling fingers and painful breath,

"Does Evan go with you?"

"Yes, he never fails me, he has neither weakness nor weariness to mar my pleasure or to thwart my will."

"Truly a tender and a wifely answer."

"I am not tender nor wifely; why assume the virtues which I never shall possess? They were not set down in the bond; that I fulfilled to the letter when I married you, and beyond the wearing of your name and ring I owe you nothing. Do I?"

"Yes, a little gratitude for the sincerity that placed a doomed life in your keeping; a little respect for the faith I have kept unbroken through all temptations; a little compassion for a malady that but for you would make my life a burden I would gladly lay down."

Time was when words like these would have touched and softened her, but not now, for she had reached the climax of her suf-

fering, the extent of her endurance, and turning on him she gave vent to the passionate emotion which could no longer be restrained:

"I should have given you much gratitude if in helping me to save one life you had not doomed another. I should honestly respect the faith you boast of if such costly sacrifices were not demanded for its keeping. I should deeply pity that mortal malady if you had bravely borne it alone instead of seeking a selfish solace in bequeathing it to another. I tell you, Felix, you are killing me swiftly and surely by this dreadful life. Better end me at once than drive me mad, or leave me a strong soul prisoned in a feeble body like yourself."

For the first time in his life Stähl felt the touch of fear, not for himself but for her, lest that terrible affliction which so baffles human skill and science should fall upon the woman whom he loved with a selfish intensity which had tangled two lives and brought them to this pass.

"Hush, Ursula," he said, soothingly, "have patience, I shall soon be gone, and then — what will you do then?"

The question leaped to his lips, for at the word "gone" he saw the gloom lift from her face, leaving an expression of relief that unmistakably betrayed how heavily her burden had oppressed her. Undaunted by the almost fierce inquiry she fixed her eyes upon him, and answered steadily:

"I shall put off my bridal white, wear widow's weeds for a single year, and then" — there she, too, paused abruptly; but words were needless, for as Evan's step sounded on the stair she turned and hurried towards him, as if love, liberty and life all lay waiting for her there. Stähl watched them with a jealous pang that pierced the deeper as, remembering Ursula's taunt, he compared the young man with himself; the one rich in the stature, vigor, comeliness that make a manly man; the other, in sad truth, a strong spirit imprisoned in a ruined body. As he looked he clenched his pale hand hard, and muttered low between his set teeth:

"He shall not have her, if I sell my soul to thwart him!"

To Ursula's intense surprise and Evan's annoyance Stähl followed them into the carriage, with a brief apology for his seeming caprice. No one spoke during the short drive, but as they came into the

brilliant rooms Ursula's surprise deepened to alarm, for in the utter change of mien and manner which had befallen her husband she divined the presence of some newborn purpose, and trembled for the issue. Usually he played the distasteful part of invalid with a grace and skill which made the undisguisable fact a passport to the sympathy and admiration of both men and women. But that night no vigorous young man bore himself more debonnairly, danced more indefatigably, or devoted himself more charmingly to the service of matron, maid and grateful hostess. Lost in amazement, Ursula and Evan watched him, gliding to and fro, vivacious, blithe and bland, leaving a trail of witty, wise or honied words behind him, and causing many glances of approval to follow that singular countenance, for now its accustomed pallor was replaced by a color no art could counterfeit, and the mysterious eyes burned with a fire that fixed and fascinated other eyes.

"What does it mean, Evan?" whispered Ursula, standing apart with her faithful shadow.

"Mischief, if I read it rightly," was the anxious answer, and at that moment, just before them, the object of their thoughts was accosted by a jovial gentleman, who exclaimed:

"God bless me, Stähl! Rumor said you were dying, like a liar as she is, and here I find you looking more like a bridegroom than when I left you at the altar six months ago."

"For once rumor tells the truth, Coventry. I am dying, but one may make their exit gracefully and end their tragedy or comedy with a grateful bow! I have had a generous share of pleasure; I thank the world for it; I make my adieu to-night, and tranquilly go home to rest."

Spoken with an untroubled smile the words were both touching and impressive, and the friendly Coventry was obliged to clear his voice before he could answer with an assumption of cheery unbelief:

"Not yet, my dear fellow, not yet; we cannot spare you this forty years, and with such a wife what right have you to talk of ending the happy drama which all predict your life will be?" then glad to change the subject, he added: "Apropos of predictions, do take pity on my curiosity and tell me if it is true that you entertained a party

with some very remarkable prophecies, or something of that sort, just before your marriage with Miss Forrest. Hay once spoke mysteriously of it, but he went to the bad so soon after that I never made him satisfy me."

"I did comply with a lady's wish, but entertainment was not the result. I told Hay, what all the world knew, the next day, that certain dishonorable transactions of his were discovered, and warrants out for his arrest, and they hurried home to find my warning true."

"Yes, no one dreamed of such an end for the gay captain. I don't ask how your discovery was made, but I do venture to inquire if Miss Heath's tragical death was foretold that night?"

"That which indirectly caused her death was made known to her that night, but for her sake you will pardon me that I keep the secret."

"A thousand pardons for asking, and yet I am tempted to put one more question. You look propitious, so pray tell me if your other predictions were fulfilled with equal success?"

"Yes; sooner or later they always are."

"Upon my life, that's very singular! Just for the amusement of the thing make one now, and let me see if your skill remains undiminished. Nothing personal, you know, but some general prediction that any one may know and verify."

Stähl paused a moment, bending his eyes on Ursula, who stood unseen by his companion, then answered slowly with a memorable tone and aspect:

"I prophesy that before the month is out the city will be startled by a murder, and the culprit will elude justice by death."

Coventry's florid countenance paled visibly, and hastily returning thanks for the undesirable favor so complacently granted, he took himself away to whisper the evil portent in the ears of all he met. As he disappeared Stähl advanced to his wife, asking with an air of soft solicitude:

"Are you weary, love? or will you dance? Your cousin is negligent to-night."

"Oh, no, I have not wished to dance. Let us go now, and Evan, come to me to-morrow evening, when you will find a few friends and much music," she answered, with an unquiet glance at her hus-

band, a significant one at her cousin, who obeyed it by leaving them with a silent bow.

The homeward drive was as quiet as the other had been, and when they alighted Stähl followed his wife into the drawing-room; there, dropping wearily into a seat, he removed the handkerchief which had been pressed to his lips, and she saw that it was steeped in blood.

"Pardon me — it was unavoidable. Please ring for Marjory," he said, feebly.

Ursula neither spoke nor stirred, but stood regarding him with an expression which alarmed him, it was so full of a strange, stern triumph. It gave him strength to touch the bell, and when the faithful old woman who had nursed him from his babyhood came hurrying in, to say quietly:

"Take that ugly thing away, and bring my drops; also your mistress's vinaigrette, she needs it."

"Not she, the icicle," muttered Marjory, who adored her master, and heartily disliked her mistress because she did not do likewise.

When the momentary faintness had cleared away Stähl's quick eye at once took in the scene before him. Marjory was carefully preparing the draught, and Ursula stood watching her with curious intentness.

"What is that?" she asked, as the old woman put down the tiny vial, containing a colorless and scentless liquid.

"Poison, madam, one drop of which will restore life, while a dozen will bring a sure and sudden death."

Ursula took up the little vial, read the label containing both the medicine and its maker's name, and laid it back again with a slight motion of head and lips, as if she gave a mute assent to some secret suggestion. Marjory's lamentations as she moved about him drew the wife's eyes to her husband, and meeting his she asked coldly:

"Can I help you?"

"Thanks, Marjory will tend me. Good-night, you'll not be troubled with me long."

"No, I shall not; I have borne enough."

She spoke low to herself, but both listeners heard her, and the old woman sternly answered:

"May the Lord forgive you for that speech, madam."

"He will, for He sees the innocent and the guilty, and He knows my sore temptation."

Then without another look or word she left them with the aspect of one walking in an evil dream.

All night Marjory hovered about her master, and early in the morning his physician came. A few words assured Stähl that his hour was drawing very near, and that whatever work remained to be done must be accomplished speedily. He listened calmly to the truth which he had forced from the reluctant doctor, and when he paused made no lament, but said, with more than his accustomed gentleness:

"You will oblige me by concealing this fact from my wife. It is best to let it break upon her by merciful degrees."

"I understand, sir, I will be dumb; but I must caution you not to exert or agitate yourself in the least, for any undue exertion or excitement would be fatal in your weak state."

The worthy doctor spoke earnestly, but to his infinite amazement and alarm his patient rose suddenly from the couch on which he lay half dressed, and standing erect before him, said forcibly, while his hollow cheeks burned crimson, and his commanding eye almost enforced belief in his assertion:

"You are mistaken; I am not weak, for I have done with fear as well as hope, and if I choose to barter my month of life for one hour, one moment of exertion or excitement, I have the right to do it."

He paused, took breath and added:

"My wife intended to receive her friends tonight; she must not be disappointed, therefore you will not only tell her I am in no danger, but add that an unexpected crisis in my malady has come, and that with care and a season at the South I shall yet be a hale and hearty man. Grant me this favor, I shall not forget it."

The doctor was both a poor and a timid man; his generous but eccentric patient was a fortune to him; the falsehood seemed a kind one; the hint of a rich remembrance was irresistible, and bowing his acquiescence, he departed to obey directions to the letter.

All that day Ursula sat in her room writing steadily, and all that

day her husband watched and waited for her coming, but sent no invitation and received no message. At dusk she went out alone. Her departure was unheard and unseen by any but the invalid, whose every sense was alert; his quick ear caught the soft rustle of her dress as she passed his door, and dragging himself to the window he saw her glide away, wrapped in a shrouding cloak. At that sight Stähl's hand was lifted to the bell, but he dropped it, saying to himself:

"No, if she did not mean to return she would have taken care to tell me she was coming back; women always betray themselves by too much art. I have it! she has been writing, Marjory says; the letter is to Evan; she fears he may not come to-night, and trusts no one but herself to post it. I must assure myself of this."

Nerved with new strength, he went down into the dainty room so happily prepared and dedicated to Ursula's sole use. It was empty, but the charm of her presence lingered there, and every graceful object spoke of her. Lights burned upon the writing-table; the ink was still wet in the pen, and scattered papers confirmed the report of her day's employment; but no written word was visible, no note or packet anywhere appeared. A brief survey satisfied her husband, and assured him of the truth of his suspicion.

"Oh, for an hour of my old strength to end this entanglement like a man, instead of being forced to wait for time and chance to aid me like a timorous woman," he sighed, looking out into the wild March night, tormented by an impotent desire to follow his truant wife, yet conscious that it was impossible unless he left a greater work undone, for hourly he felt his power decline, and one dark purpose made him tenacious of the life fast slipping from his hold.

For many moments he stood thinking deeply, so deeply that the approach of a light, rapid step roused him too late for escape. It was his wife's step; why was she returning so soon? had her heart failed her? had some unforeseen occurrence thwarted her? She had not been absent long enough to post a letter to reach Evan's lodgings, or the house of any friend, then where had she been? An uncontrollable impulse caused Stähl to step noiselessly into the shadow of a curtained recess as these thoughts flashed through his mind, and hardly had he done so when Ursula hurried in wet,

wild-eyed and breathless, but wearing a look of pale determination which gave place to an expression of keen anxiety as she glanced about the room as if in search of something. Presently she murmured half aloud, "He shall never say again that I do not trust his honor. Lie there in safety till I need you, little friend," and lifting the cover of a carved ivory casket that ornamented the low chimneypiece, she gave some treasure to its keeping, saying, as she turned away with an air of feverish excitement, "Now for Evan and — my liberty!"

Nothing stirred in the room but the flicker of the fire and the softly moving pendulum of the clock that pointed to the hour of seven, till the door of Ursula's distant dressing-room closed behind her and a bell had summoned her maid. Then, from the recess, Stähl went straight to the ivory ornament and laid his hand upon its lid, yet paused long before he lifted it. The simple fact of her entire trust in him at any other time would have been the earnest safeguard of her secret; even now it restrained him by appealing to that inconsistent code of honor which governs many a man who would shoot his dearest friend for a hot word, and yet shrink with punctilious pride from breaking the seal of any letter that did not bear his name. Stähl hesitated till her last words stung his memory, making his own perfidy seem slight compared to hers. "I have a right to know," he said, "for when she forgets her honor I must preserve mine at any cost." A rapid gesture uncovered the casket, and showed him nothing but a small, sealed bottle, lying alone upon the velvet lining. A harmless little thing it looked, yet Stähl's face whitened terribly, and he staggered to a seat, as if the glance he gave had shown him his own death-warrant. He believed it had, for in size, shape, label and colorless contents the little vial was the counterpart of another last seen in Ursula's hand, one difference only in the two — that had been nearly empty, this was full to the lip.

In an instant her look, tone, gesture of the preceding night returned to him, and with the vivid recollection came the firm conviction that Ursula had yielded to a black temptation, and in her husband's name had purchased her husband's death. Till now no feeling but the intensest love had filled his heart towards her; Evan

Discovery of the Poison

he had learned to hate, himself to despise, but of his wife he had made an idol and worshipped her with a blind passion that would not see defects, own disloyalty or suspect deceit.

From any other human being the treachery would not have been so base, but from her it was doubly bitter, for she knew and owned her knowledge of his exceeding love. "Am I not dying fast enough for her impatience? Could she not wait a little, and let me go happy in my ignorance?" he cried within himself, forgetting in the anguish of that moment the falsehood told her at his bidding, for the furtherance of another purpose as sinful but less secret than her own. How time passed he no longer knew nor cared, as leaning his head upon his hands, he took counsel with his own unquiet heart, for all the evil passions, the savage impulses of his nature were aroused, and raged rebelliously in utter defiance of the feeble prison that confined them. Like all strong yet selfish souls, the wrongs he had committed looked to him very light compared with this, and seeing only his own devotion, faith and patience, no vengeance seemed too heavy for a crime that would defraud him of his poor remnant of unhappy life. Suddenly he lifted up his head, and on his face was stamped a ruthless, reckless purpose, which no earthly power could change or stay. An awesome smile touched his white lips, and the ominous fierceness glittered in his eye — for he was listening to a devil that sat whispering in his heart.

"I shall have my hour of excitement sooner than I thought," he said low to himself, as he left the room, carrying the vial with him. "My last prediction will be verified, although the victim and the culprit are one, and Evan shall live to wish that Ursula had died before me."

An hour later Ursula came to him as he sat gloomily before his chamber fire, while Marjory stood tempting him to taste the cordial she had brought. As if some impassable and unseen abyss already yawned between them, she gave him neither wifely caress nor evening greeting, but pausing opposite, said, with an inclination of her handsome head, which would have seemed a haughty courtesy but for the gentle coldness of her tone:

"I have obeyed the request you sent me, and made ready to receive the friends whose coming would else have been delayed. Is it

your pleasure that I excuse you to them, or will you join us as you have often done when other invalids would fear to leave their beds?"

Her husband looked at her as she spoke, wondering what woman's whim had led her to assume a dress rich in itself, but lustreless and sombre as a mourning garb; its silken darkness relieved only by the gleam of fair arms through folds of costly lace, and a knot of roses, scarcely whiter than the bosom they adorned.

"Thanks for your compliance, Ursula. I will come down later in the evening for a moment to receive congratulations on the restoration promised me. Shall I receive yours then?"

"No, now, for now I can wish you a long and happy life, can rejoice that time is given you to learn a truer faith, and ask you to forgive me if in thought, or word, or deed I have wronged or wounded you."

Strangely sweet and solemn was her voice, and for the first time in many months her old smile shed its serenest sunshine on her face, touching it with a meeker beauty than that which it had lost. Her husband shot one glance at her as the last words left her lips, then veiled the eyes that blazed with sudden scorn and detestation. His voice was always under his control, and tranquilly it answered her, while his heart cried out within him:

"I forgive as I would be forgiven, and trust that the coming years will be to you all that I desire to have them. Go to your pleasures, Ursula, and let me hear you singing, whether I am there or here."

"Can I do nothing else for you, Felix, before I go?" she asked, pausing, as she turned away, as if some involuntary impulse ruled her.

Stähl smiled a strange smile as he said, pointing to the goblet and the minute bottle Marjory had just placed on the table at his side:

"You shall sweeten a bitter draught for me by mixing it, and I will drink to you when I take it by-and-by."

His eye was on her now, keen, cold and steadfast, as she drew near to serve him. He saw the troubled look she fixed upon the cup, he saw her hand tremble as she poured the one safe drop, and heard a double meaning in her words:

"This is the first, I hope it may be the last time that I shall need to pour this dangerous draught for you."

She laid down the nearly emptied vial, replaced the cup and turned to go. But, as if bent on trying her to the utmost, though each test tortured him, Stähl arrested her by saying, with an unwonted tremor in his voice, a rebellious tenderness in his eyes:

"Stay, Ursula, I may fall asleep and so not see you until — morning. Bid me good-night, my wife."

She went to him, as if drawn against her will, and for a moment they stood face to face, looking their last on one another in this life. Then Stähl snatched her to him with an embrace almost savage in its passionate fervor, and Ursula kissed him once with the cold lips, that said, without a smile, "Good-night, my husband, sleep in peace!"

"Judas!" he muttered, as she vanished, leaving him spent with the controlled emotions of that brief interview. Old Marjory heard the word, and from that involuntary betrayal seemed to gather courage for a secret which had burned upon her tongue for two mortal hours. As Stähl sunk again into his cushioned seat, and seemed about to relapse into his moody reverie, she leaned towards him, saying in a whisper:

"May I tell you something, sir?"

"Concerning what or whom, my old gossip?" he answered, listlessly, yet with even more than usual kindliness, for now this humble, faithful creature seemed his only friend.

"My mistress, sir," she said, nodding significantly.

His face woke then, he sat erect, and with an eager gesture bade her speak.

"I've long mistrusted her; for ever since her cousin came she has not been the woman or the wife she was at first. It's not for me to meddle, but it's clear to see that if you were gone there'd be a wedding soon."

Stähl frowned, eyed her keenly, seemed to catch some helpful hint from her indignant countenance, and answered, with a pensive smile:

"I know it, I forgive it; and am sure that, for my sake, you will

"Good-night, my husband, sleep in peace!"

be less frank to others. Is this what you wished to tell me, Marjory?"

"Bless your unsuspecting heart, I wish it was, sir. I heard her words last night, I watched her all to-day, and when she went out at dusk I followed her, and saw her buy it."

Stähl started, as if about to give vent to some sudden passion, but repressed it, and with a look of well-feigned wonder, asked:

"Buy what?"

Marjory pointed silently to the table, upon which lay three objects, the cup, the little vial and a rose that had fallen from Ursula's bosom as she bent to render her husband the small service he had asked of her. There was no time to feign horror, grief or doubt, for a paroxysm of real pain seized him in its gripe, and served him better than any counterfeit of mental suffering could have done. He conquered it by the power of an inflexible spirit that would not yield yet, and laying his thin hand on Marjory's arm, he whispered, hastily:

"Hush! Never hint that again, I charge you. I bade her get it, my store was nearly gone, and I feared I should need it in the night."

The old woman read his answer as he meant she should, and laid her withered cheek down on his hand, saying, with the tearless grief of age:

"Always so loving, generous and faithful! You may forgive her, but I never can."

Neither spoke for several minutes, then Stähl said:

"I will lie down and try to rest a little before I go — "

The sentence remained unfinished, as, with a weary yet wistful air, he glanced about the shadowy room, asking, dumbly, "Where?" Then he shook off the sudden influence of some deeper sentiment than fear that for an instant thrilled and startled him.

"Leave me, Marjory, set the door ajar, and let me be alone until I ring."

She went, and for an hour he lay listening to the steps of gathering guests, the sound of music, the soft murmur of conversation, and the pleasant stir of life that filled the house with its social charm, making his solitude doubly deep, his mood doubly bitter.

Once Ursula stole in, and finding him apparently asleep, paused for a moment studying the wan face, with its stirless lids, its damp forehead and its pale lips, scarcely parted by the fitful breath, then, like a sombre shadow, flitted from the room again, unconscious that the closed eyes flashed wide to watch her go.

Presently there came a sudden hush, and borne on the wings of an entrancing air Ursula's voice came floating up to him, like the sweet, soft whisper of some better angel, imploring him to make a sad life noble by one just and generous action at its close. No look, no tone, no deed of patience, tenderness or self-sacrifice of hers but rose before him now, and pleaded for her with the magic of that unconscious lay. No ardent hope, no fair ambition, no high purpose of his youth, but came again to show the utter failure of his manhood, and in the hour darkened by a last temptation his benighted soul groped blindly for a firmer faith than that which superstition had defrauded of its virtue. Like many another man, for one short hour Felix Stähl wavered between good and evil, and like so many a man in whom passion outweighs principle, evil won. As the magical music ceased, a man's voice took up the strain, a voice mellow, strong and clear, singing as if the exultant song were but the outpouring of a hopeful, happy heart. Like some wild creature wounded suddenly, Stähl leaped from his couch and stood listening with an aspect which would have appalled the fair musician and struck the singer dumb.

"She might have spared me that!" he panted, as through the heavy beating of his heart he heard the voice he hated lending music to the song he loved, a song of lovers parting in the summer night, whose dawn would break upon their wedding-day. Whatever hope of merciful relenting might have been kindled by one redeeming power was for ever quenched by that ill-timed air, for with a gesture of defiant daring, Stähl drew the full vial from his breast, dashed its contents into the cup, and drained it to the dregs.

A long shudder crept over him as he set it down, then a pale peace dawned upon his face, as, laying his weary head upon the pillow it would never find sleepless any more, he pressed the rose against his lips, saying, with a bitter smile that never left his face again:

"I won my rose, and her thorns have pierced me to the heart; but my blight is on her, and no other man will wear her in his bosom when I am gone."

PART III

"STAY, EVAN, when the others go; I have much to say to you, and a packet of valuable papers to entrust to you. Do not forget."

"You regard me with a strange look, Ursula, you speak in a strange tone. What has happened?"

"They tell me that Felix will live, with care and a journey to the South."

"I catch your meaning now. You will go with him."

"No, my journey will be made alone."

She looked beyond him as she spoke, with a rapt yet tranquil glance, and such a sudden brightness shone upon her face that her cousin watched her half bewildered for a moment; then caught at a hope that filled him with a troubled joy, and whispered with beating heart and lowered voice:

"Shall I not follow you, Ursula?"

Her eye came back to him, clear and calm, yet very tender in its wistfulness, and though her words sounded propitious his hope died suddenly.

"I think you will follow soon, and I shall wait for you in the safe refuge I am seeking."

They stood silent for many minutes, thinking thoughts for which they had no words, then as a pause fell after music, Ursula said:

"Now I must sing again. Give me a draught of water, my throat is parched."

Her cousin served her, but before the water touched her lips the glass fell shattered at her feet, for a wild, shrill cry rang through the house silencing the gay sounds below, and rudely breaking the long hush that had reigned above. For one breathless instant all stood like living images of wonder, fear and fright, all waited for what should follow that dread cry. An agitated servant appeared

upon the threshold seeking his mistress. She saw him, yet stood as if incapable of motion, as he made his way to her through a crowd of pale, expectant faces.

"What is it?" she asked, with lips that could hardly syllable the words.

"My master, madam — dead in his bed — old Marjory has just found him. I've sent for Doctor Keen," began the man, but Ursula only seemed to hear and understand one word:

"Dead!" she echoed — "so suddenly, so soon — it cannot be true. Evan, take me to him."

She stretched out her hands as if she had gone blind, and led by her cousin, left the room, followed by several guests, in whom curiosity or sympathy was stronger than etiquette or fear. Up they went, a strange procession, and entering the dusky room, lighted only by a single shaded lamp, found Marjory lamenting over her dead master in a paroxysm of the wildest grief. Evan passed in before his cousin, bent hastily and listened at the breathless lips, touched the chill forehead, and bared the wrist to feel if any flutter lingered in the pulse. But as he pushed back the loose sleeve of the wrapper, upon the wasted arm appeared a strange device. Two slender serpents twined together like the ring, and in the circle several Hindoo characters traced in the same deep red lines. At that sight the arm dropped from his hold, and he fell back daunted by a nameless fear which he could neither master nor divine.

As Ursula appeared the old woman's grief changed to an almost fierce excitement, for rising she pointed from the dead husband to the living wife, crying shrilly:

"Come; come and see your work, fair-faced devil that you are! Here he lies, safe in the deadly sleep you gave him. Look at him and deny it if you dare!"

Ursula did look, and through the horror that blanched her face many eyes saw the shadow of remorse, the semblance of guilt. Stähl lay as she left him, his head pillowed on his arm with the easy grace habitual to him, but the pallor of that sleeping face was now changed to the awful grayness that living countenances never wear. A bitter smile still lingered on the white lips, and those mysterious eyes were wide open, full of a gloomy intelligence that ap-

palled the beholder with the scornful triumph which still lurked there unconquered even by death. These defiant eyes appeared fixed on Ursula alone; she could not look away, nor break the spell that held her own, and through the hurried scene that followed she seemed to address her dead husband, not her living accuser.

"My work? the sleep I gave? what dare I not deny?" she said, below her breath, like one bewildered.

"See her feign innocence with guilt stamped on her face!" cried Marjory, in a passion of indignant sorrow. "You killed him, that is your work. You drugged that cup with the poison I saw you buy to-day — that is the sleep you gave him — and you dare not deny that you hated him, wished him dead, and said last night you'd not be troubled long, for you had borne enough."

"I did not kill him! You saw me prepare his evening draught, and what proof have you that he did not pass away in sleep?" demanded Ursula, more firmly, yet with an awestruck gaze still fixed upon her husband's face.

"This is my proof!" and Marjory held up the empty counterpart of the little vial that lay on the table.

"That here! I left it in my — "

A hand at Ursula's lips cut short the perilous admission, as Evan whispered:

"Hush! for God's sake, own nothing yet."

"Too late for that," screamed Marjory, more and more excited by each word. "I found it in the ashes where she flung it in her haste, believing it was destroyed. I saw it glitter when I went to mend the fire before I woke my master. I knew it by the freshness of the label, and in a moment felt that my poor master was past all waking of mine, and found it so. I saw her buy it, I told him of it, but he loved her still and tried to deceive me with the kind lie that he bade her do it. I showed him that I knew the truth, and he only said, 'I know it, I forgive her, keep the secret for my sake,' and trusting her to the last, paid for his blind faith with his life."

"No, no, I never murdered him! I found him sleeping like a child an hour ago, and in that sleep he died," said Ursula, wringing her hands like one well nigh distraught.

"An hour ago! hear that and mark it all of you," cried Marjory.

"Two hours ago she bade him good night before me, and he called her 'Judas,' as she kissed him and went. Now she owns that she returned and found him safely sleeping — God forgive me that I ever left him! for then she must have remixed the draught in which he drank his death. Oh, madam! could you have no pity, could you not remember how he loved you? see your rose fast shut in his poor dead hand — could you not leave him the one little month of life he had to live before you were set free?"

"One month!" said Ursula, with a startled look. "They told me he would live to be a hale, old man. Why was I so deceived?"

"Because he would not mar your pleasure even for a single night. He meant to tell you the sad truth gently, for he thought you had a woman's heart, and would mourn him a little though you could not love."

Paler Ursula could not become, but as mesh after mesh of the net in which she had unconsciously helped to snare herself appeared, her husband's purpose flashed upon her, yet seemed too horrible for belief, till the discovery of that last deceit was made; then like one crushed by an overwhelming blow, she covered up her face and sunk down at Evan's feet. He did not raise her up, and though a gust of eager, agitated voices went whispering through the room, no one spoke to her, no one offered comfort to the widow, counsel to the woman, pity to the culprit. They listened only to old Marjory, who poured forth her story with such genuine grief, such perfect sincerity, that all felt its pathos and few doubted its entire truth. Evan alone believed in Ursula's denial, even while to himself he owned that she had borne enough to make any means of liberation tempting. He saw more clearly than the rest how every act, look and word of hers condemned her; and felt with a bitter pang that such an accusation, even if proved false, must cast a shadow on her name and darken all her life.

Suddenly, when the stir was at its height, Ursula rose, calm, cold and steady; yet few who saw her then ever forgot the desolate despair which made that beautiful face a far more piteous sight than the dead one. Turning with all her wonted dignity, she confronted the excited group, and without a tear in her eye, a falter in her

voice, a trace of shame, guilt or fear in mien or manner, she said clearly, solemnly,

"I am guilty of murder in my heart, for I did wish that man dead; but I did not kill him. The words I spoke that night were the expression of a resolve made in a moment of despair, a resolve to end my own life, when I could bear no more. To-day I was told that he would live; then my time seemed come, and believing this to be my last night on earth, I bade my husband farewell as we parted, and in a few hours hoped to lay down the burden he had made heavier than I could bear. That poison was purchased for myself, not him; he discovered it, believed I meant his death, and with a black art, which none can fathom but myself, so distorted my acts and words, before a witness, that the deed committed by himself should doom me to ignominy and avenge his wrong. I have no hope that any one will credit so wild a tale, and therein his safety lies; but God knows I speak the truth, and He will judge between us at a more righteous bar than any I can stand at here. Now do with me as you will, I am done."

Through all the bitter scenes of public accusation, trial and condemnation Ursula preserved the same mournful composure, as if having relinquished both hope and fear, no emotion remained to disturb the spirit of entire self-abnegation which had taken possession of her. All her cousin's entreaties, commands and prayers failed to draw from her the key to the mystery of her strange marriage; even when, after many merciful delays, sentence was at length pronounced upon her, and captivity for life was known to be her doom, she still refused to confess, saying:

"This fate is worse than death; but till I lie on my deathbed I will prove faithful to the promise made that man, traitorous as he was to me. I have done with the world, so leave me to such peace as I can know, and go your way, dear Evan, to forget that such a mournful creature lives."

But when all others fell away, when so-called friends proved timid, when enemies grew insolent and the whole world seemed to cast her off, one man was true to her, one man still loved, believed and honored her, still labored to save her when all others gave her

up as lost, still stood between her and the curious, sharp-tongued, heavy-handed world, earning a great compassion for himself, and, in time, a juster, gentler sentiment in favor of the woman whose sin and shame he had so nobly helped to bear.

Weeks and months went heavily by, the city wearied itself with excited conjectures, conflicting rumors, varying opinions, and slowly came to look with more lenient eyes upon the beautiful culprit, whose tragic fate, with its unexplained mystery, began to plead for her more eloquently than the most gifted advocate. Few doubted her guilt, and, as she feared, few believed the accusations she brought against her dead husband; but the plea of temporary insanity had been made by her counsel, and though she strenuously denied its truth, there were daily growing hopes of pardon for an offense which, thanks to Evan's tireless appeals, now wore a far less heinous aspect than at first.

All the long summer days Ursula sat alone in her guarded room, tranquilly enjoying the sunshine that flickered through the leaves with which Evan had tried to mask the bars that shut out liberty but not heaven's light. All the balmy summer nights she lay on her narrow bed, haunted by dreams that made sleep a penance and not a pleasure, or watched, with wakeful eyes, the black shadow of a cross the moon cast upon her breast as it peered through the barred window like a ghostly face. To no one did she reveal the thoughts that burdened her, whitening her hair, furrowing her face and leaving on her forehead the impress of a great grief which no human joy could ever efface.

One autumn day Evan came hastening in full of a glad excitement, which for the moment seemed to give him back the cheery youthfulness he was fast losing. He found his cousin lying on the couch he had provided for her, for even the prison officers respected that faithful love, and granted every favor in their power. She, too, seemed to be blessed with a happy mood, for the gloom had left her eyes, a peaceful smile sat on her lips, and when she spoke her voice was musical, with an undertone of deep emotion.

"Bless your tranquil face, Ursula! One would think you guessed my tidings without telling. Yes, it is almost certain that the pardon will be granted, in answer to my prayers. One more touch will win

Ursula in Prison

the men who hold your fate in their hands, and that touch you can give by clearing up the mystery of Stähl's strange power over you. For your own sake and for mine do not deny me now."

"I will not."

The joy, surprise and satisfaction of the moment caused Evan to forget the sad condition upon which this confidence could be accorded. He thought only of all they had suffered, all they might yet enjoy if the pardon could be gained, and holding that thin hand fast in both his own, he listened, with absorbing interest, to the beloved voice that unfolded to him the romance within a romance, which had made a tragedy of three lives.

"I must take you far back into the past, Evan, for my secret is but the sequel of one begun long before our birth. Our grandfather, as you know, was made governor of an Indian province while still a young and comely man. One of the native princes, though a conquered subject, remained his friend, and the sole daughter of this prince loved the handsome Englishman with the despotic fervor of her race. The prince offered the hand of the fair Naya to his friend, but being already betrothed to an English girl, he courteously declined the alliance. That insult, as she thought it, never was forgiven or forgotten by the haughty princess; but, with the subtle craft of her half-savage nature, she devised a vengeance which should not only fall upon the offender, but pursue his descendants to the very last. No apparent breach was made in the friendship of the prince and governor, even when the latter brought his young wife to the residence. But from that hour Naya's curse was on his house, unsuspected and unsleeping, and as years went by the Fate of the Forrests became a tragical story throughout British India, for the brothers, nephews and sons of Roger Forrest all died violent or sudden deaths, and the old man himself was found murdered in the jungle when at the height of fame and favor.

"Two twin lads alone remained of all who had borne the name, and for a time the fatal doom seemed averted, as they grew to manhood, married and seemed born to know all the blessings which virtue and valor could deserve. But though the princess and her father were dead, the curse was still relentlessly executed by some of her kindred, for in the year of your birth your father vanished

suddenly, utterly, in broad day, yet left no trace behind, and from that hour to this no clue to the lost man was ever found beyond a strong suspicion, which was never confirmed. In that same year a horrible discovery was made, which shocked and dismayed all Christian India, and was found hard of belief across the sea. Among the tribes that infested certain provinces, intent on mischief and difficult to subdue, was one class of assassins unknown even to the native governments of the country, and entirely unsuspected by the English. This society was as widely spread and carefully organized as it was secret, powerful and fanatical. Its members worshipped a gloomy divinity called Bohwanie, who, according to their heathen belief, was best propitiated by human sacrifices. The name of these devotees was Phansegars, or Brothers of the Good Work; and he who offered up the greatest number of victims was most favored by the goddess, and received a high place in the Hindoo heaven. All India was filled with amazement and affright at this discovery, and mysteries, till then deemed unfathomable, became as clear as day. Among others the Fate of the Forrests was revealed; for by the confession of the one traitor who betrayed the society, it appeared that the old prince and his sons had been members of the brotherhood, which had its higher and its lower grades, and when the young governor drew down upon himself the wrath of Naya, her kindred avenged her by propitiating Bohwanie with victim after victim from our fated family, always working so secretly that no trace of their art remained but the seal of death.

"This terrible discovery so dismayed my father that, taking you, an orphan then, and my mother, he fled to England, hoping to banish the dreadful past from his mind. But he never could, and it preyed upon him night and day. No male Forrest had escaped the doom since the curse was spoken, and an unconquerable foreboding haunted him that sooner or later he too should be sacrificed, though continents and oceans lay between him and the avengers. The fact that the black brotherhood was discovered and destroyed weighed little with him, for still a fear pursued him that Naya's kindred would hand down the curse from generation to generation, and execute with that tenacity of purpose which in that climate of the passions makes the humblest foe worthy of fear. He doubted

all men, confided his secret to none, not even to his wife, and led a wandering life with us until my mother died. You remember, Evan, that the same malady that destroyed her fell likewise upon you, and that my father was forced to leave us in Paris, that he might comply with my mother's last desire and lay her in English ground. Before he went he took me apart and told me the dark history of our unfortunate family, that I might be duly impressed with the necessity of guarding you with a sleepless vigilance; for even then he could not free himself from that ominous foreboding, soon, alas! to be confirmed. It was a strange confidence to place in a girl of seventeen, but he had no friend at hand, and knowing how wholly I loved you, how safe I was from the Fate of the Forrests, he gave you to my charge and left us for a week. You know he never came again, but found his ghostly fear a sad reality in England, and on the day that was to give my mother's body to the earth he was discovered dead in his bed, with the marks of fingers at his throat, yet no other trace of his murderer ever appeared, and another dark secret was buried in the grave. You remember the horror and the grief that nearly killed me when the tidings came, and how from that hour there was a little cloud between us, a cloud I could not lift because I had solemnly promised my father that I would watch over you, yet conceal the fate that menaced you, lest it should mar your peace as it had done his own. Evan, I have kept my word till the danger is for ever past."

She paused there, but for a moment her cousin could only gaze at her, bewildered by the sudden light let in by the gloomy past. Presently he said, impetuously:

"You have, my faithful Ursula, and I will prove that I am grateful by watching over you with a vigilance as sleepless and devoted as your own. But tell me, was there nowhere in the world justice, power or wit enough to stay that savage curse? Why did not my father, or yours, appeal to the laws of either country and obtain redress?"

"They did, and, like others, appealed in vain; for, till the Phansegars were discovered, they knew not whom to accuse. After that, as Naya's kindred were all gone but a few newly-converted women and harmless children, no magistrate in India would condemn the

innocent for the crimes of their race, and my father had no proofs to bring against them. Few in England believed the seemingly incredible story when it was related to them in the Indian reports. No, Evan, the wily princess entrusted her revenge to able hands, and well they did the work to the very last, as we have bitter cause to know. Every member of the brotherhood, and every helper of the curse, bore on his left arm the word 'Bohwanie!' in Hindoo characters. You saw the sign on that dead arm. Do you understand the secret now?"

"Great heavens, Ursula! Do you mean that Stähl, a Christian man, belonged to this heathen league? Surely you wrong him there."

"You will not think so when I have told all. It seemed as horrible, as incredible to me as now to you, when I first saw and comprehended on the night that changed both our lives. Stähl suspected, from many unconscious betrayals of mine (my dislike of India, my anxiety for you, then absent, and a hundred indications unseen by other eyes) that I knew the secret of the curse; he proved it by whispering the hated name of Bohwanie in my ear, and showing me the fatal sign — I knew it, for my father had told me that also. Need I tell you what recollections rushed upon me when I saw it, what visions of blood rose red before my panic-stricken eyes, how instantly I felt the truth of my instinctive aversion to him, despite his charms of mind and manner, and, above all, how utterly I was overpowered by a sense of your peril in the presence of your unknown enemy? A single thought, hope, purpose ruled me, to save you at any cost, and guard the secret still; for I felt that I possessed some power over that dread man, and resolved to use it to the uttermost. You left us, and then I learned at what a costly price I could purchase the life so dear to me. Stähl briefly told me that his mother and one old woman were the last of Naya's race, and when his grandfather, who belonged to the brotherhood, suffered death with them, he charged her to perpetuate the curse, as all the members of the family had pledged themselves to do. She promised, and when my father left India she followed, but could not discover his hiding-place, and with a blind faith in destiny, as native to her as her superstition, she left time to bring her victim to her. While

resting from her quest in Germany she met and married Felix Stähl, the elder, a learned man, fond of the mysticism and wisdom of the East, who found an irresistible charm in the dark-eyed woman, who, for his sake, became a Christian in name, though she still clung to her Pagan gods in secret. With such parents what wonder that the son was the man we found him? for his father bequeathed him his features, feeble health, rare learning and accomplishments; his mother those Indian eyes that I never can forget, his fiery yet subtle nature, the superstitious temperament and the fatal vow.

"While the father lived she kept her secret hidden; when he died, Felix, then a man, was told it, and having been carefully prepared by every art, every appeal to the pride and passion of his race, every shadow years of hatred could bring to blacken the memory of the first Forrest and the wrong he was believed to have done their ancestors, Felix was induced to take upon himself the fulfilment of the family vow. Yet living in a Christian community, and having been bred up by a virtuous father, it was a hard task to assume, and only the commands of the mother whom he adored would have won compliance. He was told that but two Forrests now remained, one a girl who was to go scatheless, the other a boy, who, sooner or later, was to fall by his hand, for he was now the last male of his race as you of ours. How his mother discovered these facts he never knew, unless from the old woman who came to them from England to die near her kin. I suspect that she was the cause of my poor father's death, though Stähl swore that he never knew of it until I told him.

