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The United States and South Asia from the Age of Empire to decolonization: A history of entanglements

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The contributions assembled in this volume present cutting-edge research that examines the network of Indo-American interconnections over a wider time frame. The case studies stretch into the early decades of the American republic hinting at a longer history of mutual influence and exchange, beyond the registers of 'the American century' of globalization. By bringing together academics working across disciplines ranging from history to cultural and literary studies, comparative religion, political science and sociology, this volume thus foregrounds and historicizes the complex, multi-sited, polyvalent nature of the Indo-US encounter. At the same time, the book explores the possibilities of methodologically engaging with established categories – such as the nation, the imperial and Empire – and test alternative typologies to better understand this encounter. Taken together, our authors reconstruct the myriad ways in which Americans and Indians have engaged with each other through trade, diplomacy, intellectual comradeship, missionary evangelism and revolutionary fervor.

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The United States and South Asia from the Age of Empire to Decolonization *provides an innovative and intriguing set of essays on the continuities and shifts in Indo-U.S. relationships from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. […] the volume represents a welcome step forward for the project of New International History integrating state- and non-state perspectives along with anti/colonial approaches, as well as advancing the field of Indo-U.S. history.*
– MARK REEVES, Samford University

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The United States and South Asia from the Age of Empire to Decolonization

HARALD FISCHER-TINÉ & NICO SLATE (EDS)

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GLOBAL CONNECTIONS: ROUTES AND ROOTS – 5

The United States and South Asia from the Age of Empire to Decolonization

A History of Entanglements

Edited by
HARALD FISCHER-TINÉ & NICO SLATE

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The United States and South Asia from the Age of Empire to Decolonization

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THE UNITED STATES AND SOUTH ASIA FROM THE AGE OF EMPIRE TO DECOLONIZATION

A History of Entanglements

Edited by

Harald Fischer-Tiné and Nico Slate

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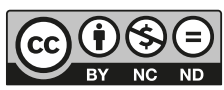

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INTRODUCTION

Religion, Politics, and Development — Mapping the Sites and Domains of Indo-American Exchange, *c.* 1850–1970[1]

Harald Fischer-Tiné, Sujeet George and Nico Slate

The election of Kamala Harris as the first South Asian American Vice President of the United States has expanded interest in the long history of connections between the United States and South Asia. Harris joins an impressive roster of Indian American politicians—a roster that spans the political spectrum from conservative Republican governors like Nikki Haley and Bobby Jindal to progressive Democratic members of congress like Ro Khanna and Pramila Jayapal. It would be a mistake to see the growing political prominence of the South Asian American community as a clear marker of the unity or visibility of that community. Indeed, questions of identity and authenticity mark many of the most prominent Indian American politicians—including Harris, Haley, and Jindal. What it means to be South Asian American—or Indian American—has long been bound up with complex and ever-shifting boundaries of race, nation, and religion.[2] Those boundaries were in turn linked to larger and longer histories of mutual perception, multifaceted entanglements and concrete interactions between the United States and South Asia.

For decades, the historiography on modern South Asia has been tethered to the signposts of Empire and the nation-state as its recurrent referents. Even as postcolonial theory, Subaltern studies and feminist theory sought to expand the intellectual terrain, the dominance of the nation-Empire dyad has continued more or less unabated. The gradual waning of the Cold War, concurrent with the rise of Global History, has, however, brought into sharper focus the methodological limitations and shortcomings of both Imperial history and Area Studies. This edited volume offers a fresh approach to the intellectual, cultural, economic and literary histories that have "entangled" the United States of America and the Indian subcontinent. After global history had been initially dominated by transregional comparisons and the study of (unilateral) long-distance transfers, the more dynamic and process-oriented concept of "entanglement" became increasingly prominent in the field from the late 1990s onwards, producing myriad studies on the "back and forth of people ideas and things across boundaries".[3] The shift toward interactive "transnational" histories at times risked an uncritical celebration of connections

and entanglements of various kinds, as if such histories could themselves usher in a new and more just way of looking at the human past. A "breathless sense of freedom," to use the words of historian Paul Kramer, tinged even many of the richest transnational histories.[4] Cutting against such enthusiasm, Indrani Chatterjee has argued for the impossibility of "connected histories across spaces shaped by war and the partitions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries," and Kris Manjapra has reminded us that entanglements, albeit implying "some degree of interdependence", can also be highly asymmetrical, because they "exist within larger systems of power, discourse and economy".[5] It is important to keep these caveats in mind when looking at the multifaceted exchanges between North America and South Asia that are under scrutiny in this book.

The hegemonic role of the USA in the post-World War II global order has led to a proliferation of research examining diplomatic contacts and the exchange of ideas, and flows of material aid, knowledge and expert personnel between India and the USA from the 1950s to the 2000s.[6] A few exceptions aside,[7] it was only recently that this 'presentist' approach was challenged by research that has examined the network of interconnections over a wider time frame stretching into the early decades of the American republic and has hinted at a longer history of connections going beyond the registers of what has alternatively been described as 'Americanization', US-cultural Imperialism' or 'the American century' of globalization.[8] Since the global ascent of the United States and the increasing US presence in Asia during the Cold War are often seen as the seemingly natural starting points for the study of Indo-US entanglements, the long prehistory of such exchanges is often overlooked. Precisely for the same reason the bulk of existing scholarship is devoted to official contacts and diplomatic history. To correct this bias, the editors deemed it particularly important to select the contributions to this anthology in a way that allowed for a special emphasis on non-state actors and also prominently included the pre-independence era.

By bringing together academics working across disciplines ranging from history and ethnomusicology to cultural and literary studies, political science and sociology, this volume thus foregrounds and historicizes the multi-sited, polyvalent nature of the protracted Indo-US encounter. At the same time, the volume will inspect the possibilities of methodologically engaging with categories—such as the nation, the 'imperial' and Empire—and explore alternative typologies to better understand the various forms of this transregional and transcultural interaction. The contributions assembled in this book reconstruct the myriad ways in which Americans and Indians have engaged with each other through trade, diplomacy, intellectual comradeship, missionary evangelism and revolutionary (or developmentalist) fervor.

Contribution to the literature

The story of American Exceptionalism has tended to have a self-evident tone in much mainstream as well as historical understanding of twentieth-century American history. Recent scholarship has, however, sought to temper the 'Manifest Destiny' rhetoric and highlighted the fissures and fault lines that punctuate this grand narrative. In his recently published magnum opus *American Empire: A Global History*, the British historian Anthony G. Hopkins offers a challenging revaluation of the conventional understanding of American Exceptionalism.[9] He places the rising global influence of nineteenth and early-twentieth-century United States within the existing, in-flux networks of other imperial empires, thus charting a history of an intensely globalized, interconnected world. Along similar lines, Daniel Immerwahr has made a powerful plea for the (re-) discovery of the United States' imperial past, pointing to the striking parallels with Britain, France and the other usual suspects of imperialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[10]

Seen in this light, the volume seeks to investigate the ways in which the British imperial networks intermingled and mediated with American experiences in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century colonial India. In addition, it becomes imperative to ask anew how to conceptualize the Indo-US encounter over a longer temporal scale. As American notions of mass consumerism, including Hollywood and Jazz, seeped into the everyday imaginings of early twentieth-century Indians under British rule,[11] there was a coincident renegotiation of the relationship between the colonized natives and their British rulers. Following the pioneering forays by scholars such as Mrinalini Sinha and David Arnold, the volume at hand pursues this triangulated nature of identity-making and societal reframing and thus recasts the positioning of the USA within global narratives of the twentieth century.[12]

As indicated above, historiography on modern South Asia has suffered from a fixation on the Empire and the nation-state as its recurrent referents. An engagement with the nature of Indo-US interactions makes possible a re-examination of some of the core ideas and concepts associated with Imperial history by expanding the frames of reference within which histories of Empire could be situated.[13] At the same time, the flowering of the sub-discipline of Global History since the early 2000s has left in its wake critical questions crucial to our understanding of the impulses of Western modernity and the stratified histories of globalization.[14] Methodologically, the volume seeks to explore the potentials of better engaging with the developing paradigm of global history by looking at the multi-layered, multi-spatial nature of interactions between the United States and South Asia, and contextualizing it within narratives that potentially frame out on a canvas wider than hitherto imagined.

Much before the United States, as a hegemon of the post-World War II global order, sought to influence the ideological moorings of the newly independent Indian state, there had been sustained interactions between the American republic and the Indian subcontinent on a variety of levels. Recent scholarship has highlighted the longer-term series of interconnections that spanned multiple domains, including the trade of Indian commodities and curiosities, the transfer and adoption of philosophical Indic ideas by varied groups of American intellectuals, artists and the broader public, as well as an abiding sense of morbid curiosity about the strange mores of South Asian societies.[15]

The "Orient" and India in particular was part of a rich tapestry of visual, textual and material imaginations in the nineteenth-century United States. While trade between the USA and British India dominated the early decades of the republic,[16] the work of American missionaries, which started as early as 1812,[17] came to be a significant connection in the subsequent decades of the nineteenth century. The caste question and its relation to a highly racialized American society was a persistent theme in accounts of the Indian social system that were circulated through travelogues, pamphlets and newspaper reports.[18] With its structural hierarchies and modes of social exclusion, the caste system served as an easy reference for the inherent backwardness of the people as imagined in the American Gilded and Progressive Ages respectively. The juxtaposition between the question of race in the American context, and its echoes with the Indian caste system has emerged in diverse circumstances, as evident in its abiding relevance in contexts that have moved well into the twentieth century.[19] Our volume will grapple with the heterogeneity of these narratives by placing emphasis on the diversity of the actors who were involved, and the varied routes and contexts through which these actors engaged with each other.

Arguably the most enduring, widespread and sustained set of interactions between the USA and South Asia have been directed by the hundreds of Christian missionaries who sought to redeem and uplift the 'heathen masses' in the Indian subcontinent. As Protestant notions of the 'Social Gospel' gained an increasingly international character from the 1890s,[20] American missionary work in the Indian subcontinent had an impact on a diverse range of fields including health, education, sports and rural reconstruction.[21]

Belying notions of a unidirectional flow of ideas are accounts of the impact of nineteenth century Indic ideals on the American imagination. Swami Vivekananda's address at the 1893 Chicago World Parliament of religions has attained a certain mythical quality often associated with originary moments of wonderment. Seen as heralding America's initiation into the realm of Indian spiritual cosmos, Vivekananda's visit to the USA has, perhaps unfairly, overshadowed the multiple nodes of linkages that ushered in ideas of Hindu philosophy to the American society of the late nineteenth century.[22] Vivekananda was but one of

a steady line of monks, sadhus—and occasionally, plain opportunists seeking a captive audience—who strove to bring Hindu philosophy as well as yoga to a rapidly expanding American middle class.[23] The mostly positive attitude that had shaped many of the intellectual engagements of Americans with the subcontinent and its cultures and religions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had largely evaporated by the Interwar years. The fact that the widespread Indophilia in the United States had given way to Indophobia became tangible in the widely debated publication of the book *Mother India* by social commentator and white supremacist Katherine Mayo in 1927. Mayo's book portrayed India and especially Hindu culture in an exceedingly negative light as cruel, backward and irrational, while hailing British colonial rule as beneficial for the subcontinental population. A rich body of research has recently analyzed the ensuing '*Mother India* debate' from various angles, often placing emphasis on its enmeshment with contemporaneous xenophobia and anti-immigration discourses in Jazz Age America.[24]

While the realm of the metaphysical highlights the co-constitutive nature of the Indo-American encounter, the domain of the revolutionary-political emerged at a specific moment of global anti-imperialism and 'transnational nationalism'.[25] The interwar period saw the emergence of a transnational Indian diaspora that was inculcated an American ethos through their exposure to education opportunities in American universities. These revolutionaries collaborated with their fellow countrymen in an attempt to overthrow an imperial rule through networks across continents and empires. Their narratives highlight the transnational frames within which the anti-imperial rhetoric was articulated in lands and contexts far away from India. The multiplicity of meanings that could be, and were, sustained by the Indian revolutionaries abroad hints at the fecundity of the ideas that were grappled with. At the same time, it points to the sheer promiscuity of ideas drawn from diverse global contexts and experiences. Here was an instance of thought and action that imbibed ideals from the American experience, as evidenced among members of the *Ghadar* party who found common ground on the Pacific coast.[26]

The rather spectacular story of the tiny Indian student community's revolutionary activities in North America has opened the door for a scholarly engagement with other, more pedestrian, segments of the South Asian immigrant population in the first half of the twentieth century. There is by now a rich body of literature on the subcontinental diaspora in the United States — ranging from low caste labor migrants to religious missionaries and high-profile South Asian entrepreneurs living in the US who became active in the India Lobby during the interwar years and the Second World War — and the multidirectional cultural flows their presence has triggered.[27]

Such variegated interconnections were redrawn by the 1940s. The Second World War and its aftermath — which also brought about entirely new and

hitherto barely studied cultural Indo-US entanglements through the presence of 250,000 GIs in South Asia —[28] is conventionally regarded as the commencement of the global 'age of development' spearheaded by the United States. Even prior to this moment, the early decades of the twentieth century saw a redefinition of the "civilizing mission" whereby the missionary enterprise sought to engage with alien cultures in a language of mutual comprehensibility rather than external, hierarchical superimposition of ideas and precepts. Such a realignment involved as much grappling with questions of a practical nature as with transcendental ones. Focusing on rural reconstruction projects, notions of physical health and well-being, citizenship training and education, the Protestant mission redefined its emancipatory agenda, which segued into the development paradigm of the post-World War II global order.