"After much urging, many commands, he gave the promise, asking only freedom to do the work as he would, for though the savage spirit of his Hindoo ancestors lived again in him, the influence of civilization made the savage modes of vengeance abhorrent to him. His mother soon followed the good professor, then leaving our meeting still to chance, Felix went roaming up and down the world a solitary, studious man, for ever haunted by the sinful deed he had promised to perform, and which grew ever more and more repugnant to him.

"In an evil hour we met; my name first arrested him; my beauty

The Mystery Revealed

(I may speak of it now for it is gone) attracted him; my evident aversion piqued his pride and roused his will to overcome it; and then the knowledge of my love for you fanned his smouldering passion to a blaze and confirmed his wavering purpose. You asked on that sad night if I had learned to love while you were gone? I spoke truly when I answered yes, for absence proved how dear you had become to me, and I only waited your return to gratefully accept the love with which I knew your heart was overflowing. You came, and seeing Stähl's devotion, doubted the affection I never had confessed. He saw it plainly, he divined your passion, and in an hour decided upon gratifying his own desire, keeping the promise he made his mother, yet sparing himself the crime of murder, well knowing that for you life without me would be a fate more dark than any death he could devise. I pleaded, prayed and wept, but he was inexorable. To tell you was to destroy you, for he feared nothing; to keep the secret was to forfeit your love and sacrifice myself. One hope alone remained to me, a sinful yet a pardonable one in such a strait as mine; Felix could not live long; I might support life for a time by the thought that I had saved you, by the hope that I might soon undeceive and recompense you for the loss you had sustained. Evan, it was a natural yet unrighteous act, for I did evil that good might come of it, and such deeds never prosper. Better have left you in God's hand, better even have seen you dead and at peace than have condemned you to the life you have led and still must lead for years perhaps. I was a weak, loving, terror-stricken woman, and in that dreadful hour one fear overwhelmed all other passions, principles and thoughts. I could save you, and to accomplish that I would so gladly have suffered death in any shape. Believe that, dearest Evan, and forgive me for the fate to which I have condemned the man I love, truly, tenderly even to the end."

Her voice died in a broken sob as Evan gathered her close to his sore heart, and she clung there spent and speechless, as if the pain of parting were for ever over and her refuge found at last. Evan spoke first, happily and hopefully for, the future opened clearly, and the long twilight seemed about to break into a blissful dawn.

"You shall be repaid for your exceeding love, Ursula, with a devotion such as man never gave to woman until now. There is no longer any cloud between us, nor shall there be between you and the world. Justice shall be done, and then we will leave this city of bitter memories behind us, and go away together to begin the new life that lies before us."

"We shall begin a new life, but not together, Evan," was the low answer, as she tenderly laid her pale cheek to his, as if to soften the hard truth.

"But, love, you will be free at once; there can be no doubt of the pardon now."

"Yes, I shall soon be free, but human hands will not open my prison doors, and I humbly trust that I may receive pardon, but not from human lips. Evan, I told you I would never tell my secret till I lay on my deathbed; I lie there now."

If she had stabbed him with the hand folded about his neck, the act would not have shocked and startled him like those last words. They pierced him to the heart, and as if in truth he had received a mortal wound, he could only gaze at her in dumb dismay, with eyes full of anguish, incredulity and grief.

"Let me seem cruel that I may be merciful, and end both suspense and fear by telling all at once. There is no hope for me. I have prayed to live, but it cannot be, for slowly yet surely Felix has killed me. I said I would gladly die for you, God takes me at my word, and now I am content. Let me make my sacrifice cheerfully, and let the suffering I have known be my atonement for the wrong I did myself and you."

As she spoke so tranquilly, so tenderly, a veil seemed to fall from before her cousin's eyes. He looked into the face that smiled at him, saw there the shadow which no human love can banish, read perfect peace in its pale serenity, felt that life was a poor boon to ask for her, and with a pang that rent that faithful heart of his, silently relinquished the one sustaining hope which had upheld him through that gloomy year. Calm with a grief too deep for tears, he drew the wan and wasted creature who had given herself for him closer to the shelter of his arms, and changed her last fear to loving

pride by saying, with a manful courage, a meek resignation that ennobled him by its sincerity:

"Rest here in peace, my Ursula. No selfish grief shall cloud your sunset or rob you of one hour of happy love. I can bear the parting, for I shall follow soon; and thank God that after the long bewilderment of this sad world we may enjoy together the new life which has no end."

THE END

The Portable Walt Whitman

Edited with an Introduction by
MICHAEL WARNER

PENGUIN BOOKS

1871

Passage to India.

1

Singing my days,
Singing the great achievements of the present,
Singing the strong light works of engineers,
Our modern wonders (the antique ponderous Seven outvied,)
In the Old World the east the Suez canal,
The New by its mighty railroad spann'd,
The seas inlaid with eloquent gentle wires;
Yet first to sound, and ever sound, the cry with thee O soul,
The Past! the Past! the Past!

The Past—the dark unfathom'd retrospect!
The teeming gulf—the sleepers and the shadows!
The past—the infinite greatness of the past!
For what is the present after all but a growth out of the past?
(As a projectile form'd, impell'd, passing a certain line, still
keeps on,
So the present, utterly form'd, impell'd by the past.)

2

Passage O soul to India!
Eclaircise the myths Asiatic, the primitive fables.

Not you alone proud truths of the world,
Nor you alone ye facts of modern science,
But myths and fables of eld, Asia's, Africa's fables,
The far-darting beams of the spirit, the unloos'd dreams,
The deep diving bibles and legends,
The daring plots of the poets, the elder religions;
O you temples fairer than lilies pour'd over by the rising sun!
O you fables spurning the known, eluding the hold of the known, mounting to heaven!
You lofty and dazzling towers, pinnacled, red as roses, burnish'd with gold!
Towers of fables immortal fashion'd from mortal dreams!
You too I welcome and fully the same as the rest!
You too with joy I sing.

Passage to India!
Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?
The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,
The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,
The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,
The lands to be welded together.

A worship new I sing,
You captains, voyagers, explorers, yours,
You engineers, you architects, machinists, yours,
You, not for trade or transportation only,
But in God's name, and for thy sake O soul.

3

Passage to India!
Lo soul for thee of tableaus twain,
I see in one the Suez canal initiated, open'd,
I see the procession of steamships, the Empress Eugenie's leading the van,
I mark from on deck the strange landscape, the pure sky, the level sand in the distance,

I pass swiftly the picturesque groups, the workmen gather'd,
The gigantic dredging machines.

In one again, different, (yet thine, all thine, O soul, the same,)
I see over my own continent the Pacific railroad surmounting
every barrier,
I see continual trains of cars winding along the Platte carrying
freight and passengers,
I hear the locomotives rushing and roaring, and the shrill
steam-whistle,
I hear the echoes reverberate through the grandest scenery in
the world,
I cross the Laramie plains, I note the rocks in grotesque
shapes, the buttes,
I see the plentiful larkspur and wild onions, the barren,
colorless, sage-deserts,
I see in glimpses afar or towering immediately above me the
great mountains, I see the Wind river and the Wahsatch
mountains,
I see the Monument mountain and the Eagle's Nest, I pass the
Promontory, I ascend the Nevadas,
I scan the noble Elk mountain and wind around its base,
I see the Humboldt range, I thread the valley and cross the
river,
I see the clear waters of lake Tahoe, I see forests of majestic
pines,
Or crossing the great desert, the alkaline plains, I behold
enchanting mirages of waters and meadows,
Marking through these and after all, in duplicate slender lines,
Bridging the three or four thousand miles of land travel,
Tying the Eastern to the Western sea,
The road between Europe and Asia.

(Ah Genoese thy dream! thy dream!
Centuries after thou art laid in thy grave,
The shore thou foundest verifies thy dream.)

4

Passage to India!
Struggles of many a captain, tales of many a sailor dead,
Over my mood stealing and spreading they come,
Like clouds and cloudlets in the unreach'd sky.

Along all history, down the slopes,
As a rivulet running, sinking now, and now again to the surface rising,
A ceaseless thought, a varied train—lo, soul, to thee, thy sight, they rise,
The plans, the voyages again, the expeditions;
Again Vasco de Gama sails forth,
Again the knowledge gain'd, the mariner's compass,
Lands found and nations born, thou born America,
For purpose vast, man's long probation fill'd,
Thou rondure of the world at last accomplish'd.

5

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,
Cover'd all over with visible power and beauty,
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,
Unspeakable high processions of sun and moon and countless stars above,
Below, the manifold grass and waters, animals, mountains, trees,
With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

Down from the gardens of Asia descending radiating,
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,
Wandering, yearning, curious, with restless explorations,
With questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-happy hearts,
With that sad incessant refrain, *Wherefore unsatisfied soul?* and *Whither O mocking life?*

Ah who shall soothe these feverish children?
Who justify these restless explorations?
Who speak the secret of impassive earth?
Who bind it to us? what is this separate Nature so unnatural?
What is this earth to our affections? (unloving earth, without
a throb to answer ours,
Cold earth, the place of graves.)

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried
out,
Perhaps even now the time has arrived.

After the seas are all cross'd, (as they seem already cross'd,)
After the great captains and engineers have accomplish'd their
work,
After the noble inventors, after the scientists, the chemist, the
geologist, ethnologist,
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

Then not your deeds only O voyagers, O scientists and
inventors, shall be justified,
All these hearts as of fretted children shall be sooth'd,
All affection shall be fully responded to, the secret shall be
told,
All these separations and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd
and link'd together,
The whole earth, this cold, impassive, voiceless earth, shall be
completely justified,
Trinitas divine shall be gloriously accomplish'd and
compacted by the true son of God, the poet,
(He shall indeed pass the straits and conquer the mountains,
He shall double the cape of Good Hope to some purpose,)
Nature and Man shall be disjoin'd and diffused no more,
The true son of God shall absolutely fuse them.

6

Year at whose wide-flung door I sing!
Year of the purpose accomplish'd!
Year of the marriage of continents, climates and oceans!
(No mere doge of Venice now wedding the Adriatic,)
I see O year in you the vast terraqueous globe given and giving all,
Europe to Asia, Africa join'd, and they to the New World,
The lands, geographies, dancing before you, holding a festival garland,
As brides and bridegrooms hand in hand.

Passage to India!
Cooling airs from Caucasus far, soothing cradle of man,
The river Euphrates flowing, the past lit up again.

Lo soul, the retrospect brought forward,
The old, most populous, wealthiest of earth's lands,
The streams of the Indus and the Ganges and their many affluents,
(I my shores of America walking to-day behold, resuming all,)
The tale of Alexander on his warlike marches suddenly dying,
On one side China and on the other side Persia and Arabia,
To the south the great seas and the bay of Bengal,
The flowing literatures, tremendous epics, religions, castes,
Old occult Brahma interminably far back, the tender and junior Buddha,
Central and southern empires and all their belongings, possessors,
The wars of Tamerlane, the reign of Aurungzebe,
The traders, rulers, explorers, Moslems, Venetians, Byzantium, the Arabs, Portuguese,
The first travelers famous yet, Marco Polo, Batouta the Moor,
Doubts to be solv'd, the map incognita, blanks to be fill'd,
The foot of man unstay'd, the hands never at rest,
Thyself O soul that will not brook a challenge.

The mediæval navigators rise before me,
The world of 1492, with its awaken'd enterprise,
Something swelling in humanity now like the sap of the earth
in spring,
The sunset splendor of chivalry declining.

And who art thou sad shade?
Gigantic, visionary, thyself a visionary,
With majestic limbs and pious beaming eyes,
Spreading around with every look of thine a golden world,
Enhuing it with gorgeous hues.

As the chief histrion,
Down to the footlights walks in some great scena,
Dominating the rest I see the Admiral himself,
(History's type of courage, action, faith,)
Behold him sail from Palos leading his little fleet,
His voyage behold, his return, his great fame,
His misfortunes, calumniators, behold him a prisoner,
chain'd,
Behold his dejection, poverty, death.

(Curious in time I stand, noting the efforts of heroes,
Is the deferment long? bitter the slander, poverty, death?
Lies the seed unreck'd for centuries in the ground? lo, to
God's due occasion,
Uprising in the night, it sprouts, blooms,
And fills the earth with use and beauty.)

7

Passage indeed O soul to primal thought,
Not lands and seas alone, thy own clear freshness,
The young maturity of brood and bloom,
To realms of budding bibles.

O soul, repressless, I with thee and thou with me,
Thy circumnavigation of the world begin,

Of man, the voyage of his mind's return,
To reason's early paradise,
Back, back to wisdom's birth, to innocent intuitions,
Again with fair creation.

8

O we can wait no longer,
We too take ship O soul,
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,
Amid the wafting winds, (thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O soul,)
Caroling free, singing our song of God,
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

With laugh and many a kiss,
(Let others deprecate, let others weep for sin, remorse, humiliation,)
O soul thou pleasest me, I thee.

Ah more than any priest O soul we too believe in God,
But with the mystery of God we dare not dally.

O soul thou pleasest me, I thee,
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,
Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,
Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O Thou transcendent,
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them,
Thou mightier centre of the true, the good, the loving,

Thou moral, spiritual fountain—affection's source—thou
reservoir,
(O pensive soul of me—O thirst unsatisfied—waitest not
there?
Waitest not haply for us somewhere there the Comrade
perfect?)
Thou pulse—thou motive of the stars, suns, systems,
That, circling, move in order, safe, harmonious,
Athwart the shapeless vastnesses of space,
How should I think, how breathe a single breath, how speak,
if, out of myself,
I could not launch, to those, superior universes?

Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,
At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,
But that I, turning, call to thee O soul, thou actual Me,
And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,
And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.

Greater than stars or suns,
Bounding O soul thou journeyest forth;
What love than thine and ours could wider amplify?
What aspirations, wishes, outvie thine and ours O soul?
What dreams of the ideal? what plans of purity, perfection,
strength?
What cheerful willingness for others' sake to give up all?
For others' sake to suffer all?

Reckoning ahead O soul, when thou, the time achiev'd,
The seas all cross'd, weather'd the capes, the voyage done,
Surrounded, copest, frontest God, yieldest, the aim attain'd,
As fill'd with friendship, love complete, the Elder Brother
found,
The Younger melts in fondness in his arms.

9

Passage to more than India!
Are thy wings plumed indeed for such far flights?
O soul, voyagest thou indeed on voyages like those?
Disportest thou on waters such as those?
Soundest below the Sanscrit and the Vedas?
Then have thy bent unleash'd.

Passage to you, your shores, ye aged fierce enigmas!
Passage to you, to mastership of you, ye strangling problems!
You, strew'd with the wrecks of skeletons, that, living, never reach'd you.

Passage to more than India!
O secret of the earth and sky!
Of you O waters of the sea! O winding creeks and rivers!
Of you O woods and fields! of you strong mountains of my land!
Of you O prairies! of you gray rocks!
O morning red! O clouds! O rain and snows!
O day and night, passage to you!

O sun and moon and all you stars! Sirius and Jupiter!
Passage to you!

Passage, immediate passage! the blood burns in my veins!
Away O soul! hoist instantly the anchor!
Cut the hawsers—haul out—shake out every sail!
Have we not stood here like trees in the ground long enough?
Have we not grovel'd here long enough, eating and drinking like mere brutes?
Have we not darken'd and dazed ourselves with books long enough?

Sail forth—steer for the deep waters only,
Reckless O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,

For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

O my brave soul!
O farther farther sail!
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?
O farther, farther, farther sail!

EDWARD W. SAID

Orientalism

PENGUIN BOOKS

PENGUIN CLASSICS

Published by the Penguin Group
Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R ORL, England
Penguin Group (USA) Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, USA
Penguin Group (Canada). 90 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 700, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4P 2Y3
(a division of Pearson Penguin Canada Inc.)
Penguin Ireland, 25 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, Ireland (a division of Penguin Books Ltd)
Penguin Group (Australia), 250 Camberwell Road. Camberwell, Victoria 3124. Australia
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Penguin Books India Pvt Ltd, 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi - 110 017, India
Penguin Group (NZ), 67 Apollo Drive. Rosedale, North Shore 0632, New Zealand
(a division of Pearson New Zealand Ltd)
Penguin Books (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd, 24 Sturdee Avenue,
Rosebank, Johannesburg 2196, South Africa

Penguin Books Ltd. Registered Offices: 80 Strand. London WC2R ORL, England

www.penguin.com

First published by Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd 1978
Published in Peregrine Books 1985
Reprinted in Penguin Books 1991
Reprinted with a new Afterword 1995
Reprinted with a new Preface 2003
13

Printed in England by Clays Ltd, St Ives pic
Typeset in Times Roman

978-0-141 18742-6

www.greenpenguin.co.uk

Introduction

I

On a visit to Beirut during the terrible civil war of 1975-1976 a French journalist wrote regretfully of the gutted downtown area that "it had once seemed to belong to . . . the Orient of Chateaubriand and Nerval."[1] He was right about the place, of course, especially so far as a European was concerned. The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences. Now it was disappearing; in a sense it had happened, its time was over. Perhaps it seemed irrelevant that Orientals themselves had something at stake in the process, that even in the time of Chateaubriand and Nerval Orientals had lived there, and that now it was they who were suffering; the main thing for the European visitor was a European representation of the Orient and its contemporary fate, both of which had a privileged communal significance for the journalist and his French readers.

Americans will not feel quite the same about the Orient, which for them is much more likely to be associated very differently with the Far East (China and Japan, mainly). Unlike the Americans, the French and the British—less so the Germans, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, and Swiss—have had a long tradition of what I shall be calling ***Orientalism,*** a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience. The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West)

as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience. Yet none of this Orient is merely imaginative. The Orient is an integral part of European *material* civilization and culture. Orientalism expresses and represents that part culturally and even ideologically as a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles. In contrast, the American understanding of the Orient will seem considerably less dense, although our recent Japanese, Korean, and Indochinese adventures ought now to be creating a more sober, more realistic "Oriental" awareness. Moreover, the vastly expanded American political and economic role in the Near East (the Middle East) makes great claims on our understanding of that Orient.

It will be clear to the reader (and will become clearer still throughout the many pages that follow) that by Orientalism I mean several things, all of them, in my opinion, interdependent. The most readily accepted designation for Orientalism is an academic one, and indeed the label still serves in a number of academic institutions. Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient—and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist—either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism. Compared with *Oriental studies* or *area studies,* it is true that the term *Orientalism* is less preferred by specialists today, both because it is too vague and general and because it connotes the high-handed executive attitude of nineteenth-century and early-twentieth-century European colonialism. Nevertheless books are written and congresses held with "the Orient" as their main focus, with the Orientalist in his new or old guise as their main authority. The point is that even if it does not survive as it once did, Orientalism lives on academically through its doctrines and theses about the Orient and the Oriental.

Related to this academic tradition, whose fortunes, transmigrations, specializations, and transmissions are in part the subject of this study, is a more general meaning for Orientalism. Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident." Thus a very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the

Orient, its people, customs, "mind," destiny, and so on. *This* Orientalism can accommodate Aeschylus, say, and Victor Hugo, Dante and Karl Marx. A little later in this introduction I shall deal with the methodological problems one encounters in so broadly construed a "field" as this.

The interchange between the academic and the more or less imaginative meanings of Orientalism is a constant one, and since the late eighteenth century there has been a considerable, quite disciplined—perhaps even regulated—traffic between the two. Here I come to the third meaning of Orientalism, which is something more historically and materially defined than either of the other two. Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. I have found it useful here to employ Michel Foucault's notion of a discourse, as described by him in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* and in *Discipline and Punish*, to identify Orientalism. My contention is that without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously 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 period. Moreover, so authoritative a position did Orientalism have that I believe no one writing, thinking, or acting on the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by Orientalism. In brief, because of Orientalism the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action. This is not to say that Orientalism unilaterally determines what can be said about the Orient, but that it is the whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that peculiar entity "the Orient" is in question. How this happens is what this book tries to demonstrate. It also tries to show that European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self.

Historically and culturally there is a quantitative as well as a qualitative difference between the Franco-British involvement in the Orient and—until the period of American ascendancy after

World War II—the involvement of every other European and Atlantic power. To speak of Orientalism therefore is to speak mainly, although not exclusively, of a British and French cultural enterprise, a project whose dimensions take in such disparate realms as the imagination itself, the whole of India and the Levant, the Biblical texts and the Biblical lands, the spice trade, colonial armies and a long tradition of colonial administrators, a formidable scholarly corpus, innumerable Oriental "experts" and "hands," an Oriental professorate, a complex array of "Oriental" ideas (Oriental despotism, Oriental splendor, cruelty, sensuality), many Eastern sects, philosophies, and wisdoms domesticated for local European use—the list can be extended more or less indefinitely. My point is that Orientalism derives from a particular closeness experienced between Britain and France and the Orient, which until the early nineteenth century had really meant only India and the Bible lands. From the beginning of the nineteenth century until the end of World War II France and Britain dominated the Orient and Orientalism; since World War II America has dominated the Orient, and approaches it as France and Britain once did. Out of that closeness, whose dynamic is enormously productive even if it always demonstrates the comparatively greater strength of the Occident (British, French, or American), comes the large body of texts I call Orientalist.

It should be said at once that even with the generous number of books and authors that I examine, there is a much larger number that I simply have had to leave out. My argument, however, depends neither upon an exhaustive catalogue of texts dealing with the Orient nor upon a clearly delimited set of texts, authors, and ideas that together make up the Orientalist canon. I have depended instead upon a different methodological alternative—whose backbone in a sense is the set of historical generalizations I have so far been making in this Introduction—and it is these I want now to discuss in more analytical detail.

II

I have begun with the assumption that the Orient is not an inert fact of nature. It is not merely *there,* just as the Occident itself is not just *there* either. We must take seriously Vico's great obser-

vation that men make their own history, that what they can know is what they have made, and extend it to geography: as both geographical and cultural entities—to say nothing of historical entities—such locales, regions, geographical sectors as "Orient" and "Occident" are man-made. Therefore as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery, and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West. The two geographical entities thus support and to an extent reflect each other.

Having said that, one must go on to state a number of reasonable qualifications. In the first place, it would be wrong to conclude that the Orient was *essentially* an idea, or a creation with no corresponding reality. When Disraeli said in his novel *Tancred* that the East was a career, he meant that to be interested in the East was something bright young Westerners would find to be an all-consuming passion; he should not be interpreted as saying that the East was *only* a career for Westerners. There were—and are—cultures and nations whose location is in the East, and their lives, histories, and customs have a brute reality obviously greater than anything that could be said about them in the West. About that fact this study of Orientalism has very little to contribute, except to acknowledge it tacitly. But the phenomenon of Orientalism as I study it here deals principally, not with a correspondence between Orientalism and Orient, but with the internal consistency of Orientalism and its ideas about the Orient (the East as career) despite or beyond any correspondence, or lack thereof, with a "real" Orient. My point is that Disraeli's statement about the East refers mainly to that created consistency, that regular constellation of ideas as the pre-eminent thing about the Orient, and not to its mere being, as Wallace Stevens's phrase has it.

A second qualification is that ideas, cultures, and histories cannot seriously be understood or studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied. To be-'ieve that the Orient was created—or, as I call it, "Orientalized"—and to believe that such things happen simply as a necessity of 'he imagination, is to be disingenuous. The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony, and is quite accurately indicated in the title of K. M. Panikkar's classic *Asia and Western Dominance*.[2] The Orient was Orientalized not only because it was discovered to be "Oriental" in all those ways considered common-

place by an average nineteenth-century European, but also because it *could be*—that is, submitted to being—*made* Oriental. There is very little consent to be found, for example, in the fact that Flaubert's encounter with an Egyptian courtesan produced a widely influential model of the Oriental woman; she never spoke of herself, she never represented her emotions, presence, or history. *He* spoke for and represented her. He was foreign, comparatively wealthy, male, and these were historical facts of domination that allowed him not only to possess Kuchuk Hanem physically but to speak for her and tell his readers in what way she was "typically Oriental." My argument is that Flaubert's situation of strength in relation to Kuchuk Hanem was not an isolated instance. It fairly stands for the pattern of relative strength between East and West, and the discourse about the Orient that it enabled.

This brings us to a third qualification. One ought never to assume that the structure of Orientalism is nothing more than a structure of lies or of myths which, were the truth about them to be told, would simply blow away. I myself believe that Orientalism is more particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is as a veridic discourse about the Orient (which is what, in its academic or scholarly form, it claims to be). Nevertheless, what we must respect and try to grasp is the sheer knitted-together strength of Orientalist discourse, its very close ties to the enabling socio-economic and political institutions, and its redoubtable durability. After all, any system of ideas that can remain unchanged as teachable wisdom (in academies, books, congresses, universities, foreign-service institutes) from the period of Ernest Renan in the late 1840s until the present in the United States must be something more formidable than a mere collection of lies. Orientalism, therefore, is not an airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been a considerable material investment. Continued investment made Orientalism, as a system of knowledge about the Orient, an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness, just as that same investment multiplied—indeed, made truly productive—the statements proliferating out from Orientalism into the general culture.

Gramsci has made the useful analytic distinction between civil and political society in which the former is made up of voluntary (or at least rational and noncoercive) affiliations like schools,

families, and unions, the latter of state institutions (the army, the police, the central bureaucracy) whose role in the polity is direct domination. Culture, of course, is to be found operating within civil society, where the influence of ideas, of institutions, and of other persons works not through domination but by what Gramsci calls consent. In any society not totalitarian, then, certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others; the form of this cultural leadership is what Gramsci has identified as *hegemony,* an indispensable concept for any understanding of cultural life in the industrial West. It is hegemony, or rather the result of cultural hegemony at work, that gives Orientalism the durability and the strength I have been speaking about so far. Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe,[3] a collective notion identifying "us" Europeans as against all "those" non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what made that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures. There is in addition the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent, or more skeptical, thinker might have had different views on the matter.

In a quite constant way, Orientalism depends for its strategy on this flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand. And why should it have been otherwise, especially during the period of extraordinary European ascendancy from the late Renaissance to the present? The scientist, the scholar, the missionary, the trader, or the soldier was in, or thought about, the Orient because he *could be there,* or could think about it, with very little resistance on the Orient's part. Under the general heading of knowledge of the Orient, and within the umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orient during the period from the end of the eighteenth century, there emerged a complex Orient suitable for study in the academy, for display in the museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration in anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial, and historical theses about mankind and the universe, for instances of economic and sociological theories of development, revolution, cultural person-

ality, national or religious character. Additionally, the imaginative examination of things Oriental was based more or less exclusively upon a sovereign Western consciousness out of whose unchallenged centrality an Oriental world emerged, first according to general ideas about who or what was an Oriental, then according to a detailed logic governed not simply by empirical reality but by a battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections. If we can point to great Orientalist works of genuine scholarship like Silvestre de Sacy's *Chrestomathie arabe* or Edward William Lane's *Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, we need also to note that Renan's and Gobineau's racial ideas came out of the same impulse, as did a great many Victorian pornographic novels (see the analysis by Steven Marcus of "The Lustful Turk"[4]).

And yet, one must repeatedly ask oneself whether what matters in-Orientalism is the general group of ideas overriding the mass of material—about which who could deny that they were shot through with doctrines of European superiority, various kinds of racism, imperialism, and the like, dogmatic views of "the Oriental" as a kind of ideal and unchanging abstraction?—or the much more varied work produced by almost uncountable individual writers, whom one would take up as individual instances of authors dealing with the Orient. In a sense the two alternatives, general and particular, are really two perspectives on the same material: in both instances one would have to deal with pioneers in the field like William Jones, with great artists like Nerval or Flaubert. And why would it not be possible to employ both perspectives together, or one after the other? Isn't there an obvious danger of distortion (of precisely the kind that academic Orientalism has always been prone to) if either too general or too specific a level of description is maintained systematically?

My two fears are distortion and inaccuracy, or rather the kind of inaccuracy produced by too dogmatic a generality and too positivistic a localized focus. In trying to deal with these problems I have tried to deal with three main aspects of my own contemporary reality that seem to me to point the way out of the methodological or perspectival difficulties I have been discussing, difficulties that might force one, in the first instance, into writing a coarse polemic on so unacceptably general a level of description as not to be worth the effort, or in the second instance, into writing so detailed and atomistic a series of analyses as to lose all track of the general

lines of force informing the field, giving it its special cogency. How then to recognize individuality and to reconcile it with its intelligent, and by no means passive or merely dictatorial, general and hegemonic context?

III

I mentioned three aspects of my contemporary reality: I must explain and briefly discuss them now, so that it can be seen how I was led to a particular course of research and writing.

1. The distinction between pure and political knowledge. It is very easy to argue that knowledge about Shakespeare or Wordsworth is not political whereas knowledge about contemporary China or the Soviet Union is. My own formal and professional designation is that of "humanist," a title which indicates the humanities as my field and therefore the unlikely eventuality that there might be anything political about what I do in that field. Of course, all these labels and terms are quite unnuanced as I use them here, but the general truth of what I am pointing to is, I think, widely held. One reason for saying that a humanist who writes about Wordsworth, or an editor whose specialty is Keats, is not involved in anything political is that what he does seems to have no direct political effect upon reality in the everyday sense. A scholar whose field is Soviet economics works in a highly charged area where there is much government interest, and what he might produce in the way of studies or proposals will be taken up by policymakers, government officials, institutional economists, intelligence experts. The distinction between "humanists" and persons whose work has policy implications, or political significance, can be broadened further by saying that the former's ideological color is a matter of incidental importance to politics (although possibly of great moment to his colleagues in the field, who may object to his Stalinism or fascism or too easy liberalism), whereas the ideology of the latter is woven directly into his material—indeed, economics, politics, and sociology in the modern academy are ideological sciences—and therefore taken for granted as being "political."

Nevertheless the determining impingement on most knowledge

produced in the contemporary West (and here I speak mainly about the United States) is that it be nonpolitical, that is, scholarly, academic, impartial, above partisan or small-minded doctrinal belief. One can have no quarrel with such an ambition in theory, perhaps, but in practice the reality is much more problematic. No one has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position, or from the mere activity of being a member of a society. These continue to bear on what he does professionally, even though naturally enough his research and its fruits do attempt to reach a level of relative freedom from the inhibitions and the restrictions of brute, everyday reality. For there is such a thing as knowledge that is less, rather than more, partial than the individual (with his entangling and distracting life circumstances) who produces it. Yet this knowledge is not therefore automatically nonpolitical.

Whether discussions of literature or of classical philology are fraught with—or have unmediated—political significance is a very large question that I have tried to treat in some detail elsewhere.[5] What I am interested in doing now is suggesting how the general liberal consensus that "true" knowledge is fundamentally nonpolitical (and conversely, that overtly political knowledge is not "true" knowledge) obscures the highly if obscurely organized political circumstances obtaining when knowledge is produced. No one is helped in understanding this today when the adjective "political" is used as a label to discredit any work for daring to violate the protocol of pretended suprapolitical objectivity. We may say, first, that civil society recognizes a gradation of political importance in the various fields of knowledge. To some extent the political importance given a field comes from the possibility of its direct translation into economic terms; but to a greater extent political importance comes from the closeness of a field to ascertainable sources of power in political society. Thus an economic study of long-term Soviet energy potential and its effect on military capability is likely to be commissioned by the Defense Department, and thereafter to acquire a kind of political status impossible for a study of Tolstoi's early fiction financed in part by a foundation. Yet both works belong in what civil society acknowledges to be a similar field, Russian studies, even though one work may be done by a very conservative economist, the other by a radical literary

historian. My point here is that "Russia" as a general subject matter has political priority over nicer distinctions such as "economics" and "literary history," because political society in Gramsci's sense reaches into such realms of civil society as the academy and saturates them with significance of direct concern to it.

I do not want to press all this any further on general theoretical grounds: it seems to me that the value and credibility of my case can be demonstrated by being much more specific, in the way, for example, Noam Chomsky has studied the instrumental connection between the Vietnam War and the notion of objective scholarship as it was applied to cover state-sponsored military research.[0] Now because Britain, France, and recently the United States are imperial powers, their political societies impart to their civil societies a sense of urgency, a direct political infusion as it were, where and whenever matters pertaining to their imperial interests abroad are concerned. I doubt that it is controversial, for example, to say that an Englishman in India or Egypt in the later nineteenth century took an interest in those countries that was never far from their status in his mind as British colonies. To say this may seem quite different from saying that all academic knowledge about India and Egypt is somehow tinged and impressed with, violated by, the gross political fact—and yet *that is what I am saying* in this study of Orientalism. For if it is true that no production of knowledge in the human sciences can ever ignore or disclaim its author's involvement as a human subject in his own circumstances, then it must also be true that for a European or American studying the Orient there can be no disclaiming the main circumstances of *his* actuality: that he comes up against the Orient as a European or American first, as an individual second. And to be a European or an American in such a situation is by no means an inert fact. It meant and means being aware, however dimly, that one belongs to a power with definite interests in the Orient, and more important, 'hat one belongs to a part of the earth with a definite history of involvement in the Orient almost since the time of Homer.

Put in this way, these political actualities are still too undefined and general to be really interesting. Anyone would agree to them without necessarily agreeing also that they mattered very much, for instance, to Flaubert as he'wrote *Salammbo,* or to H. A. R. Gibb as he wrote *Modern Trends in Islam.* The trouble is that there is too great a distance between the big dominating fact, as I have de-

scribed it, and the details of everyday life that govern the minute discipline of a novel or a scholarly text as each is being written. Yet if we eliminate from the start any notion that "big" facts like imperial domination can be applied mechanically and deterministically to such complex matters as culture and ideas, then we will begin to approach an interesting kind of study. My idea is that European and then American interest in the Orient was political according to some of the obvious historical accounts of it that I have given here, but that it was the culture that created that interest, that acted dynamically along with brute political, economic, and military rationales to make the Orient the varied and complicated place that it obviously was in the field I call Orientalism.

Therefore, Orientalism is not a mere political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a large and diffuse collection of texts about the Orient; nor is it representative and expressive of some nefarious "Western" imperialist plot to hold down the "Oriental" world. It is rather a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also of a whole series of "interests" which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it *is*, rather than expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world; it is, above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political (as with a colonial or imperial establishment), power intellectual (as with reigning sciences like comparative linguistics or anatomy, or any of the modern policy sciences), power cultural (as with orthodoxies and canons of taste, texts, values), power moral (as with ideas about what "we" do and what "they" cannot do or understand as "we" do). Indeed, my real argument is that Orientalism is—and does not simply represent—a considerable dimension of modern political-intellectual culture, and as such has less to do with the Orient than it does with "our" world.

Because Orientalism is a cultural and a political fact, then, it does not exist in some archival vacuum; quite the contrary, I think it can be shown that what is thought, said, or even done about the Orient follows (perhaps occurs within) certain distinct and intellectually knowable lines. Here too a considerable degree of nuance and elaboration can be seen working as between the broad superstructural pressures and the details of composition, the facts of textuality. Most humanistic scholars are, I think, perfectly happy with the notion that texts exist in contexts, that there is such a thing as intertextuality, that the pressures of conventions, predecessors, and rhetorical styles limit what Walter Benjamin once called the "overtaxing of the productive person in the name of . . . the principle of 'creativity,' " in which the poet is believed on his own, and out of his pure mind, to have brought forth his work.[7] Yet there is a reluctance to allow that political, institutional, and ideological constraints act in the same manner on the individual author. A humanist will believe it to be an interesting fact to any interpreter of Balzac that he was influenced in the *Comedie humaine* by the conflict between Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire and Cuvier, but the same sort of pressure on Balzac of deeply reactionary monarchism is felt in some vague way to demean his literary "genius" and therefore to be less worth serious study. Similarly—as Harry Bracken has been tirelessly showing—philosophers will conduct their discussions of Locke, Hume, and empiricism without ever taking into account that there is an explicit connection in these classic writers between their "philosophic" doctrines and racial theory, justifications of slavery, or arguments for colonial exploitation.[8] These are common enough ways by which contemporary scholarship keeps itself pure.

Perhaps it is true that most attempts to rub culture's nose in the mud of politics have been crudely iconoclastic; perhaps also the social interpretation of literature in my own field has simply not kept up with the enormous technical advances in detailed textual analysis. But there is no getting away from the fact that literary studies in general, and American Marxist theorists in particular, have avoided the effort of seriously bridging the gap between the superstructural and the base levels in textual, historical scholarship; on another occasion I have gone so far as to say that the literary-cultural establishment as a whole has declared the serious study of imperialism and culture off limits.[9] For Orientalism brings one up directly against that question—that is, to realizing

that political imperialism governs an entire field of study, imagination, and scholarly institutions—in such a way as to make its avoidance an intellectual and historical impossibility. Yet there will always remain the perennial escape mechanism of saying that a literary scholar and a philosopher, for example, are trained in literature and philosophy respectively, not in politics or ideological analysis. In other words, the specialist argument can work quite effectively to block the larger and, in my opinion, the more intellectually serious perspective.

Here it seems to me there is a simple two-part answer to be given, at least so far as the study of imperialism and culture (or Orientalism) is concerned. In the first place, nearly every nineteenth-century writer (and the same is true enough of writers in earlier periods) was extraordinarily well aware of the fact of empire: this is a subject not very well studied, but it will not take a modern Victorian specialist long to admit that liberal cultural heroes like John Stuart Mill, Arnold, Carlyle, Newman, Macaulay, Ruskin, George Eliot, and even Dickens had definite views on race and imperialism, which are quite easily to be found at work in their writing. So even a specialist must deal with the knowledge that Mill, for example, made it clear in *On Liberty* and *Representative Government* that his views there could not be applied to India (he was an India Office functionary for a good deal of his life, after all) because the Indians were civilizationally, if not racially, inferior. The same kind of paradox is to be found in Marx, as I try to show in this book. In the second place, to believe that politics in the form of imperialism bears upon the production of literature, scholarship, social theory, and history writing is by no means equivalent to saying that culture is therefore a demeaned or denigrated thing. Quite the contrary: my whole point is to say that we can better understand the persistence and the durability of saturating hegemonic systems like culture when we realize that their internal constraints upon writers and thinkers were *productive*, not unilaterally inhibiting. It is this idea that Gramsci, certainly, and Foucault and Raymond Williams in their very different ways have been trying to illustrate. Even one or two pages by Williams on "the uses of the Empire" in *The Long Revolution* tell us more about nineteenth-century cultural richness than many volumes of hermetic textual analyses.[10]

Therefore I study Orientalism as a dynamic exchange between

individual authors and the large political concerns shaped by the three great empires—British, French, American—in whose intellectual and imaginative territory the writing was produced. What interests me most as a scholar is not the gross political verity but the detail, as indeed what interests us in someone like Lane or Flaubert or Renan is not the (to him) indisputable truth that Occidentals are superior to Orientals, but the profoundly worked over and modulated evidence of his detailed work within the very wide space opened up by that truth. One need only remember that Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* is a classic of historical and anthropological observation because of its style, its enormously intelligent and brilliant details, not because of its simple reflection of racial superiority, to understand what I am saying here.

The kind of political questions raised by Orientalism, then, are as follows: What other sorts of intellectual, aesthetic, scholarly, and cultural energies went into the making of an imperialist tradition like the Orientalist one? How did philology, lexicography, history, biology, political and economic theory, novel-writing, and lyric poetry come to the service of Orientalism's broadly imperialist view of the world? What changes, modulations, refinements, even revolutions take place within Orientalism? What is the meaning of originality, of continuity, of individuality, in this context? How does Orientalism transmit or reproduce itself from one epoch to another? In fine, how can we treat the cultural, historical phenomenon of Orientalism as a kind of *willed human work*—not of mere unconditioned ratiocination—in all its historical complexity, detail, and worth without at the same time losing sight of the alliance between cultural work, political tendencies, the state, and the specific realities of domination? Governed by such concerns a humanistic study can responsibly address itself to politics *and* culture. But this is not to say that such a study establishes a hard-and-fast rule about the relationship between knowledge and politics. My argument is that each humanistic investigation must formulate the nature of that connection in the specific context of the study, the subject natter, and its historical circumstances.

2. *The methodological question.* In a previous book I gave a good deal of thought and analysis to the methodological importance f°r work in the human sciences of finding and formulating a first ste P. a point of departure, a beginning principle.[11] A major lesson

I learned and tried to present was that there is no such thing as a merely given, or simply available, starting point: beginnings have to be made for each project in such a way as to *enable* what follows from them. Nowhere in my experience has the difficulty of this lesson been more consciously lived (with what success—or failure—I cannot really say) than in this study of Orientalism. The idea of beginning, indeed the act of beginning, necessarily involves an act of delimitation by which something is cut out of a great mass of material, separated from the mass, and made to stand for, as well as be, a starting point, a beginning; for the student of texts one such notion of inaugural delimitation is Louis Althusser's idea of the *problematic*, a specific determinate unity of a text, or group of texts, which is something given rise to by analysis.[12] Yet in the case of Orientalism (as opposed to the case of Marx's texts, which is what Althusser studies) there is not simply the problem of finding a point of departure, or problematic, but also the question of designating which texts, authors, and periods are the ones best suited for study.

It has seemed to me foolish to attempt an encyclopedic narrative history of Orientalism, first of all because if my guiding principle was to be "the European idea of the Orient" there would be virtually no limit to the material I would have had to deal with; second, because the narrative model itself did not suit my descriptive and political interests; third, because in such books as Raymond Schwab's *La Renaissance orientate*, Johann Fuck's *Die Arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts*, and more recently, Dorothee Metlitzki's *The Matter of Araby in Medieval England*[13] there already exist encyclopedic works on certain aspects of the European-Oriental encounter such as make the critic's job, in the general political and intellectual context I sketched above, a different one.

There still remained the problem of cutting down a very fat archive to manageable dimensions, and more important, outlining something in the nature of an intellectual order within that group of texts without at the same time following a mindlessly chronological order. My starting point therefore has been the British, French, and American experience of the Orient taken as a unit, what made that experience possible by way of historical and intellectual background, what the quality and character of the experience has been. For reasons I shall discuss presently I limited that already limited (but still inordinately large) set of questions to

the Anglo-French-American experience of the Arabs and Islam, which for almost a thousand years together stood for the Orient. Immediately upon doing that, a large part of the Orient seemed to have been eliminated—India, Japan, China, and other sections of the Far East—not because these regions were not important (they obviously have been) but because one could discuss Europe's experience of the Near Orient, or of Islam, apart from its experience of the Far Orient. Yet at certain moments of that general European history of interest in the East, particular parts of the Orient like Egypt, Syria, and Arabia cannot be discussed without also studying Europe's involvement in the more distant parts, of which Persia and India are the most important; a notable case in point is the connection between Egypt and India so far as eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain was concerned. Similarly the French role in deciphering the Zend-Avesta, the pre-eminence of Paris as a center of Sanskrit studies during the first decade of the nineteenth century, the fact that Napoleon's interest in the Orient was contingent upon his sense of the British role in India: all these Far Eastern interests directly influenced French interest in the Near East, Islam, and the Arabs.

Britain and France dominated the Eastern Mediterranean from about the end of the seventeenth century on. Yet my discussion of that domination and systematic interest does not do justice to (a) the important contributions to Orientalism of Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, and Portugal and (b) the fact that one of the important impulses toward the study of the Orient in the eighteenth century was the revolution in Biblical studies stimulated by such variously interesting pioneers as Bishop Lowth, Eichhorn, Herder, and Michaelis. In the first place, I had to focus rigorously upon the British-French and later the American material because it seemed inescapably true not only that Britain and France were the pioneer nations in the Orient and in Oriental studies, but that these vanguard positions were held by virtue of the two greatest colonial networks in pre-twentieth-century history; the American Oriental Position since World War II has fit—I think, quite self-consciously in the places excavated by the two earlier European powers. Then too, I believe that the sheer quality, consistency, and mass British, French, and American writing on the Orient lifts it above the doubtless crucial work done in Germany, Italy, Russia, and elsewhere. But I think it is also true that the major steps in Oriental scholarship were first taken in either Britain and France,

then elaborated upon by Germans. Silvestre de Sacy, for example, was not only the first modern and institutional European Orientalist, who worked on Islam, Arabic literature, the Druze religion, and Sassanid Persia; he was also the teacher of Champollion and of Franz Bopp, the founder of German comparative linguistics. A similar claim of priority and subsequent pre-eminence can be made for William Jones and Edward William Lane.

In the second place—and here the failings of my study of Orientalism are amply made up for—there has been some important recent work on the background in Biblical scholarship to the rise of what I have called modern Orientalism. The best and the most illuminatingly relevant is E. S. Shaffer's impressive *"Kubla Khan" and The Fall of Jerusalem*,[14] an indispensable study of the origins of Romanticism, and of the intellectual activity underpinning a great deal of what goes on in Coleridge, Browning, and George Eliot. To some degree Shaffer's work refines upon the outlines provided in Schwab, by articulating the material of relevance to be found in the German Biblical scholars and using that material to read, in an intelligent and always interesting way, the work of three major British writers. Yet what is missing in the book is some sense of the political as well as ideological edge given the Oriental material by the British and French writers I am principally concerned with; in addition, unlike Shaffer I attempt to elucidate subsequent developments in academic as well as literary Orientalism that bear on the connection between British and French Orientalism on the one hand and the rise of an explicitly colonial-minded imperialism on the other. Then too, I wish to show how all these earlier matters are reproduced more or less in American Orientalism after the Second World War.

Nevertheless there is a possibly misleading aspect to my study, where, aside from an occasional reference, I do not exhaustively discuss the German developments after the inaugural period dominated by Sacy. Any work that seeks to provide an understanding of academic Orientalism and pays little attention to scholars like Steinthai, Miiller, Becker, Goldziher, Brockelmann, Noldeke—to mention only a handful—needs to be reproached, and I freely reproach myself. I particularly regret not taking more account of the great scientific prestige that accrued to German scholarship by the middle of the nineteenth century, whose neglect was made into a denunciation of insular British scholars by George Eliot. I have in mind Eliot's unforgettable portrait of Mr. Casaubon in *Middle-*

march. One reason Casaubon cannot finish his Key to All Mythologies is, according to his young cousin Will Ladislaw, that he is unacquainted with German scholarship. For not only has Casaubon chosen a subject "as changing as chemistry: new discoveries are constantly making new points of view": he is undertaking a job similar to a refutation of Paracelsus because "he is not an Orientalist, you know.'"[5]

Eliot was not wrong in implying that by about 1830, which is when *Middlemarch* is set, German scholarship had fully attained its European pre-eminence. Yet at no time in German scholarship during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century could a close partnership have developed between Orientalists and a protracted, sustained *national* interest in the Orient. There was nothing in Germany to correspond to the Anglo-French presence in India, the Levant, North Africa. Moreover, the German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical, Orient: it was made the subject of lyrics, fantasies, and even novels, but it was never actual, the way Egypt and Syria were actual for Chateaubriand, Lane, Lamartine, Burton, Disraeli, or Nerval. There is some significance in the fact that the two most renowned German works on the Orient, Goethe's *Westdstlicher Diwan* and Friedrich Schlegel's *Vber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier,* were based respectively on a Rhine journey and on hours spent in Paris libraries. What German Oriental scholarship did was to refine and elaborate techniques whose application was to texts, myths, ideas, and languages almost literally gathered from the Orient by imperial Britain and France.

Yet what German Orientalism had in common with Anglo-French and later American Orientalism was a kind of intellectual *authority* over the Orient within Western culture. This authority must in large part be the subject of any description of Orientalism, and it is so in this study. Even the name *Orientalism* suggests a serious, perhaps ponderous style of expertise; when I apply it to modern American social scientists (since they do not call themselves Orientalists, my use of the word is anomalous), it is to draw attention to the way Middle East experts can still draw on the vestiges of Orientalism's intellectual position in nineteenth-century Europe.

There is nothing mysterious or natural about authority. It is formed, irradiated, disseminated; it is instrumental, it is persuasive; [11] has status, it establishes canons of taste and value; it is virtually

indistinguishable from certain ideas it dignifies as true, and from traditions, perceptions, and judgments it forms, transmits, reproduces. Above all, authority can, indeed must, be analyzed. All these attributes of authority apply to Orientalism, and much of what I do in this study is to describe both the historical authority in and the personal authorities of Orientalism.

My principal methodological devices for studying authority here are what can be called *strategic location,* which is a way of describing the author's position in a text with regard to the Oriental material he writes about, and *strategic formation,* which is a way of analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large. I use the notion of strategy simply to identify the problem every writer on the Orient has faced: how to get hold of it, how to approach it, how not to be defeated or overwhelmed by its sublimity, its scope, its awful dimensions. Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-a-vis the Orient; translated into his text, this location includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text—all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking in its behalf. None of this takes place in the abstract, however. Every writer on the Orient (and this is true even of Homer) assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies. Additionally, each work on the Orient *affiliates* itself with other works, with audiences, with institutions, with the Orient itself. The ensemble of relationships between works, audiences, and some particular aspects of the Orient therefore constitutes an analyzable formation—for example, that of philological studies, of anthologies of extracts from Oriental literature, of travel books, of Oriental fantasies—whose presence in time, in discourse, in institutions (schools, libraries, foreign services) gives it strength and authority.

It is clear, I hope, that my concern with authority does not entail analysis of what lies hidden in the Orientalist text, but analysis rather of the text's surface, its exteriority to what it describes. I do not think that this idea can be overemphasized. Orientalism is premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak, describes

the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West. He is never concerned with the Orient except as the first cause of what he says. What he says and writes, by virtue of the fact that it is said or written, is meant to indicate that the Orientalist is outside the Orient, both as an existential and as a moral fact. The principal product of this exteriority is of course representation: as early as Aeschylus's play *The Persians* the Orient is transformed from a very far distant and often threatening Otherness into figures that are relatively familiar (in Aeschylus's case, grieving Asiatic women). The dramatic immediacy of representation in *The Persians* obscures the fact that the audience is watching a highly artificial enactment of what a non-Oriental has made into a symbol for the whole Orient. My analysis of the Orientalist text therefore places emphasis on the evidence, which is by no means invisible, for such representations *as representations,* not as "natural" depictions of the Orient. This evidence is found just as prominently in the so-called truthful text (histories, philological analyses, political treatises) as in the avowedly artistic (i.e., openly imaginative) text. The things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original. The exteriority of the representation is always governed by some version of the truism that if the Orient could represent itself, it would; since it cannot, the representation does the job, for the West, and *faute de mieux,* for the poor Orient. "Sie konnen sich nicht vertreten, sie miissen vertreten werden," as Marx wrote in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte.*

Another reason for insisting upon exteriority is that I believe it needs to be made clear about cultural discourse and exchange within a culture that what is commonly circulated by it is not "truth" but representations. It hardly needs to be demonstrated again that language itself is a highly organized and encoded system, which employs many devices to express, indicate, exchange messages and information, represent, and so forth. In any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a *re-presence,* or a representation. The value, efficacy, strength, apparent veracity of a written statement about the Orient therefore relies very little, and cannot instrumentally depend, on the Orient as such. On the contrary, the written statement is a presence to the reader by virtue of its having excluded, displaced, made supererogatory any such *real thing* as "the Orient." Thus all

of Orientalism stands forth and away from the Orient: that Orientalism makes sense at all depends more on the West than on the Orient, and this sense is directly indebted to various Western techniques of representation that make the Orient visible, clear, "there" in discourse about it. And these representations rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, agreed-upon codes of understanding for their effects, not upon a distant and amorphous Orient.

The difference between representations of the Orient before the last third of the eighteenth century and those after it (that is, those belonging to what I call modern Orientalism) is that the range of representation expanded enormously in the later period. It is true that after William Jones and Anquetil-Duperron, and after Napoleon's Egyptian expedition, Europe came to know the Orient more scientifically, to live in it with greater authority and discipline than ever before. But what mattered to Europe was the expanded scope and the much greater refinement given its techniques for receiving the Orient. When around the turn of the eighteenth century the Orient definitively revealed the age of its languages—thus outdating Hebrew's divine pedigree—it was a group of Europeans who made the discovery, passed it on to other scholars, and preserved the discovery in the new science of Indo-European philology. A new powerful science for viewing the linguistic Orient was born, and with it, as Foucault has shown in ***The Order of Things,*** a whole web of related scientific interests. Similarly William Beckford, Byron, Goethe, and Hugo restructured the Orient by their art and made its colors, lights, and people visible through their images, rhythms, and motifs. At most, the "real" Orient provoked a writer to his vision; it very rarely guided it.

Orientalism responded more to the culture that produced it than to its putative object, which was also produced by the West. Thus the history of Orientalism has both an internal consistency and a highly articulated set of relationships to the dominant culture surrounding it. My analyses consequently try to show the field's shape and internal organization, its pioneers, patriarchal authorities, canonical texts, doxological ideas, exemplary figures, its followers, elaborators, and new authorities; I try also to explain how Orientalism borrowed and was frequently informed by "strong" ideas, doctrines, and trends ruling the culture. Thus there was (and is) a linguistic Orient, a Freudian Orient, a Spenglerian Orient, a Darwinian Orient, a racist Orient—and so on. Yet never has there

been such a thing as a pure, or unconditional, Orient; similarly, never has there been a nonmaterial form of Orientalism, much less something so innocent as an "idea" of the Orient. In this underlying conviction and in its ensuing methodological consequences do I differ from scholars who study the history of ideas. For the emphases and the executive form, above all the material effectiveness, of statements made by Orientalist discourse are possible in ways that any hermetic history of ideas tends completely to scant. Without those emphases and that material effectiveness Orientalism would be just another idea, whereas it is and was much more than that. Therefore I set out to examine not only scholarly works but also works of literature, political tracts, journalistic texts, travel books, religious and philological studies. In other words, my hybrid perspective is broadly historical and "anthropological," given that I believe all texts to be worldly and circumstantial in (of course) ways that vary from genre to genre, and from historical period to historical period.

Yet unlike Michel Foucault, to whose work I am greatly indebted, I do believe in the determining imprint of individual writers upon the otherwise anonymous collective body of texts constituting a discursive formation like Orientalism. The unity of the large ensemble of texts I analyze is due in part to the fact that they frequently refer to each other: Orientalism is after all a system for citing works and authors. Edward William Lane's *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* was read and cited by such diverse figures as Nerval, Flaubert, and Richard Burton. He was an authority whose use was an imperative for anyone writing or thinking about the Orient, not just about Egypt: when Nerval borrows passages verbatim from *Modern Egyptians* it is to use Lane's authority to assist him in describing village scenes in Syria, not Egypt. Lane's authority and the opportunities provided for citing him discriminately as well as indiscriminately were there because Orientalism could give his text the kind of distributive currency that he acquired. There is no way, however, of understanding Lane's currency without also understanding the peculiar features of *his* text; this is equally true of Renan, Sacy, Lamartine, Schlegel, and a group of other influential writers. Foucault believes that in general the individual text or author counts for very little; empirically, in the case of Orientalism (and perhaps nowhere else) I find this not to be so. Accordingly my analyses employ close textual readings

whose goal is to reveal the dialectic between individual text or writer and the complex collective formation to which his work is a contribution.

Yet even though it includes an ample selection of writers, this book is still far from a complete history or general account of Orientalism. Of this, failing I am very conscious. The fabric of as thick a discourse as Orientalism has survived and functioned in Western society because of its richness: all I have done is to describe parts of that fabric at certain moments, and merely to suggest the existence of a larger whole, detailed, interesting, dotted with fascinating figures, texts, and events. I have consoled myself with believing that this book is one installment of several, and hope there are scholars and critics who might want to write others. There is still a general essay to be written on imperialism and culture; other studies would go more deeply into the connection between Orientalism and pedagogy, or into Italian, Dutch, German, and Swiss Orientalism, or into the dynamic between scholarship and imaginative writing, or into the relationship between administrative ideas and intellectual discipline. Perhaps the most important task of all would be to undertake studies in contemporary alternatives to Orientalism, to ask how one can study other cultures and peoples from a libertarian, or a nonrepressive and nonmanipulative, perspective. But then one would have to rethink the whole complex problem of knowledge and power. These are all tasks left embarrassingly incomplete in this study.

The last, perhaps self-flattering, observation on method that I want to make here is that I have written this study with several audiences in mind. For students of literature and criticism, Orientalism offers a marvelous instance of the interrelations between society, history, and textuality; moreover, the cultural role played by the Orient in the West connects Orientalism with ideology, politics, and the logic of power, matters of relevance, I think, to the literary community. For contemporary students of the Orient, from university scholars to policymakers, I have written with two ends in mind: one, to present their intellectual genealogy to them in a way that has not been done; two, to criticize—with the hope of stirring discussion—the often unquestioned assumptions on which their work for the most part depends. For the general reader, this study deals with matters that always compel attention, all of them connected not only with Western conceptions and treatments of the Other but also with the singularly important role played by Western culture

in what Vico called the world of nations. Lastly, for readers in the so-called Third World, this study proposes itself as a step towards an understanding not so much of Western politics and of the non-Western world in those politics as of the *strength* of Western cultural discourse, a strength too often mistaken as merely decorative or "superstructural." My hope is to illustrate the formidable structure of cultural domination and, specifically for formerly colonized peoples, the dangers and temptations of employing this structure upon themselves or upon others.

The three long chapters and twelve shorter units into which this book is divided are intended to facilitate exposition as much as possible. Chapter One, "The Scope of Orientalism," draws a large circle around all the dimensions of the subject, both in terms of historical time and experiences and in terms of philosophical and political themes. Chapter Two, "Orientalist Structures and Restructures," attempts to trace the development of modern Orientalism by a broadly chronological description, and also by the description of a set of devices common to the work of important poets, artists, and scholars. Chapter Three, "Orientalism Now," begins where its predecessor left off, at around 1870. This is the period of great colonial expansion into the Orient, and it culminates in World War II. The very last section of Chapter Three characterizes the shift from British and French to American hegemony; I attempt there finally to sketch the present intellectual and social realities of Orientalism in the United States.

3. *The personal dimension.* In the *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci says: "The starting-point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory." The only available English translation inexplicably leaves Gramsci's comment at that, whereas in fact Gramsci's Italian text concludes by adding, "therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory."[14]

Much of the personal investment in this study derives from my awareness of being an "Oriental" as a child growing up in two British colonies. All of my education, in those colonies (Palestine and Egypt) and in the United States, has been Western, and yet that deep early awareness has persisted. In many ways my study of Orientalism has been an attempt to inventory the traces upon me, the Oriental subject, of the culture whose domination has been so powerful a factor in the life of all Orientals. This is why for me the

Islamic Orient has had to be the center of attention. Whether what I have achieved is the inventory prescribed by Gramsci is not for me to judge, although I have felt it important to be conscious of trying to produce one. Along the way, as severely and as rationally as I have been able, I have tried to maintain a critical consciousness, as well as employing those instruments of historical, humanistic, and cultural research of which my education has made me the fortunate beneficiary. In none of that, however, have I ever lost hold of the cultural reality of, the personal involvement in having been constituted as, "an Oriental."

The historical circumstances making such a study possible are fairly complex, and I can only list them schematically here. Anyone resident in the West since the 1950s, particularly in the United States, will have lived through an era of extraordinary turbulence in the relations of East and West. No one will have failed to note how "East" has always signified danger and threat during this period, even as it has meant the traditional Orient as well as Russia. In the universities a growing establishment of area-studies programs and institutes has made the scholarly study of the Orient a branch of national policy. Public affairs in this country include a healthy interest in the Orient, as much for its strategic and economic importance as for its traditional exoticism. If the world has become immediately accessible to a Western citizen living in the electronic age, the Orient too has drawn nearer to him, and is now less a myth perhaps than a place crisscrossed by Western, especially American, interests.

One aspect of the electronic, postmodern world is that there has been a reinforcement of the stereotypes by which the Orient is viewed. Television, the films, and all the media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds. So far as the Orient is concerned, standardization and cultural stereotyping have intensified the hold of the nineteenth-century academic and imaginative demonology of "the mysterious Orient." This is nowhere more true than in the "ways by which the Near East is grasped. Three things have contributed to making even the simplest perception of the Arabs and Islam into a highly politicized, almost raucous matter: one, the history of popular anti-Arab and anti-Islamic prejudice in the West, which is immediately reflected in the history of Orientalism; two, the struggle between the Arabs and Israeli Zionism, and its effects upon American Jews as well as upon both the liberal culture and the population at large; three, the almost

total absence of any cultural position making it possible either to identify with or dispassionately to discuss the Arabs or Islam. Furthermore, it hardly needs saying that because the Middle East is now so identified with Great Power politics, oil economics, and the simple-minded dichotomy of freedom-loving, democratic Israel and evil, totalitarian, and terroristic Arabs, the chances of anything like a clear view of what one talks about in talking about the Near East are depressingly small.

My own experiences of these matters are in part what made me write this book. The life of an Arab Palestinian in the West, particularly in America, is disheartening. There exists here an almost unanimous consensus that politically he does not exist, and when it is allowed that he does, it is either as a nuisance or as an Oriental. The web of racism, cultural stereotypes, political imperialism, dehumanizing ideology holding in the Arab or the Muslim is very strong indeed, and it is this web which every Palestinian has come to feel as his uniquely punishing destiny. It has made matters worse for him to remark that no person academically involved with the Near East—no Orientalist, that is—has ever in the United States culturally and politically identified himself wholeheartedly with the Arabs; certainly there have been identifications on some level, but they have never taken an "acceptable" form as has liberal American identification with Zionism, and all too frequently they have been radically flawed by their association either with discredited political and economic interests (oil-company and State Department Arabists, for example) or with religion.

The nexus of knowledge and power creating "the Oriental" and in a sense obliterating him as a human being is therefore not for me an exclusively academic matter. Yet it is an *intellectual* matter of some very obvious importance. I have been able to put to use my humanistic and political concerns for the analysis and description of a very worldly matter, the rise, development, and consolidation of Orientalism. Too often literature and culture are presumed to be politically, even historically innocent; it has regularly seemed otherwise to me, and certainly my study of Orientalism has convinced me (and I hope will convince my literary colleagues) that society and literary culture can only be understood and studied together. In addition, and by an almost inescapable logic, I have found myself writing the history of a strange, secret sharer of Western anti-Semitism. That anti-Semitism and, as I have discussed

it in its Islamic branch, Orientalism resemble each other very closely is a historical, cultural, and political truth that needs only to be mentioned to an Arab Palestinian for its irony to be perfectly understood. But what I should like also to have contributed here is a better understanding of the way cultural domination has operated. If this stimulates a new kind of dealing with the Orient, indeed if it eliminates the "Orient" and "Occident" altogether, then we shall have advanced a little in the process of what Raymond Williams has called the "unlearning" of "the inherent dominative mode."[17]

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India in the American Imaginary, 1780s–1880s

palgrave
macmillan

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The New Urban Atlantic
ISBN 978-3-319-62333-7 ISBN 978-3-319-62334-4 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-62334-4

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017948280

Cover image: Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; Gift of Mrs. Frank L. Babbott, Jr., 1941

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

CHAPTER 1

India in the American Imaginary, 1780s–1880s

Rajender Kaur and Anupama Arora

Fort St. George is a handsome brick fortification. It appears very strong but is probably too much extended to make as able a defence as might otherwise be done. It contains a regular built town, containing several houses, many stores, shops etc. besides an English Church, the Government offices and accommodations for the troops. In the public square, in the middle of the Fort, is a statue of Marquis Cornwallis, lately brought from England. Not being entirely finished it was kept covered while we were here, but was to be opened with a great parade in a few days, on the anniversary of the victory gained by that nobleman under the walls of Seringapatam, which produced peace with Tippoo. The public buildings attract no attention from their splendour. No black is permitted to go into the Fort in a palanquin; they must walk in from the gates. All the European merchants have their stores in the Fort. They generally live a few miles from the Fort in the country.
—Captain Dudley Leavitt Pickman, The Journal of the Belisarius, 1799–1800

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A. Arora and R. Kaur (eds.), *India in the American Imaginary, 1780s–1880s*, The New Urban Atlantic,
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-62334-4_1

A stranger, the first moment he sees an Indian city is probably more astonished, his curiosity more awakened, perhaps delighted, than it can be in visiting the first European cities. Although the latter may be decorated with more superb palaces and public buildings, although you find in than much more refinement and luxury, yet they cannot in my opinion excite half the emotion that you feel on first seeing the former. To be placed instantaneously in a crowded city, its houses are styled differently, streets thronged with every cast and kind from the pale European resident to the jet black Kauffree/ Caffie. Thousands of men and women almost naked, others though dressed yet so singularly as to exact attention, from the turban'd Turk to the "sans culottes" coolee—in fact English, Americans, French and Portuguese, Armenians and Jews, Parsees, Gentoos and Mahommedans, each wearing the costume of his nation, displaying its peculiar manners. I am sure that when I entered the city of Paris, so famed for wonders, my curiosity was by no means so raised as at Bombay.

—William A. Rogers, Journal containing Remarks and Observations during a Voyage to India: The Journal of the Tartar 1817–1818

These two excerpts from the journals of Captain Dudley Leavitt Pickman, founder of one of the great trading firms and merchant dynasties of Salem, Massachusetts, and of William Augustus Rogers, log master of the *Tartar*, respectively, were written in the heyday of the United States' trade to China and India, which flourished between 1782 and 1844.[1] They provide dramatically different responses to the sights and sounds of India.[2] Describing two very diverse port cities—Madras, in Southern India, and Bombay in Western India—these travelogues gesture toward the breadth of the American maritime trade with India and the diversity of responses to the American encounter with India. Rogers presents Bombay as a cosmopolitan crossroads of the world where every kind of foreign national can be seen, from the "pale European to the jet black Kauffree," and provides an illuminating glimpse into the open-minded curiosity and wonder, however short-lived, that marked Indo-American interactions in the early republic. Captain Pickman's remarks, on the one hand, on the British settlement of Fort George in Madras and his references, on the other hand, to Cornwallis and Tippoo reveal an intimate knowledge of the British East India Company's affairs in India and of their determined efforts to establish supremacy there. Pickman's comments shed light on the transnational investments of the early republic by showing how closely the protracted Anglo-Indian Mysore Wars (which eventually led to the defeat and death of the

dreaded Tipu Sultan in 1799) were followed in the USA. In referring to Cornwallis as a nobleman, Pickman seems to gloss over Cornwallis's humiliating surrender in the Siege of Yorktown in 1781, which forced the British to sign peace treaties that eventually led to the end of the American War of Independence. In this context, then, Pickman's appreciative reference to Cornwallis's statue, to be unveiled after a victory parade in Madras, is prescient in that it hints at the incipient imperial ambitions of a young nation that would slowly align with Britain. The reference to the natives of India as "blacks" who are forbidden entry into the fort in a palanquin but can only enter on foot further reveals the othering gaze of racial taxonomies that would slowly harden in the nineteenth century as the USA became more established as a nation and more engaged in its own forms of empire building. These hardening attitudes are epitomized, for instance, in the anti-India rhetoric of the coverage of the Sepoy Rebellion (1857) against British rule in American print culture and were symptomatic of changing American attitudes and the increasing synchrony of its geopolitical interests with Britain.[3] Hardening racial attitudes and the adoption of increasingly pejorative Orientalist perspectives on Asia and on India during the course of the nineteenth century were part and parcel of an aggressive belief in the doctrine of Manifest Destiny that had led to the annexation of vast territories on the continent in the Southwest and the Pacific coast from Mexico in the war with Mexico in 1846–1848, eventually culminating in an unapologetic baring of U.S. imperial ambitions in the Spanish–American War of 1898.

We begin our introduction to Indo-American interactions in the long nineteenth century with the maritime journal entries of Pickman and Rogers to underscore the triangulated relationship between the USA, Britain, and India forged by the far-ranging reach of British imperial networks. As American maritime trade flourished with India, it was not uncommon to see many a *lascar* (sailor from India or Southeast Asia) in Salem and other port cities along the Eastern seaboard. The travel logs and journals of Pickman, Rogers, and numerous other supercargoes and captains reveal the dimensions of the expansive trade in cotton and silk textiles, sugar, ginger, and indigo, among other commodities that captured the imagination of Americans in the early republic and that was reflected in the widespread mention of India in popular print culture. The lucrative trade with India, in addition to bringing riches to the new

nation, was also invested with much symbolic meaning in the early years of the new republic and was an important formative cultural encounter through which Americans crystallized a sense of self. The impact of this significant economic relationship and its manifestation in American political and cultural life and how it came to inform the American imaginary in the early republic need to be examined more substantively.[4]

The essays that comprise this volume on Indo-American interactions in the long nineteenth century frame the "the idea of India" in the American imaginary within a transnational lens that is attentive to global flows of goods, people, and ideas within the circuits of imperial and maritime economies in late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century USA. By tracing the "Indic presence" across differing contexts, times, and regions of the USA, this diverse and interdisciplinary volume adds to an understanding of the fast changing terrain of economic, political, and cultural life in the USA as it slowly emerged from being a British colony to having imperial ambitions of its own. We argue that India/the Indian subcontinent (whether as an idea, as goods/objects/commodities, or as peoples) was part of the cultural and political imaginary of the USA from its inception and performed important ideological work in articulating the nation in the postrevolutionary period and through the nineteenth century.

India dominated the imaginative landscape of Americans and permeated the literary and cultural discourse of the times in significant ways through diverse print and performative forums of high and popular culture, as well as through institutions such as the Salem East India Marine Society, the American Oriental Society, and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Print culture in the form of missionary tracts, newspapers, periodicals, memoirs, poems, and prose; the performances of plays; the spectacle of the circus, *nautch*, or dancing girls; and fashion and clothing, as well as the immense profits generated by a vigorous trade—all evidenced the enormous presence of India. This Indic presence served different needs and purposes, highlighting national and domestic concerns—over gender and sexuality, race, religion, and class. The essays in this volume elaborate in a nuanced manner the startling and significant ways in which India showed up in a range of contexts and conversations in the new republic and across the nineteenth century. They suggest the changing self-image of a nation—from one that embodied a surprisingly cosmopolitan sensibility, a relative openness to different cultural values and customs in the late eighteenth and

early nineteenth centuries, to one that slowly allied itself with Britain and adopted increasingly imperial, rigid, and discriminatory racial and cultural attitudes by the close of the century. Beyond shifts in perspective effected by changing political winds over the course of the century, no doubt, differing perspectives on India were also shaped by the varied contexts in which Americans encountered India: through direct interactions by traders and missionaries in the economic and religious contexts, indirectly by consumers of Indian goods and textiles and by readers encountering figurations of India in print culture, or intellectually through an engagement with Hindu philosophical texts as in the case of the Transcendentalists.[5]

India in America in the Long Nineteenth Century

India has been part of the American imaginary since Christopher Columbus set out to find a new trade route to India and landed instead on the shores of the Americas. But one can trace the earliest Indo-American interactions to the 1620s, when Europeans brought servants from the Indian subcontinent with them to North America. New research on the colonial period facilitated by the digitization of archival materials such as newspapers, parish records, court records of petitions and rulings, and papers of the Continental Congress, among others, reveals an American landscape sprinkled quite significantly with people of South Asian origin. Known then as "East Indians," in distinction to Native Americans, who were called "Indians," their presence in early colonial America is linked directly to the British East India Company and its functionaries who brought back servants from India to England, and then to America, for either personal use or profit.[6] Some of these ex-British East India Company functionaries, like Elihu Yale (1649–1721), Thomas Law (1756–1834), and Captain John O'Donnell (1749–1805), exercised significant influence in American affairs and are associated with iconic institutions and cities such as Yale University, Washington, DC, and the city of Baltimore, respectively.[7] Over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, India was present in the imagination of important American figures such as Cotton Mather, Thomas Jefferson, and John Adams, who invoked it in their speeches and writings. In addition, "India Goods" (mostly textiles) were advertised in newspapers and present in households, and their consumption helped define the self-image of an elite class along the eastern seaboard. The consumption of oriental

goods helped create an incipient form of an imperial and global consciousness of which India, along with China, was an important constituent.

In addition, India also entered Americans' imaginations variously through the postrevolutionary era's expanding print culture, as newly minted American citizens followed debates over British colonial excesses and exploits: the British parliamentary inquiry into the corruptions of General Clive in India, the 1788 impeachment trial of Warren Hastings, and the British colonial wars with Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, the Tiger of Mysore.[8] For most Americans in the early republic and the federalist period, India or the "East Indies" represented an undifferentiated region of the globe east of the Cape of Good Hope, comprising the Indian subcontinent, Indonesia, Southeast Asia, China, and extending into the Pacific. However, a growing attentiveness to political geography necessitated by transnational networks of imperial and maritime economies in the early nineteenth century gradually established India as a distinct place in the early American imaginary. Thus, towns small and large—Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Pondicherry, Arcot, Pulicat, and Serangipatnam, to name just a few—were part of the imaginative geography of India in American popular culture.

Beyond economic benefits, the young American nation's successful trade with the East Indies was significant for its symbolic meaning. After the revolution, this trade was imbued with ideas of national independence. The importance of this trade to the nation was observed by an American author, Bartholemew Burges, who in 1790 wrote that a connection with India "is not only courted by the whole commercial world, but whose opulence, munificence, and [commercial] traffic … have become a matter of general conversation and national attention."[9] Important American personages recognized the resonance surrounding trade with "wealthy India." Ezra Stiles, the president of Yale College, gave a speech in 1783 in which he celebrated the idea that "Navigation will carry the American flag around the globe itself; and display the thirteen stripes and new constellation at *bengal* and *canton*, on the *indus* and *ganges*."[10] John Adams advised American merchants to "push their commerce to the East Indies,"[11] and Thomas Jefferson expressed the need to build a "North American road to India" to exploit the potential for trade.[12] After being subject to trade restrictions as a colonial outpost, the new nation was eager to chart its own destiny through trading freely in the East. In her important book *U. S Orientalisms*: *Race, Nation, and*

Gender in Literature, Malini Johar Schueller suggests that the commercial came to be "invested with raced cultural ideologies" and that the ability to trade with the East Indies carried with it associations of a mission, power, and pride.[13]

The interests of trade and the increasing importance of India to the nascent imperial ambitions of the USA were reflected in the cultural sphere through the establishment of such abiding American institutions as the East India Marine Society (1799) and the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) (1812), which collated and disseminated information sent by American missionaries to the East, and through the widespread dissemination of scholarship on ancient Hindu and Buddhist philosophical texts through the American Oriental Society (1842). These institutions produced an increasingly intimate knowledge of India that demarcated "Indostan" as a distinctive geographical, cultural, and political entity separate from China and Southeast Asia. Their publications and collections also served to codify the dominant tropes about India that circulated in popular culture and that came to exercise a significant influence in American life and letters in the nineteenth century.

The East India Marine Society in Salem was formed as "a museum of natural and artificial curiosities particularly such as are to be found beyond the Cape of Good Hope and Cape Horn."[14] Yankee trade ships brought in goods and products from the Indies in the bustling seaports, and the East Coast was thus familiar with the "Indies" through its products such as textiles and jewelry, items still exhibited at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, one of the oldest continuously operated museums in the country.[15] Visitors marveled at ornaments, palanquins, silver hookahs, China tea sets, silks, porcelain, life-size figures of Asian merchants, figures of Hindu deities—such as Krishna, Rama, and Sita—and a stone hand from Elephanta cave temples of Bombay ornaments—all quaint curios of the East.[16] One of the earliest donations by a foreigner to this museum was that by the Parsee merchant Nusserwanjee Maneckjee Wadia, who donated his own portrait in 1803. Maneckjee also gave a cashmere shawl to Captain George Nichols of Salem as a wedding gift for his wife, as Nichols recalled in his autobiography, *A Salem Shipmaster and Merchant:* "[Maneckji] gave me at the same time a camel's-hair shawl, quite a handsome one. I returned the compliment, by presenting him with a set of Mayor's *Voyages.* Afterwards he sent me a shawl of a larger size and handsomer."[17] These exchanges suggest the

open-mindedness with which early American merchants approached India as they sought to cultivate cross-cultural friendships that were formed in the crucible of these early maritime trade networks. More pertinently, American merchants did not establish commercial houses in India as they did in China. They preferred to do business through Indian brokers, or *banians*, who they trusted implicitly and whose credit they would often use in their trade in the Bay of Bengal, sharing their profits with the Indian middlemen who facilitated local contacts and business. Such commercial ties built on trust inevitably resulted in close personal ties as well and formed the basis of the mutually respectful ties between Americans and Indians. Ramdulal Dey was one merchant broker who was connected to American maritime trading houses in Salem, Boston, Philadelphia, Newburyport, and Marblehead. An enormously rich man, Dey was so widely respected for his skills and connections that in 1801, thirty Americans gathered together in Calcutta to present him with a life-sized portrait of George Washington.[18] The presentation of portraits functioned as a symbolic gesture of cultural exchange between Americans and Indians and was clearly intended to bolster trading relationships.

These ties of friendship that characterized early American encounters with India stand in sharp contrast to the generally negative representations of India in missionary accounts that were motivated by the need to "civilize" the natives. Through the nineteenth century, a missionary discourse on India proliferated in a variety of missionary periodicals that printed texts such as *Bishop Heber's India* and Mrs. Harriet Newell's *Missionary Letters and Impressions* (1813), among others. As early as 1721, Cotton Mather had written a manual (*India Christiana*) to help missionaries convert people in India.[19] Mather also corresponded with Bartholomew Ziegenbalgh, a German missionary, and with Danish missionaries in India.[20] But it was only after the formation of the ABCFM that India became a rich field for American missionary work. Soon, these missionaries were returning from India, often with tales of the horrors witnessed in the heart of darkness, tales meant to generate support among American citizenry for their missionary work abroad. The ethnocentric cultural imperialism of American missionaries was also evident in the numerous missionary periodicals and books of the period that carried caricatured images of naked holy men contorting their bodies or lying on beds of nails, terrifying images of the "demonic" Goddess Kali, idol worship, and sati, for example, calculated to leave no doubt in readers' minds about the inferiority of "heathen" religions and the superiority

of Christianity. These texts show the beginnings of the racialization of the "Hindoos" and their religion as inferior, and a discourse that would later dominate the exclusionary immigration rhetoric leveled against Indian migrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the USA.[21]

Other examples of texts that contributed to the vilification of India as a place of naked sadhus, unspeakable rites, and superstitions were Caleb Wright's *India and Its Inhabitants* (1854) and the Presbyterian missionary William Butler's *The Land of the Veda* (1872). That these sorts of books enjoyed immense popularity is illustrated by the fact that Wright's *Historic Incidents and Life in India* (1869) was published in five editions, with one selling over 38,000 copies.[22] A popular missionary hymn of the time period, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," by Bishop Reginald Heber speaks of "The heathen in his blindness/[who] Bows down to wood and stone."[23] In his "Sermon on the Idolatry of Hindoos" (1816), the speaker-missionary Samuel Nott stated, "My hearers, in attempting to send the gospel to the heathen, we are entering upon a work of toil, of difficulties, of expense, of trying disappointments, though doubtless of ultimate success."[24] (6) Nott's rhetoric anticipates Rudyard Kipling's 1899 poem "The White Man's Burden," which he wrote to enjoin the U.S. government to colonize the Philippines and help Britain in "civilizing" the darker nations of the world. Kipling was a little late in advising the U.S. government since it had been engaged in careful "empire making" for over a century. Schueller argues the ubiquitous civilizing mission and "disinterested" toil discourse of American missionaries was one arena where American "interests" and ambitions as an emergent nation were articulated. In *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early Republic*, Emily Conroy-Krutz echoes Schueller as she traces the global forays of the missionaries of the ABCFM into the distant climes of Asia, Africa, and the Pacific islands to argue that the early United States was not only "continental and republican" but also "international and imperial" in important ways.[25]

Americans were also well acquainted with India through imported British and European theater with Indian themes, such as David Humphreys' *The Widow of Malabar* (1791) and William Thomas Moncrieff's *The Cataract of the Ganges, or, The Rajah's Daughter* (1824). A popular play in the 1824 New York theater season, *The Cataract of the Ganges* portrayed India as a land of internal strife and intrigue between Hindus and Muslims, rife with female infanticide, and

requiring the firm hand of the British to maintain law and order in the land. The characters fit into neat colonial stereotypes such as the "good native" (the Indian man who works well with the British and needs their intervention to rescue him), the "bad native" (the sneaky Indian who wants power for himself, threatens the British, wants to rape Indian women), the hapless Indian woman (who ultimately is rescued and saved by the gallant British man), and the courageous and moral British men.[26] However, the immediate pleasure of such plays was in the evocation of exotic settings: a contemporary review, for example, praises the play mostly for its atmosphere, "The trampling and prancing of the beautiful horses, arrayed in all the trappings of eastern significance—the long procession—the chariots and the music—and the crowds which throng the stage, glittering in such princely apparel—all pass before the mind like a dazzling and glorious dream."[27] Humphreys' play *The Widow of Malabar* (1791) also features an unfortunate Hindu Indian woman who is being forced to commit sati (a Hindu widow's self-immolation on her dead husband's funeral pyre). *The Widow* was a popular play in Philadelphia, one that brought the far reaches of the globe such as India to citizens of the new republic. Plays such as these contributed to early knowledge construction about India. Jeffrey H. Richards, however, notes that while Humphreys' play was true to the French original by Antoine-Marin Lemierre from which it was adapted, he changed the ending and added his own prologue "in order to affirm American republicanism as the ideal social framework."[28] These India-themed plays performed in the early republic created images of India for American consumption while serving the purpose of American self-definition and interests.