A combination of the Marshall Plan and the Point Four Program sought to restructure both Europe and the decolonizing nation-states in Asia, Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean in the decades after 1945.[29] Recent scholarship has highlighted the variegated histories of this period, and has attempted to divert the focus from diplomatic squabbles and foreign aid policy, to examine community development projects at the ground level, as well as exchange of technical expertise through philanthropic agencies such as the Ford and Rockefeller foundations.[30] Although this aspect is barely covered in the present volume, it should not be forgotten that a seamless continuity of US influences in the Indian subcontinent after 1947 was severely challenged by the partition of British India and the subsequent existence of two (from 1971 on: three) very different states in the region. Thus far, the history of Pakistani-US relations has mostly been covered with a focus on the diplomatic, developmental, military and geostrategic dimensions.[31] A more thorough exploration of social and cultural aspects remains an important desideratum for future historical research.

The intellectual legacy of the American influence on postcolonial India has been varied—on the one hand, the growth of the Area Studies paradigm had its very specific "Indian" component that had an impact on the development of South Asian Studies in some of the premier American universities.[32] As several scholars have recently argued, the area studies idea can also be traced back to American missionaries, who often possessed unique regional expertise and language skills and became important pioneers and hinge figures when the American "bid for world knowledge" began to take shape after the Second World War.[33] At the same time, concepts resulting from the disciplines of social psychology as well as management training were sold to the Indian elite as a panacea for the adolescent nation's slow growth pangs.[34]

There were more cross-fertilizations. As Nico Slate has recently argued, the political traditions of both the nation-states exemplify the ways in which the

democratic ideal can be enriched by the social diversity intrinsic to both countries.[35] Yet expressions of such diversities, as well as the longer-term legacies of the Indo-US encounter, necessarily slip "beyond nationalist frames." This volume aims to foreground these variegated histories by considering sites and intellectual domains that are yet underexplored and thus examine the international ramifications of what has hitherto been understood as purely international endeavors.

Chapter Previews

While all of the chapters in this volume speak to each other, we have divided the volume into three sections: "Literature, Religion & Culture," "Revolutionaries and Missionaries," and "Social Sciences, Development & Technocracy." The section on literary, religious and cultural exchanges kicks off with a contribution by ethnomusicologist Bradley Shope, who examines some of the earliest musical and theatrical exchanges between North America and South Asia. In his chapter *A Goldrush, Steamships, and Blackface: The New York Serenaders in India, early-1850s* Shope reconstructs the arrival of an American minstrelsy troupe in the subcontinent while adroitly placing their South Asian tour in the broader context of the dramatically intensifying global communication and mobility in mid-nineteenth century. Between 1851 and 1853, the New York Serenaders toured cities and towns across India, performing both minstrel songs and English traditional music. Enthusiastic audiences of English-speakers considered the group to be authentic curators of contemporary United States performance culture. Steamships facilitated their travel within the subcontinent and made available to the group shipments of the most up-to-date printed music of minstrel songs from the U.S., which was important to their reputation as leading-edge performers. The group traveled from the Atlantic seaboard of the United States to San Francisco during the gold rush era in 1849, but they left the city soon after to pursue performance opportunities at destinations in the Pacific, and eventually in India. Shope's chapter puts the technological, cultural, and commercial circumstances that made possible their travel from San Francisco to India in stark relief. Simultaneously, it examines the impact of racism that was partly responsible for the success of blackface minstrelsy in India, the availability of printed music on the subcontinent, the expansion of steamship transportation within and beyond the British Empire, and the role of San Francisco as a blossoming Pacific port powerhouse. It ultimately suggests that the confluence of these determinants enabled (for the first time) an organized group of American blackface musicians to travel to India and successfully perform popular music from the U.S.

Next is Susan M. Ryan's chapter *Imagining Empire*, which examines American reactions to the Great Indian Rebellion, 1857–58, by analyzing reports and comments

in the US press and reflections in contemporary American literature. Ryan starts her investigation on *The Sepoy Rebellion and American Global Ambition* with Walt Whitman's 1871 poem "Passage to India". This poem, often invoked in scholarly conversations on the nineteenth-century United States' global turn, celebrates three of the era's most impressive engineering feats — the laying of the transatlantic telegraph cable in 1858, the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, and the opening of the Suez Canal later that year. These infrastructural advances obviously accelerated the pace of travel and communication, but for Whitman they also subtended an expansive American presence abroad, one that revivifies the Columbian project that the poem repeatedly invokes. Whitman here heralds the United States' international emergence with an exuberance that mirrors his expressed faith in human beings' capacity to control and reshape the earth itself. If "Passage to India" stands as a monument to imperial optimism, a lesser-known American conversation on India, which took place nearly fifteen years earlier, evinced a great deal more ambivalence. In the summer and fall of 1857, American magazines and newspapers began printing details of a widespread rebellion among native Indian soldiers (called sepoys) against British rule. News of the uprising and of British reprisals shocked American readers not just in terms of their staggering violence, but also insofar as supposed inferiors had managed to carry out an elaborate and at least temporarily successful conspiracy against a European power. As Ryan persuasively argues, American commentators confronted two downsides of imperial ambition: first, that the colonized could not be so easily dominated as some had assumed; and second, that efforts at reasserting such elusive control could cost an imperial power in moral or reputational terms. According to Ryan, US writings on India in 1857–1858, then, represent a crucial if understudied moment of dissent in the nation's own shift toward imperialism, as British blunders and atrocities dimmed Americans' own luminous fantasies of global power.

The subsequent chapter in this section is by Philip Deslippe, a scholar of religious studies. His contribution *Stage Magicians, Sidewalk Salesmen, Con Artists, and Yogis in American Popular Culture* focuses on the hitherto unduly neglected role of South Asian *Fakirs* in the United States. While Swami Vivekananda's 1893 address to the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago is often perceived as the first significant introduction of Hinduism to the American public, tour guides advised visitors to the much larger Columbian Exposition that hosted the Parliament that many of the streets at the fair would be filled with fakirs. But these fakirs were not religious renunciants, but rather men making a brisk trade selling cheap novelties to visitors. As Deslippe's study demonstrates, through nearly a century of popular usage in America that started just after the Civil War, the term "fakir" acquired numerous successive meanings in the United States as it moved from India to a description of magicians in Orientalist costumes on the vaudeville stage, then a

term for ostentatious salesmen on American sidewalks, then to duplicitous con artists and criminals, and finally to the yogis and swamis from India who travelled to the United States and were labelled with the various meanings of the term. More than a simple loanword, the word *fakir* is one of the earliest, long-running, and perhaps most influential ways in which American popular culture has engaged with ideas of India, and through a large cache of newspaper and magazine articles, this chapter will trace its history for the first time.

The subsequent section zooms in on the activities of two groups of historical actors that became particularly conspicuous in pushing the boundaries of Indo-U.S. relations, namely American Missionaries on the one hand and Indian 'revolutionaries' and politicians on the other. Joanna Simonow's contribution examines the key role of missionaries from the United States in organizing famine relief in late colonial India. Her chapter *American Humanitarianism in colonial South Asia* embeds a case study on famine relief in Bombay organized by the Marathi Mission during the late 1890s in the wider context of the creation of an American 'moral Empire' that took shape roughly at the same time. As Simonow reminds us, the year 1896 marked the beginning of a prolonged period of amplified hunger in British India, which historians commonly divide into the famines of 1896–97 and 1899–1900. Although Americans had shown interest in alleviating social ills in South Asia before, the responses of missionary societies, philanthropists and the religious press in North America to these famines were unprecedented in many ways. The heightened interest of Americans to share their wealth to relieve famine India emerged against the background of U.S. imperialism, changing Anglo-American relations and the growing influence of foreign missionaries on American perceptions of India. The chapter examines the surge of US-sponsored famine relief in India in the late 1890s as a defining moment in the larger history of the encounter between South Asia and the United States, and explores some of the multidirectional engagements of both societies that emerged against this background.

An utterly different facet of American missionary engagement in South Asia is put under scrutiny in historian Harald Fischer-Tiné's chapter on *American 'Boyology' and the YMCA's work with early adolescents in India (c. 1900–1950).* As the author compellingly demonstrates, American and Canadian volunteers working for the largely US-led and financed Indian YMCA (or simply Y) in South Asia were key in developing sophisticated programs to save the subcontinental adolescents from the perceived danger of moral corruption. Their 'boys' work' schemes attempted to inculcate 'modern' norms and values with a view of preparing potential future Indian leaders for political autonomy. The Y's Boys' Department was founded in 1901 and it reached the peak of its influence during the two-and-a-half decades preceding Indian independence in 1947. The chapter not only discusses concrete

elements of the program, such as sport, camping and scouting, it also reconstructs the wider transnational trends that led to the new attention to "one fifth of the world's boyhood". A particular focus lies on the medico-sociological American discourse of 'boyology', which can be discerned in contemporary manuals designed for the YMCA workers and educators involved as well as in their practical schemes. The unique, quasi-scientific approach to boys' work adopted by the Y was regularly marketed as being distinctly 'American' and superior to British colonial schemes, because it allegedly fostered the Indian boys' capacity for 'self-government' and democracy. In sum, Fischer-Tiné's case study allows to grasp how both global currents in the perception of boyhood and adolescence as well as transnationally circulating American models of character building, habit formation and citizenship training played out in the Indian subcontinent, leaving many legacies in the post-colonial societies of the region.

The next two chapters in this section shift camps, as it were, putting the spotlight on Indian political activists that became active in the United States. Neilesh Bose's contribution explores *India and the US in Entangled Histories* through the lens of the illustrious Indian Revolutionary Taraknath Das. Das (1884–1958), an itinerant nationalist and anti-colonial activist who spent considerable time in the United States through educational and activist networks, remains a relatively under-studied figure in both North American and South Asian histories. Given his centrality to the revolutionary *Ghadar* movement, educational training in the USA, and his role in North American and European interwar anti-colonial organizations, his peripatetic life and many writings, serve as a window into braided histories of race and citizenship between the United States of America and British India in the late colonial era. Seen alongside other "expatriate patriots" such as Mohandas Gandhi and Shyamji Krishnavarma, Das is a central figure in the history of overseas nationalism in the early to mid-twentieth century. Bose's chapter focus on his relationship with the United States of America, as the space provided a fertile ground for his activism, his relationship to citizenship, and overall politics of nationalism. In addition to offering a coherent picture of his activities as an Indian nationalist, Neilesh Bose presents Taraknath Das's life as a layer of American history, discussing why and how his struggles with citizenship flow from a longer history of citizenship in the United States of America.

The much shorter, though equally fascinating American experiences of another illustrious Indian political leader are discussed in Nico Slate's essay. *The American Journeys of Rammanohar Lohia* concentrates on events that took place in the spring of 1964, when Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, a prominent socialist member of the Indian Parliament, was arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, for attempting to enter

a "whites only" restaurant. Slate's skillful and fine-grained reconstruction of the subsequent events is most illuminating: The US State Department quickly sent a formal apology to the Indian Ambassador. In response, Lohia informed reporters that both the State Department and the Indian Embassy "may go to hell." When told that the American Ambassador to the United Nations, Adlai Stevenson, would offer his apologies, Lohia replied that Stevenson should apologize to the Statue of Liberty. Lohia was not new to the United States, nor to being arrested while fighting injustice. In the summer of 1951, he spent over a month traveling across the United States, encouraging a range of audiences to take up civil disobedience in the struggle against American racism. Interestingly, the Indian socialist used his sojourn to meet with dozens of activists, intellectuals, and political figures, including Walter Reuther, Pearl S. Buck, Norman Thomas, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Albert Einstein. By examining Lohia's American excursions, Slate's chapter thus manages to shed new light on the larger intersection of socialism and civil rights within and between the United States and India.

The third and final part of this anthology eventually moves from the realm of missionary and political intervention and politics to the fields of Science, Development and Technocracy. The contributions assembled in this section leave no doubt that these were equally important sites in the wider scheme of Indo-US interactions, particularly during the twentieth century.

Sujeet George's contribution to *U.S Missionary Ethnography and the Indian Social Anthropological Tradition* dovetails nicely with the chapter on the YMCA's boyology in the previous section, in that it confirms that the boundaries between missionary and academic projects conducted by Americans in South Asia could be rather porous. By the middle of the twentieth century, the 'village' had come to be regarded both as a signifier and as an object of enquiry in the Cold War era of developmental modernization. While development experts charted a specific trajectory of comprehending the village in the Global South, the social anthropological tradition of early postcolonial India offered granular case studies of specific villages, such as M. N. Srinivas' 'Rampura'. They have come to occupy a significant intellectual place for their detailed representations of social relations in a moment of transition immediately after the end of colonial rule. Karimpur—the fictive name given to a village in North India by the American missionaries William and Charlotte Wiser—was chronicled by the couple for over a decade from 1925 onward. The major publication emerging from this fieldwork, a monograph titled *Behind Mud Walls*, is now widely regarded as a benchmark for the village studies that emerged thereafter. In the later decades, however, Karimpur's status as an exemplar of 'the little community' was usurped by scholarship produced within the developing area studies paradigm. George interprets the representation of 'Karimpur' as a moment of transition from a framework of missionary ethnography

to Cold War-era Area Studies. Even as the Wisers charted a different trajectory in the succeeding years through their establishment of the Indian Village Studies, the tales of 'Karimpur' were revived in the 1960s by the anthropologist Susan Wadley. By looking at the continuities as well as divergences in 'Karimpur' as the object of enquiry over a period of almost half a century, the article attempts to chronicle a facet of the early history of Area Studies.

The democratic and modernist messianism that, as we have seen, characterized already early twentieth initiatives launched by American missionaries, continued to shape purportedly secular US development projects implemented in India after the country had become independent in 1947. This is marvelously illustrated in Prakash Kumar's chapter on *the Development of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University.* Postcolonial India's tryst with higher education came in the shape of Radhakrishnan Commission Report of 1949, that proffered setting up a network of "rural universities" in India. The commission spoke of the ills of political democracy and liberal regime that might encumber these universities to erode villages in a wave of commodification, industrialization and urbanization. Rural universities were called upon to bring expertise that would not estrange rural people from village life but rather would be bound to rural India's "great traditions." After all, "[n]o man who is cut off from that tradition becomes a good farmer," the commission said. A decade later, the USAID became involved in the establishment of a network of twelve state agricultural universities in India between 1960 and 1971. The advocacy for a technocratic, productivist "land grant" vision in India through these institutions marked a different stage in the evolution of pedagogy, science, and expertise in India's extended postcolonial moment. The questions of freedom and democracy remained pertinent in a new climate of meritocracy as India embarked on a path of agricultural development through the green revolution. These institutions were embedded in a new context of youth culture and politics. The reproduction of caste-based hierarchies in an expanding agrarian economy, youth migration out of agriculture due to aspirational reasons, and the engagement of social groups and epistemic communities with agrarian technologies to both cement and question existing identity was implicated in possibilities of democratic transformation. In a broader sense, Prakash's chapter thus sheds new light on the entanglement of Americanist technocratic visions with democratic possibilities in postcolonial India before 1971.

The third section and the book close with Nicole Sackley's pioneering exploration of *Women's Work and the Indo-American Roots of the Global Handicraft Trade.* Scholarship on development in Nehru's India, and US participation in these projects, has focused largely on agriculture and the emergence of the Green Revolution, population control, or on various schemes for "village uplift." Nehruvian-era interest in "traditional" handicrafts has been largely ignored, positioned either as a concession

to Gandhian cottage industry or as an effort to delineate the ancient roots of the new nation. Yet, handicrafts were also an important realm of employment and seen as valuable export for India in the 1950s and early 1960s. Unlike agriculture, handicraft development offered a realm where women actors could carve out significant niches for themselves. Sackley's essay focuses on the Indo-American alliances that built the Central Cottage Industries Emporium in New Delhi, a centre of a global handicraft trade. The Central Cottage Industries Emporium brought together the socialist- and Gandhian-inspired Indian Cooperative Union, Rockefeller and Ford philanthropy, the Government of India, the Museum of Modern Art, diplomatic culture, and New York department stores. At the heart of the story are women as development agents, both well-known figures such as Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Fori Nehru, and Pupul Jayakar, but also a lesser-known cast of American diplomatic wives, Indian women salespeople and traveling agents, and female artisans. Exploring these connections, Sackley's essay provides a new perspective on the role of women in development, Gandhians in Indo-US encounters, and handicrafts in crossing boundaries of art, commercial culture, and economic development.

Taken together, the eleven studies assembled in this volume provide fascinating new insights into the long trajectories and multifaceted character of Indo-American interactions. They will hopefully stimulate more research in this rewarding field of historical inquiry.

Notes

[1] Thanks are due to Sujeet George, for his efforts in organizing a workshop on Indo-US Entanglements at ETH Zurich in January 2020. It was out of that memorable event that most contributions to this edited volume have grown. We also thank Amanda Katz for preparing the index and Denise Lim for helping to compile the bibliography.

[2] It is revealing that the Berkeley City Council in California recently renamed a street after Kala Bagai, a female South Asian immigrant, not on account of her lifetime achievements, but because "the racism she experienced at the hands of Berkeley homeowners is a history all residents should know". https://scroll.in/global/973377/a-century-after-she-was-pushed-out-of-her-home-by-racists-a-us-city-is-honouring-mother-india, accessed 27 February 2021.

[3] Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 42.

[4] Paul Kramer, "Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World," *The American Historical Review* 116, no. 5 (December 2011), 1348–91.

[5] Kris Manjapra, "Transnational Approaches to the Study of Global History: A view from the Study of German-Indian Entanglement," *German History* 32, no. 2 (2014), 288; Indrani Chatterjee, "Connected Histories and the Dream of Decolonial History," *South Asia* 41, no. 1 (2018), 69–86. Also see C. A. Bayly et al., "On Transnational History," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 2006), 1441–1464; Ian Tyrrell, "Reflections on the Transnational Turn in United States History: Theory and Practice," *Journal of Global History* 4, no. 3 (2009), 453–74.

[6] For typical examples see Meenakshi Ahamed, *A Matter Of Trust : India-US Relations from Truman to Trump* (New Noida: HarperCollins India, 2022); Thomas William Shillam, "Shattering the 'looking-glass world': the Congress for Cultural Freedom in South Asia, 1951–55," *Cold War History* 20, no. 4 (2020), 441–59; Atul Bhardwaj, *India-America Relations 1942–62: Rooted in the International Order* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019); Pallavi Raghavan, "Journeys of Discovery: The State Visits of Jawaharlal Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan to the United States", in Manu Bhagavan (ed), *India and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 19–35; David C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, *2018);* Rudra Chaudhuri, *Forged in Crisis*: *India and the United States since 1947* (Noida: HarperCollins India, 2014); Ashok Kapur et al. (eds), *India and the United States in a Changing World* (New Delhi etc.: Sage, 2002); Andrew J. Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: The United States and India, 1947–1964* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000); and Dennis Merrill, *Bread and the Ballot: the United States and India's Economic Development* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

[7] The only comprehensive recent account of Indo US-interactions that covers a longer historical period — predominantly, though not exclusively, from a diplomatic history perspective — is Srinath Raghavan, *Fierce Enigmas: A History of the United States in South Asia* (New York: Basic Books, 2018). Most of the few other existing studies taking a *longue durée* approach are either slightly outdated or of a rather uncritical nature. See, for instance, M.V. Kamath, *The United States and India, 1776–1996: the Bridge over the River Time* (New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1998); and R. K. Gupta, *The Great Encounter: A Study of Indo-American Literary and Cultural Relations* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1986).

[8] See, for instance, Petra Goedde, "US Mass Culture and Consumption in a Global Context," in David C. Engerman, Max Paul Friedman and Melani McAlister (eds) *America in the World, Volume IV, 1945 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 281–303; Ludovic Tournès, *Américanisation: une histoire mondiale, XVIII-XXI siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2020); Robert W. Rydell and Rob Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869–1922* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2005); and Susantah Goonatilake, "*Cultural Imperialism*: A Short History, Future, and a Postscript from the Present," in Bernd Hamm and Russell Smandych (eds), *Cultural Imperialism: Essays on the Political Economy of Cultural Domination* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 32–51.

[9] Anthony Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018). See also Kristin L. Hoganson and Jay Sexton (eds), *Crossing Empires: Taking U.S. History in Transimperial Terrain* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020).

[10] Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the Greater United States* (London: The Bodley Head, 2019).

[11] Rini Bhattacharya Mehta, "Screening/Meaning: Hollywood's Long Career in India," *Comparative American Studies An International Journal* 12, no. 1–2 (2014), 93–98; Nikhil Govil and Eric Hoyt, "Thieves of Bombay: United Artists, Colonial Copyright, and Film Piracy in the 1920s," *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies* 5, no. 1 (2014), 5–27; Babli Sinha, *Cinema, Transnationalism, and Colonial India: Entertaining the Raj* (London and New York, Routledge, 2013); Bradley Shope, *American Popular Music in Britain's Raj* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016) and Stéphane Dorin, "'*Swingin' India*: Circulations coloniales et postcoloniales du Jazz en Inde," *L'Homme* 202 (2012), 169–192.

[12] David Arnold, 'Globalization and Contingent Colonialism: Towards a transnational history of "British" India', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 2 (2015); Harald Fischer-Tiné, 'The YMCA and Low Modernist Development in South Asia (c. 1922–1957)', *Past & Present* 240, no. 1

(2018), 193–234; Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

13 Durba Ghosh, "Another Set of *Imperial Turns*?" *The American Historical Review* 117, no. 3, (2012), 772–793.

14 Harald Fischer-Tiné, "Marrying Global History with South Asian History: Potential and Limits of Global Microhistory in a Regional Inflection," *Comparativ* 29, no. 2 (2019), 52–77.

15 See, for instance, Michael J. Altman, *Heathen, Hindoo, Hindu: American Representations of India, 1721–1893* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Gwilym Beckerlegge, "The Early Spread of Vedanta Societies: An Example of 'Imported Localism'," *Numen* 51, no. 3 (2004), 296–320; Vijay Prashad, *The Karma of Brown Folk* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 11–45; Carl Jackson, *Vedanta for the West: The Ramakrishna Movement in the United States* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994); and Alan D. Hodder, "'Ex Oriente Lux': Thoreau's Ecstasies and the Hindu Texts," *Harvard Theological Review* 86, no. 4 (1993), 430–438. For a somewhat more popular account see also Philip Goldberg, *American Veda: From Emerson and the Beatles to Yoga and Meditation—How Indian Spirituality Changed the West* (New York: Harmony Books, 2010).

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18 Anupama Arora and Rajender Kaur, *India in the American Imaginary, 1780s–1880s* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

19 Babli Sinha, "Dissensus, education and Lala Lajpat Rai's encounter with W.E.B. Du Bois," *South Asian History and Culture* 6, no. 4 (2015), 463–476; Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Gerald Horne, *The End of Empires: African Americans and India* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), Penny von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). For a systematic comparison on the Caste and Race questions see Gyanendra Pandey, *A History of Prejudice: Race, Caste and Difference in India and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

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[23] Philipp Deslippe, "The *Swami Circuit*: Mapping the Terrain of Early American Yoga." *Journal of Yoga Studies* 1 (2018), 5–44; Philipp Deslippe, "The Hindu in Hoodoo: Fake Yogis, Pseudo-Swamis, and the Manufacture of African American Folk Magic," *Amerasia* 40, no. 1 (2014), 34–56; Stephen Prothero, "Mother India's Scandalous Swamis," in Colleen McDannell (ed), *Religions of the United States in Practice: Volume Two* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 418–432; and Prashad, *Karma of Brown Folk*, 36–51.

[24] Marouf Hasian Jr. and Anne Bialowas, "Gendered Nationalism, the Colonial Narrative, and the Rhetorical Significance of the *Mother India* Controversy," *Communication Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (2009), 469–486; Anupama Arora, "'Neighborhood Assets' or 'Neighborhood Nuisances?' National Anxieties in Katherine Mayo's 'Mother India'," *Women's Studies* 37, no. 2 (2008), 131–155; Sinha, *Specters of Mother India;* Paul Teed, "Race against Memory: Katherine Mayo, Jabez Sutherland, and Indian Independence," *American Studies* 44, no. 1–2 (2003), 35–57.

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[27] A helpful collection of essays is Vivek Bald et al. (eds), *The Sun Never Sets: South Asian Migrants in an Age of U.S. Power* (New York: New York University Press, 2013). Fascinating individual studies include Vivek Bald, *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); Dinyar Patel, "'One Man Lobby'? Propaganda Nationalism in the Diaspora, and the India League of America during the Second World War," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 49, no. 6 (2021), 1110–40; Harold A. Gould, *Sikhs Swamis and Spies: The India Lobby in the United States, 1900–1946* (New Delhi etc.: Sage, 2006); and Nile Green, *Terrains of Exchange. Religious Economies of Global Islam* (London: Hurst, 2014), 207–34; For a more exhaustive review of the copious diaspora literature see Sandhya Shukla, "South Asian Migration to the United States," in: Joya Chatterji and David Washbrook (eds), *Routledge Handbook of the South Asian Diaspora* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2013), 166–79.

[28] Suchintan Das, "In an Alien City: American Soldiers in Wartime Calcutta (1942–1946)," *Global Histories* 7, no. 1 (2021), 140–67; and Yasmin Khan, "Sex in an Imperial War Zone: Transnational Encounters in Second World War India," *History Workshop Journal* 73, no. 1 (2012), 240–58.