India also appeared in other literary genres—such as the earliest American novels by women writers as well as in epistolary accounts or Oriental letters. References to India or the East Indies occur in the margins and with regularity in many novels, including in Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly* (1799) and in sentimental novels such as the anonymous *Fidelity Rewarded: or the History of Polly Granville* (1796), Sarah Sayward Barrell Keating Wood's *Dorval or The Speculator* (1801), *Moreland Vale, or The Fair Fugitive* (by a Lady of the State of New York) (1801), and Rebecca Rush's *Kelroy* (1812). In the sentimental novels by women writers (such as *Kelroy* and *Dorval*), India emerges as a suggestive and pliable symbol, one that registers the enormous profits being generated by the East Indies trade in that era and hints at the contours of the imperial ambitions of a young nation. India becomes a career for the

young American men who journey to the East as it yields untold riches from worthy trade and commercial activity; additionally, it serves as the proving ground for moral and masculine worthiness, for articulating American enterprise and patriotism.[29]

Similarly, epistolary accounts, such as *A Series of Indostan Letters* (1790) by Bartholomew Burges or Benjamin Silliman's *Letters of Shahcoolen, a Hindu Philosopher Residing in Philadelphia to His Friend El Hassan, an Inhabitant of Delhi* (1802), were very popular. In *Letters of Shahcoolen*, Silliman used the persona of the "Hindu philosopher" to critique Mary Wollstonecraft's ideas, which were gaining popularity in the new republic. As Silliman draws on William Jones for his description of Hindu poetry or Indian life and landscape, an Orientalist understanding of India—as exotic, sensual, feminized, irrational, wild—emerges in the text. According to scholar Michael Chandos Brown, "Silliman adopts the *feminized* persona of the Hindu philosopher to deride Wollstonecraft's transgression into the *masculine* world of print culture and the shaping of social polity."[30] The literary device of the Oriental letters allowed for social criticism and commentary on preoccupations of the new republic. Ultimately, the presence of India in all these various texts served to imagine the new nation and shed a light on its anxieties, topical issues of the day, and identity making.

Inspired by the work of the European Orientalist William Jones, the scholar who "discovered" Oriental texts for the world, some members of the New England elite literati started the American Oriental Society in 1843, which is among the oldest literary societies in the USA dedicated to scholarship in a specific field. The *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, which was published from 1843 to 1900, carried over a hundred articles on India, on ancient literature and philology. One of the society's founders was Edward Salisbury, the first Sanskrit professor appointed to Yale College, a university that was founded by an American-born Englishman, Elihu Yale, who made his fortunes in India as an employee of the East India Company and rose to become governor of Madras in 1687. One of the central missions of the society was "the cultivation of learning in the Asiatic, African and Polynesian languages" to create a taste for Oriental learning and to publish texts, translations, memoirs and communications in Sanskrit and Semitic languages.[31] Early issues of the journal from the 1840s and 1850s featured articles such as "A History of Buddhism in India," a review of "Professor Lassens' Antiquities of India," "A Translation of the *Surya Siddhanta*," a review article on "The

Latest Sanskrit Publications in India," and an article on "Specimens of the Naga Language of Assam." The wide range and specialist focus of these articles indicate the remarkable scholarly interest and work in Indian religion, linguistics, and culture that percolated down to popular culture and the ready availability of translations of Hindu philosophical and literary texts.

This interest and reconsideration of Indian philosophy and literature eventually shaped the Transcendentalist movement and influenced most of the writers of the so-called American Renaissance, especially in the works of New England intellectuals Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. As their work suggests, Transcendentalism became an important site through which Hindu texts, such as the *Gita*, the *Laws of Manu*, the *Vishnu Puranas*, the *Vedas*, and the *Upanishads*, became part of the American philosophical and religious imagination. For instance, Emerson was effusive about the *Vedas,* which he called "the Bible of the tropics."[32] His poem "Brahma" (1857) was much influenced by his reading of the *Vishnu Purana* and the *Katha Upanishad*.[33] That Melville too was well acquainted with the *Vedas* is clear in his discussion of whaling in *Moby-Dick* (1851) , where the narrator Ishmael uses images from Hindu mythology to prove his knowledge of whaling as well as the value of whaling in different cultures.[34] However, while the *Vedas* were popular with nineteenth-century American writers, it was the *Gita* that the Transcendentalists devoured, with both Thoreau and Emerson speaking of their fascination with this Hindu scriptural and philosophical text. Thoreau carried the *Gita* with him to Walden Pond, and his treatise *Walden* (1854) contains numerous references to India. For American writers and thinkers such as Thoreau, India represented the ancient, old, spiritual, sentimental East in contrast to the youthful and rational USA. Concerned as the Transcendentalists were with spiritual India, they turned a blind eye, willfully, to political India and the realities of British colonialism in India. Thus, there was no space in their work to engage the anticolonial 1857 Indian Sepoy Rebellion, even as the event was covered widely in prominent American magazines such as *Harper's Magazine* and the *Knickerbocker* and made appearances in popular American fiction of the time.

References to India—whether as the main theme or hovering suggestively in the background—also appeared systematically in the work of major and minor nineteenth-century male and female American writers, such as Walt Whitman, Louisa May Alcott, Lucretia Maria Davidson,

John Greenleaf Whittier, and James Russell Lowell, among others. Whitman's poem "A Passage to India" (1869)—written to celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal that would increase geographical contact and intimacy among nations—is the best known and most frequently discussed of these. Others included Davidson's poem "Amir Khan" (1829) set in Kashmir, India; Lowell's poems such as "An Oriental Apologue" (1849) and "Dara" (1850); and John Greenleaf Whittier's "The Brewing of Soma." In Davidson's poem of a doomed love affair, India appears as a land of riches: "Rich vases, with sweet incense streaming/Mirrors a flood of brilliance beaming … And marble pillars, pure and cold,/ And glittering roof, inlaid with gold,/And gems, and diamonds …"[35] These sensual descriptions of the wealth of the fabled East were staples of Orientalist discourse on India. Even an author of no less stature than Alcott contributed to this repertoire of images. India appears not only in Alcott's popular novel *Little Women* (1868), where (exotic) goods and commodities from India serve to animate the protagonist's imagination, but in her relatively obscure sensational short stories that she published anonymously in periodicals such as *Frank Leslie's Lady's Magazine* and *Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. In the thriller "Fate in a Fan" (1869), a villainous gambler-father, who served as a soldier in the East, has brought back with him a poison—a "subtle Indian perfume"—that is hidden in his hapless daughter's fan to stupefy his gambling opponents.[36] This story echoes and foreshadows Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Speckled Band" (1892), which also depicts a villainous father's use of "Indian" things (an Indian snake in Doyle's story) that threaten his daughter's life. Alcott's shocker "The Fate of the Forrests" (1865) involves Hindu thuggism (and mind control and mesmerism), an oft-used trope in British sensational colonialist fiction. These stories use India as a shorthand for the inscrutable and inexplicable, perpetuating the image of India as a place of strange rites, deadly poisons, and murderers.

One thus sees here both the shifting attitudes toward India by the late nineteenth century as well as the contradictions and ambivalences that had characterized the India–USA encounter from the late eighteenth century onward. India was simultaneously exotic and barbaric, advanced and regressive, a place of rich spiritual or philosphical texts and of heathen cultures. It is thus not ironic or inexplicable that the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries both witnessed an "Oriental craze" where India was in vogue again and showed up variously in American material culture and the arts as well as the hardening of racial

attitudes in the form of hate crimes and restrictive immigration legislation against Indian immigrants.

Vivek Bald notes that between 1880 and 1920, "the United States was in the grips of a craze over India and 'the Orient' that was, in some ways, larger and more pervasive than anything that has occurred since […] Americans of all classes and walks of life were drawn to an 'India' that was, in essence, a collective fantasy."[37] The Indian Nautch Dancers (along with snake charmers and jugglers), for instance, who arrived in 1880 in New York to perform in Augustin Daly's show *Zanina*, were treated as exoticized spectacles and commodities in newspaper reviews; and although these were the first dancers from India to perform on the American stage, the Indian dancing girl had been circulating as an "Orientalist fantasy" since the mid-eighteenth century.[38] Indian goods were also in demand again in the modern obsession with foreign or imported Eastern goods within the new culture of mass consumption. Magazines such as *Harper's Bazaar* and *Godey's Lady's Book and Magazine* include numerous references to Indian goods. The "New York Fashions" column of *Harper's Bazaar* on August 8, 1868, for instance, noted that "A fancy for India goods is one of the caprices of the summer. The French Empress, with characteristic love of variety, has clothed herself in the soft, fleecy India muslin, in Corah silks, and pongee, and of a sudden they are the fashion." The June 13, 1872 column noted that "the world of fashion is out of town" where "India goods are chosen for sea-shore dresses." *The Decorator and Furnisher*, a New York-based magazine of interior decoration published in the late nineteenth century, in an article on "Indian Textile Fabrics" (February 1895), noted the high demand for Indian goods and how the variety of textiles was suitable for all sorts of drapery and decorations. Indian design was championed by the likes of the American designer and painter Lockwood de Forest (1850–1932), who played an important role in creating an Indian style of interior decoration in the late nineteenth century.[39]

At roughly around the same time that *The Decorator* was reporting on the enthusiasm for Indian goods and styles as part of the trend of "cosmopolitan domesticity" or a desire for the foreign in bourgeois home decoration, the West Coast was beginning to witness an emerging anti-South Asian sentiment, with articles such as "The West and the Hindu Invasion" (*Overland Monthly* 1883) that described "The Hindus and the Hindu Invasion [as] the latest racial problem with which we of the West have to deal."[40] Other instances of the shifting attitudes toward India

of founding fathers such as George Washington (Tchen), the impassioned debates about the corrupting influence of Chinese tea in colonial America (Frank), or how postrevolutionary American merchants sought to define their identity and place in Canton as they participated in global trade (Yokota), these scholars explore in various ways early American encounters with "Cathay" or China or broadly the East Indies and their significance in the prerevolutionary period and the nascent nation. A recent collection edited by Patricia Johnston and Caroline Frank, *Global Trade and Visual Arts in Federal New England* (2014), similarly makes a valuable contribution to the ways in which East Indies trade impacted the aesthetic sensibilities of New England in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by examining a variety of objects or forms such as textiles (cottons and silks), artifacts (paintings and engravings), and architecture.

However, while Johnston and Frank focus on Federal New England and the East Indies trade, the scholarship for the most part focuses on China; and while Indian cities such as Calcutta and Bombay are registered as notable ports of call affording lucrative opportunities to trade in Eastern goods, textiles, and spices, the specific geopolitics of the India–America connection is left uninvestigated. There is, thus, on the whole, a need for more scholarship on India–USA commercial-imperial connections and interactions in the sociocultural sphere in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Among prominent works that begin to address this gap are Susan Bean's *Yankee India: American Commercial and Cultural Encounters with India in the Age of Sail* (2006), James R. Fichter's *So Great a Profitt* (2010), and Jonathan Eacott's *Selling Empire* (2016).[43] Eacott examines British and American trade with India through the presence and consumption of "India goods" and the imperial aesthetic that developed around these goods. Bean and Fichter also look at the lucrative trade of the early USA with India and the range of connections this fostered and the ways in which it resonated in and around the founding decades of the American republic. They emphasize how the outwardly small size and short life of the East Indies trade belies its important and long-lasting role in the new republic. Thus, while Fichter argues that the "U.S. trade with Asia between 1783 and 1815 transformed both the British Empire and the United States" and altered the "shape of American business," Bean notes how the "trade generated federal tax revenues, helped relieve the war debt, and raised capital to build up nascent industries."[44]

In addition to these recent works, much of the existing scholarship, old and new, within American literary and cultural studies that has focused on early interactions between the USA and India has largely examined the intellectual exchange of ideas in the nineteenth century, how India was part of the imagination of canonical American authors such as Thoreau, Whitman, Emerson, Hawthorne, and others. An earlier group of American and Indian scholars examined the influence of ancient Hindu Indian texts and culture on the American Transcendentalists, mostly focusing on the religious and mystical context. Some of these books, for example, are Frederic Ives Carpenter's *Emerson and Asia* (1930), Arthur Christy's *The Orient in American Transcendentalism* (1932), V.K. Chari's *Whitman in the Light of Vedantic Mysticism* (1965), and Arthur Versluis's *American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions* (1993). Recent scholarship—mostly journal essays or individual chapters in monographs—examining these major American authors' interest in India and Indian texts has made visible the more political and domestic ramifications of this engagement. One of the pioneering works on this topic is Schueller's book, *U.S. Orientalisms*, which teases out how a raced or gendered construction of India served as contrast in the consolidation of the USA as an active, young, and vibrant (male) nation in Whitman's and Emerson's texts. A chapter in Wai Chee Dimock's *Through Other Continents* (2006) focuses on Thoreau's deep engagement with the *Bhagavad Gita*, as she examines how his reading of this sacred philosophical Indian text resonates with his position on many domestic sociopolitical affairs such as slavery, American military force, and pacifism. Similarly, Nikhil Bilwakesh's essay "Emerson, John Brown and Arjuna: Translating the Bhagavad Gita in a Time of War" (2009) works through Emerson's deployment of the *Gita*; he attempts a "martial reading of the *Gita*" to provide "new insight into Emerson's somewhat extraordinary support for the militant abolitionist John Brown."[45]

Mark Kamrath (2004), Karen Weyler (2005), and Eric A. Goldman (2008) have examined the circulation of India in American print culture (novels, drama, periodicals, and magazines). Kamrath, for example, focuses on how the prolific genre of Oriental tales that circulated in the print culture of the early republic served a didactic function, addressing issues of republican virtue and "the early republic's growing ambivalence toward the boundaries between the liberal 'pursuit of happiness' or pleasure and moral propriety."[46] Kamrath sees the Oriental tale of the late eighteenth century as embodying both "the discourses

of republican virtue and patriarchy *and* the desire for female independence, equality, and liberation."[47] He argues that the "transgressive" material of many Oriental tales, which presented overt sexuality or the eroticized female body, pertains to the construction of female chastity and virtue in the seduction novel of the same time. Also focusing on the notion of republican virtue, Weyler looks at the references to the East Indies trade in sentimental novels by early American women writers such as Rush's *Kelroy* (1812) and Wood's *Dorval, or The Speculator* (1801) in her book *Intricate Relations* (2005). Weyler illustrates the material and symbolic significance of the East Indies trade to the new nation and examines how this trade is constructed as a virtuous economic activity in contrast to gambling and speculation. While Weyler looks at relatively less-acknowledged female novelists, Goldman turns his attention to Charles Brockden Brown, the best-known and most prolific American writer in the early republic, in his essay "The 'Black Hole of Calcutta' in Charles Brockden Brown's America: American Exceptionalism and India in *Edgar Huntly*" (2008). His Saidian reading of Brown's Gothic novel mines a marginal but illuminating reference to an episode from British Indian colonial history, that of the "black hole of Calcutta," in order to argue against the myth of American exceptionalism. All these scholars demonstrate the critical role India played in important domestic issues, such as financial speculation, the consolidation of a masculinist American national identity, and on race and gender, to show the intimacy of the interconnections between American and British interests in the larger imperial public sphere.

This edited collection will contribute further to the exciting area of scholarship that globalizes American studies and answers the need for exclusive scholarship on India as a seminal ideological force field in American culture and politics. Much work is being done, and remains to be done, to explore and tease out in sophisticated ways the protean dimensions of the influence that India exerted on American political and cultural life, as well as the ways in which it came to shape debates on race, gender, and national self-image in the nineteenth century. This collection will also complement the ever-increasing excellent body of work on immigrant-diasporic South Asian American formations and networks since the late nineteenth century, among them works such as Joan Jensen's *Passage from India* (1988), Karen Leonard's *Making Ethnic Choices* (1992), and Vivek Bald's *Bengali Harlem* (2013).

Structure and Organization

This book is organized into four sections: "Transatlantic Imperial Circuits: Trade, Missionary Activity, and the British East India Company," "The Imperial Imaginary: Indo-American Interactions in the Literary, Philosophical, and Political Sphere," "Imperial Publics: India in U.S. Reform Debates on Race, Slavery, and Labor," and "Orientalist Imaginings: Royal India and American Fine Arts and Painting." Collectively, the essays offer an in-depth description and analysis of Indo-American encounters in the long nineteenth century.

The two essays in the first section—by Michael A. Verney and Rosemarie Zagarri—situate the early republic firmly within the transnational networks of empire recording direct encounters with India and the reactions this produced. Insofar as Britain constituted the common link between the USA and India, British imperial rule facilitated the Indo-American encounter in terms of the movement of commodities, people, and ideas. So, for instance, American missionary activities, conducted in tandem and sometimes in contest with American commercial enterprises in India, and were closely aligned with British trade and colonial networks in India. If the USA has been "haunted by empire" from its very beginning (to use Ann Laura Stoler's evocative phrase), this is nowhere more clear than in the close, though sometimes conflicted, relationship between religion and imperial vision. Beyond missionary activity, however, there was a busy movement of ex-colonials among Britain, India, and the USA. Several Britons who had served in the British East India Company chose to make their home in the USA and parlayed their experience in India into influential roles in the new republic. It is in the intimate space of the family and in the complicated contours of the biographies of some of these ex-colonials, many of whom had cohabited with Indian women and brought their mixed-race children to the USA, that we see the imperial public interconnected in the domestic and private spheres.

In "An Eye for Prices, an Eye for Souls: American Merchants and Missionaries in the Indian Subcontinent, 1784–1838," Verney argues that between Independence and 1840, Americans' perceptions of and writings about native India changed dramatically. Such a shift was due in part to the transition from merchant-mariners to missionaries as the predominant professions to visit the subcontinent. From 1783 until the War of 1812, American trade with India boomed as merchants rode

the winds of neutral trade to windfall profits. Largely forbidden from trading with the houses of the East India Company, however, American businessmen had to look elsewhere for trading partners. They found them in the well-educated native Indian merchants of Anglo-Indian metropolises. Because their commercial success in India was predicated on their relationships with these men, American captains and supercargoes had every reason to overcome cultural differences. Many of the most successful India traders therefore forged remarkably respectful, fair, and even friendly relationships with their indigenous counterparts. Soon, however, changes in the nation's tariff policy in 1816 crippled the India trade and drove away many merchants. Missionaries soon took their place as the predominant American travelers to India in the early republic. Unlike merchants, missionaries had every reason to exploit cultural and religious differences, both for publicity and for reasons of funding. Their writings and publications had a profound effect on how ordinary Americans thought of themselves and their relationship to non-Christian peoples in India.

Zagarri's essay, "The Empire Comes Home: Thomas Law and his Mixed Race Children," focuses on Thomas Law, an important administrator in the British East India Company who chose to make the USA his home and became one of the founding fathers of the nation's capital, Washington, DC, besides being a prominent voice in debates on slavery, trade, currency regulations, and the plight of native Americans. In 1794, he, along with his sons, moved to the USA, where he became a key figure in early Washington, DC, society. Zagarri examines the fate of Law's mixed-race sons. Although their high social class tended to mitigate racial prejudice, racial animosity surfaced at key moments in their lives. Like British India, the early American republic was slowly and steadily experiencing a hardening of racial boundaries during the early decades of the nineteenth century.

The two essays in the second section of the collection turn our attention to the engagement with India in the literary and philosophical spheres in canonical mid-nineteenth-century texts and authors—Thoreau, Melville, and Maria Susanna Cummins—and to the political implications of these interactions. The enormous appetite for Indian goods, including expensive cashmeres and cottons, was whetted in no small measure by the enormous cultural cache attached to Hindu philosophical and spiritual ideas garnered from precious print material carried by these ships, even as the familiar sight of Indian ocean sailors/lascars in

port cities of the eastern seaboard made the people of India a recognizable presence in the popular imagination.

In a wide-ranging comparative essay, "Indo-American Encounters in Melville and Thoreau: Philosophy, Commerce, and Religious Dialogue," Brian Yothers puts the Transcendentalists in conversation with Melville to examine how Thoreau and Melville provide complementary approaches to the encounter between India and America. While Thoreau engaged India on an intellectual level, finding the subcontinent to be a source of timeless wisdom that could contribute to his pursuit of virtue and self-culture, Melville, who was engaged by Transcendentalism but quite critical of the movement's ahistorical qualities, presents a different approach to the Indo-American encounter. In addition to including wide-ranging references to Hindu and Buddhist thought and Indian art throughout his oeuvre, Melville also includes more discussion of the material exchanges between India and the USA. His rendering of South Asian sailors on the Irawaddy in *Redburn* (1849), the discussion of Robert Knox's *Historical Relation of Ceylon* in *White-Jacket* (1850), various references to cultural exchange in *Moby-Dick* (1851) , and his treatment of travel and religious pilgrimage in *Clarel* (1876) and "Rammon: A Fragment" all evidence this differently valenced interest in the Indian subcontinent. Drawing on Melville's novels, poetry, biblical marginalia, and his marginalia to Schopenhauer, Yothers' essay examines what India, and South Asia more broadly, meant to Melville's mature cosmopolitanism and how Melville enriches the Transcendentalist encounter with India represented by Thoreau.

Mark B. Kelley's essay, in turn, examines the presence of India in nineteenth-century canonical American writers' work by focusing on the best-selling popular domestic sentimental romance, Maria Susanna Cummins's *The Lamplighter* (1854). In "'Every India Mail': *The Lamplighter* and the Prospect of U.S. Transoceanic (Postal) Empire, *1847–1854*," Kelley traces the ubiquitous though invisible networks of empire in the female-dominated print culture of sentimental fiction by drawing attention to the circulation of letters. When reading Cummins's novel, one cannot track the camel's-hair scarf, the cage of birds, or the "great package of letters" that Willie posts from Calcutta, India, to his would-be love Gertrude Flint in Boston (140). Yet, to overlook this fictional mail is to lose the historical and thematic links between sentiment and empire. Tracking the mail in India within the circuit of empire, Kelley shows how sentiment is not merely forged by empire but plays an active part in its material and cultural work.

Beyond the circulation of letters and goods in the imperial circuit, India was also regularly invoked in other domestic debates and contexts, which forms the focus of the third section of the collection. As the new nation sought to articulate and consolidate its identity—racial, cultural, national—India figured in discourses of domesticity, slavery, citizenship, and Manifest Destiny. For instance, the invocation of political developments in India (such as the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion against British colonialism) served to either contrast the USA with the British to assert an exceptional identity or to claim a common Anglo-Saxon lineage and history with the British. Similarly, strategically invoking Indian social prejudices such as the caste system in debates around American slavery served the purposes of both slavery apologists as well as antislavery advocates. In addition, people of Indian ancestry, such as George DeGrasse, sought American citizenship, putting pressure on constructions of race, nation, and citizenship as they were articulated together in the early republic. All three essays in this section show differently how India figured in contestations over U.S. national identity during the nineteenth century.

Anirudra Thapa and Susan M. Ryan turn their attention to nineteenth-century American print culture to trace how political and social India (rather than spiritual India) emerged as a point of reference. In "Cast in Print: The Indian Mutiny, Asiatic Racial Forms, and American Domesticity," Thapa argues that the anticolonial Indian Insurgency of 1857 remained a watershed event in the history of colonial representation. As part of the historical process of textualizing empire, the Indian Insurgency helped the Western print industry, on both sides of the Atlantic, produce a body of texts—fictional, journalistic, and populist—categorized as "Mutiny lore." Such texts mark a shift of emphasis in the representation of the colonized. By analyzing L. Clarke Davis's *Stranded Ship* (1869) and Jane Goodwin Austin's "The Loot of Lucknow" (1868) within the broader context of American print culture, Thapa shows that the oriental imagination in nineteenth-century U.S. print culture is an expression of the "political unconscious" that renders visible the imperial imaginary embedded in the discourse of Manifest Destiny. As such, the narratives of transnational encounters with the Orient demystify the very rhetoric of "imperial denial" in American cultural and political discourses. In "India and U.S. Cultures of Reform: Caste as Keyword," Ryan takes up Americans' appropriations of the term *caste* in order to analyze the ways in which India figured into nineteenth-century U.S. debates over slavery and racial injustice. Drawing on

newspaper and magazine articles, missionary commentary, and a range of novels, it first establishes that Americans used caste as a figure for rigid and antimeritocratic social values and then shows how such authors as Julia C. Collins, Mary Hayden Pike, and Albion Tourgée, among others, applied the term as a means of critiquing racial hierarchies and their deformation of courtship and marriage. While such authors used caste to unsettle white American readers' sense of racial superiority, they also participated in a delegitimizing of the Indian other, who came to represent a timeless incapacity for reform.

Pratibha Kanakamedala's essay, "Considered a Citizen of the United States: George DeGrasse, a South Asian in Early (African) America," focuses on the story of George DeGrasse, a Hindu from Calcutta, in early-nineteenth-century New York. Little is known about DeGrasse's life, but through her archival research, Kanakamedala shows that DeGrasse was probably the illegitimate biracial son of a French naval officer. DeGrasse's first appearance in the archives is as Aaron Burr's servant in 1802. Her essay traces the arrival, activism, and community building of DeGrasse in New York City, and it establishes him as a pioneer in the long and lesser-documented history of Asian-Black political solidarity in the early republic. He and his neighbors built a vibrant community that challenged notions of nation, citizenship, and its responsibilities at a time when these concepts were in constant flux.

The concluding essay in the collection examines Orientalist imaginings surrounding India through portrayals of royal India in/and American fine arts and painting. A fair amount of scholarship exists on the corpus of British and European Orientalist painting inspired by the Near and Far Orient. Not enough attention has been paid to the genre of American Orientalist painting and specifically the influence of India in American visual arts. Imperial networks of trade and commerce facilitated not only a deep interest in the profundities of Hindu philosophy, but they also served as corridors through which exotic commodities from Asia arrived in America as well as allowed for American artists to travel to India. First-hand or lived experience in India, as well as contact with commodities or with the materiality of these artifacts, played no small role in shaping complex visual strategies through which Orientalist painting evolved. High Victorian imperialism coincided with the Gilded Age in America when the demand for exotica was at its peak to influence American design ethos and the genre of American Orientalist painting.

Romita Ray's essay, "'A Dazzle of Light': Edwin Lord Weeks and Royal India," focuses on Lord Edwin Weeks, the prominent American

Orientalist painter and the first known American artist to visit India. Ray argues that long before *Life* magazine featured the Maharaja of Jaipur's wedding in its August 1948 issue, Weeks was busy recording royal India in 1883, during the height of the Victorian Raj. Ray examines Weeks's fascination with painting royal India—with its maharajas, architectural splendor, and lavish material culture. What interests Ray is how the American tourist and visual artist participated in the dynamics of imperial consumption and display. She examines how Weeks's preoccupation with surfaces that embodied royal India were rendered with jewel-like precision. In analyzing Weeks's visual approach to textures in the context of the Aesthetic movement, and from a broader engagement with Indian craftsmanship in American material culture, Ray underscores the powerful role that artifice and surface played on the imaging of India within the dynamics of British imperial taste, aesthetics, and consumption.

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While this collection by no means represents a comprehensive or exhaustive look at all the various ways in which "India" circulated in the USA, it gestures suggestively to the critical space occupied by India in the American imaginary for over a century. India was present in the USA—as an idea, as goods and commodities, as people from the subcontinent—and studying this presence yields rich insights about U.S. nation making and identity making from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth century. India featured in a range of contexts from the 1780s to the 1880s—in conversations on fashion, aesthetics, religion, reform, trade, slavery, women's rights—and tracing this presence shows the USA as being entangled squarely within imperial and global networks. Examining the traffic between India and the USA since the postrevolutionary era reveals the critical role that this transnational movement played in shaping the U.S. national landscape. As India and the USA seek each other as geopolitical partners in the twenty-first century, we hope this collection of essays will open up fresh avenues of inquiry that situate the current relationship in the context of Indo-American encounters in the foundational era of the early republic and the long nineteenth century.

Notes

1. Captain Dudley Leavitt Pickman, *The Journal of the Bellisarius, 1799–1800*, Peabody Museum of Salem: Pickman Journal.

2. William A. Rogers, *Journal containing Remarks and Observations during a Voyage to India: The Journal of the Tartar 1817–1818*, Peabody Museum of Salem: Tartar Journal.
3. For a fuller discussion of the coverage of the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857, or what Indian historians refer to as the First War of Independence, see Nikhil Bilwakesh: "Their faces were like so many of the same sort at home: American Responses to the Indian Rebellion of 1857," *American Periodicals* 21, no. 1 (2011): 1–23.
4. In *So Great a Proffit: How the East Indies Trade Transformed Anglo-American Capitalism*, (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2010), James R. Fichter argues that "American trade to the East Indies as a whole had repercussions for society, economics, and politics on both sides of the Atlantic." In particular, for the young American republic trade with Asia meant "the accumulation of wealth and financial capital into the hands of the wealthiest Americans, creating financiers who would profoundly alter the shape of American business" (4).
5. For the meanings attached to the consumption of "India goods" in the early republic, see Anupama Arora, "'The Wonders of India so Near our Front Doors': Consuming India, Imagining America," in *TOPIA: Canadian Journal of Cultural Studies* 37 (May 2017): 111–135.
6. Some of these servants were exploited as indentured labor and also sold into slavery. See Paul Heinegg's website for advertisements for East Indian runaway slaves. http://www.freeafricanamericans.com/East_Indians.htm. See also Francis C. Assisi and Elizabeth F. Pothen's award-winning journalism on the earliest South Asians in the USA where they track the earliest South Asians to Virginia in 1624. For an analysis of petitions by lascars and servants/slaves from India, see Rajender Kaur, "The Curious Case of Sick Keesar and the Pre-history of South Asians in America," *The Journal of Transnational American Studies* 8, no. 1 (2017).
7. See, for instance, Gauri Viswanathan's essay, "The Naming of Yale College: British Imperialism and American Higher Education," in *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, edited by Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 85–108.
8. Contemporary accounts of Tipu Sultan and his eventual death were published in such newspapers as *The True American Commercial Advertiser in Philadelphia*, March 18, 1800. Tipu Sultan is supposed to have sent three ships full of ammunition to aid Americans against the British during the American War of Independence. Mysore was one of the first states to recognize the United Sates after the American Revolution. See also Rajender Kaur's "Reading 'Tipu Sultan' in Early America: Some Cross-Continental Entanglements," article in progress.

9. Bartholemew Burges, *A Series of Indostan Letters* (1790; repr, New York, 1817), vii–viii.
10. Quoted in Patricia Johnston and Caroline Frank, eds., *Global Trade and Visual Arts in Federal New England* (University of New Hampshire Press, 2014), 2.
11. Ibid., 1.
12. Malini Johar Schueller, *U. S. Orientalisms*: *Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature*, *1790–1890* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 28.
13. Ibid., 26.
14. *Guide to the Peabody Museum* (Salem MA: The Essex Institute, 1916), 2.
15. In her book *Yankee India: American Commercial and Cultural Encounters with India in the Age of Sail, 1784–1860* (Peabody Essex Museum, 2001), Susan Bean, curator of the South Asian and Korean Art Collections at the Peabody Essex museum in Salem, offers a fascinating glimpse into the vigorous cultural and commercial interface between American merchants who sailed to India in search of new markets in the wake of trade restrictions on familiar markets such as the West Indies because of the American Revolution of 1776. These merchants and business agents brought back treasure chests of textiles, tea and spices, art objects like curiosities and luxuries, and books that helped Americans form a sense of India.
16. While Salem's East India Museum's collections were considered the largest, it was not the first or only museum to include Asian artifacts, attesting to a widespread degree of interest in Asia. Other museums were those of the Charleston Society that had opened in 1773, Charles Wilson Peale's museum that had opened in Philadelphia in 1785, and Daniel Bowen's 1773 Columbian Museum. For a discussion of the East India Marine Society and museum of Salem, see Jee Yoon Lee, "'The Rude Contact of Some Actual Circumstance': Hawthorne and Salem's East India Marine Museum," *ELH* 73, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 949–973; James M. Lindgren, "'That Every Mariner May Possess the History of the World:' A Cabinet for the East India Marine Society of Salem," *The New England Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (June 1995): 179–205; Susan Stedman, "The Peabody Museum of Salem," *African Arts* 10.1 (Oct 1976): 42–47, and Patricia Johnston, "Global Knowledge in the Early Republic: The East India Marine Society's Curiosities Museum," in C. Mills, ed., *A Long and Tumultuous Relationship: East–West Interchanges in American Art* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Scholars Press, 2011): 69–79.
17. Martha Nichols, ed. *A Salem Shipmaster and Merchant: The Autobiography of George Nichols* (Boston: The Four Seas Company, 1921), 63.
18. See Bean, "The American Market for Indian Textiles, 1785–1820: In the Twilight of Traditional Cloth Manufacture," in *Textiles in Trade:*

Proceedings of the Textile Society of America Biennial Symposium, September 14–16, 1990, Washington, DC, 43–52.

19. Vijay Prashad, *The Karma of Brown Folk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 23.
20. Mukhtar Ali Isani, "Cotton Mather and the Orient," *New England Quarterly*, 43, no. 1 (1970): 23. Isani discusses Mather's sustained interest in the Indies, which, he argues, shows yet another side of his "extraordinary inquiring nature" and "reflects the global awareness of Puritan America" (58).
21. See Agnes Foster Buchanan, "The West and the Hindu Invasion," *Overland Monthly* (San Francisco, 1883), Herman Scheffauer, "The Tide of Turbans," *The Forum* (June 1910), and F.G. Moorhead, "The Foreign Invasion of the Northwest," *The World's Work* (March 1908).
22. Prashad, *Karma of Brown Folk*, 25.
23. Reginald Heber, *The Poetical Works* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1853), 87.
24. Samuel Nott, "A Sermon on the Idolatry of the Hindoos" (delivered November 29, 1816, at the Annual Meeting of the Female Foreign Mission Society of Franklin, Connecticut, Hubbard and Marvin Printers: Norwich, CT, 1817), 6.
25. Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2015), 5.
26. See Andrew J. Rotter, "Gender Relations, Foreign Relations: The United States and South Asia, 1947–1964," *Journal of American History* (September 1994): 518–542, for a brief discussion of *The Cataract*.
27. *The New York Mirror* (September 11, 1824).
28. Jeffrey H. Richards, "Early Republican Drama," in *The Oxford Handbook of American Drama*, eds. Jeffrey H. Richards and Heather S. Nathans (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 56.
29. For a fuller discussion of how "India" functions in the fiction of early American women writers, see Arora and Kaur, "Writing India in Early American Women's Fiction," *Early American Literature* 52, no. 2 (June 2017): 363–388.
30. For a detailed discussion of Silliman's text, see Michael Chandos Brown, "Mary Wollstonecraft, or, the Female Illuminati: The Campaign against Women and 'Modern Philosophy' in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 15, no. 3 (Autumn, 1995): 389–424, 411.
31. Quoted in David Weir, *American Orient: Imagining the East from the Colonial Era through the Twentieth Century* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011), 77.
32. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, vol. 4* (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1904), 314.
33. This was not a one-sided love affair. Rabindranath Tagore declared his affection for Emerson during his own tours of the United States. In

1916, he told an American journalist, "I love your Emerson … In his work one finds much that is of India" (247). Another Indian visitor, Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, similarly praised Emerson: "He seems to us to have been a geographical mistake. He ought to have been born in India" (quoted in Arthur Christy, "Orientalism in New England: Whittier," *American Literature* 1, no. 4 (Jan 1930): 392.

34. In addition to Indian scriptures, Melville was clearly aware of, and recorded, the presence of Indian sailors on the maritime circuits as he wrote about them in his books of the sea, *Moby-Dick* and *Redburn*.
35. Lucretia M. Davidson, "Amir Khan," In *Amir Khan and Other Poems*, ed. Samuel F.B. Morse, A.M. (New York: G. and C. and H. Carvill, 1829), 10.
36. Madeleine B. Stern and Daniel Shealy, eds., *The Lost Stories of Louisa May Alcott* (NY: Citadel Press, 1993), 68.
37. Vivek Bald, *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 16.
38. For a detailed discussion of the racialized and gendered discourse surrounding the bodies of these Indian women dancers, see Priya Srinivasan, "The Nautch Women Dancers of the 1880s: Corporeality, US Orientalism, and anti-Asian immigration Laws," *Women and Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 19, no. 1 (March 2009): 8.
39. A 2015 exhibition at New York City's Cooper Hewitt Museum focused on Lockwood de Forest (1850–1932), America's leading Aesthetic movement champion of Indian design. During a year-long stay in India in 1881, de Forest established a studio guided by an Indian Jain merchant, Muggunbhai Hutheesing, in the western Indian city of Ahmedabad (in Gujarat), where he employed master craftsmen to create decorative teak wood and brass panels that he imported to the USA. http://www.cooperhewitt.org/events/current-exhibitions/passion-for-the-exotic-lockwood-de-forest-frederic-church/.
40. Kristin Hoganson, "Cosmopolitan Domesticity: Importing the American Dream, 1865–1920." *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 1 (Feb 2002): 57.
41. For an analysis of the travel narratives of some Indian visitors to the 1893 Chicago Exposition, see Anupama Arora, "'This is a Civilized Nation, and a Man from the East has no Right to Criticize it:' Indian Visitors at the 1893 Columbian Exposition," *Journeys: The International Journal of Travel and Travel Writing* 15, no. 1 (2014): 23–47.
42. Timothy Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10.
43. For older scholarship on this trade, see Holden Furber, "The Beginnings of American Trade with India, 1784–1812," *New England Quarterly* (June 1838), 235–265; G. Bhagat *Americans in India 1784–1860*. New

York: New York University Press, 1970, and Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts 1783–1860* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press Cambridge, 1921).

44. Fichter, *So Great a Profitt*, 2–3; Bean *Yankee India*, 11.
45. Nikhil Bilwakesh, "Emerson, John Brown and Arjuna: Translating the Bhagavad Gita in a Time of War," *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 55, no. 1 (2009): 29.
46. Mark L. Kamrath, "An 'Inconceivable Pleasure' and the *Philadelphia Minerva*: Erotic Liberalism, Oriental Tales, and the Female Subject in Periodicals of the Early Republic," *American Periodicals* 14, no. 1 (2004): 11.
47. Ibid., 21.

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Indian Superstition

BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON

EDITED WITH

A Dissertation on Emerson's
Orientalism at Harvard by

KENNETH WALTER CAMERON

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HANOVER, NEW HAMPSHIRE, 1954

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY CAYUGA PRESS, INC., ITHACA, NEW YORK

Young Emerson's Orientalism at Harvard

NEW ENGLAND'S first direct contact with India was probably established by wealthy Boston shipowners, who built their villas in Dorchester or Brookline and filled them with bric-a-brac, plaster casts, and teakwood chests. The exploits and reports of these East India merchants contributed more than is commonly suspected to American curiosity regarding the Orient, its strange customs, and its philosophy—though literature was eventually required to sustain it. By the 1790's, books began to reach Boston from the printing presses of Calcutta, especially the works of Sir William Jones and the *Transactions* of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, of which he was president.[1*] As early as January 27, 1795, the Massachusetts Historical Society elected that hero a corresponding member and wrote on February 7: "Your character, and the attention which the world allows you to have paid to learning have induced us to pursue such measures as we hope will obtain your good wishes."[2] Although Jones had died nine months before the letter was mailed, the liaison between New England historians and oriental researchers was, nonetheless, effected. It is highly probable that the Reverend William Emerson, who joined the Society

* Footnotes appear at the end of this dissertation, pp. 38-47.

shortly after moving to Boston in 1799, shared with English and New England clergymen the hope that oriental studies might eventually throw new light on the Hebrew scriptures, for as Richard Watson[3] had said in his address to the clergy of the Archdeaconry of Ely on May 9-10, 1780, "it is a mortifying reflection, that we know very little of the history of the human race." Since the recognized antiquity of the available Indian annals seemed to militate against the Mosaic history, and since "the Gentoo scriptures" made "no mention of the deluge," and since the "Bramins" affirmed "that the deluge never took place in Indostan," was it not important for Christian scholars to translate *all* the Indian scriptures and, if possible, find the corroboration they desired? He and his fellows were disturbed by science and hoped somehow to counteract the opinion of the great Linnaeus "that whatever marks there may be of a slow and almost insensible conversion of sea, into dry land, there are none of a deluge any where to be found."[4]

The Orient was much discussed by the literati of the Anthology Club,[5] which the Reverend William Emerson formed in Boston in 1804, shortly after becoming editor of the *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review*.[6] In January, the periodical had printed M. M. Clifford's "Asia, an Elegy,"[7] describing the miserable condition of society in India. In July, 1805, appeared Act I of Sir William Jones's translation from the Sanskrit *Sakuntala*[8] by Calidasa, the "oriental Shakespeare"—possibly the first Hindu work to be printed in the United States. Then followed a review of Lord Teignmouth's *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones;*[9] a review of Charles Grant's *A Poem on the Restoration of Learning in the East;*[10] and "Bibliographical Notices of Harvard College Library—Oriental Literature,"[11]—the last by Thaddeus Mason Harris. This periodical, the predecessor of the *North American Review*, was

read during his college years by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Romanticism in England was approaching full flood when the Reverend William Emerson died on May 12, 1811, leaving in his library a file of the *Monthly Anthology*, a number of contemporary religious periodicals containing references to the Orient, and several significant books. The volumes listed on the broadside for the auctioneer's sale of August 27, 1822,[12] included Teignmouth's *Memoirs of ... Jones* and the *Translation of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah [Zaarmilla] written previous to, and during the period of his residence in England.*[13] The latter was the sort of popular and informative work which the Emerson family read at the hearth, and it was typical of the literary and homiletical works issued or reissued between 1790 and 1821 for circulation in Boston in having a treatise or appendix "on the history, religion, and manners of the Hindoos." At least one edition of Luiz de Camöes, *The Lusiad; or The Discovery of India*, in the popular translation of William Julius Mickle, also offered a lengthy "Enquiry into the Religious Tenets and Philosophy of the Brahmins."[14] Robert Southey's *The Curse of Kehama* avoided the preliminary dissertation but instead crowded into its voluminous notes choice extracts from more than forty rich oriental sources.[15] Even preachers of the period were fond of attaching informative expositions and documents to their published sermons, as is illustrated by Samuel Nott, Jr., who in *A Sermon on the Idolatry of the Hindoos* (delivered Nov. 29, 1816, at Franklin, Conn.)[16] constructed an appendix out of passages from Southey's notes and many other standard oriental treatises. Published before Ralph Waldo Emerson entered Harvard, this, like the other works mentioned, helps attest to the prevailing romantic and missionary climate of opinion—an interest in the faraway and in the primitive—apparent in his reading and in his journals of the college years.[17] For fuller insight

into the *Zeitgeist,* the researcher ought to study the early lists of book holdings of the Boston Library Society, the Boston Athenaeum, and Harvard University, especially the "Systematic Index" of the last-mentioned collection, prepared in 1830 by Benjamin Peirce.[18]

Emerson's residence at Harvard coincided with the stirring of the literary mind of Boston by oriental breezes. *The Christian Disciple and the Theological Review* (1813–1823),[19] forerunner of the *Christian Examiner,* reprinted Sir William Jones's "On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India" and carried articles entitled "Human Sacrifices Offered to the Ganges" and "A Remarkable Hindoo Reformer [Rammohun Roy]."[20] The *North American Review,* begun in 1815, carried, among others, William Tudor's "Theology of the Hindoos as taught by Ram Mohun Roy" and Theophilus Parsons' "Manners and Customs of India."[21] These journals young Emerson read as published, together with occasional volumes of the *Christian Observer* of London, in which were discussed Rammohun Roy's activities, the "duty to Christianize India," and the works of Claudius Buchanan.[22] He examined even more faithfully, however, both the current and early volumes of the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quarterly Review,*[23] which furnished him with nearly twenty articles on India and a considerable body of Eastern lore overlooked by students of his orientalism.[24]

That Harvard University in Emerson's day was strongly conscious of India, the rich bibliographical article in the *Monthly Anthology* (1808), cited above,[25] will conclusively prove. Its final paragraph recommended "to the youth, who are fond of oriental literature, the *Asiatick Miscellany,* the *Ayeen Akbery* translated by Gladwin, the *Forms of Herkern* by Balfour, the *Poems of Ferdosi* by Champion, the *Institutes of Menu,* and, above all, the *Works* of Sir William Jones, *vir omni ingenio preditus, et omni laude dignus.*"[26]

In April, 1811, David Irving of Edinburgh presented to the college library a copy of Thomas Brown's *The Renovation of India, a Poem. With the Prophecy of the Ganges, an Ode* (Edinburgh, 1808)—interesting not only for its orientalism but also for two critical essays, one of which condemned the shackles of regular versification and justified a degree of spontaneity in the poet—bursts of "wild imagery and sudden passions of prophecy." (Emerson was to be attracted by these opinions during his junior year at Harvard, though his neoclassical conservatism obliged him to renounce them.) One of the popular college textbooks which fulfilled the sophomore requirement of "modern history and chronology" stressed the superstitious nature of Indian religion—Lord Woodhouselee's *Elements of General History.*[27] Dugald Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind,* required in the curriculum of the junior and senior years, called attention in its appended notes to the similarities and contrasts between Bishop George Berkeley's Ideal Theory and the transcendentalism of the Brahmins, quoting from Sir William Jones and citing his "Hymn to Narayena."[28] The Harvard Campus, moreover, was aware of the value in the "oriental theme" for essays and verses, and when, on March 7, 1821,[29] the faculty assigned Emerson "A Poem. 'Indian Superstition'—100 lines" for the Exhibition on the following April 24,[30] it doubtless had in mind the outstanding and easily available English "prize poem" on this subject written by Charles Grant, fellow of Magdalen College, Cambridge. In 1804 the Reverend Claudius Buchanan, Vice Provost of the College of Fort William in Bengal, had stimulated oriental research among the students of that British university by giving £210 to be divided among the best contributors in each of the following classes: (*a*) an English prose dissertation "On the Best Means of Civilizing the Subjects of the British Empire in India, and of Diffusing the Light of the

Harvard also had:

Christian Religion throughout the Eastern World"; (*b*) an English poem "On the Restoration of Learning in the East"; (*c*) a Latin poem on "Collegium Bengalense"; (*d*) a Greek ode on "ΓΕΝΕΣΘΩ ΦΩΣ."[31] Grant's little book on the second topic was published by the University of Cambridge in at least two editions,[32] and Massachusetts reprinted it almost immediately,[33] thereby guaranteeing a circulation in Boston and Cambridge libraries.[34] Writing Mary Moody Emerson on April 7, 1821,[35] and urging her to be present at the Exhibition to be held two weeks later, "Waldo the Poet" was conscious of her interest in the Orient and of his own achievement in the prize-winning tradition which Charles Grant had established. Apparently it was also with her wide reading in mind that he gave his aunt the title of "Inhabitant of Hamilton, [Massachusetts,] (or rather the World)."

Assuming this interesting and necessary background and the *Zeitgeist*, we must now deal with Emerson's specific preparation for his Indian poem. In compiling his "Dissertation on the Comparative Merits of Ancient and Modern Historians," completed in June, 1818, and submitted without success for the Bowdoin Prize,[36] he cited and apparently examined William Robertson's *An Historical Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients Had of India.*[37] Like so many other publications in this period, Robertson's work had a rich appendix "on the civil policy, the laws, and . . . religious institutions of the Indians," in which he wrote:[38]

> As superstition and false religion take their rise, in every country, from nearly the same sentiments and apprehensions, the invisible beings, who are the first objects of veneration, have every where a near resemblance. To conceive an idea of one superintending mind, capable of arranging and directing all the various operations of nature, seems to be an attainment far

beyond the powers of man in the more early stages of his progress.... He fancies that it is the province of one deity to point the lightning, and, with an awful sound, to hurl the irresistible thunderbolt at the head of the guilty; that another rides in the whirlwind, and, at his pleasure, raises or stills the tempest; that a third rules over the ocean; that a fourth is the god of battles; that while malevolent powers scatter the seeds of animosity and discord, and kindle in the breast those angry passions which give rise to war, and terminate in destruction, others, of a nature more benign, by inspiring the hearts of men with kindness and love, strengthen the bonds of social union, augment the happiness, and increase the number, of the human race.

Then, during one week beginning August 29, 1818, Emerson read Thomas Duer Broughton's *Selections from the Popular Poetry of the Hindoos,*[39] with its appended notes, which gave him glimpses of the attractiveness of Indian life as described in early Hindu literature—the view of a paradise he was later to recall in lines 103-110 of his poem. For six weeks—from December 12, 1818, until the following February—Emerson and his family read Hugh Pearson's celebrated *Memoirs of the Rev. Claudius Buchanan.*[40] Between September 2 and 4, 1819, when he was about to enter his junior year, he studied Volume I of Lord Woodhouselee's *Considerations on the Present Political State of India,* which dealt with the causes of delinquency and depravity among the orientals, and the oppressive treatment of the lower orders by the Brahmins.[41] In March, 1820, he examined Volume I of *The Asiatick Miscellany*[42] (recommended on the early library list), containing the Indian hymns translated by Sir William Jones—notably the "Hymn to Narayena" with its extensive introduction—and also works of Sadi, Hafiz, and Jami; preadamite fables and antediluvian tales; early Hindu histories, besides descriptions of India and

voyages to the Orient. This collection must have provided a rich stimulus for all his future studies in the East. In early April, moreover, he was much moved by Southey's review, "British Monasticism,"[43] which surveyed "the most disgusting actions of insane and grovelling superstition" among early Egyptian Christians with occasional asides on the practices of the Hindus. Emerson read with fascination but disapproval about the "freaks and follies of the human mind" and the "diseases of the moral and intellectual nature" which early ascetics manifested, ranging from the behavior of those who acted like beasts, crawled on all fours, and considered a bath an abomination, to those who "resembled the Yoguees of Hindostan," who took lodgings in the stews, and who threw modesty to the winds—the "rank weeds of the Egyptian soil." Emerson, who was at this time also collecting material for his Bowdoin Prize dissertation on "The Character of Socrates,"[44] indicated in his notes the obvious contrast between the simple yet rigorous self-discipline of his manly Greek hero and the obvious psychopathy of the monks and their Eastern brothers. Socrates never manifested "anything like that excess of Indian superstition which worships God by outraging nature. . . . Human nature wants no such champions."[45] Southey had pointed out the parallel between the monkish eagerness for torment in the hope of increasing spiritual merit and the fanaticism of the Indian pilgrims who cast themselves in front of the ruthless Juggernaut. A few months later Emerson was to encounter the same false religion in Southey's Kehama, the "man-almighty" (line 142) grasping at destiny through unusual acts of penance.

The article was still in his mind, moreover, when during the spring of 1820 he completed his poem, "Improvement," delivered in April of that year before the Pythologian Society at Harvard.[46] The hint for both its theme and structure

he drew from the following passage in Southey, which he summarized in his journals:[47]

> Superstition has always lost something of its grossness as it proceeded from east to west. The mythology of Egypt was less grotesque and monstrous than that of Hindostan,—the mythology of Greece less so than that of Egypt. And thus, in later times, the Stylitae, and the other heroes of the desert, fell as much short of the Hindoo penitents in their extravagancies and practices of self-torture, as they exceeded their followers in Europe.

According to Emerson's Pythologian exercise, Improvement (capitalized because an abstraction) seems to have begun her march in Greece and Rome and then, with Columbus, moved westward. England (also called "Albion") soon gained world ascendancy and then sent the enlightened lady to India. The rough draft mentions Egypt in some connection and, in describing Columbus' fated discovery of new lands, implies that Improvement chose for her final headquarters Emerson's own beloved America. The latest revision of the poem does not survive, but I am confident that it was much better organized than the journal fragments and that the United States was, indeed, the westward point toward which the march was being conducted. The letter to Charles on April 21, 1820, implies as much when it describes the subject as wavering between the theme of progress and that of "the course of Empire"—an obvious reference to Bishop Berkeley's famous lines about America.[48]

> The Muse, disgusted at an age and clime,
> Barren of every glorious theme,
> In distant lands now waits a better time,
> Producing subjects worthy fame:
>
> In happy climes, where from the genial sun
> And virgin earth such scenes ensue,
> The force of art by nature seems outdone,
> And fancied beauties by the true:

See Arthur Kay, The Epic Intent and the American Dream: The Westering Theme in American Poetry

In happy climes the seat of innocence,
  Where nature guides and virtue rules,
Where men shall not impose for truth and sense,
  The pedantry of courts and schools:

There shall be sung another golden age,
  The rise of empire and of arts,
The good and great inspiring epic rage,
  The wisest heads and noblest hearts.

Not such as Europe breeds in her decay;
  Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heavenly flame did animate her clay,
  By future poets shall be sung.

Westward the course of empire takes its way;
  The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
  Time's noblest offspring is the last.

All Emerson's early patriotic poems show an indebtedness to Berkeley's vision as well as to his verses, which are echoed in the following passage from "Improvement."[49] Herein one also finds a small portion of "Indian Superstition" (lines 45-49), conceived a year before the Exhibition of April 24, 1821.

Oer climes oer ages Empire holds his way
Still [canceled] westward where Destiny's
    strange pathway lay
The island Queen [*i.e.*, England] recieves [*sic*]
    the mystic power
And stalls like coursers in her Ocean bower
In Albion long the Chariot has delayed
And Fate enlarged the glorious gift she made
She bid her throw the chain of empire round
Oer lands which Roman triumph never found.
And bid Improvement rise on Indian plains
That land of woe & of romantic strains

There in devotion to mysterious powers
The Indian stands in Ganges holy bowers
On the hot sands where human nature fails
&c

After putting his Pythologian poem into final form in April, 1820—with or without the above references to superstitious India—he succeeded, by the following July 21, in completing his dissertation on Socrates, which referred to one "act" in Berkeley's historic "drama" of the race and echoed the familiar subjects of superstition, modern improvement, human progress, and the world of the East Indies where nature was still being outraged for the worship of God. And Emerson contrasted the "common-sense" temperament of Socrates with the opposite one of the poet, who, amidst "golden dreams,—airy nothings, bright personifications of glory and joy and evil," one can imagine "sitting apart, like Brahma, moulding magnificent forms, clothing them with beauty and grandeur."[50] About this same time, he became familiar with the colorful episode of Nala and Damayanti from the *Mahábhárat.*[51]

When his senior year at Harvard opened in the fall of 1820, he was resolved to try once more for the Bowdoin Prize by writing on the present state of ethical speculation. The curriculum of the final year was richly philosophical, the principal textbooks being Paley's *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy,* Bishop Joseph Butler's *Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature,* and the important second volume of Stewart's *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind.* In the last, Emerson was introduced, probably for the first time, to parallels and contrasts between Berkeleian and Hindu Idealism, which were in later years to increase his respect for oriental thought and cause him to overlook its "superstition." For the moment, Berkeley's philosophy[52]—not yet the Hindu—fascinated him,

and he pursued that interest by reading Sir William Drummond's *Academical Questions,* an excellent handbook in metaphysical matters.[53] Then, shortly before Christmas, 1820, he came upon two significant reviews—"Maurice's *India*" and "Teignmouth's *Life of Sir William Jones,*"[54] the second of which led him eventually to the *Life* itself.[55] About February 10, 1821, he started composing a theme for Professor Edward Tyrrel Channing—"Influences of Weather on Intellectual Temperament"—using as principal illustration the distressed and superstitious inhabitants of "Indostan," whose burning sun and strange skies made them fierce and brutal.[56] On February 24, [57] he took from the library Volume IV of the *Monthly Anthology and Boston Review,* which was to be important to him. One may surmise that critical considerations led him to it. I think the two articles on alliteration[58] which he found in it largely account for the excessive use of this device in his poem. He may, indeed, have sought the long and interesting review of Joseph Priestley's *Memoirs,*[59] and doubtless noted with appreciation, in passing, the short article on Spenser and Dante[60] and the "Song of a Runic Bard," which was to haunt his mind and express itself as a poetic theme as long as he lived.[61] I am inclined to believe, however, that he wanted specifically the review of the Salem edition of Grant's *Poem on the Restoration of Learning in the East,* which led him almost immediately to the important prize work itself.[62] This and *The Curse of Kehama,*[63] which he studied while he composed his lines for the Exhibition, completed his preparation. In Southey's notes he found gems like the following,[64] the first of which is echoed in his second Bowdoin Prize essay.

> The soul itself is its own witness; the soul itself is its own refuge; offend not thy conscious soul, the supreme internal witness of men! . . . The sinful have said in their hearts, none see us. Yes, the gods distinctly see them, and so does the spirit within their

breasts. . . . The guardian deities of the firmament, of the earth, of the waters, of the human heart, of the moon, of the sun, and of fire, of punishment after death, of the winds, of night, of both twilights, and of justice, perfectly know the state of all spirits clothed with bodies. . . . O friend to virtue! that supreme Spirit, *which thou believest one and the same with thyself,* resides in thy bosom perpetually, and is an all-knowing inspector of thy goodness or of thy wickedness. . . . If thou beest not at variance, by speaking falsely, with Yama, the subduer of all, with Vaivaswata the punisher, with that great Divinity who dwells in thy breast,—go not on a pilgrimage to the river Ganga, nor to the plains of Curu, for thou hast no need of expiation. [*Institutes of Menu,* tr. Jones, ch. viii]

I am the creation and the dissolution of the whole universe. There is not any thing greater than I, and all things hang on me, even as precious gems upon a string. I am moisture in the water, light in the sun and moon, invocation in the *Veds,* sound in the firmament, human nature in mankind, sweet-smelling savour in the earth, glory in the source of light: In all things I am life; and I am zeal in the zealous; and know, O Arjoon! that I am the eternal seed of all nature. I am the understanding of the wise, the glory of the proud, the strength of the strong, free from lust and anger; and in animals I am desire regulated by moral fitness. [Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita*]

From such revealing scriptures as these, Emerson was soon to pass to Frederick Schlegel's *Lectures*[65] and to "Essay II" in Dugald Stewart's *Philosophical Essays.*[66]

"Indian Superstition" ought briefly to be considered with Emerson's three other didactic poems which preceded it.[67] All are written in heroic couplets and observe the conventions of the Age of Pope.[68] All are filled with abstractions, and all are pro-American and antidespotic.[69] In "Washington" (1814),[70] which is anti-British, Israel's God raises up a hero in whose eye Columbia's lightning glitters and around whose awful head are Guardian Angels.[71] His shield, "Glory," gives Columbia her independence by putting to

flight Albion's hosts. In "Independence" (1815),[72] the same theme is developed. The enemy is Ambition, who attempts to subjugate the world in different historical epochs in the persons of Xerxes, Philip of Macedon, Catiline, Britannia (Albion),[73] and Napoleon.[74] Independence, however, descends from Heaven and animates the Greeks, Demosthenes, Cicero, Washington, and Alexander of Russia in turn to crush their foes. Emerson here employed the same imagery regarding Washington as in the earlier poem. Since I have already discussed elements in the structure of the still-unpublished third poem ("Improvement"), I shall add only that its opening, as we now have it in the rough draft, deals with the Muse, or Poesy, who desires to sing of better times—an obvious expansion of Bishop Berkeley's first stanza. Emerson toys with the idea that improvement in poetry might seem to require breaking the fetters or shackles of rhyme, but he quickly asserts that tradition is too strong to tolerate such a change.[75] Abstractions[76] abound in these later verses, and we are therefore prepared for a large number in "Indian Superstition" as well as for the familiar intention "to elevate Columbian glory."[77]

Grant's *Restoration of Learning in the East*, one of the two principal influences on Emerson's Exhibition poem, provides the reader with an excellent survey of Hindu history, deities, and religious customs. Its influence upon Emerson extended to matters of diction and imagery, even to format, but especially to structure and major themes. Grant's preliminary statement follows:[78]

1. The *first* part of the poem describes the degraded state of Hindoo literature during the latter part of the last century. The shocks which learning sustained from the persecuting bigotry of Aurungzebe, the irruption of Nadir Shah, and the intestine divisions to which that irruption gave rise, are particularly noticed.
2. A transition is then made to the ancient splendor of Hindoo

literature during the period when India was governed by her native kings. The earliest age of authentic Indian history is brought into review; some account is given of the poetry and philosophy of Vyasa, which distinguished succeeding times; and this part closes with a reference to the last brilliant era of India, when the poet Calidasa flourished.

3. *Lastly,* The revival of learning on the banks of the Ganges, under the auspices of the English, and particularly of the Asiatic Society, is celebrated. The poem concludes with anticipating the diffusion of the arts, the sciences, and the religion of Great Britain, throughout the East.

Grant supplied Emerson[79] with colorful descriptions of India's golden age—her Garden-of-Eden epoch—in the Vale of Cashmere.[80]

Oh, once for thee [Cashmere] the rosy-finger'd Hours
Wove wreaths of joy in Pleasure's echoing bowers;
Once round thy limpid stream and scented grove,
The haunts of Fancy, Freedom lov'd to rove;
And, moulded by the hand of young Desire,
Thy daughters shone amid the virgin choir:
Not fair Circassia touch'd her blooming race
With tints so tender of impassion'd grace;
With all their glances wove such artless wiles,
Or breath'd such brightness round their angel smiles.

. . . . .

Hail, happy years! when every lyre was strung,
And every clime with mirth and music rung.
While Asia's voice her Calidasa blest,
Hark! kindred spirits answer'd from the West.
There all his lofty tones Lucretius gave,
And epic transports burst on Mincio's wave,
While rov'd the Matin bee o'er sweetest flowers,
And all Hymettus bloom'd in Tibur's bowers.
Oh, could some God have rent the veil away,
And join'd in one the masters of the lay!

In the middle section, Grant summarized Hindu philosophy, set forth particulars concerning the *Bhagavadgita,* and identified Vyasa's Idealism with Berkeley's. Of these matters, Emerson's poem gives hints.[81]

Nor less inspir'd and bold, in later time
Flow'd the full melody of Sanscreet rhyme,
Which tells what hosts on Kirket's[82] plains engag'd;
What ruthless wars fraternal chieftains wag'd.
Here the fierce Kooroos all their thunders pour;
Bheem's dreadful shell, and Bheeshma's lion roar:
There Pandoo's sons their favour'd ranks expand,
The fiery gandeev[83] bends in Arjun's[84] hand.
Lo, gods and demigods, a countless throng,
Blaze in the verse, and swell the pomp of song.
High Casi's groves and the rapt'rous measures hail,
And distant calpas[85] kindle at the tale.

Such was thy strain, Vyasa,[86] saint and sage,
Th' immortal Berkeley of that elder age.
Like him, with flames of holiest rapture fir'd,
To thoughts sublime thy daring mind aspir'd,
And, nature opening to thy ardent glance,
Saw God alone through all the vast expanse.
Mysterious theme! Beneath the peipal[87] shade,
His aged limbs the reverend Brahmin laid;
Full on his brow the holy ointment glow'd,[88]
The snow-white zennar[89] o'er his shoulder flow'd;
The pointed cusa[90] deck'd his green retreat,
And Ganges' billow kiss'd his sacred feet:
Serene he view'd the laughing scenes around,
Bright Magadh's vales with floating chawla[91] crown'd,
The sunshine calm on Casi's turrets shed,
And clouds reposing on Heemala's head;
Then, all entranc'd, recall'd his wand'ring eye,
And fix'd the gather'd beams on Deity:
From height to height his musing spirit soar'd,
And speechless thought[92] th' unutter'd name ador'd:

Till words unconscious flowing from his tongue,
He swell'd the strain, and mystic measures sung.

" 'Tis all delusion: Heaven and earth and skies,
"But air-wove images of lifeless dyes.
"HE only lives—Sole Being—None beside—
"The Self-existing, Self-beatify'd:
"All else but wakes at Maya's[93] fairy call;
"For All that is, is not; or God is All.
"Stupendous Essence! obvious, yet unknown;
"For ever multiply'd, for ever One.
"I feel thee not, yet touch on every side;
"See not, yet follow where thy footsteps guide;
"Hear not thy voice, yet own its mystic power
"In breathing silence of the midnight hour.
"Oh, what art thou? since all this bursting scene,
"Unnumber'd isles, and countless waves between:
"This fabric huge, on floating pillars rais'd,
"With suns and fiery elements emblaz'd;
"And thy own pedma,[94] roseate flower of light,
"Emblem and cradle of Creative Might;
"Live only on thy sleepless eye reclin'd,
"Embosom'd deep in the abyss of Mind.
"Close but th' all-seeing Mind, no splendor burns;
"Unfold, and all the Universe returns.
"Oh, what art thou? and what this darkling ray,
"Whose sadden'd lustre mourns in shrines of clay?
"Sprung from thyself, tho' quench'd in human frame,
"Faint emanation of th' Eternal Flame.
"Oh, fade these scenes, where phantom beauty glows,
"And bid th' uncumber'd soul on Thee repose;
"Expanse how dread, immeasurable height,
"Depth fathomless, and prospect infinite."

Yet whence this progress of the Sage's mind,
Beyond the bounds by Nature's hand assign'd?
Whence, every form of vulgar sense o'erthrown,
Soars the rapt thought, and rests on God alone?

. . . . .

Ask the poor Hindoo if material things
Exist: he answers, Their existence springs
From Mind within, that prompts, protects, provides,
And moulds their beauties, or their terrors guides.
Blooms the red flow'ret? Durva[95] blushes there.
Flash lightnings fierce? dread Indra[96] fills the air.
The morning wakes, or high the white wave swells;
That Surya[97] brightens, Ganga[98] this impels.
Thus, in each part of this material scene,
He owns that matter leans on Mind unseen;
And in each object views some God pourtray'd,
This all in all, and that but empty shade;
The Mind extinct, its shadows too must flee,
And all the visible forget to be.
But when the Sage is taught these Gods to deem
The powers personify'd of One Supreme,
He not destroys their functions, but transfers;
Their titles changes, not their characters;
Content, for many, one Great Cause t' adore,
He now terms attributes what Gods before:
Yet still untouch'd that principle retains,
Mind, ever present, in all matter reigns;
His creed the same, whate'er that Mind he call,
In each imprison'd, or diffus'd through all.

Although Grant chiefly lamented the decline of ancient learning in India and heralded its revival under English missionaries and scholars, he also touched on Emerson's assigned subject and indicated its moral implications.[99]

But not alone the trumpet's madding roar
Expell'd the weeping Arts from Ganges' shore;
Lo! nurs'd in Superstition's gloomy bower,
Vice[100] wings with added speed the fatal hour;
Thick and more thick her blighting breath she sheds,
And Learning sickens as the mildew spreads.
For still this sovereign principle we find,
True in the individual as the kind,

Strong links and mutual sympathies connect
The moral powers and powers of intellect;
Still these on those depend by union fine,
Bloom as they bloom, and as they fade, decline.

Grant's lines[101] on the caste system and on Transmigration, with his appended note on human souls condemned to live in the bodies of jackals, were in Emerson's mind when he wrote of India's chains and praised Columbia as giver of freedom to *all* men in the United States.[102] He also remembered this passage of Grant's poem in his Bowdoin Prize essay, upon which he was at work in March and April, 1821.[103]

At Brahma's stern decree, as ages roll,
New shapes of clay await th' immortal soul;
Darkling, condemn'd in forms obscene[104] to prowl,
And swell the midnight melancholy howl.
Be thine the task, his drooping eye to cheer,
And elevate his hopes beyond this sphere,
To brighter heavens than proud Sumeeru[105] owns,
Though girt with Indra and his burning thrones.
Then shall he recognize the beams of day,
And fling at once the four-fold chain[106] away.

Grant's extravagant praise of Britain as the liberator of India was, of course, unacceptable to Ralph, who was a schoolboy during the War of 1812 and who had already written poems on Columbia and the westward course of empire. Britain's title ("Queen of many Isles") suggested to Emerson a name for India ("Queen of the East") and reminded him of Ocean's "thousand isles."[107]

BRITAIN, thy voice can bid the dawn ascend,
On thee alone the eyes of ASIA bend.
High Arbitress! to thee her hopes are given,
Sole pledge of bliss, and delegate of Heaven;
In thy dread mantle all her fates repose,

Or bright with blessings, or o'ercast with woes;
And future ages shall thy mandate keep,
Smile at thy touch, or at thy bidding weep.
Oh! to thy godlike destiny arise!
Awake and meet the purpose of the skies!
Wide as thy sceptre waves, let India learn
What virtues round the shrine of empire burn;
Some nobler flight let thy bold Genius tower,
Nor stoop to vulgar lures of fame or power;
Such power as gluts the tyrant's purple pride,
Such fame as reeks around the homicide.
With peaceful trophies deck thy throne, nor bare
Thy conquering sword, till Justice ask the war.

. . . . .

Be these thy trophies, Queen of many Isles!
On these high Heaven shall shed indulgent smiles.
First, by thy guardian voice to India led,
Shall Truth divine her tearless victories spread;
Wide and more wide the heaven-born light shall stream,
New realms from thee shall catch the blissful theme,
Unwonted warmth the soften'd savage feel,
Strange chiefs admire, and turban'd warriors kneel,
The prostrate East submit her jewell'd pride,
And swarthy kings adore the Crucify'd.

From the following lines Emerson caught the optimism with which Grant regarded India's future—and something of his florid diction.[109]

Till from the blazing line to polar snows,
Through varying realms, one tide of blessing flows.
Then shall thy breath, celestial Peace, unbind
The frozen heart, and mingle mind with mind;
With sudden youth shall slumb'ring Science start,
And call to life each long-forgotten art,
Retrace her ancient paths, or new explore,
And breathe to wond'ring worlds her mystic lore.

Yes, it shall come! E'en now my eyes behold,
In distant view, the wish'd-for age unfold.
Lo, o'er the shadowy days that roll between,
A wand'ring gleam foretells th' ascending scene!
Oh, doom'd victorious from thy wounds to rise,
Dejected INDIA, lift thy downcast eyes,
And mark the hour, whose faithful steps for thee
Through Time's press'd ranks bring on the jubilee!

The influence of Southey's *The Curse of Kehama* upon Emerson's poem will be chiefly demonstrated in the notes following the text of the poem. I need not summarize the action of the former work, because Scott's outline is easily available.[110] Southey's preface sets forth its important theme.

In the religion of the Hindoos, which of all false religions is the most monstrous in its fables, and the most fatal in its effects, there is one remarkable peculiarity. Prayers, penances, and sacrifices, are supposed to possess an inherent and actual value, in no degree depending upon the disposition or motive of the person who performs them. They are drafts upon Heaven, for which the Gods cannot refuse payment. The worst men, bent upon the worst designs, have in this manner obtained power which has made them formidable to the Supreme Deities themselves, and rendered an *Avatar,* or Incarnation of Veeshnoo the Preserver, necessary.

Kehama, the "man-almighty," in his attempt to control earth and heaven through his penances, resembled other tyrant rajahs whose threats and achievements brought Narayena or Vishnu, the second person of the Hindu Triad, into life to save mankind from oppression.[111] (Hebrew apocalyptic reflects a similar expectation—the coming of the Messiah when the world has reached the lowest stage of degradation and despair.) When Kehama was about to sacrifice his one-hundredth horse and gain control over the Swerga (heaven), Southey describes the suspense in these lines:[112]

Dost thou tremble, O Indra, O God of the Sky,
Why slumber those Thunders of thine
Dost thou tremble on high, . .
Wilt thou tamely the Swerga resign, . .
Art thou smitten, O Indra, with dread?
Or seest thou not, seest thou not, Monarch divine,
How many a day to Seeva's shrine
Kehama his victim hath led?
Nine and ninety days are fled,
Nine and ninety steeds have bled;
One more the rite will be completed,
One victim more, and this the dreadful day,
Then will the impious Rajah seize thy seat,
And wrest the thunder-sceptre from thy sway.
Along the mead the hallowed Steed
Yet bends at liberty his way;
At noon his consummating blood will flow.
O day of woe! above, below,
That blood confirms the Almighty Tyrant's reign!
Thou tremblest, O Indra, O God of the Sky,
Thy thunder is vain!
Thou tremblest on high for thy power!
But where is Veeshnoo at this hour,
But where is Seeva's eye?
Is the Destroyer blind?
Is the Preserver careless for mankind?

Liberty-loving and republican Ralph Emerson clearly had no respect for this tyrant who persecuted the poor peasant Ladurlad and his lovely daughter, Kailyal, and scornfully refers to him in line 142 of his poem. Southey thus not only provided Emerson with a small encyclopedia of oriental knowledge but also a story illustrating the idealistic theme of *Comus,* "Virtue may be assailed but never hurt."[113] Southey also influenced Emerson's diction.[114]

"Indian Superstition" is a significant but in no sense a

successful poem. In it Emerson attempted to tie together a number of pictures or images—clear, doubtless, in his own mind, but blurred to us, largely because of crowding, condensation, poor transitions, and predominance of didactic purpose. The vagueness of much of the piece to one who comes upon it without commentary is partly attributable to the reader's unfamiliarity with what was once common knowledge. Taken by themselves, the chief pictures are interesting, because they foreshadow the "eye-mindedness" of his maturity, and the successful handling of images in such a lyric as "Each and All." Here they are: (a) Ariel and the sylphs of Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" and Ariel of *The Tempest* (1-6); (b) Errour's Den, etc., in Book I of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (7, 15-19); (c) the monstrous Juggernaut idol riding over fanatic devotees in India (25-29); (d) a composite view of Hindu superstition from Southey and contemporary reports of missionaries regarding the terrible Brahmin theism that forced men into excruciating penances and human oblations on the banks of the Ganges (33-38; 47-66); (e) Kehama, the sacrificer of horses and the oppressor of peasants (70-78); (f) Milton's concept of "a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep" in *Areopagitica* blended with the picture of Satan and his cohorts lying thunderstruck on the burning lake of Hell in Book I of *Paradise Lost* (79-88); (g) the rise of the goddess Columbia, reflecting other poems of the period of the American Revolution (91-102); (h) the paradisiacal life in the Vale of Cashmere, as described in early Indian literature (103ff.); (i) the Creation of the world and the birth of Brahma in a lotus flower (105-110); (j) the picture of desolation, resembling Grant's and the current "ruin" literature of early Romanticism—e.g., Volney's *Ruins*—(112-120); (k) maids of empire assemble for judgment—the motif of the Valkyries or of Gray's "The Fatal Sisters"—from Northern

mythology (125-126); (1) Freedom unsheathes her sword to march throughout the world (135ff.).

The meaning of Emerson's poem will be clearer if it is analyzed as follows:

Introduction: Aided by Prospero's book, Emerson invokes the stern spirits of India to commune with him.

I. Picture of dishonored India—Superstition's court—the fanaticism that supports the Juggernaut—the hopelessness and misery of religionists—children thrown as offerings into the Ganges—the misuse of wealth in India's Hindu shrines.

II. The illusory world in which the Indian worshiper is tossed about by mysterious powers—He faces terrifying paradoxes and spiritual horrors, with unending penances. (All this echoes *Kehama.*)

III. Description of the tyranny and spiritual power of a Brahmin who through penances has (like Kehama) begun to subdue not only earth but heaven—misery of those whom he punishes or pursues with vengeance. (Emerson is thinking of Ladurlad and Kailyal.)

IV. When will India gain her freedom and in spite of opposition find the joy of nationhood and enlightenment like Columbia?

V. India's happier times recalled, especially the creation of the world and the Incarnation of Brahma—halcyon times when learning flourished—what a contrast to the present havoc and sorrow!

VI. Emerson's vision of the awakening—Maids of empire come to strike off India's shackles and banish Superstition.—Foremost among them is Columbia, the guardian angel of the United States, flushed with recent victories over the British.

VII. The United States is described.—It has no Indras and no Kehamas.—The goddess Freedom dwells among the

common people as well as among the wealthy. She wishes to extend her dominion over the world, threatening superstition and tyranny everywhere.—India has begun to catch the spirit. (The Carboneria in Italy have been the most recent converts to liberty.)

Since no first draft of the poem seems to have survived, we cannot observe Emerson's early methods of revision or note what elements in the original he decided to excise in preparing the present text. I am inclined to believe that in its earliest state the conclusion was much more concrete and more typically "Yankee" than the conventional rhetoric about Columbia and the veiled allusion to the Italian rebels. One bit of evidence seems to justify such a view. Inside the cover of an early notebook near some notes on bamboo and on the giant banyan tree of India[115] appear four spirited lines which make Emerson's little poem prophetic of twentieth-century India, in which Freedom, as predicted, has won her victory—or part of it.

Britain withdraw her legions from the land
Her thirsty despots & their fierce command
And Hindoo heroes rule their native shore
And heaven the long lost boon of peace restore.

My final word concerns the style and diction of "Indian Superstition," which opens in the balanced and restrained manner of "The Rape of the Lock." Emerson had noted Walter's article on Pope, which had praised that poem for its ingenuity.[116]

As to the machinery Johnson acknowledges that it is not Pope's invention, and Warton shews that he found it in the Compte de Gabalis. Indeed the same aerial beings, with different names and characters, may be observed in Shakespeare's Midsummer's Night Dream; they existed traditionally in the days of Spenser, and are mentioned in various poets of that age, now not generally known. A little race of similar beings, who sleep on the air-

spider's web and travel on moon-beams, is still said to exist among them by the inhabitants of a certain English county, remote from the capital, the name of which I do not recollect; and there is little doubt, that a curious inquirer by the aid of poetical archaeology might trace the history of these diminutive intelligences back to the age of chivalry. . . . The machinery of the Rape of the Lock is not therefore of Pope's invention. He found the beings already existing, and only gave them new occupations in a humorous scene of domestick life. Before they lurked in flowers or roved in the woods, but now Pope has introduced them into the parlour and assigned them the care of the toilet or card table.