[29] Nicole Sackley, "The Village as Cold War Site: Experts, Development, and the History of Rural Reconstruction," *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 3 (2011), 481–504; David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010); Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). For American developmentalist engagement in India see, amongst others, Prakash Kumar, "'Modernization' and Agrarian Development in India, 1912–52," *Journal of Asian Studies* 79, no. 3 (2020), 633–58; Jack Loveridge, "Between Hunger and Growth: Pursuing Rural Development in Partition's Aftermath, 1947–1957," *Contemporary South Asia* 25, no. 1 (2017), 56–69; Corinna R. Unger, *Entwicklungspfade in Indien: Eine Internationale Geschichte, 1947–1980* (Göttingen, Wallstein: 2015), 47–74; Benjamin Siegel, "'Fantastic Quantities of Food Grains': Cold War Visions and Agrarian Fantasies in Independent India," in Leslie James and Elisabeth Leake (eds), *Negotiating Independence: New Directions in the History of Decolonization and the Cold War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 21–42; and Nicole Sackley, "Village Models: *Etawah*, India, and the Making and Remaking of Development in the Early Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 4 (2013), 749–778.

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32 Nicholas Dirks, *Autobiography of an Archive: A scholar's passage to India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 265–290.

33 Harald Fischer-Tiné, "Third-Stream Orientalism: J. N. Farquhar, the Indian YMCA's Literature Department, and the Representation of South Asian Cultures and Religions (ca. 1910–1940)", *Journal of Asian Studies* 79, no. 3 (2020), 659–83; and Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad*. The phrase 'bid for world-knowledge' alludes to Anne Kwaschik, *Der Griff nach dem Weltwissen: Zur Genealogie von* Area Studies *im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2018).

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PART I

Religion and Culture

CHAPTER 1

A Gold Rush, Steamships, and Blackface: The New York Serenaders in San Francisco and India, early-1850s

Bradley Shope

Abstract

Between 1851 and 1853, the American blackface troupe New York Serenaders toured cities and towns across India, performing both minstrel songs and English traditional music. English-speaking audiences considered the group to be authentic curators of contemporary United States performance culture. Steamships facilitated their travel within the subcontinent and made available to the group shipments of the most up-to-date printed music of minstrel songs from the U.S., which was important to their reputation as leading-edge performers. The group traveled from the Atlantic seaboard of the United States to San Francisco during the gold rush era in 1849, but they left California soon after to pursue performance opportunities at destinations in the Pacific, and eventually in India. This chapter focuses on the technological, cultural, and commercial circumstances that made possible their travel from San Francisco to India. It more specifically examines the impact of racism unique to blackface minstrelsy in India, the availability of printed music on the subcontinent, the expansion of steamship transportation within and beyond the British empire, and the role of San Francisco as a blossoming Pacific port powerhouse. It ultimately suggests that the confluence of these determinants enabled an organized group of American blackface musicians to travel to India and successfully perform popular music from the U.S.

Keywords: steamships, blackface, minstrelsy, gold rush, printed music, popular music

The population of San Francisco increased dramatically within a few months of the discovery of gold in California in 1848. By 1849, improved transportation networks moved people, cargo, and news between the city and international destinations with ever-increasing efficiency and frequency, including to countries in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. The New York Serenaders, a six-person American blackface minstrel troupe, initially led by Bill White on violin, were part of the flood of entertainers that travelled to San Francisco in 1849.[1] Shortly after their arrival, they took advantage of the large number of ships departing the city to Pacific ports, seeking opportunities in Hawaii, Australia, and eventually India. They were among the first

organized American blackface minstrel troupes to tour the Indian subcontinent, travelling to Bombay (modern Mumbai), Calcutta (modern Kolkata), and other small cities and towns between 1851 and 1853.[2] They performed minstrel songs, parodies, stump speeches, and skits in racist blackface, but they also performed British folk and traditional songs and dances, including clog dancing, a style of step-dance characterized by the use of inflexible wooden-soled shoes.

This chapter explores the confluence of technological, cultural, and commercial circumstances that made possible the New York Serenaders' tour of India in the early 1850s. It focuses on four areas: (1) the expansion of steamship transportation within and beyond the British Empire, (2) the character and scope of racist elements inherent in blackface minstrelsy in India, (3) the California gold rush, and (4) the availability of printed music in India via transnational steamship networks. Historians Charles Bright and Michael Geyer suggest that occasional confluences of interweaving historical conditions—or "entanglements" as they term it—can become "thick," achieving a threshold that "reverberat[es] throughout the world."[3] The above four thematic areas converged and impacted commercial and musical activities in India and the Pacific world, creating a "thicker" moment that for the first time enabled an organized group of American blackface musicians to travel to India and perform American popular music. Much of this chapter addresses music mobility made possible by steamships, which in the early to middle 1800s facilitated unprecedented flows of passengers and ideas between India and distant locations, and significantly impacted communication and commercial activity throughout the empire and beyond.[4] Steamships created novel connections between people and places, and supported a new mobility in music commerce between port cities in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

The New York Serenaders were popular in India in part because the racism associated with blackface minstrelsy was uniquely relevant to audiences there. Subaltern scholar Clare Anderson suggests that categories of race at this time in the British empire were fluid, culturally contingent against broader politics of difference, and "not simply grounded in 'birth', 'blood', or 'colour'."[5] Writing about race and the development of blackface minstrels in the British empire at the time, Richard Waterhouse proposes that audiences conflated "West Indian and African Negroes [sic] as well as the Indians into one inclusive category of inferiority …[t]hey were all savage, infantile and incompetent."[6] Colonialism is in many respects a relationship of domination and difference, or of domination and subordination, and the social construction of race—sometimes fluid and contingent, and sometimes rigid and essentialized—constituted a key marker of social position.[7] Using blackface performance practice as a single frame of analysis, this chapter proposes, in part, that audiences conflated divergent categories of race into an essentialized classification—namely, black or African American—and ascribed to that very

classification a subordinate status. In the blackface minstrel performances of the New York Serenaders in India, less-provocative expressions of racial ordering could be maintained through performative subjugation of African Americans rather than any of the racialized populations specific to the subcontinent at the time. In this manner, the New York Serenaders' performances were more innocuous for public consumption. Essentially, audiences projected their class and racial awarenesses and apprehensions onto the American system of slavery and racial positioning.[8]

The New York Serenaders chose to travel across the Pacific and into the Indian Ocean from San Francisco in part because the British empire was an arena of expansion and profit. Audiences in India viewed the group as authentic curators of American blackface minstrelsy, and as such they became popular among British, European and other English-speaking audiences (including Indians). The term "entanglement" in this volume suggests that people and places are not only connected, but are also sometimes frequently disconnected and reconnected.[9] The New York Serenaders left San Francisco after one of their instrumentalists, Arthur Reynolds, was murdered in the Bella Union, a popular saloon and performance venue. They arrived in San Francisco seeking riches and participation in the growing performance industry, but quickly left for Hawaii when violence struck, as I will discuss later. New York Serenaders' tour of India (a few short months after their travel to Hawaii) represented a "thicker" moment for blackface minstrelsy because the lawlessness of San Francisco pushed the group away from the city, the racial undercurrents that made popular blackface performances in India pulled them to the subcontinent, and the increasing efficiency and safety of steamships made possible much of their travel and growth in popularity.

Historians of 1800s British imperialism often suggest that a wide variety of activities in the British empire impacted cultural and commercial mobilities and networks within the imperial framework.[10] These scholars conceptualize the British empire as a complex patchwork of interacting and dynamic agencies and locations, rather than as one homogenous center-down entity with a single overarching objective directed from London. The remarkable growth of San Francisco and the efficient movement of musicians and printed music across the Pacific region exemplify some of these interrelated, horizontal entanglements. A pattern emerged in the early-1850s that positioned San Francisco as a location of impact with other metropolises in the empire. It became enmeshed with established British imperial cultural trends and commercial enterprises, which was most clearly seen in Bombay and Calcutta, where the New York Serenaders often performed British traditional music as much as blackface minstrel songs. They learned many of these English songs while in India, made possible to some extent by the availability of printed music, and they became entangled in a music culture in these two cities that obliged them to perform songs outside the blackface canon.

Steamships

Historian Frank Broeze suggests that 1850 was the beginning of the "disappearance of the wooden sailing ship as the prime mover of intercontinental and regional trade, and its replacement by metal vessels, first iron and then steel, propelled by sail as well as steam."[11] From the 1830s through the late 1800s, Britain maintained significant technological and commercial advantage in steamship development and construction, largely because of a worldwide system of government mail subsidies that supported the transportation of commercial cargo of all sorts, including printed music and newspapers.[12] American maritime industry became more significant to this imperial transport network around 1849 with the growth of shipping activity from San Francisco. Jean Heffer, a historian of American imperialism in the Pacific, suggests that "[at] the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, all American ships trading with the Pacific left from, and returned to, Northeastern [United States] ports[,] … in San Francisco the Americans had acquired direct, if still limited, access to the Pacific—an advantage their European competitors could only envy."[13] With the discovery of gold, San Francisco began to partially alter this British-dominated Pacific and Indian Ocean maritime commerce.[14]

The early 1850s were the initial years of the large-scale impact of commercial steamship travel. Many scholars cite the 1860s as the critical period of impact, when a broader scope of steamships travelled farther, safer, and faster.[15] The expansiveness of global steamship travel routes matured and intensified significantly during this decade. The impact of steamers on the mobility of music between India and the U.S. in the early 1850s was subtler. No regular steamship activity existed between San Francisco and Hawaii or Australia in the early 1850s. In fact, the New York Serenaders travelled to and from these destinations on sailing ships. However, in 1849 the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in the United States opened the route between San Francisco and Panama,[16] as well as to ports in Latin America. Though it would be several years before a regular, timetabled system of steamers ran between North America and distant locations such as Australia, New Zealand, and India, the capacity of entertainers to travel in steamers from the Atlantic seaboard to San Francisco supported San Francisco's role as a major launching point to locations in the Pacific.[17] Additionally, while in India the group travelled via steamships,[18] which was a comparatively safe and efficient means of transportation,[19] and the most recent sheet music of blackface minstrel songs was available via established steamship commercial networks from Europe or England.

Steamships travelling to India carried news and information about San Francisco. In the months before the New York Serenaders arrived, English-language newspapers throughout the subcontinent closely followed developments in San Francisco and its growing potential as a Pacific port. The *Friend of India and*

Statesman in Calcutta published regular articles that expressed anxiety about the growth of California and its potential to alter commerce in the Pacific. An article on August 26, 1852 stated with apprehension that, "[t]he giant strides of America have astounded the world, and in their greatness baffled all calculation … with our eyes we see them grasping at the trade of the world." Another anonymous article in the *Bombay Gazette* on October 30, 1850 even suggested that Americans had become the "lords of the Pacific":

> Accustomed as our Transatlantic cousins are to expect everything and to claim everything, they little thought five years ago that they would soon occupy the western coast [of the United States], be the lords of the pacific, and possess a city there whose sudden rise surpasses even the imperial creations of Constantinople and Alexandria. They are quite beside themselves with wonderment and joy."[20]

This same article suggests that the many "robberies and assassinations" in the city require "a rule which very much resembles the Saxon institutions of tythings and hundreds, and which alone seems capable of reducing to order any utterly heterogeneous mass of men."[21] Articles in the *Bombay Gazette* frequently referenced the lawlessness of San Francisco, so the readership was aware of both its historic growth and its disorder and, in this instance, readers were met with suggestions that British approaches to law and regulation might assist with the disorder.

The front page of the *Bombay Gazette* in this same issue printed a large advertisement for a performance of the Ethiopian Serenaders, a blackface group from England touring India at the time. The advertisement listed their song repertoire in detail, the price of admission, and other particulars. Blackface minstrelsy had been popular in England from the middle 1840s (almost as early as in the United States) and by the late 1850s at least 50 minstrel troupes were performing in Britain, with a dozen or so in London.[22] A significant number of American performers stayed in England and started English-based troupes.[23] By the time the New York Serenaders arrived on the subcontinent in 1851, both the growth of San Francisco and blackface performances in India were prominently positioned in the English-language news.

Articles about San Francisco in the India-based *Bombay Gazette* were frequently printed in a section titled "European Extracts," which reproduced content from a variety of newspapers in Europe and England.[24] Steamship historian Peter Putnis suggests that regularly timetabled steamship mail services enabled the steady circulation of news and information to cities within the British empire and elsewhere in the English-speaking world.[25] Steamships traveling across the globe carried newspapers, dispatches, and other communication matter to major port cities. According to Putnis, this global communication network was primarily a matter of the international circulation (via steamers) of content from local newspapers that

were reprinted in special editions that provided news and information services aimed at promoting the interests of colonial communities throughout the British Empire and elsewhere. Urban centers with large ports became repositories of files of papers garnered from throughout the world. Roland Wenzlhuemer has recently emphasized that steamships not only brought their endpoints in contact, they also interjected themselves as mediators in the flow of information, gaining a "strong bearing on that which [was] connected."[26] The ships themselves mediated, transformed and modified meanings attributed to the communication and merchandise they carried. Because the information was transported on an advanced, speedy technology, the onboard news (and cargo) sometimes garnered special attention. This value-added discernment impacted marketing and advertising strategies for cargo, especially for printed music, as discussed below.