Beginning with line 11, however, the tone of "Indian Superstition" becomes increasingly romantic. Significant are Emerson's choice of adjectives,[117] his occasional Miltonic touches,[118] and his studied alliteration.[119] (He had been reading Sidney Willard's well-illustrated article[120] on the last-mentioned subject between February 24 and March 3, 1821.) His interest in Spenser[121] is evident in the allusion to Book I of the *Faerie Queene,*[122] in his choice of abstractions,[123] and in his intruding three alexandrines[124] among his heroic couplets. His imagery, as in his earlier poems, is heavily Hebraic.[125] He liked word contrasts of darkness-clouds-storm figures with their opposites of light-lightning-sun-sunny.[126] Whereas Grant often mentioned "trophies," Emerson used figures of crown-wreath-brow.[127] Both men used words denoting shackles-chains-thralldom. Emerson apparently followed Southey in his thunder-summit-mountain imagery,[128] but stood independent of his sources in his liking for sanguinary words: blood-bloody-crimson.[129]

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1. See its *Asiatic Researches; or Transactions . . . for enquiring into the history, the antiquities, the arts and sciences, and literature of Asia* (20 vols.; Calcutta, 1788–1836). Vols. 1-10 were reprinted verbatim from the foregoing originals at London, 1801–1811. Two other

volumes appeared before 1819. The Massachusetts Historical Society was founded in 1791.

2. John Shore, 1st Baron Teignmouth, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones* (2 vols.; London, 1806), II, 367-370. A copy of this work was owned by the Rev. William Emerson. R. W. E. began searching for it *ca.* Jan. 1, 1821. See footnote 55 *infra.*

3. Watson was Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge and Archdeacon of Ely. See his "A Discourse" in *The Asiatick Miscellany* (2 vols.; Calcutta, 1785–1786), I, 1-17, esp. pp. 5, 10. Emerson read this first volume *ca.* March, 1820.

4. *Ibid.*, I, 13.

5. Its reading room or library became the foundation for the library of the Boston Athenaeum in 1807. See James Elliot Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (6th ed., 2 vols.; Boston and New York, 1890), I, 23-26.

6. Issued in 10 volumes, Boston, 1804–1811. David Phineas Adams edited only the first six numbers of Vol. I. William Emerson was editor until 1805, when he was succeeded by Samuel Cooper Thacher, librarian of Harvard University between 1808 and 1811. For Mary Moody Emerson's many contributions to this periodical, see *Journal of the Proceedings of the Society which conducts The Monthly Anthology and Boston Review (1805–1811)*, ed. M. A. DeWolfe Howe (Boston, 1910), pp. 317-319.

7. *Monthly Anthology*, I (1803–1804), 132-133.

8. "Sacontala, or The Fatal Ring (Act I)," *Monthly Anthology*, II (1805), 360-366. For continuations, see 409-413, 466-472, 520-526, 578-583, 639-656.

9. *Monthly Anthology*, II (1805), 370-376.

10. *Ibid.*, IV (1807), 227-330.

11. *Ibid.*, V (1808), 82-88.

12. See Kenneth W. Cameron, *Emerson the Essayist* (2 vols.; Raleigh, North Carolina, 1945), II, 135-137.

13. The editor and "translator"—probably the author—was Elizabeth Hamilton. Two editions are recorded in the British Museum: 2 vols.; Dublin, 1797; 2nd ed., 2 vols.; London, 1801.

14. Third ed. (2 vols.; London, 1798), II, 178-251.

15. First ed., London, 1810. The notes cover pp. 269-376; it should

be remembered that Southey's sources automatically became Emerson's also.

16. Published at Norwich, Conn., 1817. (Copy in the Boston Athenaeum.) The instructive appendix, covering pp. 37-95, deals with the following: (1) Belief of the Hindus in an eternal and omnipotent God. (Includes Sir William Jones's "Hymn to Narayena" with commentary.) (2) Two classes of worshipers: the Direct (or mystic) and Indirect (or worshipers of God through images). (3) Assemblies of the Hindus to hear the legends of the gods. (4) The Earthen Age. (5) The annual drowning of the gods. (6) Primeval Deities of the Hindus: Brahma, the creator; Vishnu, the preserver; Siva, the destroyer. (7) The incarnations of Vishnu to preserve men from tyranny. (8) The churning of the sea. (9) Minor Deities. (10) Moral character of the gods. (11) The worship of the Hindus. (12) The influence of religious austerities. (13) The reverence paid to the objects of nature and living creatures. (14) Religious devotees.

17. See also the significant "Dissertation concerning the Customs, Manners, Languages, Religion and Philosophy of the Hindoos," prefixed to Muhammed Firishtah, *The History of Hindostan,* trans. Alexander Dow (2 vols.; London, 1768), I, xxi-lxix. (Harvard had 3 vols., London, 1770–1772.)

18. Published as Vol. III of *A Catalogue of the Library of Harvard University* (3 vols.; Cambridge, 1830). See works listed under the following headings: Oriental and Other Languages, Oriental Literature, Voyages and Travels, Asian . . . and Other History, Sermons, and Philosophy.

19. The first series (6 vols.; Boston, 1813–1818) was edited by Noah Webster; the new series (5 vols.; Boston, 1819–1823) was edited by Henry Ware.

20. See respectively: orig. ser., II (1814), 343-344; III (1815), 23-24; V (1817), 123-125.

21. *North American Review,* VI (1817–1818), 386-393; IX (1819), 36-58.

22. See XV (1816), 682-684; XI (1812), 261-272; X (1811), 248-258; XII (1813), 646-669.

23. See the bibliography of his early reading in the literature regarding the Orient in Appendix C.

24. See Frederic Ives Carpenter, *Emerson and Asia* (Cambridge,

1930), *passim,* esp. p. 10; Arthur Christy, *The Orient in American Transcendentalism* (New York, 1932); Ralph L. Rusk, *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (New York, 1949), pp. 83, 93.

25. See note 11.

26. I have simplified the difficult typography of the original.

27. See Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee, *Elements of General History, Ancient and Modern,* to which are added a table of chronology, etc. (From the 7th English ed., with continuation by Thomas Robbins, covering 1700–1815; Hartford, 1818, p. 257.)

28. Dugald Stewart, *Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind* (2 vols.; [Edinburgh, 1816]), II, 527-530, 556.

29. MS. Records of the College Faculty, IX (1814–1822), 247-248.

30. University in Cambridge: *Order of Performances for Exhibition, Tuesday, April 24, 1821* (Cambridge, 1821), p. 4.

31. "May I become a light!" (Cf. Genesis 1:3.)

32. See *A Poem on the Restoration of Learning in the East* (Cambridge, [Eng.], 1805); and in *Classical Journal,* V, no. 10 (1812), 317-333.

33. In Salem (Cushing and Appleton), 1807. The edition was actually printed by Greenough, Stebbins and Hunt, State Street, Boston.

34. The Boston Athenaeum had both the English and American editions. Although Harvard had only the edition in the *Classical Journal,* it made a special listing of the little work in its printed catalogue of 1830. It may originally have had copies of the separate, but, if so, they were lost before the fourth decade of the century.

35. Emerson's *Letters* (ed. R. L. Rusk, 6 vols.; New York, 1939), I, 99-100.

36. A MS. owned by the R. W. E. Memorial Association, now in the Houghton Library at Harvard.

37. Harvard owned two editions: London, 1791; London, 1802. The Boston Athenaeum also owned two: Dublin, 1791; London, 1804.

38. William Robertson, *The Works* (8 vols.; Oxford, 1815), VIII, 325. Cf. the two kinds of spirits invoked in the beginning of Emerson's poem.

39. London, 1814. See *Emerson the Essayist,* II, 154, 171.

40. See *Emerson the Essayist,* II, 155, 180. (Boston Library Society List, no. 133.)

41. The work was published in 2 vols., London, 1815. Another ed. (2 vols.) London, 1816. See esp. chaps. iii and iv. See *Emerson the Essayist,* II, 155. Cf. "Indian Superstition," ll. 67-78.

42. See Kenneth W. Cameron, *Emerson's Early Reading List (1819–1824)* (New York, 1951), pp. 4, 9. Vol. I of the *Miscellany* contains more than 500 quarto pages. For his transcripts of "Narayena," see *Journals,* I, 157, and his *Parnassus* (Boston, 1875), p. 180.

43. *Quarterly Review,* XXII (July, 1819), 59-102.

44. Completed July 21, 1820. See *Two Unpublished Essays,* ed. Edward Everett Hale (Boston and New York, 1896), pp. 3-39.

45. *Ibid.,* pp. 38-39.

46. See *Letters,* I, 93. No final copy seems to survive, but the sprawling rough draft is preserved in Emerson's unpublished journals.

47. See *Quarterly Review,* XXII (1819), 66.

48. George Berkeley, "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Arts and Learning in America," *The Works* (London, 1837), p. 394. For commentary, see Burton Stevenson, *The Home Book of Quotations* (3rd ed.; New York, 1937), p. 52.

49. They seem to be ll. 140-153 of the sprawled sections of the rough draft.

50. *Two Unpublished Essays,* p. 15.

51. See "Sanscrit Poetry," *Edinburgh Review,* XXXIII (1820), 431-442.

52. See *Emerson the Essayist,* I, 69-77.

53. Vol. I (no more published), London, 1805. See *Emerson's Early Reading List,* pp. 6, 10.

54. *Edinburgh Review,* V (1804–1805), 288-301, 329-346. See *Emerson the Essayist,* II, 157.

55. See "Books Inquirenda" in *Journals,* I, 82. I date the entry *ca.* Jan. 1, 1821, on evidence of the dates of his finding and reading the *inquirenda* immediately preceding and following it. The total list of books to be searched for appears at the end of the MS. "Wide World No. 2," and covers the period of the manuscript, from September, 1820. I believe he soon thereafter found Teignmouth in his father's library. He seems to have come upon it later than his classmates. A glance through the charging records of the college library for the freshman year (1817–1818) reveals that Emerson's close friends were reading Jones's poems and Teignmouth's *Life of Jones.*

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Joseph Bancroft Hill and John Boynton Hill, for example, borrowed both these works during June and July, 1818. For their relationship with R. W. E., see *Emerson the Essayist,* I, 457-458, which gives the minutes of the literary club "without a name."

56. See the hint of this theme in *Journals,* I, 83. See the footnote on climate in Appendix B for the principal influences upon Emerson and his contemporaries.

57. See *Emerson the Essayist,* II, 157.

58. *Monthly Anthology,* IV (1807), 86, 654-656.

59. *Ibid.,* pp. 259-265, *et passim.*

60. *Ibid.,* pp. 36, 253-255.

61. *Ibid.,* pp. 602-603. See Kenneth W. Cameron, "The Potent Song in Emerson's Merlin Poems," *Philological Quarterly,* XXXII (1953), 22-28.

62. *Monthly Anthology,* IV (1807), 327-330.

63. London, 1810. The notes cover pp. 269-376.

64. *Op. cit.,* pp. 339, 363. The first is found in Sir William Jones, *Works* (13 vols.; London, 1807), VII, 344-345.

65. See *Emerson the Essayist,* II, 158, 182, and Karl Wilhelm Friedrich von Schlegel, *Lectures on the History of Literature, Ancient and Modern,* trans. John G. Lockhart (2 vols.; Edinburgh, 1818) and (2 vols.; Philadelphia, 1818). See esp. pp. 191-198. Emerson probably could not have known Schlegel's *Ueber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808).

66. "On the Idealism of Berkeley."

67. I might have included an unfinished "letter poem," dated Sept. 24, 1817, now found in *Letters,* I, 42-44. It, too, is written in heroic couplets and deals with the abstractions Hope, Despair, and Superstition. Emerson's unconventional method of footnoting (p. 44) appears in "Indian Superstition" (l. 67).

68. See Agnes Marie Sibley, *Alexander Pope's Prestige in America, 1725–1835* (New York, 1949); and Leon Howard, "The American Revolt against Pope," *Studies in Philology,* XLIX (1952), 48-65.

69. I have given reasons above for assuming that the poem, "Improvement," in its final form, praised America. For the prevalence of patriotism in the American literature contemporary with Emerson, see Van Wyck Brooks, *The Flowering of New England* (New York, [1941]), the early chapters and esp. pp. 78ff. and 126ff.

70. "Lines on Washington written at Concord Dec 24th 1814" in *Letters,* VI, 329.

71. Cf. "Indian Superstition," ll. 102, 135-138, 141-148.

72. Delivered at the performance of the Boston Latin School, Aug. 25, 1815. See *Letters,* VI, 330-332.

73. An allusion to the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 appears in ll. 135-138 of "Indian Superstition."

74. Emerson's interest in Napoleon throughout life and the problem of the dictator are treated in Perry Miller, "Emersonian Genius and the American Democracy," *New England Quarterly,* XXVI (1953), 27-44. See Brooks, *op. cit.,* p. 76.

75. He had, doubtless, read Francis Jeffrey's severe strictures on Southey's verse experiments in the *Edinburgh Review,* XVII (1810–1811), 429-465. In *Letters,* I, 11, he remembered Samuel Johnson's thundering against "lax and lawless versification." See also Thomas Brown's *The Renovation of India* (Edinburgh, 1808) mentioned above.

76. Besides Improvement, the abstractions include Grandeur, Ignorance, Rhyme, Fashion, Ambition, Glory, Fate, Danger, Death, Havoc, Ruin, Destiny, Strength, and Albion.

77. See *Letters,* I, 67.

78. Grant, *op. cit.,* p. 4.

79. See "Indian Superstition," ll. 103ff., 111-112.

80. See Grant, *op. cit.,* pp. 11, 25. Emerson found this theme also in Broughton, *op. cit.,* p. 8, *et passim.*

81. Grant, *op. cit.,* pp. 16-22. Cf. "Indian Superstition," ll. 53, 105ff.

82. "The following passage will be best explained by a general note. The other great epic poet of India, besides Valmic, was Vyasa. He wrote an epic poem, called The Mahabbarat. Of this poem Mr. Wilkins has translated an episode, called, The Bhagvat Geeta, or episode of Bhagvat or Crishna, another name for Vishnu. The episode describes the preliminaries to a dreadful battle fought near Delhi, between the Kooroos and Pandoos, two great collateral branches of the same family. The Pandoos were successful. The Bhagvat Geeta is considered as too sacred for common readers, and is said to contain all the mysteries of Hindooism. It certainly abounds with sublime passages" (Grant).

83. "The gandeev was Arjun's bow" (Grant).

84. "Arjun, one of the Pandoos, was the favourite and pupil of Crishna, who acted as his charioteer in this battle" (Grant).

85. "A calpa is a day of Brahma" (Grant).

86. "Vyasa was not only a poet. He founded the most celebrated philosophical school in India, called the Vedanti School; of which the principal tenet is that so ably recommended to his countrymen by the celebrated Bishop Berkeley; viz. 'That matter exists only as it is perceived'" (Grant).

87. "The sacred fig-tree" (Grant).

88. "The Brahmins paint a streak of yellow ochre on their foreheads; some sects horizontally, and others perpendicularly" (Grant).

89. "The zennar is the sacred thread worn by Brahmins" (Grant).

90. "The cusa is the most sacred species of grass" (Grant).

91. "Chawla, the Indian name of rice" (Grant).

92. "The OM, or name of the Deity, never to be uttered but in silence" (Grant).

93. "Maya, or Delusion; supposed to be a Goddess sprung from Brahma" (Grant).

94. "Pedma, the sacred name of the lotos; an object of supreme veneration in all the mythological systems of the East, especially in that of the Hindûs. Brahma is said to have been born in a lotos, when he created the world. It was regarded also as an emblem of the creative power. 'This plant (says Mr. Knight) being productive of itself, and vegetating from its own matrice, without being fostered in the earth, was naturally adopted as the symbol of the productive power of waters, upon which the active spirit of the Creator operated, in giving life and vegetation to matter'" (Grant).

95. "Durva is the most beautiful species of grass, and supposed to be the residence of a Nymph of the same name. Its flowers, says Sir W. Jones, seen through a lens, are like minute rubies" (Grant).

96. "The God of the firmament" (Grant). See also the note on l. 141 of "Indian Superstition."

97. "The Deity of the Sun" (Grant).

98. "Gamga is the Goddess of the Ganges, who sprung, like Pallas, from the head of the Indian Jove" (Grant).

99. Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

100. "The inevitable tendency of vice to degrade the faculties of the soul, is most eloquently insisted on by Longinus, in the last section of his celebrated treatise" (Grant).

101. Grant, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

102. See "Indian Superstition," ll. 13, 35, 76ff., 129ff., 137, 146. Emerson's subject required him to ignore the military despotisms upon which Grant especially dwells.

103. See *Two Unpublished Essays*, p. 74: "After the decline of the Roman church the lower orders in Europe had no Indian Brahmin to tell them that in the eternal rounds of transmigration their souls could never rise above the jackal."

104. "The Hindûs of the lowest class firmly believe themselves to be of the same species as the jackals; and are taught, that through eternal transmigrations they shall never rise higher than those animals" (Grant). On this subject see also Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*, pp. 343-344.

105. "Sumeeru is the mountain on which Indra's heaven is placed" (Grant).

106. "In allusion to the four castes" (Grant).

107. Grant, *op. cit.*, pp. 34, 36, 37. On Columbia's role, see "Indian Superstition," ll. 137-140, 149-156.

108. "Indian Superstition," ll. 11-12, 140.

109. Grant, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

110. Sir Walter Scott, "Southey's *Curse of Kehama*," *Quarterly Review*, V (1811), 40-61.

111. See Grant, *op. cit.*, p. 8; Southey, *The Curse of Kehama*, pp. 102-103; esp. Broughton, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-152. In his fourth Avatar or Outar, Vishnu was Nur Singh or the Man-Lion, who tore to pieces Harrunakus, a tyrant. In his fifth, he was Bawun or the Dwarf, overreaching Bul, a tyrannical and impious rajah. In his sixth, he was Purus Ram, who overcame the whole race of the Rajpoots from which an evil rajah sprang. In his eighth, he was Krishna, in which character he overthrew the usurper Kuns, performing deeds of valor in the *Muhabarut* or great war, which is the subject of the noblest Indian poem.

112. *The Curse of Kehama*, pp. 74-75. See also pp. 62, 68-69, 71, 76, 103.

113. *Ibid.*, p. 200.

114. Such words as adamantine, clouds, faulchion, fane, lightning, lineaments, thunder, and trumpet.

115. "No. XVIII" (Cabot's "M") reverse of fly leaf. It was apparently written at the same time as he composed the material beginning at the opposite end, in what is now known as "Cabot's M-

prime." See Typescript Journal now numbered "Houghton 16A, Part 1." Emerson might have known the following anti-British work: *A Vindication of the Hindoos from the Aspersions of the Rev. Claudius Buchanan . . . with a Refutation of the Arguments exhibited in his Memoir,* by a Bengal Officer (London, 1808). He might have seen the review, "A Vindication of the Hindoos," *Eclectic Review,* VII (1808), 252-272. For Emerson's creative use of the bamboo and banyan trees of India during his early years and for the possible sources of his information, see F. Y. St. Clair, "Emerson among the Siphars," *American Literature,* XIX (1947), 73-77.

116. "On Pope," *Monthly Anthology,* II (1805), 232-238. Emerson withdrew this volume from the Boston Library Society on Dec. 4, 1819, and kept it until the twenty-third. The quotation is on p. 237.

117. E.g., boundless, bloated, writhing, haggard, unholy, shuddering, blazoned, glittering.

118. E.g., l. 25.

119. See esp. ll. 17, 24, 29, 40, 45-47, 81, 102, 127, 137, 140, *et passim.*

120. See Sidney Willard, "Alliteration," *Monthly Anthology,* IV (1807), 654-656. See the shorter article on p. 86 of the same volume.

121. See *Letters,* I, 82 (Apr. 23-24, 1819): "I am reading . . . 3d Vol of Spenser's Faery Queen with which I am *delighted.*" He read Thomas Warton's *Observations on the Fairy Queen of Spenser,* in two volumes, early in 1820. See "Spenser," *Monthly Anthology,* IV (1807), 36.

122. See ll. 15-19.

123. Many, of course, are paralleled in Grant's poem and in Southey's. Some are common enough in this period. See "Of Spenser's Allegorical Character" in Warton, *op. cit.* (2nd ed.; London, 1762), II, 87-113. Emerson was also probably acquainted with John Hughes's "Essay on Allegorical Poetry—On the Faerie Queen" in Vol. II of Spenser's *Works* (2 vols.; London, 1805).

124. See ll. 36, 74, 102. See Warton, *ed. cit.,* II, 154-155.

125. E.g., cherubim, bugle, trumpet, ark, law, angel, and archangel.

126. See ll. 1, 94-99, 127 and 91, 96, 102, 104.

127. See ll. 110-119.

128. E.g., ll. 92-93, 111. On the Himalayan imagery, see *The Curse of Kehama,* pp. 314-316. On thunder, see ll. 63, 95.

129. See ll. 18, 23, 36.

ariel: a review of international english literature
ISSN 0004-1327 Vol. 41 No. 2 Pages 113–138 Copyright © 2011

Indian Journals and Allen Ginsberg's Revival as Prophet of Social Revolution

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Countercultural political and social histories may well remember Allen Ginsberg's renditions of beatnik religious and narrational adventures into underclass liberal intellectualism and social ethics as the expression of the true sublimity of "Beat," if only because he anticipates the massive protest vehicle of 1960s counterculture. In addition, biographical assessments assert the fact that spiritual metaphors of discovery and deracialized ethno-studies could galvanize intellectual and social revolutions against the anesthetizing power of American capitalist-technological authoritarianism (Raskin, Schumacher). Hence, analytic readings tend to point out pronounced differences with Jack Kerouac, Ginsberg's spiritual mentor, and William S. Burroughs, a onetime lover who had forewarned the young Ginsberg not to adopt a political liberalism that mimicked "the most damnable tyranny, a sniveling, mealy-mouthed tyranny of bureaucrats, social workers, psychiatrists, and Union officials" (qtd. in Johnson 113). Robert Johnson describes Burroughs's instructional tone: ideologies obstructed the thinker's point of view, and liberalism "was a plot to create conformity—politically, economically, and, as his letters to Ginsberg consistently argue, sexually" (106).

Ginsberg's two-year trek to India between 1961 and 1963 was, in fact, the narrative force which catalyzed his rebirth as prophet, icon, and countercultural messenger, causing him to move further from Kerouac's spiritual adventuring while transforming anguish into redemption that made possible the development of a truly countercultural outlook and protest rhetoric. First, a reading of *Indian Journals* implies a decisive moment of authorial self-doubt, borrowed from the poet's sexual and philosophical anxieties which were the result of dependence upon Burroughs and Kerouac as a "protégé." Depression, both in and after the

publication of "Howl," is intimately connected with Ginsberg's relationship to his mentors. His poetry during the late 1950s and early 1960s profile the isolating psychic frustrations of an intellectual gay dissenter obsessed with finding meanings, yet unable to realize sustained selfhood while confronted with American capitalist-military dominance. Notwithstanding his translation of drugged depression into poems such as 1959's "Lysergic Acid" and 1963's "Mescaline," the tone of his entreaty was often quite simple. In 1962, he pleaded with Kerouac in a letter: "what will happen to my mind which has lost its idea?" (*Indian Journals* 11). My sense is that two regenerative themes characterize the transformation of "beatnik" Ginsberg into the ebullient, concrete, and synthetic hippie poet who would truly challenge American structures of domination. The first was intellectual: Hindu India manifested Ginsberg's concept of "world," materially crystallized his understanding of liberal international possibility, and expanded the urgency of learning from the "Eastern" anthropological/cultural traditions, redeveloping social ethics away from the rhetoric of colonialism, postcolonialism, and globalization.

Orientalist configurations of otherness, too, were challenged, making vocalizations of true narrative communicativity between "White" and "Other" possible. Here, a reading of the makings of poems such as "Stotras to Kali Destroyer of Illusions" marked an interesting change, a moment where Ginsberg rewrote the mythology and typology of American domination to present a ubiquitous sacrificial demon which had amalgamated and destroyed man's intellectual and social being. This poem, which was in a constant state of revision in the early 1960s, empowered the focus of poetry once again to challenge the rhetoric of war, democracy, and authority within the American social landscape. The second effect was mystical and spiritual: Ginsberg's drugged depression at the outset of his journey became pleasantly romanticized, set in a country with a long history of tolerance for mysticism, shamanism, and underground rebellions against the State. Hindu mysticism, far from maintaining class separation, provided class-conscious material for the Ginsbergian revolution against American military-capitalist-technological dominance. Readings of *Indian Journals* with a view to the semiotics

of narrative production re-establishes romanticism, yet one which was redemptive of the individual's understanding of history, the sensing of *telos*, and one's ethical selfhood. In short, India performed the social and spiritual transformation of Ginsberg into a revived political acolyte, while challenging the orientalist domain of his fantasies to present a more deeply sensible Other and a changing political dynamic sympathetic with American liberalism.

Despite the wealth of contemporary scholarship about the Beat Generation, my sense is that it remains fair to pose the orientalist paradigm against the measurable impact of Beat (re) learnings of Indian and Far Eastern philosophies, literatures, and music arts. When one reads Kerouac's novels or Ginsberg's poems, the impact of orientalist metaphors remain doubly constant: few are the number of contemporary non-Western thinkers cited as compared with the broad list of ancient philosophers and poets that could easily be read without historical context or even logical digestions which might construe an authentic or humanistic derivation of "meaning." The mysterious and sublime grasp of the White adventurer was also ensured by this exotic anti-rationality: Kerouac, Ginsberg, and Burroughs all use rhetorical foils of "madness," "insanity," "strangeness" to mask the vivid possibilities of foreign performance cultures which had languished during centuries of White incomprehension, demonization, and thus superstructural validation of White economic and governmental dominance. Ginsberg's traveling inquiries did not seek closed objectives of ethnographic preservation: his was a deeply contemplated effort to internalize and suppose the potential influences of Indian religious psychodramas upon Americans. Michael Schumacher and John Raskin document the obvious ferment of Ginsberg's voyage, and recall efforts to find himself through free participation in and observation of distant oriental cultures which were confined to backwardness and obscurity. Nonetheless, there are clear points of departure from the scope and intent of Kerouac's highly sentimental journeying among Mexicans and Black Americans. Ginsberg's political aspirations were more detailed and more contemporaneous than those of his Beat predecessors. It must also be said that Ginsberg's travels, communication with spiritual leaders and poets, and re-crea-

tions of Hindu spiritual-ritual breadth, confirmed beatnik authenticity even while it erased its apolitical exclusivity. While paired with Western underclass histories and depicted as the place of multi-directional spiritual transmigrations, India confirmed Ginsberg's lifelong quest for the Blakean undermoorings of spirit, nature, and pastoralism. India also represented the academic quest for a common East-West history that Kerouac was studying through Arthur Schopenhauer, and was the subject of mutual cross-cultural and historical thinking (Kerouac, *Desolation Angels* 193, *Selected Letters 1957–1969* 392). Ginsberg did not simply take up the task of presenting Eastern thinkers or the breadth of Indian intellectual consciousness. He also used underclass Indian devotions to revive countercultural notions of egalitarianism, environmentalism, and social policy reform, to transform India into a Blakean tempest that, within all her dense humanity and visible suffering, would demand that the world abandon its urban, technologized, and militarized obsessions.

A definite departure from beatnik poeticism into countercultural political protest is clear in the early shards of Ginsberg's first major poem, "Stotras To Kali, Destroyer of Illusions." He rewrites the literary and romantic portrait of America's democratic history to produce a massive engine of conscious terror which demanded the strength, fluidity, and urgency of contercultural mobilizations, both emotional and psychic. The first draft attempts to dissolve American democracy's limitless power through journeying and through the re-writing of democratic *ethos*; these entreaties are revised significantly to make way for the typological destroyer of consciousness and for the human cycles of death and redemption initiating 1960s counterculture.

Much of the published draft of "HYMN TO US" is faithful to the first draft which was written in 1961; the published version of "Durga-Kali," written on May 8, 1962, however, adds a much deeper and more sweeping set of symbols of destruction, sacrificing the poetic mercy and piety of America's literary past. The first draft of "Durga-Kali," written on April 18, 1961, arranged the typology of man's civilizational death to represent the absorption of totalitarianism into the American political structure:

> the skulls that hang on Kali's neck
> Geo Washington with eyes rolled up &
> Tongue hanging out of his mouth like a fish
> N. Lenin upside down, einstein's hairy white
> cranium. Hitler with his mustache grown
> walrus-droop over his lip, Roosevelt with
> grey eyeballs; Stalin grinning forever,
> Mussolini with a broken jaw, artaud (*Ginsberg Papers*, box 47, folder 1)

Leftist political theory in the United States and in Europe could not dismiss this restatement of democracy as totalitarianism: to pair the leaders of fascist and communist dictatorships with democracy, and to say that American democracy was "sick" with its unclarified and noxious integration with the most nefarious leaders of communism and fascism, was a direct attack upon the government's diplomacy and the flirtations of those less convinced of the possible "mission" of Pax Americana. The published version which appears in 1962, however, deepens the assault by identifying romantic literature, twentieth-century American poets, including himself and his family, and finally his questionable consciousness, to be symbolized as prey to the Hindu goddess of death. It reads as follows:

> one hand fingers her pearly shining necklace of skulls—
> Hitler, Mussolini, Roosevelt, Chamberlain, Lavalle, Stalin,
> Mayakovsky, Hart Crane, Yessenin, Vachel Lindsay, Virginia
> Woolf, Poe, Dylan Thomas, Ramana Maharishi, Naomi Ginsberg,
> Uncle Max, Aunt Eleanor, Uncle Harry, & Aunt Rose, & WC
> Fields—"skull rosary" (*Indian Journals* 23)

The addition of romantic poets, feminist writers, family members, and spiritual gurus who Ginsberg had sought in order to infuse poetic *métier* and spiritual peace was as much an expurgation of things "Beat" as it was representative of a grand restatement of the totality of civilizational death. For Ginsberg to move further into the cycles and machinations of

an altered consciousness which could fight American imperialism, this death was necessary, if only to moor him more completely to the Hindu devotional tradition that premised its selflessness and redemptions from psychological suffering. That so many relics of maternity, bliss, and beauty are lumped with fascist and communist dictators, too, presented an imbibed absorption which could only be redeemed among poor, underclass, and largely unrecognized vestiges of the decolonized "South." India, too, was a country very incompletely governed by a postcolonial "national" culture and, being a democracy, a sporadic arrangement of modern and traditional shards manifesting poverty and socio-economic powerlessness. The edit tests Ginsberg's faith, his mercifulness to the afflicted, and the evil machinations of his Western origins. It also opens up the narrowness of his intellectual perspective in order to receive a much greater portrait of intellectual consciousness.

Hindu cosmology also mediated the poetic transformation from romantic bard to countercultural rebel: Dylan Thomas and Vachel Lindsay reappear in interviews justifying the import of Ginsberg's 1966 poem, "Wichita Vortex Sutra." In 1968, he unified romantic reinvention with rock and folk music, rather than jazz, as vehicles for protest along the lines of bardic singing for peace and love:

> The way beyond the printed page is music! Bob Dylan. That's the inevitable … well. The first way out is simply platform chanting, like William Jennings Bryan, or Vachel Lindsay or Dylan Thomas or myself or whoever makes it on the platform—the vocalization. The bardic thing. Platform thing. Platform-bardic—Aah! (laughs to himself) Then next—at least in America at this point—it seems historically to have led to a revival of poetry as *song*. (*Spontaneous Mind* 157)

Further, Ginsberg's Indiology did not assemble a force merely cultural or historical in nature: *Indian Journals* is not without some pronounced moments of sociopolitical critique and theorization about mass democratic political action. *Indian Journals* evokes characters and situations that demonstrate the Other's collective response to White economic and cultural subjugation of the non-Christian world. The narrative

technique of diary entries is not part of an othering agency; *Indian Journals* makes frequent comparisons to the depression and *pathos* of Western Europe found in paintings and works of literature, including Dante Alighieri's *The Inferno*. Descriptive techniques for reviving otherness contribute to the counter-thrust of Western authorship: like Blake and Dante, Ginsberg explores the catharsis and anguishes of the individual as recurrent confirmations of the need for social interaction and for shared social identities abundant in Indian society and folklore.

The cultural moment of performativity suggested numerous deductions of countercultural political theory and mobilization dynamics. Hindu folk devotionals, chanting, and purification rituals figured significantly into Ginsberg's pronounced involvement in the Vietnam War, the skewered 1968 elections, and the American social establishment. Unlike the attempt of "spontaneous prose" to capture a unique and undefinedly sublime moment of cultural difference or even divergence, the diaries and their snapshots of folk devotionals (*bhajans*) suggest their functional power to be part of necessary social praxis. His 1969 *Playboy* interview illustrates the functioning of man's essential truths against mainstream dysfunctionalism: "the robot standardization of American consciousness is one side-effect feedback from a greedy, defective technology, just as ecological disorder is another feedback, and these systemic disorders reinforce each other fatally unless there is complete metabolic change" (*Spontaneous Mind* 194). Ginsberg examines repression physiologically and intellectually: "we are all blocked off from our own perceptions. The doors of perception have been closed, the gates of feeling shut, the paths of sensation overgrown, the roads of consciousness covered with smog"(162).

Negative generalizations of the West appear to suggest a contrast with the harmony and community of Hindu chanting and singing to not simply be beautiful and part of a legendary historiography, but an essential functioning of the human community whose healing power touched a primordial human nature derived socially rather than spontaneously or a part of one's individual genius. Notes on the Hindu cremation rites also foreshadowed communalism: the "gathering of the tribes" (205) during the San Francisco "Be-In" directly repeated Indian sociopolitics

by transcendentally staging divine messianism as that which offered solutions to "the crisis of identity and crisis of the planet and political crisis" (205). In the 1969 trial of Black Panther leader Bobby Seale, Ginsberg adeptly manifests prayer into psychic and rhetorical confrontation of the American technological authority and totality:

> By immobilize (through chanting "Om") I meant shut down the mental machinery which repeats over and over again the images of fear which are scaring people in uniform, that is to say, police officers, or the demonstrators whom I refer to as naked, meaning naked emotionally and perhaps, hopefully, naked physically. (234)

Again, I wish to emphasize that Ginsberg's affinity for Indian folk music and rituals was not merely Beat-friendly romanticism, but a continuing and deepening gradient of learning social communicativity that contributed to the American counterculture's re-writing of the democratic experience. The train of symbols in sentences describing *bhajans*, traveling picture assemblages of Indian cities, dreams, visionary moments of transcendence, and even cremation ceremonies where participants jump into the fire and inscribe ash in their bodies, continues in both Kerouacian "spontaneous prose" and its ecstatic, humoric stresses on the body, nature, and language. Still, the cremation rites challenged Ginsberg to realize and to negotiate Hindu Indian social communications. This was important, if only because of Jonathan Eburne's charge that Kerouac "configured" otherness to ensure the personal genius of authorship without paying much substantive attention to the essential actors who are makers of that social-spiritual experience. Ginsberg does write of the outburst tactfully, both a test of faith and a recognition of his alien status. Still, the "singing beggar" established the social depth and gradient of learning for an outsider; his lament disinters Ginsberg's spiritual/parapsychological pretense to epiphany through Hinduism:

> And my singing beggar now squatting on a red pit, lucidly chanting away gods name—I thought perhaps this be Master Sign since I been earlier so rejectful to him & he turning out to

> be such a simple holy sustained all nite praying fellow like this in front of my eyes—I sat on bench near his fire & he talked to me in loud voice, a speech I couldn't follow, sounded like he complaining my being so selfish waving his arms at me from his little brushwood hot flamey pile—I moved away, just in case he get further noisy or mad— (*Indian Journals* 78)

And then, Ginsberg is bemused and exiled when the presumed magical dream of transcendent identity through "crystal cabinet Krishna beribboned & jeweled in minds eye" (78) lampooning himself as a complete outsider and without shoes:

> I had wakened, thinking it all a cartoon dream, no longer trembling, as the temple bell-going shout rose to a noisy Bong climax like the end of laughing gas movie—shoes gone like Donald Owl—went barefoot for tea & puris & potatos. (78)

Even if it simply restates the communitarian and lingual separateness of Hindu India from an American, Jewish outsider possessing nothing but devotion, scriptural readings and possible re-conceptualizations, this poem in particular assigns a transformative ethics. Ginsberg is a subject of India, rather than India the subject of his imagination. To pair transcendence with idle, thoughtless humour and petty theft was not new: Bowles, Kerouac, and Burroughs were masters of the form and suggested through these pairings the White man's unfitness for parapsychological knowledge. Ginsberg first interprets this awakening morally: he has not learned; he must explore more definitively India's intellectual history and mythology for answers. Second, the communicativity of Hindu Indian social spheres is masked by the outsider's complete ignorance of language and his uncertainty in translating instances of the community's collective psychology. Here begins Ginsberg's much more definitive search for self-realization through a Hindu historiography, to understand the poetics of its socio-economic as well as mystic and dramatic expression.

Ginsberg was visibly impressed by the cultural "force" of Hindu rituals, and *Indian Journals* not only expanded the rhetorical paradigm of

"spontaneous prose," but implies a real sociopolitical development, and re-development, of otherness into an inescapably modern re-creation of world ethics. The tone of admiration and sympathy was a response to complex modern-intellectual influences upon recent Indian literatures and philosophies. In this respect, he differed from other Beats who were less likely to seek non-White authorship of the modern sort, and who were at times suspicious or even remorseful about the modernization of non-White selves. Kerouac ruefully attributes the end of a cherished era, and the end of genuine attachment to faith and man's cosmic identity, to the ancillaries of decolonization actions: "angels rioting about nothing" (*Desolation Angels* 102). By contrast, Ginsberg negotiated countercultural *praxis* through a profound socio-political identification with Indian society. With her gnawing, mass poverty, her myriad of deteriorated bodies and spirits, and her modern intellectuals who posed traditional organizations of community and economy as antidotes to the slavery of White domination, India represented the ultimate popular realization of the antithesis to White materialism and capitalism. Writing India also greatly expanded the urgent "Beat" quest for meaning and redemption for those who sought to valorize and proselytize through the experiences of the underclasses. Modifications of the "spontaneous" form meant understanding Indian myth and ritual to be constant guiding forces which remain superstructurally relevant rather than erratically defined and incomplete in their capacity to organize and direct society. Kerouac's translations of jazz, "fellahin" Mexicans and Blacks, and Buddhist *bhikkuhood* are both incomplete in suggesting socio-political and socio-economic changes, and inscribes a race against time, a transcription that faced "the Apocalypse of the Fellahin, when all Culture and Civilization are done" (*Selected Letters 1940–1956* 403). Kerouac approaches the topic of jazz's impact upon society in *Desolation Angels*, but shies away from mass democratic implications: for Duluoz, the jazzman is an isolated and reticent genius that abstractly pieced together the "human story" of Black Americans. He idealistically restates: "The Negro people will be the salvation of America" (102), yet he never offers a complete vision of Black society or consciousness, instead narrating a series of

shards, disconnected and connected only through the final genius of the author.

In contrast, India, and Ginsberg's researching of the country, represents a complex examination of modern political realities and the social possibilities for decolonization. First, Ginsberg's list of writers and philosophers that he either meets or reads contrasts with Kerouac's actions: he attends the Jamshedpur Bengali Poets Conference (41) and is so pleasantly fascinated with the poet-mystic legends of Bama Kape and Shakti Chatterjee [whose name he spells Chattertee] (83–7) that he repeatedly pursues their symbolic power in his travels. Where Kerouac had exclusively read ancient philosophers while seeking poor subjects, mystics, and other non-intellectualized prophets so as to freely configure a "magical" antiquity, and Burroughs had raved about the most delinquent or dangerous foreign extremists and dementia to discover a "Third World" modern-traditional identity synthesis, it was Ginsberg who tried foremost to understand the countercultural relevance of a non-Western modern intellectual tradition. At the beginning of his journey, many of the selected books were not focused on India; as with Kerouac's study of Buddhism, they include spiritual texts and histories which arguably aided a learning of Indian spiritual consciousness. However, one choice clearly pointed to a learning of the modern tradition and hence, modern political agency: R.K. Narayan's *Waiting For The Mahatma*. This choice did not only underscore holistic efforts to understand India's modern sociopolitical development in more detail, or the awesome task of organizing social and political revolution, or critiques of caste inequality. *Waiting For The Mahatma* elicits revolutionary characteristics analogous to the Ginsbergian countercultural creed: The Mahatma preaches chanting and music, compassion, and casteless egalitarianism to be active themes among "the non-violent soldiers marching on to cut the chains that bind Mother India" (*Waiting* 26). Ginsberg would directly copy Gandhi's frequent visits to deeply impoverished neighborhoods, while developing and intensifying the visible portrait of hunger, disease, and unemployment in order to forecast mankind's spiritual revival.

Ginsberg's tapping of Indian *literati* reflected learning of non-White social contexts in order to cure White-manifested social ills. In a fa-

miliar Beat fashion, he sought authors who identified man's spiritual redemption of self to arise from poverty, suffering, and mendicancy. Yet the quoting of Shakti Chatterjee proposed Hinduism's elastic transcendence of White culture and economic domination, and authoritatively advances non-White fighting of White economic hegemony and White moral control of modernity. The last stanza of Ginsberg's handwritten copy reads as follows:

> O god I shall meet you in the depths of the Middle Class blood
> No! You are going to be defeated, sure.
> Your every nerve is filled with white ants
> in the bones & flesh & marrow only to age old cripple heritage of blood—
> God by that time I am a master fighter for the day's fight,
> I have got the eternal right of the unachievable classical Bow-weapon—
> Tho I'm vanished ages ago from heaven—
> I am that Satan, the firstborn child of heaven. (*Indian Journals* 86–7)

Although religious faith could either be a part of *decolonization* mobilizations or appear rhetorically structured to embrace historical literatures focused upon human freedoms, postcolonialism initially embraced Marxist social theory and it frowned upon religious doctrines and social performances, as they anesthetized and disenfranchised non-Whites. Amid this volatile "modern" beginning, India promised to be a unique example of spiritual dogma, scripture, and performance manifesting modern *praxis*. Chatterjee's poem professed underclass revolt, making it the essential trait for anti-racist fighting. It presents Hinduism in terms of civilizational survival and regeneration: India had submitted to Christian domination while surviving an exile from herself. Chatterjee's right to "the unachievable classical Bow-weapon"—the *Brahma Astra*, with which the god Rama kills the ten-headed demon-king Ravana in the *Ramayana*, did not promulgate "the opiate of the masses," yet reminds us that poor Hindus could and would seek justice for their consciences and sufferings. The cultural force of legendary mythologi-

cal revival and national geopolitical protest against White institutional and social dominance challenges Ginsberg to demand White-Other intellectual-historical parity. The myriad of Indian social examples and written works intensified Ginsberg's dense polemical destructions of materialism, media and authoritarianism. Further, the moment of Ginsberg's transcription would be unmistakable: India represented a dynamic essential to the humanity of modern life, and the nation's diverse experiences would survive the government's cultural purification measures and continue to be inclusive of a wide range of practices. That few Americans had traveled to India, too, accelerated Ginsberg's apparent demand that India be humanized, stripped of her Oriental exoticity, and be understood in terms of timeless themes: life, death, the soul, and the commonality of human experiences.

Letters to Paul Bowles during 1962 confirm the religio-moral certainty that Bowles had also observed: India was a subcontinent governed by religious faith and devotional ritual intensity (*Paul Bowles Collection*, Box 9, Volume 5, *Notes On A Visit To India* 70–2). India's poverty was offset by the then relatively insignificant factor of economic globalization which would prove to be antithetical to questions of cultural authenticity and continuity. Thus, it is understandable why *Indian Journals* presented a myriad of rebirth for the thirty-six year old poet: the widespread depth of Hindu spiritual traditions, and the demand for a world that more closely mirrored the Self's true expectations and ethical understandings of the Self, implied a revolutionary compass inclusive of a large percentage of humanity that had been denied any real modern agency. All that remained for Ginsberg to do was to vocalize the thematic contents of ritual, attach it to American countercultural politics and to the increasingly politicized rock n' roll scene, render its shamanic exploitations of performance and character holy, transcendent, and romantically ideal. *Indian Journals*, then, extended holy metaphors of spontaneous prose through the visible art of spiritual hypnosis. This aspect of ritual was indeed part of Kerouac's jazzed and Mexican bacchanalias, yet *Indian Journals* offered a more adequate rendition of civilization's collective social force. Ginsberg's introduction to "spontaneous prose" in a November, 1968 interview with Fernanda Pivano

was a classic restatement of the Beat Generation's attention to both the charismatic living beauty of underclasses and the counter-generation of spiritual and social desolation, a portrait of the endangered, yet beautifully heterogeneous extra-mainstream culture:

> [Kerouac began paying] attention to the rhythm of what he was writing in his own athletic speech and to the breath-runs of it and to the lyrical quality of his own natural tongue. So when he met Neal Cassady, they had long exciting conversations. Kerouac was struck by the lyrical rhythmical quality of the Denver provincial-western-twang explanations, that Neal was playing…. [Cassady] turned Kerouac on to listening to American speech and writing American speech, and that was precisely what [William Carlos] Williams was interested in doing, writing in American prosody. (*Spontaneous Mind* 114–5)

The text of the Pivano interview establishes two recurrent themes of the 1960s counterculture. The first, that the Beats tried to replicate "natural" speech patterns and languages, poems, and lyrical forms allowing the natural Self its unadulterated location in man's spirit and soul unfettered by the *logocentrism* of writing, anticipates the popular vocalization of non-White cultures and narrative voices. The second, based on beatnik searches for the common East-West point of phonemic cultural origins, attacks rhetorics of racism, colonialism, Jim Crow segregation, and lastly postmodern stereotyping and diminution of non-White agency. Still, it must be noted that Ginsberg would continue to be strongly influenced by the British Romantic poets, and more so than Kerouac, who may be considered an intermediary between the pastoral and the technological. For Kerouac, Beat possessed a unique synthesis which was at times comical but which allowed entrance into both worlds; identity was creatable from both the material and rhetorical characteristics of either world. Ritual performances in *Indian Journals* capture a sentimentalism, a romantic attachment to Nature and creation, that was innocent and an example of countercultural idealism focused upon selfless attachment to created being. It did not demand the

abolition of technologized modernity, yet rather stated and popularized man's holistic independence from modern social controls. Kerouac attempted pastoralism when writing about Mexico in *On The Road*, but included voyages, images and characters that were modern and in some way composed the imaginative portrait of Mexico's "humanity": the cities are contemplated for their aesthetic purity, but Mexicans themselves are compared with White Americans, and automobile travel is part of the ecstasy which introduces, then limits, White participation in a legendary "beyond." In contrast, *Indian Journals* captures a systemic stress on social meaning which was pronouncedly Romantic, an illustration of mankind's dependence upon nature and a holistic contemplation of divinely hewn life. Ginsberg writes:

> And Indian singing is something else, a guy sits down surrounded—they all play sitting down barefoot anyway in pyjamas—everybody, workers, walk around in streets in underwear regular striped Hollywood nightmare shorts with open flies like Americans have nightmares being caught in the streets—so the singer sits down & begins groaning and stretches his hand out to catch the groan & whirls it above his head, any noise that comes into his throat like a butterfly, and throws it away with his left hand and catches another hypnotic gesture note with his right hand and whirls it around, his voice follows weirdly way up into the high icky giggle gargle sounds and brings it down like Jerry Colonna [American singer] and stirs it around with his forefinger like its all jello and throws it away with a piercing little falsetto into the curtain and does this over & over again till he's shaking like an epileptic fit and his fingers are all flying all over trying to catch the myriad little sounds coming in his ears like butterflies, I said that, like I mean flies well mosquitoes, little ees and zoops & eyerolling wheeps! (*Indian Journals* 66)

The rhetorical copy of Kerouac's stylistic emphasis upon narrative breath and rhythmic expression is deflated by clever manipulations of sensible voice—the singer first anticipates the perceivable power of living

experience, then moves through humorous sidesteps. Because of this, the author is not sure whether to admire the singer's nuanced, rhythmic and dramatic attachment to nature, or to amuse the audience with creatures of subtropical degeneration and disease. Still, this performance is elemental: it is sensible, interpreted through the natural sentimentality of creation's image, and is vocal, the manifestation of natural speech-rhythms within the body. Here are conceptual themes that marked the Beats' literary "counter-revolution," one that Ginsberg preached to be the most significant accomplishment of "Beat" writing. Prominently advanced are the attachment of the Indian poor to natural speech patterns, the reversal of Jacques Derrida's famous paraphrase of the "death" of writing in an indivisible relationship to human speech, voice, spirit, and body. The comments not only capture Beat orality and performativity; they also render meaningful the romanticized autonomy of non-White experience. To say, in the "orientalist" manner, that the Other lived in a world entirely different from that of Whites offers a familiar defense of anti-modernity. But, to say that mankind's communicativity, when borrowed from natural physical conventions, could orchestrate an admirably different social and psychological consciousness was indeed new, an admission that humanity and civilization were not characteristically and ultimately modern, Western, rational, and technological. The *bhajan* singer operates within a closed community; Ginsberg's observation, albeit mere delighting in this admirable "difference," suggests too the definitive fact of contemplative difference that could offset the divisive and repressive moral and intellectual codes of modernity, including modern man's individualism. It is also worth noting that Ginsberg dropped the veils of "insanity" and "madness": the singer's lament was neither musically pathetic nor peculiarly exotic. Instead, it is admired as the beauty and introspection of timeless humanity. Further, in contrast with Burroughs, who increasingly frowned upon traditional consciousness of any sort, here was a meaningful social-psychological mode of discourse, one which could control and regulate mankind's collective consciousness.

Indian Journals captures specific moments of internal political critique, including self-examinations which bolstered Romantic attach-

ments to the ecstasies of drugs and nature, but that helped him assemble a much more aggressive, truly beatnik understanding of human rights in modern times. Criticisms from Indian writers about Ginsberg's overuse of drugs such as marijuana and psilocybin made their way prominently into his self-examination. Indeed, he would re-write his self-statement from a very real and pressing self-doubt that reflected fear of "plunging into the feeling of chaos of disintegration of conceptuality through further drug experiences" (*Allen Ginsberg Collection*, Box 47, Folder 1) to the point at which he didn't "know what I'm doing now" (Box 47, Folder 1), into a more familiar prophetic statement, searching for "the idea of alteration of consciousness" (*Indian Journals* 45). Apathy would be re-written: "I'm afraid & waiting for I don't know what to push me on" (45). These revisions, which supplant the individual subject with intellectual and revolutionary community, depend upon the *necessity* of a modern and meaningful vehicle of self and collective expression through the experience of taking drugs. We may ably compare Ginsberg's narrative will against other counterculturalists who had happened upon sacrament-consuming shamans and hippies professing the abandonment of the mainstream. Ken Kesey, for example, and then Thomas Wolfe narrate the anxiety of acid-head followers in *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test* from Kesey's peculiar directive to "go beyond LSD" (Wolfe 10), and Yaqui shaman don Juan instructed anthropologist-student Carlos Castaneda to know a perceivable universe beyond the imagination thorough peyote and psilocybin, but Castaneda fails to accept the dictation of mystic parables and philosophy, confessing anxiety and doubt because his "view of things" has been shattered. It is hard to escape the accelerating momentum of Ginsberg's increased confidence in the collective modulation of consciousness and the human spirit through drugs such as *ganja* and LSD; the interviews in *Spontaneous Mind* showcase voluminous and widely referential appreciation for altered states of consciousness and their parapsychological connection with man's cosmic agency.

The pages of *Indian Journals* underscore real thematic differences between Kerouac and his *protégé* on the subject. Restated, where Kerouac envisions the mainstream from a reflective sense of detachment and

understood the relevance of technological-materialistic consciousness to stage metaphors for America's passive social and spiritual decay, Ginsberg understands drug prohibition, hostility towards non-Whites, and television-media rhetoric to synthesize intellectual conspiracy, an attempt to configure the mind as subject of worldwide totalitarian control. On August 4, 1962, when he dreamed about a meeting with Soviet Premier Nikita Khruschev, he supposed the apocalyptic fetters of totalitarian control had arrived, a "State Cosmic Controlling Agency" (*Indian Journals*). It is important to recognize and query this difference because it was this totalitarian conspiracy to dominate and exploit the mind, to govern and suppress the human psyche without the human means of regeneration and/or self-identification, that incurs and strengthens Ginsberg's Romantic idealism and his absolute stress upon people's teleological ideality. In these respects, he demands political revolution where Kerouac had imagined a deinstitutionalized series of intellectual changes informed by the reticence of Beat reflection and individual self-transmigrations. Ginsberg sees as real the possibility for American superstructural change, and his public sense of utopia is inclusive and sympathetic, whereas Kerouac's is veiled and often agonizingly exclusionary.

Classical hippie counterculturalism, complete with the naturalist-historicist emphasis upon drugs as a narrative and social catalyst, rewrites the ecstasies of "spontaneous prose" to produce ingenious, insightful portraits of humanity; the continuous motion of images, of geographies, and personal, cerebral discoveries are not merely mystic; they stage human diminution and historic detachment from modernity to possess the symbols of human teleology, a step toward LSD image-pathways underscoring naturalist/historical symbols of humanity and generativity. Many of the individual letters, notes, and poems of *Indian Journals* derive insights from the visible density of religious-historical metaphors, and their power to organize human consciousness in ways counter to technological-rational Western consciousness, particularly American consciousness. I wish to point out that it is during this trek that East-West philosophical-moral synthesis and symbiosis is approached through the iconism of literary and artistic histories. A continued theme of Ginsberg's poetry is his association of drugs

and premodern practices with, and realization of, the ambitions and narrative anxieties of European and American poets, writers, and artists. East-West comparativity was hardly unique to Ginsberg, and had formed the archaeology for *On The Road* and *Visions of Cody*; however, it was he who formed a more intense East-West sociological, anthropological, and historical comparativity when bringing to life his experiences in humanistic portraits of Hindu culture, literature, and social life. Ginsberg's snapshots of Indian poverty, rituals, and conversations stem from more objective, deracialized attentions to the study of humanity; they further a deeper attention to T. S. Eliot's demand for "earning tradition" by stripping Kerouacian poetics of the tendency to repeat a conventionalized American outsideness. India is both a modern "waste land" and an earned metaphor for historical-political reorganizations of modern man's ethical possibility. India is not an escapist paradise that faces total annihilation, as did Kerouac's Mexico, but a continuous site of learned cognition and mass proselytization for hipsters back in America. Kerouac's penchant for comic exaggerations and "free" translations of otherness is abundantly written into *On The Road*, but Ginsberg's *ganja*-catalyzed imagination focuses upon persons, legends, and images, underscoring tenable, perhaps ideal, metaphors for a timeless romanticism. In many instances, East-West textual comparisons evoke the author's struggle to romanticize "man" and "nature" through a continuous stream of images:

> Fucking started BC and continued inevitably to Konerak & after that do continue but "died with the art of sculpture" said the young scholar in the palm leaf mss room in the Orissa huge-winged state museum modern air building—came from there to bus to Udaygiri caves & all day there rolling Kif & wandering reading guidebook or sitting looking out at filmy distances hills, the small temple Lingaraj in tree clusters in the distance—very much far away and in French chapel landscape—Chapels in the fields anyway—the caves had some elephants bearing lotuses & mango branches in trunks—high naked black Jain Tirthankar 1960 statue upstairs on hill lovely

> young face—in one cave a sun flower I drew in a little book […] (104)

At other points in Ginsberg's *ganja*-soaked recollections, Hindu legends such as Bama Kape reassemble Kerouac's comic and eccentric notions of saintly wisdom to focus upon the ultimate beauty and simplicity of nature:

> And Bama Kape himself, as described by the old white-haired pandit beard who gave us a room—eating the Prasad in his own Kali mouth & surrounding his head with tara flowers—drinking and beaten up & smoking ganja with the Saadhus who passed thru Tarapith till he—since he a young man sent from home as a child— crazy woman Saint—big lush, Sirs, every body thought he was crazy except Ramakrishna who stood under his feet in Kalighat the time Bama Kape came down On a single visit—a big idiot—dwelled on *Tara*. (85)

Notwithstanding the obvious fact—Ramakrishna was a saint who inspired fiercely intellectual and Independence-hungry mystic Swami Vivekananda at the turn of the century—the general portrait of social life in *Indian Journals* captures not only the prevalence of *ganja* (cannabis) smoking among Indian rite-goers and *saadhus* (sages); it also initiates a movement of political abstraction and mass democratic *praxis* to combat the injustice of drug laws. Ginsberg extends Marxist concepts of human exploitation to the realm of man's mind and imagination; here again is a complex departure from Kerouac's journals and letters because Ti Jean viewed the mainstream intellectual tradition of America to be a lifeless phantom that could never hold back his manifold navigations of spirit and community *ethos*. It can be said that Ginsberg's continued attention to drug policy reform was the most sustained and diversely resonant of the Beat Generation. Far from merely philosophizing about drugs in the poet's tongue, he engineers his writing and public career to confront the impassive and sedimentary rule of authority. Still, Ginsberg does not reject the wisdom of his mentors; the anxiety of the early years of the 1960s about drug use confirms Burroughs' contention

that the legalization of drugs would produce no conscious breakthrough (Lotringer 106). This was not to say that Ginsberg bows to a cerebral dourness. Instead, his personal and collaborative criticism of drug use necessitated narrations friendly to British Romanticist roots and to multiethnic/multinational makings of cultural pluralism. By contrast, it appears Burroughs was reluctant to endorse pluralism as *Naked Lunch* obsessively captures the metaphysics of social, economic, and health decay in the developing world, while Kerouac passively retreats into the safe confines of American patriotism, alcoholism, and critical languor after his opium nightmare in a Tangier hotel in 1957. For several issues of social policy—drugs, peace, democratic reforms, globalizations which repeat Western supremacies—the India of *Indian Journals* is the necessary example, one of widespread attunement to cosmic-religious tradition far exceeding the imports of Western media, popular culture, and capitalist modes of domination. Dimensions of India's perceived "revolution"—she was, in 1962, a nation of 400 million, and her wealth was concentrated in the hands of one half of one percent of the population (*Indian Journals* 73)—were very attractive to him; more so was the absolute rule of Hindu religious philosophy over the vast majority of Indians.

The development of Ginsberg's peculiarly countercultural *oeuvre* restates Beat intellectual freedoms and Western, usually British Romanticist, humanism. It also manifests Hinduism into the consciousness revolution stylistically and humanistically, an essential and ultimate result of his capacity to write and rewrite modern experience. In a 1972 interview with Yves Le Pellec, he locates Beat origins and the "ecstatic" and "holy" responses to very limited rational and cultural structures of the media-washed post-World War II generation. He comments about the media and politicians in the years immediately following World War II: "the air was filled with pompous personages orating and not saying anything spontaneous or real from their own minds, they were only talking stereotypes" (*Spontaneous Mind* 281). A 1971 interview with *Partisan Review* captured the dynamic of learning East-West intellectual comparability and symbiosis, learning to personally dismiss American globalized values through the recognition of the irresistible aesthetic

origins of man's social history; Srimata Krishnaji, "a lady saint from Brindaban," causes him to stress the commonality of human cultural-intellectual origins more aggressively than did Kerouac:

> She said, "take Blake for your guru," and that put him in the context, oddly, of the Indian transcendental scene. In a personal way, though historically Blake always has been in that context, cause he's an eighteenth-century vehicle for Western Gnostic tradition that historically you can trace back to the same roots, same cities, same geography, same mushrooms, that give rise to the Aryan, Zoroastrian, Manichaean pre-Hindu yogas. (*Spontaneous Mind* 263)

Despite the continued Kerouacian brooding and semantic humours derived from Ginsberg's lifelong literary mentor, the diaries of *Indian Journals* are rich with deeply sensual associations of consciousness and transcendental signifiers suggesting the possibility of a mass cultural revolution that could redesign world ethics and man's social performativity. A December 1962 trip to Benares (Varanasi), the holiest of cities in India where millions of pilgrims come to wash themselves of their sins, illustrated several examples of not only the derivable power of prayer and devotion, but the attention to a revolution through perceptions and appearances. Aside from praising the long hair and relative nakedness of the *saadhus*, he was keen upon exposing and promoting the power of Indian spiritual consciousness through images very adaptable to hippie protest and "Flower Power." He observes while walking at night, "Householders wrapped in shawls carrying brass waterpots trudging into the Ganges steps, passing & observing the beggar man in the mid-street shrouded in its own burlap shawl—he'd been praying all night" (*Indian Journals* 131). He also notes the defiant clamor of noise: "at night [the rickshaw drivers"] bells rang in tune back & forth, speeding down the hill to Godoia from Chowk, up & down answering alarm clock tingalings in the dead streets—an iceman's tingaling, a knife sharpener's charged bellsound" (132). Geographically, that which is holy or which signals prayer is always ascendant, superior to pedestrian matters and conversations: "and a high voiced automatic chant from one man

emerges up from the street amidst the voices of male gossip & the lighting of matches glide back & forth & accumulate" (133). Ginsberg's appreciation of the ritual "power" of Indian devotions was not new, it was derived directly from Kerouac and was specifically "Beat." The belief in Hinduism's symbolic power, however, would recurrently signify the idea of hippie revolution through Ginsberg's poetry throughout the 1960s and his court appearances and protests. When breaking the stranglehold of "the whole of previously accepted Human Rationalistic rational" control of human experience and knowledge (94), India was part of his deeply reconceived poetic re-invention of himself and codified his Beat style into hippie social *praxis*. In the most basic of historiographical assessments, India helped him translate the mythology of goddess Kali into "Stotras to Kali Destroyer of Illusions," typologizing American social/political iconographies into the ultimate machinery of conscious death.

Indian Journals develops the conceptual dynamics of the poet as social revolutionary as Ginsberg "learned" India, beginning from within largely Western intellectual inspirations, then gradually leaning toward a Hinduist approximation of the poetry of mass democratic political consciousness. At the outset of the book, on July 8, 1962, he lists his definition of "a radical":

> Radical Means:
> Composition in Void: Gertrude Stein
> Association: Kerouac & Surrealism
> Break up of syntax: Gertrude Stein
> Arrangement of intuitive key words: John Ashberry's *Europe*
> Random juxtaposition: W.S. Burroughs
> Boiling down Elements of Image to Abstract Nub: [Gregory] Corso
> Arrangement of Sounds: Artaud, Lettrism, Tantric Mantras
> Record of Mind-flow: Kerouac (39)

The same entry, however, chronicles growing conceptual dynamics for translating Hinduism into an American vehicle for protest and a literary redevelopment of mutual East-West historical authenticity and essence.

Here is yet another expansion of Beat: articulating the hippies' emphasis upon the spiritual essences of the body, the mind, and the truly "human" experiencing of community. He also wrote in this entry: "as post-Einsteinian science is supposed to come to the frontier of objective research whereat the research instruments themselves are questioned, the human brain is analysed as far as it can analyse itself, to see how the structure of the brain-mind determines the interpretation of the outside universe—now found to be contained in the mind perhaps & having no objective shape outside of the measuring mind." (38) Ginsberg's redevelopment of Indian transcendental consciousnesses through Romantic imageries connected to LSD, then, are necessitated by the limits of Western rationalism and rational modes of inquiry. In short, they form part of an attempt to know the divine objectively, through the taking of perception-altering drugs. *Spontaneous Mind's* emphasis upon the living, organismic resonances of the spirit and prayer—specifically, Sanskrit mantras and ritual musics and songs, was also initiated in Ginsberg's self-reconception as a poet. He wrote:

> Easier than the arbitrary pattern of a sonnet, we don't *think* in the dialectical rigid pattern of quatrain or synthetic pattern of sonnet: We think in blocks of sensation & images. IF THE POET'S MIND IS SHAPELY HIS ART WILL BE SHAPELY. That is, the page will have an original but rhythmic shape—inevitable thought to inevitable thought, lines dropping inevitably in place on the page, making a subtle but infinitely varied rhythmic SHAPE. (41)

The technique was often used in collections such as "Wichita Vortex Sutra" and *The Fall of America*, but its highest form of ideal poetic development, the LSD-manifested "Wales Visitation," is in part inspired by both the organismic nature of Nature and the vastness of consciousness denied to people by media, propagandism and the police state. This romanticism stemmed from Ginsberg's affinity for Sanskrit as a sensible language that purifies and modulates human consciousness. The "ecologically attuned pantheistic nature trip" (*Spontaneous Mind* 256) that he warmly associated with "Wales Visitation" is in fact a corporeal

redrawing of the death-machine of "Stotras": through LSD, Ginsberg proposes a continuous sensible mutuality friendly with hippie environmentalism, ecstasy, and historical-teleological necessity. It is obvious from the journal entries and interviews that Ginsberg views India's widespread spiritual resonance to be a romantic phenomenon, deeply connected with the sensible beauty of rural pastoralism. Gradually, he assembles an anti-authoritarian and anti-media spiritual critique that develops a "force field" against war (*Spontaneous Mind* 152), and confidently states the necessity of countercultural revolution.

To conclude, it should be noted that Ginsberg's travels in the 1960s were many and that he uses other intellectual stratagems to augment his political sense of critique. He unsuccessfully courts Communism in Cuba and Czechoslovakia, and continues to seek, as Kerouac and Burroughs did, the archaeological depth of Mexico, while extending his India trip to include Cambodia. Yet hippie critique, ethics, and social performativity all appear to stem from his unique and nuanced encounter with India, and his approval of her vast and complete social independence from American materialism. It is also clear that Ginsberg, significantly alters the depressive tone of the earlier poems including "Howl" (1955) and "Television Was a Baby Crawling Toward That Deathchamber" (1959). Additionally, hippie idealism would be one phenomenon in which Ginsberg figures strongly, together with Ken Kesey and Timothy Leary. The members of the "LSD trio" expounded different methods and different phenomenological goals, yet Ginsberg's rewriting of Romanticism may yet be the most durable of its political-social statements. Critics such as Michael Schumacher and Jonah Raskin tend to limit this impact—still, in *Indian Journals*, one may see the makings of social revolution, a conscious revolution very different from that of Leary, Kesey, or Kerouac, yet one sharing the essence of a constantly building ethicalism.

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SAGGI

Atti di traduzione culturale. La diaspora indoamericana in *Interpreter of Maladies* di Jhumpa Lahiri

Raffaella Malandrino

Scrittura, identità etnica, identità di genere: Jhumpa Lahiri e la seconda generazione indiana americana

In un breve saggio scritto pochi mesi dopo aver vinto il Pulitzer Prize 2000, Jhumpa Lahiri commenta la sua condizione di scrittrice e i modi in cui il suo libro, *Interpreter of Maladies*, è stato accolto sia dal pubblico indiano che da quello statunitense. La raccolta di racconti, opera d'esordio della giovane scrittrice, è stata selezionata dalla giuria del Pulitzer perché rispettava i criteri essenziali per poter concorrere al prestigioso premio: essere il frutto creativo di cittadini americani e trattare preferibilmente di vita americana. Eppure sin dalla pubblicazione del libro, i media hanno intrapreso frequenti e scrupolosi tentativi per classificare in qualche modo autrice e opera:

> … si considerino, per esempio, i vari modi in cui vengo descritta: una scrittrice americana, una scrittrice indianamericana, un'autrice di origine inglese, un'autrice angloindiana, un'autrice NRI […], un'autrice ABCD confusa che ha finalmente trovato se stessa […]. Secondo gli intellettuali indiani, la mia scrittura rientra nella narrativa della diaspora, negli Stati Uniti viene considerata come scrittura d'immigrazione. In un certo senso, tutto ciò mi diverte. Il libro è ciò che è, ed è stato accolto in modi che non sono in grado di controllare, né tantomeno ho voglia di farlo. Il fatto che venga definita in due o centinaia di modi non ha importanza; perché, in realtà, ciascuna di queste etichette è vera.[1]

Nata a Londra nel 1967 da genitori bengalesi, e cittadina americana dall'età di 18 anni, Jhumpa Lahiri ribadisce ironicamente di esser grata che sua madre non fosse parte della giuria del Pulitzer: altrimenti, essendo ai suoi occhi "innanzitutto, e per sempre indiana", non avrebbe avuto la minima speranza di poter concorrere.[2] Come molti dei figli di seconda generazione di immigrati – che oggi, quarant'anni dopo l'Atto di Immigrazione del 1965,[3] emergono come gruppo demografico si-

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1. Jhumpa Lahiri, *Traslato Ergo Sum*, "Himal Magazine", 20 ottobre 2000, http//www.himalmag.com/oct2000/voices.html; tr. mia.

2. *Ibidem*.

3. Nel 1965 le nuovi leggi sull'immigrazione

gnificativo che comprende sia i figli nati negli Stati Uniti, sia coloro che hanno seguito i genitori nel paese ospitante durante l'infanzia – Lahiri è costretta a oscillare tra le aspettative e le premesse del suo universo biculturale.

Nonostante i suoi genitori, emigrati da Calcutta nel 1969, vivano negli Stati Uniti da quasi quarant'anni, l'autrice ricorda mura invisibili, erette intorno alla sua casa di Boston, "per tenere a distanza l'influenza dell'America". "Crescendo, mi si avvisava di non comportarmi da americana, o peggio, di non 'pensare' di esserlo. In realtà, 'essere' americani non è un'opzione".

Tale asserzione sembra veicolare i problemi di una generazione impegnata nel complesso processo di negoziare la propria identità attraverso molteplici e fluidi segni di "colore", nazionalità, classe e genere.[4] Mentre un'identità "indiana" priva di ambiguità è stata cruciale per le prime generazioni di immigrati, per i figli della seconda generazione la propensione ad adottare identità *hyphenated*, definendosi *South Asian Americans*, o *Indian Americans*, implica la distanza dagli stessi legami che i loro genitori hanno in "patria", e diluisce i referenti culturali che, in termini di gusti, abitudini e stile di vita, servono tradizionalmente a ripristinare quei legami con la stessa intensità delle generazioni precedenti. La discendenza etnica non costituisce l'aspetto fondamentale della loro auto-percezione, e quando questo avviene può succedere che l'"indianità" sia costruita attraverso una più ampia e comprensiva identità sud asiatica. Quest'ultima si costituisce a partire dalle associazioni universitarie, attraverso i programmi disciplinari promossi dai dipartimenti di studi sud asiatici, dalle organizzazioni politiche progressiste e dal desiderio di confronto con altre affiliazioni culturali.

Ma basti pensare a come i media statunitensi e indiani tendono, nel rivolgersi ai figli di seconda generazione, a utilizzare e abusare della ormai popolare definizione di *ABCD*s. "ABCD", acronimo di *American Born Confused Desi* (Indiano Di-

contribuirono ad alterare il paesaggio americano. Gli Stati Uniti, impegnati a contendersi la predominanza tecnologica con l'Unione Sovietica, cercarono di importare talenti già formati piuttosto che attendere le nuove generazioni di professionisti nazionali. Le leggi di immigrazione favorivano l'ingresso di persone istruite e orientate professionalmente. Per la prima volta venivano rimosse le vecchie barriere basate sull'"origine nazionale", eufemismo utilizzato per il più problematico, ma più accurato termine "razza", e si dava agli asiatici la possibilità di ingresso alla pari con gli europei. Usciti da un sistema di istruzione all'avanguardia e forti della conoscenza dell'inglese, i sud asiatici si trovarono avvantaggiati per opportunità professionali. I nuovi immigranti dall'India erano diversi da quelli del primo Novecento, braccianti e operai, in gran parte di origine punjabi e raccolti principalmente sul Pacifico. Erano istruiti, ambiziosi e disposti alla mobilità, avvantaggiati da clausole legislative che permettevano la riunificazione familiare, e di estrazione essenzialmente urbana. Nel 1986 gli "Asian Indians" contano circa 700.000 presenze, destinate a raddoppiare a distanza di poco più di dieci anni. Per un approfondimento storico si vedano Manju Shet, *Asian Indian Americans*, in P. Gap Min, a cura di, *Asian Americans. Contemporary Trends and Issues,* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California 1994, pp.169-98; H. Kitano, R. Daniels, *South Asians. Asian Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis*, in *Asian Americans. Emerging Minorities,* University of California-Prentice Hall, Los Angeles 2000, pp. 103-19.

4. Aparna Rayaprol, *Can You Talk Indian? Shifting Notions of Community and Identity in the Indian Diaspora*, in S. S. Jodhka, a cura di, *Community and Identities: Contemporary Discourses on Culture and Politics in India*, Sage Publications, New Delhi-Thousand Oaks-London 2001, pp. 163-90.

sorientato Nato in America) è un'etichetta irridente e spesso denigratoria, poiché sembra sottolineare l'incompiutezza della indianità: la simultanea inclusione ed esclusione dalla cultura ancestrale, implicita nel termine, vuole indicare una presunta confusione identitaria della seconda generazione; e, a seconda delle sfumature, essere un o *una* "ABCD" non di rado rinvia a una condizione negativa. Così Amitav Ghosh, voce autorevole del panorama letterario mondiale, indiano d'origine ma da tempo residente negli Stati Uniti:

> È impossibile essere imperfettamente indiani […] altrimenti in India lo sarebbero tutti. Non solo perché l'India ha fallito nel forgiare un'identità nazionale, che non è una mancanza, ma di per sé un aspetto della nostra cultura. Se mai vi fosse un solo modello di identità indiana nel senso più ampio, è semplicemente questo; che la cultura sembra costituirsi dalla proliferazione delle differenze (sebbene entro certi parametri). Essere diversi in un mondo di differenze significa ineluttabilmente appartenere. Così, chiunque, ovunque, rivendichi il più flebile legame con l'India è indiano; un potenziale attore nella cultura. La madrepatria semplicemente non ha i mezzi culturali per tagliarlo fuori.[5]

Ovvero, la natura stessa delle vicende storiche e sociali dell'India fa del pluralismo e della frammentazione gli unici referenti stabili per articolare una cultura nazionale omogenea. Applicata al contesto diasporico di un popolo che traccia la sua esperienza transnazionale in più di settanta paesi, da oltre due secoli, l'affermazione di Ghosh conferisce autorevolezza alla condizione marginale: se mai vi fosse un'"essenza" ascrivibile all'identità indiana, sostiene l'autore, questa sarebbe, paradossalmente, la capacità di adattamento all'eteroglossia, e di convivenza con molteplici dimensioni culturali.

Contrariamente allo stereotipo dominante, la seconda generazione sembra soffrire molto poco di una crisi di identità. Anche se alcuni ritengono che la definizione di *ABCD* sia appropriata alla propria condizione, molti sono sicuri di non essere "*Desi*". Per gran parte di essi, "home" è sicuramente l'America, e l'India è solo un luogo transitorio, che visitano occasionalmente per incontrare amici e parenti, o semplicemente il luogo di riferimento della nostalgia dei loro genitori. Molti dei figli della diaspora rispettano le proprie radici, mostrando una sorta di "nostalgia senza ricordo", e non esitano a vantarsene nel nuovo mercato multiculturale dell'America etnica,[6] ma generalmente tendono a convivere in modi meno rigidi della prima generazione con identità culturali che riconoscono fluide e molteplici.

In *The Namesake*, il romanzo che Lahiri pubblica nel 2003, il disagio del protagonista Gogol Ganguly emerge con ironia, quando l'adolescente assiste a una conferenza universitaria sulla letteratura indiana in lingua inglese. Gogol, figlio di ge-

5. Amitav Ghosh, *The Diaspora in Indian Culture*, "Public Culture", II, 1 (1989), pp. 73-8, p.78. Culturalmente e socialmente varie, le comunità transnazionali indiane riflettono le diversità presenti nei paesi d'origine, attraverso molteplici linee di differenziazione, etno-territoriali, di classe, religiose, linguistiche.

6. Rayaprol, *Can you talk Indian?*, cit., p. 181.

nitori bengalesi emigrati negli anni Sessanta a Boston, ascolta con distacco mentre il dibattito verte sull'aspetto sociale e psicologico della condizione postcoloniale, che caratterizza gran parte della produzione letteraria in discussione:

> Gogol è annoiato dagli esperti, che continuano a far riferimento a qualcosa chiamato "marginalità", come se fosse una specie di condizione patologica.[…] "Teleologicamente parlando, gli ABCD sono incapaci di rispondere alla domanda: 'Da dove vieni?' dichiara il sociologo. Gogol non ha mai sentito il termine ABCD. Alla fine capisce che sta per American-born confused deshi. In altre parole, lui. Sa che deshi, una parola generica per "connazionale", significa "indiano", sa che i suoi genitori e i loro amici chiamano l'India semplicemente desh. Ma Gogol non pensa mai all'India come desh. Ci pensa come ci pensano gli americani, come India.[7]

L'ignoranza di Gogol non appare una scelta narrativa innocente: ricorrendo a un effetto speculare l'autrice – peraltro potenziale ABCD – sembra voler sottolineare che il problema preoccupa più gli altri che i singoli individui a cui è destinata l'etichetta. Pregna di uno sgradevole senso di alienazione, la definizione di ABCD è qui immediatamente e consapevolmente esorcizzata; inserito nel contesto di un "dibattito teorico sull'alterità" – che viene descritto non senza sfumature parodistiche – semanticamente disgiunto dall'esperienza e dalla complessità delle vite vissute a cui si riferisce, l'acronimo risulta, nella mente del protagonista, solo un esempio di tedioso nozionismo.

Eppure, la questione identitaria della seconda generazione non è liquidabile con un'astratta invocazione dell'ibridismo culturale, o della libera scelta individuale. La famiglia e la comunità diasporica sono in genere le strutture sociali primarie in cui agiscono le nuove generazioni. Queste hanno un ruolo fondamentale nella loro formazione, in termini di orientamenti culturali, trasmissione di usanze e costumi, e apprendimento delle lingue ancestrali. La comunità indiana crede fermamente che l'integrità del gruppo dipenda dalla lealtà della seconda generazione a certi valori tradizionali; si può affermare, anzi, che è proprio il desiderio di assicurare il passaggio del testimone della cultura ai figli che determina la sua stabilità.[8] La seconda generazione non di rado è esortata a perseguire un eccellente livello di istruzione, una carriera di successo e l'ascesa economica, obiettivi che favoriscono un facile inserimento nella cultura dominante; tuttavia, nelle relazioni sociali, sia per gli uomini che per le donne si richiede il rispetto delle usanze tradizionali, soprattutto nell'ambito del matrimonio e della vita famigliare.

La scrittura, sostiene l'autrice, diviene quasi un'esigenza naturale "per sfuggire alla trappola di doversi identificare in un modo o nell'altro"; scrivere è trovare rifugio in una sfera personale per poter illuminare un mondo in cui si ha il potere di esprimere la complessità di vivere tra più dimensioni linguistiche e culturali, oltrepassando le molteplici e inevitabili aspettative delle istanze esterne

7. Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake*, Houghton Mifflin, New York 2003, p. 118. Traduzione mia.

8. Rayaprol, *Can You Talk Indian?*, cit., p. 183.

alla propria esperienza creativa. "Nel diventare una scrittrice, sono in grado di elevarmi al di sopra delle etichette che mi avevano definito in passato: al di sopra delle aspettative, sempre conflittuali, di essere una ragazza bengalese, e di essere una ragazza americana". "Scrivere […] per me è un tentativo di dar vita a un mio territorio personale".[9]

Ma di fronte alla critica, divisa principalmente tra chi suggerisce di leggere *Interpreter of Maladies* come testo di letteratura angloindiana, e chi invece lo ha accolto come opera innovativa[10] della letteratura statunitense,[11] Jhumpa Lahiri si rende anche conto che la libertà dell'autore si arresta al processo stesso della scrittura. Come ricorda Michel Foucault, del resto, la figura dell'autore è costruita da una comunità discorsiva, piuttosto che dall'autore stesso. Il nome di un autore ha la peculiarità di rivestire un certo "ruolo" in rapporto alle pratiche discorsive, fungendo, per esempio, da "funzione classificatoria", in relazione alla quale si possono caratterizzare certe modalità di ricezione e di istituzionalizzazione all'interno di una data cultura. L'autore diventa funzione, funzione variabile e complessa del discorso, che appare come "caratteristica di un modo di esistenza, di circolazione e di funzionamento di certi discorsi all'interno di una società";[12] non si forma spontaneamente attraverso la semplice attribuzione di un discorso a un individuo, ma risulta dalla complessa operazione di "costruire" un essere ragionevole a cui la società riconosce l'identità particolare di "autore". "Il libro è ciò che è ed è stato accolto in modi che non ho la facoltà, né la voglia di controllare": quello che Jhumpa Lahiri dice di *Interpreter of Maladies* ci ricorda la "morte" postulata sia da Foucault che da Roland Barthes, per cui l'idea tradizionale che l'autore sia chi assume il controllo sull'opera e sul suo significato non sopravvive alle pressioni esterne della società.