Another article in the *Bombay Gazette* earlier that year referenced the availability of blackface minstrelsy in San Francisco:

> There are two or three sets of Ethiopian serenaders in the city, who nightly lament the absence of Miss Neal, mourn over the fate of Rosa Lee, inform the public that they have just arrived from Alabama, or request in the most earnest manner, to be carried by to Old Virginny."[27]

Even though these dispatches came from the west coast of the United States, they possibly travelled from San Francisco to the east coast of the U.S., and from there to England or Europe, then via mail steamers to Alexandria, Egypt, and onward via steamship from Suez to India, or alternatively from England to India around the Cape of Good Hope, at least in the early 1850s.[28]

Equally significant to San Francisco's dynamic growth was widespread enthusiasm surrounding the arrival of steamship service. The *California* was possibly the first steamer to arrive in San Francisco carrying gold-seekers in early 1849.[29] The *Alta California*, one of the earliest San Francisco newspapers, ran an article titled "LOOK OUT FOR THE STEAMER!" in anticipation of the arrival of this ship:

> The knowing ones say we may daily look for the first steamer. If this be so, ought not our citizens to take some steps to manifest their joy at an occasion so full of interest to this Port? We most strenuously recommend the holding of a public meeting, the appointment of a committee of arrangements, and the raising of a fund for burning of powder and spermaceti on the occasion. It is an event so fraught with future hopes of advantage, that our memories will almost deserve execration if we do not celebrate the event in proper style and spirit. It is an epoch that deserves to be brought into bold relief, and he who takes an active part in getting up a judicious observance of the occasion, will, ten years hence, think it the proudest event of his life.[30]

Enthusiasm associated with San Francisco's dramatically blossoming maritime industry compelled many musicians to not only travel to the city, but to also view it as an increasingly sophisticated port from which they could travel across the Pacific to various Asian destinations.

New York Serenaders and San Francisco

The rapid development of San Francisco created new industries, generated interest in musical entertainment among the large numbers of people arriving in the city, increased the number of entertainment venues, and expedited its role as a major transportation hub. It was a small town of about 500 in early 1848, but by 1851 it had grown to 30,000 or more people, with a variety of entertainment venues and performance groups, including an opera company.[31] The transcontinental telegraph was not available in San Francisco until 1861, the regular overland mail by pony express was not available until 1860, and the transcontinental railroad did not connect the east and west coasts of the United States until 1869.[32] Before the semi-monthly steamer service of the Panama Mail Steamship Company between San Francisco and Panama in 1849, news arriving in California from the eastern United States was often six months old.[33] Even after the launch of this steamship mail service, news from the Atlantic seaboard was often a month old.[34] Information from outside California in the early years of the gold rush was choppy and dated. The passenger ship service to San Francisco from Panama, part of the primary route from the eastern U.S. from 1848–1851, was tumultuous, with service cost-prohibitive for many potential travelers.[35] By 1851, we start to see regular, large-scale service with the launch of the steamship *Golden Gate*. Kemble claims that this steamer started a new era of reliable timetabled travel: "[t]his was the first steamer actually built for the transportation of large numbers of passengers between Panama and San Francisco, and she inaugurated a period of fair stability."[36] In spite of such communication and transportation complexities, by the time New York Serenaders arrived in 1849, the city was awash with money, large numbers of people were motivated to pay hearty sums to make the trip to the city, and maritime transportation networks to and from the city were rapidly developing.[37]

New York Serenaders were among the first minstrel groups to regularly perform in San Francisco at the dawn of the gold rush era in the late 1840s.[38] When they arrived in San Francisco in 1849, competition among performance groups quickly increased, the challenges of lawlessness in the city intensified, and direct travel to Pacific locations such as Hawaii or Australia became more frequent and practical for musicians. In early 1850 the New York Serenaders travelled to

Hawaii via sail, arriving in January that year.[39] They returned to California to perform in Sacramento beginning in June,[40] and then San Francisco beginning in August.[41] They travelled to Australia in February 1851 for a tour that lasted from March through the end of the year.[42] The fact that they travelled to Hawaii in early 1850, then back to California, then to Australia in just a little over a year is testament to the potentials of travel via sail to locations in the Pacific from San Francisco.

Newly built performance venues in San Francisco catered to a broad scope of audience members of all financial means, and musicians travelled to the city to meet this growing audience demand, but at the same time the city pushed people away because of its profound challenges, at least in the early 1850s. In discussing the movement of blackface minstrel musicians to Hawaii in the early 1850s, minstrel historian T. Allston Brown suggests that Hawaii was "full of Californians avoiding the hardships of California incidental to the hard times of 1849."[43] Opportunities in San Francisco attracted entertainers to the city, and its foreboding pushed entertainers away, including westward to Hawaii, Australia, and beyond.

A key reason that the New York Serenaders left San Francisco for Hawaii in the early 1850s was the murder of their bones (a rhythmic instrument) musician Arthur Reynolds in a gambling/theatre house, the Bella Union. According to the newspaper *Alta California*, Reynolds was sleeping in a back room after a performance at the venue. At 4 am, the perpetrator Reuben Withers, a local businessman who had recently arrived from New York, asked him to leave the establishment, and when Reynolds refused, Withers pointed a pistol at his chest. Though witness accounts vary, a struggle ensued, Reynolds struck Withers twice with a chair, and while Reynolds was later holding Withers from behind, Withers pulled a knife and violently stabbed Reynolds' throat.[44] Violinist Bill White, leader of the New York Serenaders at the time, witnessed the murder. The *Daily Alta California* newspaper wrote that "Mr. White testified that when the deceased took hold of Mr. Withers, he was endeavoring to pacify him; told him to be quiet and that he was his friend."[45] Further complicating matters, Withers escaped immediate arrest, and a $3000 bounty was placed for his return to San Francisco.[46] Rumors of his whereabouts circulated San Francisco, and some accounts suggest he travelled to Acapulco via steamer, where other passengers on the ship recognized him and alerted the authorities.

Dramatic transgressions in San Francisco were common at the time.[47] Withers was arrested a few months later in Mazatlan, Mexico, sent back to San Francisco, and acquitted of the crimes because witnesses could not be secured and early gold rush legal ambiguities associated with his capture and re-patriation complicated his prosecution.[48] The murder and the subsequent departure of the New York

Serenaders from San Francisco was emblematic of the push and pull of San Francisco. Reynold's unjustified and untimely death, and the escape Mr. Withers to Mexico, were likely a key reason the group left San Francisco for Hawaii shortly after the incident. The large number of ships leaving for Pacific ports facilitated their quick departure.

The Bella Union was considered a more refined saloon. Similar establishments in San Francisco were sometimes called "melodeons" (after the portable reed organ that could sometimes substitute for an orchestra). According to George Martin, the Bella Union and other melodeons offered a "better grade of liquor and barmaids, spittoons for the tobacco-chewers, and private rooms for gambling" than many saloons in the city.[49] The performance area was typically accessed through the barroom and, according to Martin, "though the audience was perhaps less coarse in language, dress, and behavior, it was still almost exclusively male, still only marginally interested in the show."[50] The New York Serenaders were considered fit for these upper-end saloons equipped with a stage, and the sheer scope of advertisements for their performances in San Francisco and Sacramento suggests they did not have trouble finding work in some of these higher-end saloons. Yet these establishments were rowdy, and performances were only one type of entertainment among a broad scope of diversions such as gambling.

The movement of musicians around the world is both a matter of people seeking to perform elsewhere and people who want to leave somewhere. Andrew Jones has recently suggested that all performance circuits have various push-and-pull factors that compel performers to travel to and from international locations.[51] According to Jones, emergent technologies—in our case, steamships—function not only to enable but also to delimit or prevent the flow of music and musicians.[52] New technologies can render music more portable and accessible, scale-up musical networks, and according to Jones "bring together national, cross-regional, or even global communities of listeners."[53] The dramatic growth of San Francisco and the economic and transportation pathways that it facilitated compelled people to come to its shores, and when people wanted to leave—as was the case with New York Serenaders when their bones player was murdered—its newly created or reconfigured transport routes facilitated movement outwards towards the Pacific, and eventually India. Further, because of the efficient international circulation of news and cargo via steamers, interested audiences in India had access to printed music of minstrel songs and information about San Francisco even before the New York Serenaders landed on the subcontinent. When they arrived in late 1851, audiences wanted to hear their music and placed value on their background performing in California, especially San Francisco.

The Pull of India

Reviews of the New York Serenaders' performances in Bombay and Calcutta suggest that they were enthusiastically received, and that interested audiences wanted to hear the most recent minstrel songs. Even before their arrival, newspapers reprinted reviews of their earlier performances in Australia, which generated excitement about their upcoming tour. This strategy of reprinting reviews of their performances from international locations outside of India was common. A review of a performance in Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land (modern Tasmania) in the *Courier* on November 15, 1851 was reprinted in the *Bombay Gazette* in July 21, 1852 before their arrival in Bombay from Calcutta, and was upbeat: "As anticipated, the Theatre was crowded, and a spirit of enthusiasm, that never once flagged, pervaded the whole house form the very commencement of the performances … We spoke of the enthusiasm of the audience—occasionally bursting beyond all bounds[.]"[54] Most of their reviews in India were similarly positive, and the choice to reprint a review from Australia in the *Bombay Gazette* was a strategy at marketing the international scope of the group.[55]

Minstrelsy parodied African American life and culture through music, dance, and theatre. White performers blackened the face with burnt cork. Performers included songs that carried racist lyrics and skits that parodied African Americans, or slave culture more generally. Tayyab Mahmud suggests that British attitudes of racial difference during the colonial period implied that, "Europe, being the subject of History, had the right, nay the duty to govern other races, to impregnate them with reason, progress and the rule of law."[56] In India, accentuating the rule of racial difference included legally sanctioned sites of segregation such as vagrancy laws that called for the deportation of whites whose deviant behavior undermined the mystiques of the race, Contagious Disease Acts that contained inter-racial sexual relations, and so on.[57] While England enacted discriminatory policies that recognized a range of racial distinctions, blackface minstrelsy in India at this time openly directed racism specifically towards African Americans. It was a racialized space of commodity production that circumvented direct prejudice towards most of the myriad categories of race and class found on the subcontinent. Prevailing imperial ideologies at the time that sought to eventually level Indian subjects to a higher plane in the social order made nonviable the possibility of ongoing, performative subjugation of Indians, Eurasians, and others inside and outside the broad classification of "European," at least during this short period. The racism of blackface minstrels worked well in this racial climate, and it is one reason they were popular among English-speaking audiences of many backgrounds.

An article printed in the *Bombay Gazette* on July 31, 1852 references the strategy of recognizing, through performances of the New York Serenaders, the potential of "less favoured" races to achieve, under the proper circumstances, a higher status or

to be "hailed" with the appropriate recognition of social position. According to the article, their performances suggest the need to promote the standing of individuals of African descent to a more favorable level:

> May it not be said that [the New York Serenaders] and similar Ethiopian companies, by presenting the world with the simple, but affecting, picture of the joys and woes of unsophisticated "Nigger [sic]," society, are, unconsciously, extending a livelier sympathy for a cruelly depressed race, and dissipating narrow-minded prejudices against a less favoured portion of the human family? If this be so, they must be hailed, as they never before were hailed—as engaged in a noble mission, the ends of which will better be served by those who work in ignorance of the results to which their labours are contributing.[58]

According to this article, the New York Serenaders, though composed of white performers, were symbolic of the potential for individuals of African descent to achieve certain civilizing capacities.[59] This framework suggests that blackface performances had the potential to compel audiences to consider that the racially disenfranchised should obtain a more equitable future, and that a racial re-ordering might be warranted.

Richard Waterhouse has found that American minstrel performers in England during this time emphasized a vernacular considered particular to slaves in the United States, which was an important draw in India.[60] These references to slavery granted audiences real and imagined cosmopolitan access to the culture of the United States. Advertisements in local English-language newspapers often emphasized that the music represented certain rare or exotic elements unique to its American character. An article in the *Bombay Gazette* on July 8, 1852 suggested that, "The true American 'Negro Character' will be represented in their Entertainments, and nothing will be omitted to render their performances *'recherche*,' and worthy of attention of all Lover of Music." Minstrels held a *"recherche"* or exotic quality for audiences, but they also concurrently represented the culture of the United States more generally. An announcement of their arrival in Calcutta in the *Friend of India and Statesman* asserts that, "Americans have accepted the strange music of these bands as national."[61] It was strange and exotic, but also uniquely American, which—correct or incorrect—played into its value.

As an example of the use of racist elements in their song repertoire, consider one of their more frequently performed songs, *Commence You Darkies* [sic] *All.* This piece suggests that black (or blackface) musicians performing in the minstrel idiom have a special ability to generate enthusiasm and excitement for their performances:

> White folks, I am goin' to sing
> A song dat am quite new,

Ob myself an' banjo-string,
An' you, an'you, an' you!
Oh, Sam, don't laugh, I say,
Our strings will keep in tune,
Just listen to de banjo play
For de white folks 'round de room!
(Chorus)
Den commence you darkies all,
As loud as you can bawl!
Commence you darkies all tonight.

Touch light de banjo-string,
An' rattle de ole jaw-bone,
Oh, merrily sound de tambourine,
An' make de fiddle hum;
An' make de fiddle hum, old dad;
De way dem bones will shake,
Am a caution to all living niggs,
An' a deff to rattlesnakes...[62]

The lyrics were written in a manufactured vernacular, subjugating the "darkie" musicians to a distinct status, and suggesting that the performers carry an innate musical capacity to incite unusual excitement among the "white" audience.

The year before the New York Serenaders arrived in India, the Ethiopian Serenaders from England performed in Bombay and Calcutta. Their repertoire included a broad scope of minstrel songs and, as was the case with the New York Serenaders, performance reviews often emphasized the American origins of their comedic structure. One review in Bombay emphasized their use of a sense of humor similar to that which was seen in the U.S.:

> The great majority of those who went to hear and enjoy the entertainment, were only prepared for the 'Nigger Songs [sic]' and the accompaniment of the American Bones and other corresponding music;—their gratification must therefore have been much enhanced, when they found each song introduced by a dialogue spiced with witticisms and redolent of conundrums of the latest Yankee make and fashion.[63]

Attention to the American origins of blackface minstrelsy was not unique to the performances of the New York Serenaders, and expectations of authenticity were a component of the popularity of the Ethiopian Serenaders, as well as other minstrel groups that played in India throughout the nineteenth century.

While in Bombay and Calcutta, the New York Serenaders often performed British traditional music, including traditional British and European operas, as well as original pieces set to lyrics from British writers and poets, often arranged by J. P. Nash, the group's guitar player.[64] This segment of their show was called the "white face" section, and often constituted about half of the total songs they performed. The repertoire was romantic and melancholic. One of the pieces frequently performed in this section was an arrangement of *The Child's First Grief*, a poem by English poet Felicia Hemans (1793–1835). It imagines a child coping with the death of a brother. The poem addresses the child's lack of motivation to play in the absence of the deceased sibling. Using first-person from the child's perspective, it dramatically foregrounds the child's attempt to understand where the brother has gone, and why he cannot be brought back.[65] Another song often performed in this section was a musical arrangement of the poem *My Soul Is Dark* by British poet Lord Byron. As the title suggests, it deals with a struggle to escape sorrow and sadness, and highlights the capacity of music to act as a cathartic release.[66] Their choice to perform a musical arrangement of one of the great English poets was a conscious effort to promote the fashionable arts of England.

Minstrel shows in the United States in the early 1850s similarly borrowed from songs outside the minstrel canon and sometimes focused on melancholic sentimentalities, but they were typically comedic in nature, whether musically or dramatically.[67] An overview of the songs performed in the "white face" section of performances in India suggests that the New York Serenaders seemed to steer from the musical or dramatic characteristics commonly associated with blackface minstrels. This section was essentially designed to showcase British music and literature. The serious, romantic themes contrasted the blackface sections, and offered British audiences a chance to experience a nostalgic slice of home. In his research on British cultural life in Calcutta, P. J. Marshall suggests that British residents in India were frequently concerned with "sustaining British cultural life for themselves."[68] In fact, the 1850 census of Calcutta suggests that only 7534 "Europeans" lived in the city,[69] so audiences embraced the rare opportunity to experience live performances of British music and poetry. The New York Serenaders catered to this demand.

Claire Anderson suggests that the 1850 Calcutta census included "sailors, paupers and vagrants, sex workers, and even escaped convicts from Australia,"[70] as well as other so-called "poor whites" which variously included individuals and communities whose background contributed to ambiguity in definitions of whiteness at the time.[71] Categories of race were equivocal and fractured, with internal contradictions and ambiguous boundaries.[72] Satoshi Mizutani suggests that ancestry and certain somatic indicators such as skin color were necessary but not always adequate to be recognized as a commanding white agent of

British rule. Social status and level of education were important indicators and, according to Mizutani, "only those whites with sufficient degrees of attainment in these terms were deemed able to command the respect and awe of colonized subjects."[73] Further, multiple English-speaking communities, including mixed-race populations, lived in India in an expansive multilingual environment.[74] Not all of the 7534 "Europeans" were directly from Europe or England, and a larger number than that were English-speakers.

These expansive, often ambiguous categories of race prove challenging when attempting to identify the composition of audiences in the early 1850s. New York Serenaders typically performed in the European sections of town, including the Barrackpore cantonment adjacent to Calcutta,[75] and the Bombay Theatre in Bombay.[76] However, the group sometimes performed in middle-class Indian neighborhoods far from these areas, including at the Grant Road Theatre in Bombay (opened in 1846), which showcased English theater traditions during this time.[77] This theater was constructed primarily with the support of Indian (including Parsi) notables in Bombay and, according to Parsi theater scholar Kathryn Hansen, the venue catered to "both amateur British actors residing in the cantonment and civil lines and professional touring artists from England, Europe or America."[78] Hansen suggests that theater owners sought to attract a diverse variety of audiences, and its location on Grant Road situated it in a district separate from more upscale neighborhoods, which "suited theatre managers intent on attracting a larger, more heterogeneous audience" and broadened its class base of theatrical spectatorship.[79] Presumably, these diverse audiences attended the blackface minstrel shows, which at the time were in English.[80] Further, blackface minstrelsy included farcical material that was later a characteristic of Parsi theater traditions, which developed into a staged performance practice in 1853.[81] The Grant Road Theatre was a major venue in the growth of Parsi theater, so we can conclude that, at the very least, Parsis constituted at least a portion of the audience. If we accept that audiences included some assortment of so-called "poor whites" as well as middle-class Indians (including Parsis), then we can conclude that racialized meanings and stratifications inherent in blackface were constantly configured and reconfigured.

Printed Music

When addressing the support mechanisms behind large-scale performance circuits, Timothy Taylor has recently argued that "things—whether tangible or intangible—circulate because they have value for people."[82] He suggests that value facilitates circulation, and with circulation comes the exchange of time, work, and action. Drawing from the varied works of French sociologist Gabriel Tarde, Taylor

emphasizes that "things of value circulate whether or not they are considered to possess economic value."[83] While this may seem obvious at first, when we consider music, we see that aesthetics can contribute significantly to the attribution of value. As select audiences in India developed an appreciation for blackface minstrelsy, they sought to purchase printed music. Retail stores then sought to stock their shelves with the most recent selections, creating a commodity item that required global distribution and supply chain management.

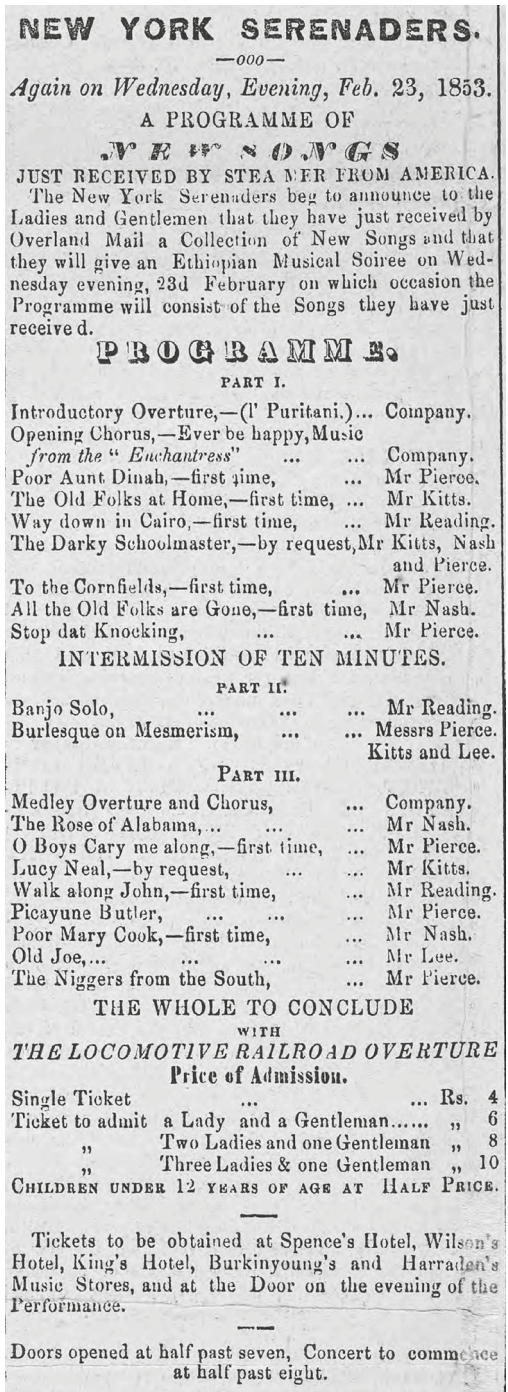
Ian Woodfield has shown that printed music from Europe and England was available in India from at least the late 1700s.[84] But with the advent of steamers, tight scheduling, and well-organized procedures for loading, unloading, and re-fueling, a sophisticated shipping process with strict timetables and continually improving ports streamlined the ordering and distribution process. Many of the first electric telegraph lines in India were constructed between shipping docks and city business districts, with the first of such lines established in Calcutta for public use in 1851.[85] Often, steamers arriving in ports received up-to-date freight orders from the city center via electrical telegraph.[86] Ships then communicated these inventory needs when arriving at their next port of call, essentially sharing information on freight orders throughout ports across the globe.[87] More efficient, reliable, and fast shipping patterns made possible quicker communication with music publishing businesses in London, San Francisco, Melbourne, and Sidney from which stores in India could order the most recent selections.

Ports became highly efficient in unloading and distributing cargo to warehouses and retail locations in the central business districts. For example, consider a shipment of printed music that arrived in Bombay on Friday, January 23, 1852 for the importer/exporter and retail store firm *Brown, Clough and Company*. On that day, the steamer *SS Achilles* arrived in Bombay with the printed music cargo, as was announced in the shipping news section of the *Bombay Gazette*. The next day (Saturday, January 24), the company printed an ad in the *Bombay Gazette* indicating that they had received the printed music, that they were sorting through it, and that they were expecting that it would be available for purchase soon. On Monday, January 26 they printed another advertisement stating that the music was available for purchase at their retail location, and they even listed some of the song selections. So essentially, the steamer arrived at Bombay on Friday, and the printed music was unloaded, unpacked, inventoried, and marketed for sale by Monday, merely three days later.

An overview of retail companies selling music at the time suggests a good amount of demand, and perhaps competition, when the New York Serenaders were touring India. *Robert Frith and Company*, *Crawford and Company*, and *Thacker and Company*, among others, actively sold printed music that year, but *Brown, Clough, and Company* focused on printed music as a niche market, at least for a while. Their

marketing strategy involved advertising that it was new, that it arrived on steamers, and that they could make the music available before their competitors, as is evidenced in the above example. Companies initiated a wide variety of advertising tactics at the time. For example, many businesses listed songs for sale that referenced popular global performers such as Jenny Lind, who was performing in the United States at the time under the management of the American entrepreneur P. T. Barnum.[88] Sellers also printed the date and the name of the steamship on which the sheet music arrived in India.[89] This marketing strategy was important for printed music because the newest music often had more value than older selections. Additionally, the steamers that these advertisements referenced, especially the *Achilles* and the *Ajdaha*, regularly carried passengers and cargo between India and Suez via the Gulf of Aden,[90] and consumers knew that cargo arriving on these crafts was recently shipped from England or Europe on two reliable and speedy vessels.

Steamers were advanced machines. Consumers wanted the music sent via these sleek new transport technologies because they were modern and new. For blackface minstrels, this quick arrival of minstrel music on steamers had advertising potential and helped popularize minstrels in India. For the New York Serenaders, advertisements of their performances often emphasized that the music they performed came directly from the U.S. As an example, consider an advertisement printed in the Calcutta *Morning Chronicle* on February 18, 1853 (see Figure 1).[91] The New York Serenaders were playing in Calcutta during this time after a successful run in Bombay. This ad not only gives us a sense of the wide variety of minstrel music they performed, it also teaches us the importance placed on the origins of the music in the United States, and the role of the steamer in creating value. The top of the ad indicates that the entire performance was a program of "New Songs … Just Received By Steamer from America." This point is well-emphasized a number of times, and the advertisement asserts that their performances "will consist of the Songs they have just received." The pieces performed for the first time in India are listed in the advertisement with the qualifier "first time" listed next to the title, and constitute 8 of the 21 pieces performed. These songs were also listed for sale in retail stores in Bombay, as well as in the U.K. several months later, including in Glasgow[92] and Greenock[93] in Scotland. However, it's questionable that the printed music came from the United States entirely via steamer. As mentioned earlier, steamship travel to India from North and South America was not active.[94] If the music came directly from the United States, it likely arrived via sailing ship from the Pacific Coast of North America, then by steamer from Australia. It's also possible that the music was shipped (via steamship or otherwise) from the Atlantic seaboard to England, then via steamships to India. Steamships had made the Atlantic crossing between the United States and Europe as early as 1819, and passenger liners travelled the Atlantic as early as 1837.[95]



NEW YORK SERENADERS.

—ooo—

Again on Wednesday, Evening, Feb. 23, 1853.

A PROGRAMME OF

NEW SONGS

JUST RECEIVED BY STEAMER FROM AMERICA.