Un esempio immediato ne è la frequente ghettizzazione degli scrittori di minoranza entro i paradigmi etnici su cui spesso si basa il discorso multiculturalista nelle università statunitensi. Imputare, infatti, all'atto creativo la discendenza etnica e culturale, o il sesso sembra sia stata da sempre una pratica che mortifica ed eleva

9. Lahiri, *Traslato Ergo Sum*, cit.

10. Si veda la recensione di Kumar su "Colorlines Magazine" poco dopo l'assegnazione del premio Pulitzer. Sebbene con toni troppo enfatici, Kumar evidenzia la necessità di rivedere il canone letterario alla luce delle voci letterarie asiatiche che documentano un intervento civile e culturale profondamente radicato nela realtà statunitense. Amitava Kumar, *The Indian's Coming*, "Colorlines Magazine", III, 3 (Fall 2000).

11. Nel 1999 tre dei racconti di *Interpreter of Maladies* sono stati pubblicati su "The New Yorker": *A Temporary Matter*, 28 dicembre 1998, *Sexy*, 4 gennaio 1999, *The Third and Final Continent*, 21/28 giugno 1999. Il nome dell'autrice appare tra quelli dei "20 migliori giovani scrittori d'America", introdotti come "le promesse letterarie del ventunesimo secolo". Seguono pubblicazioni su "Harvard Review", "Agni", "Epoch", "The Newsville Review", e "Story Quarterly", premi e riconoscimenti, come lo O. Henry Award, con l'inclusione di *The Third and Final Continent* nella popolare antologia narrativa *The Best American Short Stories 2000.*

12. Michel Foucault, *Scritti letterari*, C. Milanese, a cura di, Feltrinelli, Milano 1971, p. 9. Foucault delinea le caratteristiche essenziali della funzione-autore, in relazione ai discorsi che l'ammettono; fra queste si segnalano: la necessità di un sistema istituzionale che la riconosca come legittima proprietaria dei discorsi a essa riconducibili; e – pur nella "riconoscibilità" nei segni che a essa rimandano – l'esistenza di una "rottura", una distanza tra lo scrittore e la voce fittizia del testo, ammettendo una pluralità di ego, le molte posizioni che individui diversi possono occupare.

al tempo stesso uno scrittore di minoranza di fronte all'establishment letterario che lo ha accolto nel suo pantheon. Colei o colui a cui capita di essere membro di una minoranza etnica, una donna, una scrittrice, è costretta a esporre la sua opera a un uso e a un abuso di lodi e di critiche, che possono ignorare o enfatizzare eccessivamente questi attributi.[13]

Avviene così che, nell'incontro con il pubblico e con i lettori di *Interpreter of Maladies*, Lahiri sia esposta, oltre che alle varie argomentazioni sulla sua discendenza culturale ed etnica, a un quesito ricorrente: "perché scrivi da un punto di vista maschile?"[14] Il fatto è che, in quanto *scrittrice*, le è richiesto di affrontare modelli linguistici che assecondino l'ideologia fallocratica, con le pratiche di pensiero e di linguaggio da sempre utilizzate dal potere maschile per asserire relazioni di dominio e di subordinazione, per confermare dicotomie di *gender* che limitano o aspirano a contenere il suo potere creativo. In quanto scrittrice *etnica* spesso è spinta a ricoprire il ruolo di persona autorizzata a parlare della cultura ancestrale, o a essere la voce attraverso cui la comunità migrante riflette la propria esperienza. In quanto *figlia* di seconda generazione è costretta, nel parlare dell'India, a giustificare i vuoti linguistici, le indeterminatezze descrittive, i limiti conoscitivi di un luogo che spesso è assente, se non per intervento della memoria e di narrazioni orali intrise di nostalgie deformanti.

Ma mentre Foucalt e Barthes hanno affermato l'irrilevanza dell'identità dell'autore, è principalmente la critica femminista e sociale a sostenere, invece, la necessità di "rilocare" colui o colei che scrive in uno spazio politico, ideologico, ed etico, e a evidenziare come lui/lei trasporti nella sua scrittura le tracce del suo corpo, della sua cultura, della sua storia. Pur avvalorando la necessità di concepire l'"io" dell'autore come "infinite layers", liberandolo dalla responsabilità di doversi rapportare alla sua opera come soggetto unitario e coerente, Trinh Minh-ha crede, ad esempio, che la consapevolezza etnica e sessuale induca chi scrive a operare in un determinato contesto socio-politico, intessendo nella scrittura la consapevolezza linguistica di ciò che esprime. Questa coscienza ripristina il controllo dell'autore sul testo, ne garantisce la presenza materiale. La pubblicazione del testo, e il suo riconoscimento all'interno di una categoria che lo definisce significa la rottura di un primo sigillo, la fine di una condizione di "non ammesso", di un soliloquio confinato alla sfera privata, e l'inizio di una possibile condivisione con un altro sconosciuto – il lettore, la cui collaborazione con lo scrittore/ice permette all'opera di giungere a un pieno stato ontologico. Senza tale rito di passaggio, chi scrive sarà sempre destinato a chiedere il permesso di poter parlare.

Una volta che il testo è reso pubblico, la sua lettura implica l'intervento e la giustapposizione di "posizioni discorsive" le une contro le altre così da rivelare quan-

13. Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Woman, Native, Other*, Indiana University Press, New York 1989, p. 8.

14. Si riportano le fonti di alcune recensioni e interviste in cui l'autrice espone le proprie riflessioni sull'opera. Vibhuti Patel, *Maladies of Belonging: An Interview with Jhumpa Lahiri*, "Newsweek International", 20 settembre 1999, p. 8; Azar Nafisi, Jhumpa Lahiri, *L'Individuo e l'America*, "Micromega", 4 (2004), pp. 63-82.

to la sua ricezione sia influenzata dalle molteplici voci che operano in contesti storici e politici altrettanto differenti. Ed è da qui, da uno o vari e strategici atti classificatori, che, come sostiene Sau Ling Wong, "non sono mai innocenti", che si è capaci di rivelare le complesse relazioni di un soggetto scrivente – intrappolato tra questioni di discendenza etnica, eredità culturale, generazione e genere – con la società in cui opera.[15] La pubblicazione della raccolta, che ha avuto un ampio consenso e una risonanza critica internazionale porta necessariamente a rivolgersi al paradigma diasporico del culturalismo sud asiatico, soggiacente alle mutate condizioni in termini di comunicazioni di massa, di sviluppi tecnologici e di flussi economici transnazionali degli ultimi decenni.

Un approccio "globale", tuttavia, non impedisce all'analisi del testo di individuare e di mettere in evidenza l'adesione a specifiche agende politiche. Da un lato, infatti, le dinamiche sociali e culturali delle comunità indiane negli Stati Uniti sono caratterizzate da una crisi che si articola soprattutto sulle linee dell'identità e della conservazione culturale; di fronte alle minacce esterne del razzismo, di pregiudizi perduranti, e al rischio di una dissoluzione culturale, l'India diviene, prima di un luogo fisico del ritorno, una forza ideologica a cui fare costante riferimento, una "patria della mente".[16] Di contro, l'istituzionalizzazione degli studi (sud) asiatici americani si fonda sul desiderio di far luce su una minoranza etnica sempre più visibile, che articola con piena coscienza uno specifico ruolo attivo sia nel dibattito multiculturale asiatico, sia in quello del *mainstream*.[17]

Ciò significa capire perché *Interpreter of Maladies* può essere compreso negli studi letterari indiani *e* indiani americani, e che cosa ci dica questo fatto sull'autorità delle etichette diasporiche *e* nazionaliste che governano la lettura della letteratura. L'opera potrebbe essere concepita – e questa tendenza traspare maggiormente nelle recensioni indiane – come un'allegoria nazionale ("una delle due Indie"), come un testo letterario transnazionale e femminista, o un testo etnico americano. I racconti, quale che sia la lettura auspicata, si rivelano resistenti e allo stesso tempo adattabili a qualsiasi identificazione.

La copertina dell'edizione indiana di *Interpreter of Maladies* riporta il sottotitolo "Stories of Bengal, Boston and Beyond".[18] L' immaginario della distanza spaziale e temporale in cui si articolano i nove racconti che compongono la raccolta rintrac-

15. Sau Ling C.Wong, *The Stakes of Textual Border Crossing*, in M. A. Elliott, C. Strokes, a cura di, *American Literary Studies – A Methodological Reader*, New York University Press, New York and London 2003, pp. 290-317.

16. Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism. 1981-1991*, Penguin, London 1991, pp. 9-14.

17. Nel 1994 Rocher pubblica un articolo su "SAGAR", rivista di studi sud asiatici della Texas University, in cui riflette sulla necessità di rivedere i programmi di studio nell'area sud asiatica in relazione all'emergere delle comunità diasporiche e delle nuove generazioni di immigrati dal subcontinente indiano: "We can no longer teach South Asian Studies as a foreign subject". Già allora, la pubblicazione di una prolifica letteratura accademica, di opere di narrativa e poesia, testimoniava il potere assertivo di gruppi che facevano dell'esperienza americana un importante elemento di elaborazione concettuale e formale, su questioni di genere, cultura e identità. Rosane Rocher, *Reconstituting South Asian Studies in a Diasporic Age*, "SAGAR Magazine", I, 2 (Autunno 1994).

18. Jhumpa Lahiri, *Interpreter of Maladies*, Harper Collins, New Delhi 1999. Le successive citazioni dal testo si riferiranno all'edizione in tra-

cia pertanto quei luoghi interstiziali, che Homi Bhabha definisce di *in-betweenness*, entro cui vengono negoziate costantemente le esperienze intersoggettive e comunitarie, e i limiti e le frontiere dei valori e delle ideologie. *Beyond*, "Oltre", comporta la necessità di pensare al di là delle narrazioni di soggettività originarie e iniziali e di focalizzarsi su quei momenti o quei processi che sono prodotti nell'articolazione delle differenze culturali e che sono permeati dalle mobilità transnazionali e postcoloniali del ventesimo secolo. "Trovarsi nell'Oltre significa popolare uno spazio di intervento. Ma dimorare nell'Oltre è anche parte di un tempo di revisione, di un ritorno al presente per ri-descrivere la nostra contemporaneità culturale".[19]

Le realtà asiatiche americane si esprimono egregiamente attraverso il genere narrativo del racconto, poiché questo è strettamente connesso a una prospettiva ricca di punti di vista, e a un processo dinamico di "*re-presentation*", la rimodulazione narrativa di storie in cui l'intervento individuale dell'autore / trice si intreccia alle tracce di una voce collettiva, quella della comunità. E' proprio nel dare spazio a diverse situazioni, diverse vicende, nel lasciare ai racconti una disposizione casuale nel corpo dell'opera che le divergenti esperienze della diaspora indiana trovano espressione creativa. Ed è come se, attraverso la scelta di questa varietà narrativa, l'autrice sfuggisse volutamente a un effetto risolutivo e totalizzante, allo scopo di testimoniarne la complessità.[20]

Ovunque, nei racconti di *Interpreter of Maladies* – contemporaneamente autosufficienti e interdipendenti – scorre sotterraneo il fiume dell'inconoscibilità, dell'incomunicabilità, dell'esistenza di un segreto impenetrabile che separa gli esseri umani; questa alienazione non si riporta semplicemente ai sintomi della distanza culturale e all'incomunicabilità linguistica, ma si estende, universalmente, ai molteplici contesti entro cui si snodano le vicende delle storie, ai rapporti di coppia, alle amicizie, agli incontri epifanici che illuminano brevemente, ma con intensità, le esistenze dei protagonisti.[21]

Il simbolismo narrativo in *The Interpreter of Maladies*: fallimento di un dialogo interculturale

The Interpreter of Maladies, il racconto che dà il titolo alla raccolta, sembra condensare il tema portante dell'opera, il difficile e a volte frustrante tentativo di comunicare e di comprendersi reciprocamente, lungo le linee della diversità culturale, sessuale, e generazionale, attraverso la distanza spaziale tra l'India e gli Stati Uniti. Un nucleo di sviluppo narrativo percorre l'opera: il mutuo scambio di sguardi di personaggi che cercano di decifrare un proprio "altro", e il loro tentativo di ricondurre questi incontri a se stessi e alla propria esperienza.[22] Nel racconto, infatti, l'au-

duzione italiana, a cura di Claudia Tarolo, Jhumpa Lahiri, *L'Interprete dei Malanni*, Guanda, Parma 2003. Le pagine in parentesi nel testo.

19. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London and New York 1994, p. 7.

20. Rocio Davis, *Transcultural Reinventions: Asian Americans and Asian Canadians Short Story Cycles* ,"MELUS", XXVIII, 1 (Primavera 2003), pp. 176-79.

21. Chiara Veltri, *Jhumpa Lahiri, la cifra del disagio,* "Alias", 15 giugno 2004.

22. La recensione di Simon Lewis individua

trice ripresenta la diaspora indiana in una sorta di *rebound* geografico, rivelando uno stile narrativo che gioca coscientemente con le fratture socio-culturali dei fenomeni migratori, lasciando trasparire un impulso eversivo nei confronti di qualsiasi ideologia nazionale. Così Vijay Prashad:

> Le agenzie turistiche provano a vendere l'India ai NRI che vogliono tornare a "casa" in vacanza. "Abbracciate la terra che i vostri antenati hanno arato", dice la Royal Orient, una società che organizza brevi tour in treno attraverso gli stati più affascinanti dell'India. Tutto il romanticismo è lì, evocato da metafore orientalistiche: i maharaja, i contadini, il suolo, la cultura, la natura, la frase meravigliosa "la gente dell'India", che si potrebbe ben tradurre "la colorata gente dell'India". Per il NRI andare in India significa riabbracciare la terra, sentirne il richiamo, toccare le radici della propria "cultura".[23]

Chi siano i NRI lo sa benissimo il governo indiano dell'ultimo decennio, che ha da sempre cercato di mantenere attiva la coscienza patriottica delle comunità diasporiche, promuovendo iniziative in grado di richiamare i cosiddetti *Non Resident Indians* verso la terra d'origine. Sin dagli anni Ottanta, da quando l'India si è aperta al nuovo regime economico liberista, e ha abbassato i livelli di protezione dell'industria nazionale, gli "indiani non residenti" sono diventati intermediari importanti per gli investimenti di capitale dall'estero, e in particolar modo dagli Stati Uniti. Nel 1998 il governo del BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) propose una tessera speciale per le "Persone di Origine Indiana", garantendo loro numerosi vantaggi economici, e quindi la possibilità di conservare, se non un duplice passaporto, una forma di "cittadinanza flessibile". Strategie politiche e interessi economici a parte, i discorsi ufficiali che manipolano questo legame tra la madrepatria, o *desh*, e i suoi "indiani non residenti" mirano coscientemente a un forte coinvolgimento emotivo: lo stereotipo è che il "non residente" arricchisce il tessuto sociale dell'India riproducendo all'estero la cultura tradizionale nel vestiario, nella religione, nella lingua e nei costumi, e allo stesso tempo mostra interesse per le sorti della patria, partecipando con investimenti diretti al suo benessere e al suo risollevamento economico.[24]

Lo scenario evocato dalla citazione di Prashad accoglie la dimensione spaziale e il filo narrativo del racconto, dove una famiglia indoamericana in visita turistica in India – Mr. e Mrs. Das insieme ai tre figli, Tina, Ronny e Bobby – è diretta verso

punti comuni tra il racconto e il noto romanzo di E.M. Forster *A Passage to India*. Lewis definisce *Interpreter of Maladies* un aggiornamento letterario del romanzo, in cui è ripreso il tema della *misinterpretation* culturale e dell'incomunicabilità umana, attraverso un processo narrativo di decodifica di simboli verbali e non verbali. In entrambi i testi le percezioni della guida, personaggio maschile indiano, si scontrano con quelle di una protagonista femminile che, ispirata dalla dimensione esotica che la circonda, deve affrontare personali dilemmi emotivi. Simon Lewis, *Lahiri's* Interpreter of Maladies, "The Explicator", LIX, 4 (Estate 2001).

23. Vijay Prashad, *Desh: The Contradictions of 'Homeland*, in R. Srikanth, S. Mazumdar, a cura di, *Contours of the Heart: South Asians Map North America*, Asian American Writers Workshop, New York 1997, pp. 225-35.

24. Ivi, p. 226.

il complesso templare di Konarak, nello stato dell'Orissa; con loro c'è il signor Kapasi, guida turistica e autista dell'auto noleggiata in cui viaggiano. Lo stereotipo romantico del non residente si frantuma immediatamente contro l'asserzione triviale di una seccata Mina Das, che litiga con il marito per aver scelto una macchina senza aria condizionata: "Tutto per qualche stupida rupia. Quanto ci stai facendo risparmiare, cinquanta centesimi?" (64).

Durante il viaggio l' estraneità ai luoghi e alle usanze del posto rende sempre più intenso l'interesse dell'autista nei confronti dei suoi singolari turisti, con i quali, egli osserva alla fine, condivide una familiarità linguistica e somatica, ma non culturale: "Sembravano indiani, ma vestiti come stranieri" (57).

Dal riconoscimento di dissomiglianze e di similitudini la narrazione enfatizza costantemente richiami simbolici che rimandano al punto di vista dei personaggi; ciò che emerge con ossessione, infatti, è che tutti, dal signor Kapasi ai bambini della famiglia Das ("Papà, perché anche in questa macchina l'autista è seduto dalla parte sbagliata?", 63), presumano che la realtà sia quella che loro percepiscono individualmente.[25] Ovviamente, la natura della realtà è fragile e soggettiva, soprattutto in presenza di una distanza culturale; per l'osservatore ogni tentativo di familiarizzare l'"altro" che ha di fronte ha l'effetto di scompaginare il suo itinerario conoscitivo. Alla fine, quando sembra profilarsi la flebile possibilità di un reciproco incontro, l'illusione – come si vedrà – si svela, le fantasie crollano e ciò che resta è l'amara frustrazione dell'incomunicabilità.

La sovrabbondanza di riferimenti all'occhio e allo sguardo assegna ai personaggi centrali uno specifico strumento di osservazione che contraddistingue la loro prospettiva, e per mezzo del quale essi percepiscono e costruiscono queste realtà personali: la scena si apre su Mr. Kapasi, che, in attesa di ripartire dopo una breve sosta, osserva dallo specchietto retrovisore la signora Das, mentre solleva, "trascinando[le] lungo il sedile, gambe depilate, abbondantemente scoperte"(57). Lo specchietto retrovisore sarà, lungo tutta la narrazione, il portale di accesso visivo della guida. *The rearview mirror* è lo strumento voyeuristico che gli conferisce l'indisturbata possibilità di fruire liberamente della presenza di Mina Das, intensa, sin dall'inizio, se non altro per la curiosità che desta il suo abbigliamento succinto.

Guida turistica dell'India alla mano, macchina fotografica al collo e vistoso teleobiettivo, il signor Das è ricalcato sugli stereotipi comunemente associati ai turisti. Non a caso, il soggetto fotografico che attrae la sua attenzione è quello del "nativo del Terzo Mondo": "Un uomo scalzo, con la testa avvolta da un turbante, seduto su un carretto pieno di sacchi di grano tirato da buoi. Uomo e buoi erano magrissimi" (64). La macchina fotografica, segno distintivo del turista, del visitatore che non appartiene, enfatizza la distanza tra fotografo e soggetto. Ciò che si vede è pensato già in funzione dell'immagine che

25. La focalizzazione sulla funzione simbolica delle immagini ottiche è una chiave di lettura ripresa dall'interessante saggio di V. Sam Sahayal, *Existential Irony through Optic Motifs in "Interpreter of Maladies"* in S. Bala, a cura di, *Jhumpa Lahiri, The Master Storyteller*, Koshla Publishing House, New Delhi 2002, pp. 195-203.

si desidera trarne. Dietro il mirino l'uomo emaciato, l'individuo inquadrato, diventa possesso del signor Das: che egli lo consideri esotico, pittoresco, o selvaggio, il soggetto ripreso è simbolo, icona di un evento che concentra sensazioni estranee alla sua esistenza.

La mostruosa grandezza del teleobiettivo, che decreta il potere di manipolare la realtà ripresa a proprio piacimento, conferma a sua volta la distanza del signor Das dalla dimensione in cui si muove. Rintanandosi dietro al mirino, adattando l'immagine in base a una propria angolatura e prospettiva, Raj Das resta impermeabile ai segni della miseria, imprimendo sulla pellicola un uomo muto, congelato nel tempo e nello spazio. "Le spiace fermarsi un momento? Voglio fare una foto a quel tipo"(64), *I just want to get a shot of this guy*. "To shoot", l'atto di scattare una foto, ma anche di sparare, liquida il soggetto negandogli potenzialmente azione e vitalità, e questa scena quasi di preludio, pur dalla scarsa rilevanza narrativa nel corpo della storia, sembra voler condurre la percezione del lettore al difficile rapporto semiotico tra i personaggi. Il signor Das è infatti inconsapevolmente distante anche dalla realtà della sua famiglia, incapace di vedere i sintomi di insofferenza della moglie, di avvertire atteggiamenti che agli occhi dell'autista fanno sembrare questo nucleo di persone "tutti fratelli" (63), e continua a scattare loro foto di un sereno quadretto familiare, in cui tuttavia lui non apparirà mai. "Ma avremmo potuto fare una fotografia per gli auguri di Natale di quest'anno. Non ne abbiamo scattato una con noi cinque nemmeno al Tempio del Sole" (77).

Ai bambini, al marito, al signor Kapasi, e all'ambiente circostante Mrs. Das sottrae caparbiamente lo sguardo, dietro lo schermo di "grandi occhiali da sole scuri"(60). Il suo atteggiamento non tradisce né interesse, né alcun piacere nei confronti dei luoghi e della compagnia dei familiari, opponendo un atteggiamento ostile e individualista. È solo nel momento in cui apprende del singolare lavoro di Mr. Kapasi, che la sua indifferenza si scioglie, mentre l'uomo racconta che, per arrotondare le sue entrate, oltre a fare da guida turistica, è impiegato come interprete presso uno studio medico. Lì il suo compito è quello di tradurre i sintomi dei pazienti, la maggior parte dei quali parla gujarati, lingua sconosciuta al medico.

Mr. Kapasi ha scarsa stima della sua professione, "un'occupazione ingrata" e "un segno del suo fallimento"(66), soprattutto perché ricorda le asperità di un'esistenza il cui passato è segnato dalla morte di un figlio e dal crollo economico della famiglia. Il presente, per il signor Kapasi, si traduce in un rapporto matrimoniale ormai logoro, in una quotidianità anestetizzata. Le sue speranze da giovane erano ben diverse, quando la passione per la traduzione l'aveva spinto a tracciare le comuni etimologie delle parole in più di quattro lingue, e a credere a un certo punto, di poter conversare in "inglese, francese, russo, portoghese e italiano, per non parlare dell'hindi, bengali, orissi e gujarati. […] Aveva sognato di diventare l'interprete dei diplomatici e dignitari in conflitto, di comporre controversie di cui lui solo avrebbe compreso le differenti posizioni"(67). Nessuna di tutte queste aspirazioni ha trovato tuttavia riscontro nella realtà. Privo del supporto di sua moglie, la quale in pubblico maschera con vergogna l'occupazione del marito, il signor Kapasi comunica alla famiglia Das che fare "l'interprete di malanni" è un lavoro come un altro.

> "Ma così romantico", intervenne la signora Das con aria sognante, rompendo il suo silenzio prolungato. Sollevò gli occhiali da sole rosa e […] per la prima volta i suoi occhi incontrarono quelli del signor Kapasi nello specchietto retrovisore: chiari, un po' piccoli, lo sguardo fisso ma indolente (65).

Nell'atto di sollevare gli occhiali da sole Mrs. Das decreta il suo ingresso nella storia, sottraendo all'interlocutore l' esclusiva e unilaterale libertà di osservazione. Ma questa disponibilità a comunicare è introdotta da premesse simboliche – sguardo opaco e assonnato, atteggiamento sognante – che confondono la certezza di un'interpretazione che vada oltre le sue personali percezioni. "Ci racconti di una situazione tipica" (65), la donna affonda nel sedile posteriore dell'Ambassador, offrendo il viso al sole, mentre con gli occhi chiusi desidera *immaginare* ciò che accade, "I want to picture what happens". Di nuovo, si innesca il meccanismo di appropriazione del "soggetto nativo", di nuovo, è reiterato l'atto fotografico – atto figurale (picture) e ossimorico (She […] closed her eyes) – che distanzia il turista dall'esperienza del soggetto rappresentato.

Eppure, per quanto stravagante possa suonare alle orecchie dell'interlocutore l'interpretazione di Mina Das, la parola *romantic* ha un effetto dirompente. Sentendosi finalmente apprezzato nella sua professione, il signor Kapasi è subito dominato da un turbamento sentimentale: all'improvviso quella donna lo attrae, sogna un contatto futuro, la desidera. Da questo punto in poi, l'andamento narrativo della storia fa trapelare una costante tensione tra i segni che indicano la possibilità di un incontro e quelli che predicono il crollo finale delle aspettative.

Al romanticismo di Mina Das il signor Kapasi risponde proiettando le proprie fantasie sul rapporto che riuscirà a instaurare con la donna, la quale, immediatamente gentile e confidenziale, desidera avere il suo indirizzo, per potergli inviare le foto scattate insieme durante una sosta al ristorante. La natura illusoria dell'invito traspare proprio dall'accidentale scelta di un foglio di una rivista cinematografica, su cui "lo spazio libero era poco, il testo e l'immagine dell'eroe e dell'eroina abbracciati sotto un albero di eucalipto riempivano la pagina" (70). Mentre il signor Kapasi vi scrive meticolosamente il suo indirizzo, immagina una relazione epistolare in cui entrambi esprimeranno speranze, inibizioni, esperienze di vita quotidiana, trasportando ciascuno la propria realtà nella vita dell'altro, e riusciranno, in un nobile atto di "migrazione sentimentale"[26] attraverso l'India e gli Stati Uniti, a far fiorire una feconda amicizia.

Continua tuttavia a serpeggiare l'illusione di una reale corrispondenza. In veste di guida turistica, che acutamente Alessandro Monti definisce "promotore di sguardi, che, a sua volta, sottopone gli altri al suo sguardo incessante", il signor Kapasi cerca di trasmettere a Mina Das il potere suggestivo del tempio di Surya, sperando che lei provi la sua stessa commozione, il suo stesso trasporto di fronte alle sculture secolari. La descrizione stessa del suo aspetto fisico, "aveva l'aria stanca,

26. Si veda il saggio di Alessandro Monti, *Acts of Migration and the Despondency of the Lonely Traveller: Reading across* Interpreter of Maladies, in Bala, *Jhumpa Lahiri*, cit., pp. 86-99.

gli occhi appesantiti dopo una dura giornata di lavoro" (74), riconduce l'iconografia di Surya alla sua ricezione personale, quasi come se l'uomo avesse introiettato il luogo (Surya è "la sua preferita"), e desiderasse soprattutto far comprendere alla donna la sua triste condizione esistenziale.

Mina Das per l'ultima volta solleverà gli occhiali da sole – e ancora, l'atto sospende una possibilità di coinvolgimento emotivo – dichiarando asciutta: "Forte" (74), per poi ricomporsi nuovamente. L'uomo è sopraffatto dall'indeterminatezza della risposta: suppone che questa sia positiva, ma non riesce né a capire le parole in gergo americano, (nel testo orginale *neat* enfatizza il gioco interpretativo e la distanza tra i personaggi sul piano linguistico), né ad accertarsi se lei abbia realmente accolto il suo richiamo.

Il momento culminante della storia giunge quando i due personaggi si ritrovano da soli nella macchina, mentre la compagnia visita i santuari rupestri di Udayagiri. Mrs. Das, in un soffio, rivela al signor Kapasi il suo più intimo segreto: che suo figlio Bob è frutto di un adulterio, di una relazione momentanea e puramente sessuale con un amico di suo marito. L'angoscia che ha da anni è talmente forte da impedirle un'esistenza serena e motivata. A soli 28 anni sente di aver perso ogni amore per la vita. La sua nudità diventa in qualche modo completa. L'incontro che il signor Kapasi aveva tanto sperato – un intreccio di attrazione fisica e di unione spirituale (sentimento peraltro sostenuto dal simbolismo delle sculture erotiche del tempio, e dal richiamo dello sguardo al suo corpo florido) – sta per avverarsi, proprio nel momento in cui Mrs. Das gli concede quell'intimità tanto agognata.

Ma Mr. Kapasi resta immobile, sottoposto per la prima volta, in un ribaltamento di ruoli, allo sguardo fisso della donna: "sapeva che la signora Das lo stava guardando, ma non girò la faccia verso di lei" (78). Mrs. Das invoca il suo intervento, affinché, in veste di interprete, lui possa far luce sulle sofferenze che si porta dietro così a lungo, affinché possa tradurre il suo malessere interiore. "Qui non c'è alcuna barriera linguistica. Che bisogno c'è di un interprete?" (82). Di fronte al crollo dell'immaginario erotico, della possibilità di una relazione con Mina, l'uomo si scopre incapace di agire come lei gli ha chiesto poiché si rende conto, all'improvviso, di poter leggere in lei solo ciò che immagina.

Ma quella che pretende Mina Das, nell'affidare all'interprete la responsabilità cosciente di non limitarsi alla semplice trasposizione linguistica, è intimità: ella desidera che lui individui, di fronte alla sua rivelazione, tracce di significato ben più profonde. Forse la donna è in cerca di qualcuno che dia una voce a quel disagio spesso avvertito da molte figlie di seconda generazione cresciute in America, dove la chiusura e la circoscrizione alla dimensione domestica, la precocità delle incombenze familiari, il controllo dello spazio sociale e identitario da parte delle generazioni più anziane, comportano insoddisfazione e senso di smarrimento culturale:

> "I nostri genitori erano molto amici e vivevano nella stessa città. Per tutta la vita ci siamo visti tutti i fine settimana, a casa dei miei o a casa dei suoi. Ci mandavano a giocare di sopra mentre loro scherzavano sul nostro matrimonio. Si figuri! Non hanno mai cercato di forzarci, ma non posso fare a meno di pensare che fosse tutto combinato" (79).

Le parole di Mrs. Das si riferiscono a un problema collettivo di cui la comunità indianamericana appare spesso eccessivamente preoccupata, la cui natura sembra comune, d'altronde, a quella di molte altre culture: il controllo sessuale della gioventù; gli argomenti che riguardano relazioni sociali e scelte sessuali, infatti, costituiscono uno dei punti più spinosi del conflitto intergenerazionale. Un comportamento sessuale individuale e orientato a scelte personali non di rado è considerato potenzialmente distruttivo per l'integrità di gruppo, e poiché le donne, più degli uomini, sono costantemente pungolate con il bastone della tradizione, è sulle figlie che ricade la responsabilità di rispettare i rituali dell'Usanza Indiana, come per esempio il matrimonio combinato. Qualsiasi movimento verso scelte sessuali individuali è visto in termini di "americanizzazione", il che si traduce in un comportamento immorale e privo di sani principi. I genitori spesso contestano il comportamento "poco tradizionale" dei propri figli, sollevando il timore che un matrimonio al di fuori della comunità possa portare alla dissoluzione culturale, e che essi possano essere sessualmente attivi;[27] pertanto, la scelta autonoma di un compagno è in contrasto con la tradizione, che prevede tale scelta da parte della famiglia: una trasgressione alle nozioni ideali di femminilità, castità eterosessuale, e fedeltà alla comunità rischia di suscitare disapprovazione.

Questo atteggiamento porta le seconde generazioni ad assorbire principi "naturalizzati" della cultura indiana, e a ritenere che siano accettati universalmente e acriticamente nel subcontinente, dove, in realtà, capita che le adolescenti godano di maggiore indipendenza e libertà di movimento, dentro e fuori dalla sfera privata della famiglia.[28] Le giovani donne indiane americane sono particolarmente vulnerabili in termini di autonomia personale, e una sfida all'autorità e alle aspirazioni dei genitori può portare a un disagevole senso di inautenticità; in bilico tra il desiderio di conformarsi alle norme imposte dall'autorità familiare, che stridono con quelle dei loro coetanei, e la propria volontà individuale, molte donne di seconda generazione spesso devono affrontare sforzi immensi per affermare il proprio posto, il proprio ruolo, e la propria identità nella società statunitense. "Al college stava tutto il tempo con Raj", continua Mina Das attraverso il pensiero della guida, "e non aveva stretto molte amicizie. Non c'era nessuno con cui confidarsi, nessuno con cui dividere un pensiero o una preoccupazione. […] Dopo essersi sposata così giovane, si sentì presto sopraffatta da tutto l'insieme, avere un figlio così in fretta, allattare […], così restava a casa con il bambino tutto il giorno" (79-80).

Per quanto intenzionato ad accettare il difficile compito di interpretare il malessere della signora Das, il signor Kapasi non riesce che a troncare il dialogo, chiedendo laconico se ciò che lei prova non sia un semplice senso di colpa, invece di

27. Shamita Dasgupta, Sayantani Dasgupta, *Sex, Lies, and Women's Lives*, in S. Dasgupta, a cura di, *A Patchwork Shawl: Chronicles of South Asian Women Living in America,* Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick 1998, pp.111-128.

28. Lata Mani, *Gender, Class, and Cultural Conflict: Indu Krishnan's* Knowing Her Place, in *The Women of South Asian Descent*, Id., a cura di, *Our Feet Walk the Sky. Women of the South Asian Diaspora,* Aunt Lute Books, San Francisco 1993, pp. 32-36.

una malattia dell'animo: "È veramente dolore quello che prova, signora Das, o senso di colpa?" (83). L'aura romantica, il brulicante lavorio del sogno, si dissolvono in freddezza, dall'immobilità dell'uomo al volto inespressivo di Mrs. Das, la quale, imponendogli un silenzio di rabbiosa frustrazione, esce dalla macchina e si dirige verso il gruppo familiare. Che l' interpretazione sia errata o meno, l'effetto del freddo giudizio capovolge il significato dell'incontro, determinando il crollo definitivo di tutte le fantasie in cui entrambi avevano indugiato in cerca di un reciproco appagamento.

Il signor Kapasi appare incapace di abbandonare la logica del suo sogno romantico, di uscire da se stesso e dalla propria esperienza per creare "un'intimità necessaria tra il testo e la sua traduzione", ciò che per Gayatri Spivak diventa "il più intimo atto di lettura".[29] E un atto di traduzione implica coinvolgimento emotivo che è prima di tutto comunicazione, "compassione", colloquio silenzioso; si fa pratica interculturale solo adottando un atteggiamento sincretico verso "l'altro/a", di costante mediazione tra le sue e le proprie risposte. Una volta che i contorni di questo incontro anelato si tingono di presenze e di rivelazioni non previste dalla sua immaginazione, il signor Kapasi si ritrae, di fronte al "suo banale, volgare segreto" (82), e sottopone a giudizio ciò che in realtà invoca un contesto per essere compreso.

Mina Das, a sua volta, è intrappolata nell'immaginario esotico che lei stessa ha costruito. Di fronte a un intervento che non trova riscontro in ciò che avrebbe desiderato ascoltare – una diagnosi, e forse una soluzione al suo malessere – la donna sente di aver concesso sprovvedutamente il peso di un segreto a una conoscenza superficiale. Il signor Kapasi, non più contenuto nella sua figura romantica, lascia lei nell'imbarazzo del denudamento. E, figura minacciosa, perché detentore di una conoscenza, di una confessione, viene nuovamente allontanato.

La risoluzione della storia svia strategicamente l'attenzione del lettore dai due personaggi principali verso Bobby; se la fedeltà dell'interpretazione riconduce al senso di colpa della madre, allora è come se questo ricadesse in qualche modo sul figlio innocente, il quale, approfittando dell'incuranza del gruppo, esplora da solo il luogo deserto, e viene aggredito da un gruppo di scimmie;[30] le sue urla disperate richiamano la madre e il padre, che con l'intervento di Mr. Kapasi lo sottraggono all'assalto. È nel momento di riconciliazione tra Mrs. Das e la sua famiglia che il racconto si chiude. Con un'ultima, e ironica scena, inosservata se non da Mr. Kapasi: la striscia di carta su cui egli aveva scritto il suo indirizzo per Mrs. Das scivo-

29. Gayatri Spivak, *The Politics of Translation*, in Id., *Outside in the Teaching Machine*, Routledge, New York-London 1993, p. 180.

30. La "colpa"della madre sembra doppiamente espressa attraverso un gioco narrativo meta-intradiegetico. Dopo il racconto del tradimento, lei scende dall'auto e, barcollante sparge involontariamente manciate di riso soffiato che attraggono una scimmia. Poi, "altre si unirono, e così ben presto si trovò a essere seguita da mezza dozzina", cosicché "Quando trovarono (il bambino) era circondato da un gruppo di scimmie, più di una dozzina. Il riso soffiato disseminato dalla signora Das era sparso ai suoi piedi, e le scimmie lo rastrellavano con le zampe. Il bambino era immobile, incapace di parlare, con la faccia sconvolta dalle lacrime. Le sue gambe nude erano piene di terra, graffiate dalle scimmie che lo colpivano ripetutamente"(83, 84).

la dalla borsa della donna, e si disperde nel vento – "simbolo materiale di una disconnessione":

> Nessuno se ne accorse, tranne lui. La vide alzarsi, sollevata dalla brezza, fino agli alberi dove si erano rifugiate le scimmie, che assistevano solennemente alla scena dall'alto. Anche il signor Kapasi la osservava: era l'immagine della famiglia Das che avrebbe conservato per sempre nella memoria (86). [31]

L'immagine finale, frutto di questo mutuo scambio di prospettive e di punti di vista, è l'unica foto che Mr. Kapasi conserverà, ma imprigionata nella mente. Il foglietto non attraverserà i confini dello spazio, non sarà mai trasportato, né materialmente, né metaforicamente, al di là del mondo: mai *tradotto*.

Nella collisione simultanea delle percezioni personali che ciascuno ha dell'altro la distanza prende il sopravvento, tutti i personaggi sono lasciati a languire nel proprio solipsismo: la famiglia Das ritornerà all'hotel, per poi ripercorrere, inalterata, il tragitto verso casa, l'America; il signor Kapasi alla sua scialba quotidianità, portando con sé, forse per sempre inespressi, sogni e illusioni. L'effetto della storia, che bene si armonizza con lo stile delle altre, è infuso, così, di pessimismo, ma semina anche le tracce di una nuova coscienza, e l'apertura verso il riconoscimento di nuove realtà, sollevando il desiderio di muoversi oltre le percezioni etnocentriche di qualsiasi cultura. Da un lato il racconto sembra voler strappare all'Occidente il monopolio del turismo esotico, "restituendo l'India all'India",[32] dall'altro invita una nazione postcoloniale a riconoscere e a dialogare con la sua diaspora.

31. Simon Lewis, *Lahiri's* Interpreter of Maladies, "The Explicator", cit., p. 220.

32. Anna Nadotti, *Recensione de* L'Interprete dei Malanni, "L'Indice 2000", 9 (2003).