The New York Serenaders beg to announce to the Ladies and Gentlemen that they have just received by Overland Mail a Collection of New Songs and that they will give an Ethiopian Musical Soiree on Wednesday evening, 23d February on which occasion the Programme will consist of the Songs they have just receive d.

PROGRAMME.

PART I.

Introductory Overture,—(l' Puritani.)... Company.
Opening Chorus,—Ever be happy, Music *from the "Enchantress"* ... ... Company.
Poor Aunt Dinah,—first time, ... Mr Pierce.
The Old Folks at Home,—first time, ... Mr Kitts.
Way down in Cairo,—first time, ... Mr Reading.
The Darky Schoolmaster,—by request, Mr Kitts, Nash and Pierce.
To the Cornfields,—first time, ... Mr Pierce.
All the Old Folks are Gone,—first time, Mr Nash.
Stop dat Knocking, ... Mr Pierce.

INTERMISSION OF TEN MINUTES.

PART II.

Banjo Solo, ... Mr Reading.
Burlesque on Mesmerism, ... Messrs Pierce. Kitts and Lee.

PART III.

Medley Overture and Chorus, ... Company.
The Rose of Alabama, ... Mr Nash.
O Boys Cary me along,—first time, ... Mr Pierce.
Lucy Neal,—by request, ... Mr Kitts.
Walk along John,—first time, ... Mr Reading.
Picayune Butler, ... Mr Pierce.
Poor Mary Cook,—first time, ... Mr Nash.
Old Joe, ... Mr Lee.
The Niggers from the South, ... Mr Pierce.

THE WHOLE TO CONCLUDE WITH

THE LOCOMOTIVE RAILROAD OVERTURE

Price of Admission.

Single Ticket ... ... Rs. 4
Ticket to admit a Lady and a Gentleman..... „ 6
„ Two Ladies and one Gentleman „ 8
„ Three Ladies & one Gentleman „ 10

CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE AT HALF PRICE.

Tickets to be obtained at Spence's Hotel, Wilson's Hotel, King's Hotel, Burkinyoung's and Harraden's Music Stores, and at the Door on the evening of the Performance.

Doors opened at half past seven, Concert to commence at half past eight.

Fig. 1.1 Advertisement in *The Morning Chronicle.*
Source: *The Morning Chronicle*, Calcutta, 21 February 1853.

Concluding Remarks

The sentiments, structures and commodities that enabled the movement of blackface minstrelsy from San Francisco to India—in our case gold, steamers, printed music, and racism—involved a set of conditions and connections that unfolded into remunerative types of economic exchange for the New York Serenaders, and ultimately contributed to a continuing sense of cultural continuity for British and European audiences. New patterns of globalized, interdependent commercial activities and knowledge systems emerged in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere that enhanced the movement of musicians and information across colonial and non-colonial spaces. The New York Serenaders, in sensing the potentials and possibilities in these interdependencies, engaged in the necessary patterns of entrepreneurship to successfully tour the subcontinent, including emphasizing their American origins and performing British songs outside the blackface tradition. Their achievements relied on social familiarity; British audiences viewed the whiteface components of minstrels as nostalgic representations of a slice of home, and the blackface elements as representative of the United States.

This chapter focuses on one key moment within a broader continuum of musical movements between India and the United States, and is not meant to be a comprehensive study of the New York Serenaders' tour, nor of blackface in India more generally. In fact, a broad scope of support structures facilitated the tour of the New York Serenaders in India that I do not discuss here, including a system of ticket agents created by travelling opera and theater companies.[96] Additionally, the 1860s witnessed a more expansive increase in the availability of blackface minstrelsy with the arrival of American minstrel performer Dave Carson.[97] He designed performances that parodied a broader scope of populations, including British and Bengalis, and he made use of an even more efficient globalized transportation network. My arguments about racism are not necessarily relevant to minstrelsy after the 1850s because we begin to see performers, including Carson, comically mocking British, American, European, and certain Indian populations. By specifically examining India in the early 1850s, we see a unique set of circumstances that represented the early stages of globalized patterns of information and technology dissemination that, in conjunction with developing commercial and transportation enterprises, brought American blackface performers to India.

Notes

1 Several contemporary newspaper articles suggest that they arrived in San Francisco in 1848. I found no concrete evidence of this claim, but it's possible that one or more members of the group may have travelled to the city to perform, or to explore the potential of performing in the city. The personnel of the group changed over time, but many of the core members remained through the end of their tour in India.

2 The New York Serenaders were not the first organized blackface minstrel group to tour India. The Ethiopian Serenaders from England travelled to India in 1850, about a year before the New York Serenaders, and other groups possibly performed even earlier. Musicians from the U.S. (and elsewhere) travelled to India before this time to perform early manifestations of blackface minstrelsy and minstrel songs. Additional research is needed to identify a timeline of early blackface performances in India, and to define the distinction between blackface minstrelsy and nonspecific variety shows that incorporated blackface components. English-language newspapers in the 1830s and 1840s in India occasionally referenced Jim Crow performances in India, which was a style of entertainment often considered a direct precursor to blackface minstrelsy. See, for example, *Englishman,* March 3, 1838 and April 23, 1838. For brief accounts of Jim Crow performances in Calcutta in the 1830s, see R. Bhattacharya, "Promiscuous Spaces and Economies of Entertainment: Soldiers, Actresses and Hybrid Genres in Colonial India," *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 41, no. 2 (2014), 50–75, and C. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

3 C. Bright and M. Geyer, "Benchmarks of Globalization: The Global Condition, 1850–2010," in D. Northrop (ed), *A Companion to World History* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, Ltd., 2015), 288.

4 D. R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); D. R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); E. Harcourt and F. Harcourt, *Flagships of Imperialism: The P & O Company And The Politics of Empire From Its Origins To 1867* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); and F. Steel, *Oceania Under Steam: Sea Transport and the Cultures of Colonialism, C. 1870–1914* (United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2016).

5 C. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920*, 57.

6 R. Waterhouse, "The Internationalization of American Popular Culture in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Minstrel Show," *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 4, no. 1 (1985), 8. Waterhouse is specifically referencing audiences in England in this quote.

7 T. Mahmud, "Colonialism and Modern Constructions of Race: A Preliminary Inquiry," *University of Miami Law Review* 53, no. 4 (1999), 1220.

8 I do not necessarily suggest that these sorts of anxieties and racial constructs were pervasive in other contexts.

9 T. Ballantyne, "Rereading the Archive and Opening the Nation-State: Colonial Knowledge in South Asia (and Beyond)," in A. Burton (ed), *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) uses a similar conceptual frame when suggesting that the empire is a structure or a "complex system of overlapping and interwoven institutions, organizations, ideologies, and discourse … consisting of 'horizontal' filaments that run among various colonies in addition to 'vertical' connections between the metropole and individual colonies" (112–13). S.J. Potter and J. Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 1 (2015) suggest a similar idea in their

notion of "connected histories," which proposes that, in part, commercial and cultural links within the imperial system impacted patterns of long-distance travel. According to Potter and Saha, the term "connected histories" is from an essay published by Sanjay Subrahmanyan in 1997. See also S. Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus to the Ganges* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) for further exploration of these ideas.

[10] See, notably, C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830* (London: Longman, 1989); J. Darwin, "Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion," *The English Historical Review* 112, no. 447 (1997), 614–42; and S. Potter and J. Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire."

[11] F. Broeze, "Underdevelopment and Dependency: Maritime India during the Raj," M*odern Asian Studies* 18, no. 3, (1984), 441.

[12] Ibid.

[13] J. Heffer, *The United States and the Pacific: History of a Frontier* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 44–45.

[14] E. M. Tate in *Transpacific Steam: The Story of Steam Navigation from the Pacific Coast of North America to the Far East and the Antipodes, 1861–1941* (New York: Cornwell Books, 1986) suggests that by July 1849 there were 500 ships in port at San Francisco, a dramatic increase from previous years.

[15] See, notably, C. Balme, *The Globalization of Theatre 1870–1930: The Theatrical Networks of Maurice E. Bandmann* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2020); F. Broeze, P. Reeves, and K. McPherson, "Imperial Ports and the Modern World Economy: The Case of the Indian Ocean," *The Journal of Transport History* 7, no. 2, (1986), 1–20; J. Frey, "The Global Moment: The Emergence of Globality, 1866–1867, and the Origins of Nineteenth-Century Globalization," *The Historian* 81, no. 1 (2019), 9–56; E. C. Han, "Making a Black Pacific: African Americans and the Formation of Transpacific Community Networks, 1865–1872," *Journal of African American History* 101, no. 1–2 (2016), 23–48; and F. Steel, "Re-Routing Empire? Steam-Age Circulations and the Making of an Anglo-Pacific, c. 1850–90," *Australian Historical Studies* 46, no. 3 (2015), 356–373. It is important to note that performers travelled between the United States and locations the along the Pacific and Indian Oceans for decades before the period I discuss, which J. R. Carr, *Hawaiian Music in Motion: Mariners, Missionaries, and Minstrels* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014) and others have addressed with reference to the Hawaiian Islands.

[16] J. H. Kemble, "Pacific Mail Service Between Panama and San Francisco, 1849–1851," *Pacific Historical Review* 2, no. 4 (1933), 405–07.

[17] A gold rush in Australia in the early 1850s also impacted the movement of performers in the Pacific, an important topic outside of the scope of this chapter.

[18] W. L. Slout, *Burnt Cork and Tambourines: A Source Book of Negro Minstrelsy* (San Bernardino: Borgo Press, 2007), 96.

[19] Newspapers in India frequently mention that they travelled within India via steamers. See, for example, *Bombay Gazette*, July 8, 1852 and *Bombay Gazette*, November 13, 1852.

[20] From an anonymous article in the *Bombay Gazette* on October 30, 1850 reprinted from *The Times of London*. It also directly references San Francisco: "As for the California republic, and the scattered community of the Pacific, of which it is suddenly the queen, one can almost see them growing in each fresh arrival from the States. At San Francisco the ravages of the last conflagration have been repaired with more substantial materials. All the wants of civilized man are there supplied even quicker with the thirst of the goldhunter … San Francisco is now as well supplied with vegetables and fruit as this metropolis. The press flourishes…".

[21] *Bombay Gazette*, October 30, 1850.

[22] R. Waterhouse, "The Internationalization of American Popular Culture in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Minstrel Show," 3.

[23] Ibid.

[24] The article in the *Bombay Gazette* that claimed Americans had become "lords of the Pacific" was originally printed in the *Times of London* on September 23, 1850. It was also printed in the *Buck Herald* (September 28, 1850), which served the county of Buckinghamshire in England, the *Hampshire Telegraph* (September 28, 1850), which serves the county of Hampshire, the *Northern Whig* (September 26, 1850), which served Northern Ireland, and several other newspapers in the UK.

[25] P. Putnis, "The British Transoceanic Steamship Press in Nineteenth-Century India and Australia: An Overview," *Journal of Australian Studies* 31, no. 91 (2007), 69–79.

[26] R. Wenzlhuemer, "The Ship, the Media, and the World: Conceptualizing Connections in Global History," *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 2 (2016), 165. Wenzlhuemer is speaking about steamships and the electric telegraph in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but his theoretical orientation is relevant here. For additional discussion, see B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[27] *Bombay Gazette* (March 4, 1850), reprinted from *The Times of London*.

[28] My conjectures on the potential travel routes to India from England draw from *A Hand Book of Information for Passengers and Shippers by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company's Steamers* (1849). See C. Kaul, *Reporting the Raj: The British Press and India, c. 1880–1922* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003) for additional material on the distribution of news and the growth of communication links in the British empire.

[29] J. H. Kemble, "The Genesis of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (1934), 386–406.

[30] *Weekly Alta California*, February 1, 1849. See also Kemble, "The Genesis of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company," 396.

[31] G. Martin, *Verdi at the Golden Gate: Opera and San Francisco in the Gold Rush Years* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 3.

[32] Ibid., 4.

[33] J. D. Carter, "Before the Telegraph: The News Service of the San Francisco *Bulletin*, 1855–1861," *Pacific Historical Review* 11, no. 3 (1942), 301.

[34] Ibid.

[35] G. Martin, *Verdi at the Golden Gate: Opera and San Francisco in the Gold Rush Years*, 4.

[36] Kemble, "Pacific Mail Service Between Panama and San Francisco, 1849–1851," 407.

[37] Ibid., 405–17.

[38] For further discussion of the New York Serenaders' initial performances in San Francisco, see W. L. Slout, *Burnt Cork and Tambourines: A Source Book of Negro Minstrelsy*, and M. W. Wittmann, "Empire of Culture: U.S. Entertainers and the Making of the Pacific Circuit, 1850–1890," PhD. diss., (University of Michigan, 2010).

[39] Wittmann, "Empire of Culture: U.S. Entertainers and the Making of the Pacific Circuit, 1850–1890," 51, and Carr, *Hawaiian Music in Motion: Mariners, Missionaries, and Minstrels*, 135

[40] *Sacramento Transcript*, Volume 1, Number 47, June 25, 1850.

[41] *Daily Alta California*, Volume 1, Number 182, July 31, 1850.

[42] The *Cornwall Chronicle* (Launceston), March 1, 1851; The *Courier* (Hobart), November 15, 1851.

[43] Taken from Slout, *Burnt Cork and Tambourines: A Source Book of Negro Minstrelsy*, 137.

[44] *Daily Alta California*, December 14, 1849.

[45] *Daily Alta California*, December 17, 1849.

[46] *Daily Alta California*, December 26, 1848. For a brief account of Reynold's murder, see Wittmann, "Empire of Culture: U.S. Entertainers and the Making of the Pacific Circuit, 1850–1890," 23.

[47] See S. Johnson, *Roaring Camp: The Social World of the California Gold Rush* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000) for other accounts and further discussions of the scope and character of lawlessness and social transgressions during the gold rush.

[48] *Daily Alta California*, May 30, 1851.

[49] G. Martin, *Verdi at the Golden Gate: Opera and San Francisco in the Gold Rush Years*, 12.

[50] Ibid.

[51] A. Jones, *Circuit Listening: Chinese Popular Music in the Global 1960s* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 30.

[52] Ibid., 8. Jones is referencing middle-twentieth century transistor technology here, but his theoretical approach is relevant to our discussion.

[53] Ibid., 6.

[54] The *Bombay Gazette*, July 21, 1852.

[55] Reviews in Australia before they arrived in India were not always positive. In one instance, the group even offered to return the admissions fee and perform only in "white face" in West Maitland in 1851, just before they departed for India. The assumption here is that by only performing in whiteface, they would focus on British or European traditional music such as glee tunes, religious hymns, traditional ballads, and the like. *The Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advisor* (September 3, 1851) wrote that: "On Monday evening the attendance was again poor, and the Serenaders were so dispirited that they offered to return the money taken, or to sing without blackening their faces. The audience agreed to hear them without paint."

[56] T. Mahmud, "Colonialism and Modern Constructions of Race: A Preliminary Inquiry," *University of Miami Law Review* 53, no. 4 (1999), 1223.

[57] Ibid., 1225. For additional discussion, see Harald Fischer-Tine, *Low and Licentious Europeans: Race, Class and 'White Subalternity' in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2009).

[58] *Bombay Gazette,* July 31, 1852.

[59] For a similar discussion of race in the context of colonialism, see Mahmud, "Colonialism and Modern Constructions of Race: A Preliminary Inquiry," 1219–1246.

[60] R. Waterhouse, "The Internationalization of American Popular Culture in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of the Minstrel Show," 1–11. This draw was also seen in Australia.

[61] *Friend of India and Statesman,* January 29, 1852.

[62] Taken from N.A, *Beadle's Dime Song Book, No. 4: A Collection of New and Popular Comic and Sentimental Song* (New York: Beadle and Company, 1859), 28.

[63] *Bombay Gazette*, June 28, 1850.

[64] The group followed a similar format in Australia, where they travelled before and after their Indian tour. They performed similar repertoire in Bombay.

[65] The first few lines begin: "Oh! Call my brother back to me, / I cannot play alone! / The summer comes with flower and bee- / Where is my brother gone? / The Butterfly is glancing bright / Across the sunbeam's track; / I care not now to chase its flight- / Oh! Call my brother back!…" The lyrics were taken from L. Herrig, *The British Classical Authors: Select Specimens of the National Literature of England with Biographical and Critical Sketches* (Brunswick: George Westermann, 1872), 416.

[66] The first few lines begin: "My soul is dark-Oh! Quickly string / The harp I yet can brook to hear; / And let thy gentle fingers fling / It smelting murmur o'er mine ear."

[67] R. B. Winans, "Early Minstrel Show Music, 1843–1852," in A. Bean et al. (eds.), *Inside the Minstrel Mask: Readings in Nineteenth Century Blackface Minstrelsy* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1996), 159–61.

[68] P. J. Marshall, "The White Town of Calcutta Under the Rule of the East India Company," *Modern Asian Studies* 34, no. 2 (2000), 309.

[69] Ibid.

[70] C. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920*, 73. See also Fischer-Tine, *Low and Licentious Europeans: Race, Class and 'White Subalternity' in Colonial India*.

[71] C. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920*, 74.

[72] S. Mizutani, *The Meaning of White: Race, Class, and the 'Domiciled Community' in British India, 1858–1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1–2.

[73] Ibid.

[74] For a discussion of English-language theater in late nineteenth century India, see R. Bhattacharya, "Promiscuous Spaces and Economies of Entertainment: Soldiers, Actresses and Hybrid Genres in Colonial India," 50–75.

[75] See *Morning Chronicle* (Calcutta), January 28, 1853.

[76] See *Bombay Gazette*, August 2, 1852.

[77] See *Bombay Gazette*, October 20, 1852.

[78] K. Hansen, "Language, Community, and the Theatrical Public: Linguistic Pluralism and Change in the Nineteenth-century Parsi Theatre," in S. Blackburn and V. Dalmia (eds.), *India's Literary History: Essays on the Nineteenth Century* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 65. Beginning in 1853 we see more performances outside the English language.

[79] K. Hansen, "Parsi Theatre and the City: Locations, Patrons, Audiences," *Sarai Reader 02: The Cities of Everyday Life* (2002), 43.

[80] Blackface minstrelsy in India was regularly performed in other languages, including Hindi and Bengali, beginning in the 1860s with the arrival of Dave Carson from Montana.

[81] Hansen, "Language, Community, and the Theatrical Public: Linguistic Pluralism and Change in the Nineteenth-century Parsi Theatre," 65. For additional discussion of the use of farce in Parsi theater traditions, see R. Bhattacharya, "Promiscuous Spaces and Economies of Entertainment: Soldiers, Actresses and Hybrid Genres in Colonial India," 68. For additional discussion of the audiences attending the Grant Road Theatre, see V. S. Thakur, "Parsi Shakespeare: Precursor to 'Bollywood Shakespeare'," in C. Dionne et al. (eds), *Bollywood Shakespeares* (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

[82] T. Taylor, "Circulation, Value, Exchange, and Music," *Ethnomusicology* 64, no. 2 (2020), 255.

[83] Ibid., 262.

[84] I. Woodfield, "The Calcutta Piano Trade in the Late Eighteenth Century," in C. Bashford et al. (eds), *Music and British Culture, 1785–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) and I. Woodfield, *Music of the Raj: A Social and Economic History of Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[85] M. Gorman, "Sir William O'Shaughnessy, Lord Dalhousie, and the Establishment of the Telegraph System in India," *Technology and Culture* 12, no. 4 (1971), 585–86.

[86] Ibid.

[87] D. R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress: Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850–1940*, 36.

[88] See, for example, *Bombay Gazette,* March 20, 1852.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Information about the *Achilles* and *Ajdaha* is taken from the "Shipping Intelligence" section of a number of editions of The *Indian News and Chronicle of Eastern Affairs* (London) throughout 1852.

[91] *Morning Chronicle* (Calcutta), February 18, 1853.

[92] *Glasgow Herald*, Monday, December 11, 1854.

[93] *Greenock Advertiser*, Friday, December 1, 1854.

[94] Initial attempts to develop a steam route from Panama to Australia and New Zealand in the early 1850s were interrupted by the shipping demands of the Crimean War.

[95] E. M. Tate, *Transpacific Steam: The Story of Steam Navigation from the Pacific Coast of North America to the Far East and the Antipodes, 1867–1941* (New York: Cornwell Books, 1986), 21.

[96] Many of the meanings inherent in blackface minstrelsy in India that I discuss were seen in other places in the 1850s, including in Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. These locations were important stopping points in the movement of music and musicians from the U.S. to India. Performance groups, including the New York Serenaders, often toured these locations before or after tours of India.

[97] See R. Bhattacharya, "Promiscuous Spaces and Economies of Entertainment: Soldiers, Actresses and Hybrid Genres in Colonial India," 50–75, and B. G. Shope, *American Popular Music in Britain's Raj* (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

The Sepoy Rebellion and American Global Ambition

Susan M. Ryan

Abstract

In the summer and fall of 1857, American magazines and newspapers began printing details of a widespread rebellion among native Indian soldiers (called sepoys) against British rule. News of the uprising and of British reprisals shocked American readers not just in terms of their staggering violence, but also insofar as supposed inferiors had managed to carry out an elaborate and at least temporarily successful conspiracy against a European power. In their responses, American commentators confronted two downsides of imperial ambition: first, that the colonized could not be so easily dominated as some had assumed; and second, that efforts at reasserting such elusive control could cost an imperial power in moral or reputational terms. US writings on India in 1857–1858, then, represent a crucial if understudied moment of dissent in the nation's own shift toward imperialism, as British blunders and atrocities dimmed Americans' own luminous fantasies of global wealth and power.

Keywords: Sepoy Mutiny, Indian Rebellion of 1857, US imperialism, Christian missionaries, Jessie Brown, Dion Boucicault

Walt Whitman's 1871 poem "Passage to India" celebrates three of the era's signal engineering feats—the laying of the transatlantic telegraph cable ("eloquent gentle wires" in Whitman's rendering) in 1858; the completion of North America's transcontinental railroad in 1869; and the opening of the Suez Canal later in the same year.[1] These infrastructural advances—"our modern wonders," the poet calls them—accelerated the pace of travel and communication, but for Whitman they also subtended an expansive American presence abroad, a rebirth, in his framing, of the Age of Exploration, with North Americans this time figuring as agents rather than objects of inquiry.[2] In a poem that seems willfully to ignore the national catastrophe (the American Civil War, that is) that formed the subject of the poet's collection *Drum-Taps*, published just six years earlier, Whitman here heralds the United States' international emergence with an exuberance that mirrors his expressed faith in human beings' capacity to control and reshape the earth itself.

As the poem's title suggests, of the three wonders, the Suez Canal most pressingly commands Whitman's attention. In his rendering, this newly dug passage to India completes Christopher Columbus's earlier gambit, which sought readier access to South Asian spices and other commercial ventures in the East but instead eventuated in European empires and genocidal campaigns in the so-called New World. It is not surprising, then, that the poem repeatedly invokes Columbus: the transcontinental railroad, for example, "verifies" the explorer's dream, while Columbus is later described as "History's type of courage, action, faith," one who dominates the pageant of exploration as its "chief histrion."[3] Further, in an assertion of both circularity and unity, the work of captains and engineers makes way for the work of poets in what Whitman calls a "marriage of continents, climates and oceans!"[4] These paired historical moments—the fifteenth century's supposed discovery of the Americas and the nineteenth century's just-completed short-cut to Asia—rely on homologous fantasies: that the distant can be made proximal; that space and time are malleable; and that bold moves on a world stage are inevitably worth their cost, in both human and economic terms. For Whitman and his like-minded contemporaries, such imperial fantasies rely on the deployment of imagined superiorities disguised as or realized by means of engineering feats. But engineering itself is not, for Whitman, the crucial element. Instead, he aligns notions of expansion and dominion with the development or release of the soul—which, in the poem's last lines, "farther, farther, farther sail[s]" into eastern seas, as Whitman adopts and extends a longstanding western tradition of looking eastward for enlightenment and spiritual repose, even as one simultaneously seeks profit or adventure.[5] India, meanwhile, serves for Whitman and for many of his American readers as a metaphor for extremity itself (in terms of heat, luxury, poverty, brutality, and so on) and as the site of the western subject's striving, even as it evokes the past and the exotic—India's shores, Whitman writes, are "aged fierce enigmas," mired in a centuries-old resistance to temporal change.[6]

If Whitman's poem stands as a monument to imperial optimism, a lesser-known American conversation on India, which took place nearly fifteen years earlier, evinced considerably more ambivalence. In the summer and fall of 1857, US magazines and newspapers began printing details of a widespread rebellion among Indian soldiers (called sepoys) against British rule. This influx of news—including accounts of violent reprisals on the part of the British—captivated American audiences. Not only were the events narrated with the kind of sensationalist verve that readers relished, but they represented a bracing challenge to comfortable notions of European superiority, as the sepoys managed to launch a widespread and highly destructive rebellion, including a (re)occupation of significant geographical scope, such that the British empire itself came to seem vulnerable, at least for a time.[7] In their responses, many American commentators uncritically adopted pro-British

perspectives on the crisis. One wrote categorically that "the sympathies of the Christian world must be with the English in this momentous conflict,"[8] while others emphasized native Indian violence—a "furious anarchy" that "glutted itself with the blood of hundreds of brave men, gentle women, and innocent babes."[9] But some took the rebellion as an opportunity to consider two of the more sobering elements of western ambition: first, that the colonized could not be as easily dominated as some had assumed, whether via ideology or regular employment or threats of violence (the British had used all three); and second, that efforts at reasserting such elusive control could cost a nation dearly in moral or reputational terms.

US authors' writings on India in the late 1850s, then, represent a crucial if understudied moment of dissent in the nation's own shift toward imperialism, as British blunders and atrocities dimmed Americans' luminous fantasies of global wealth and power. In other words, the Sepoy Rebellion—later referred to as India's First War of Independence—offered a set of events and discourses through which at least some Americans stopped to question emergent ideas about overseas expansion and influence.[10] Much of this conversation was framed as a critique of British strategy and comportment: Americans had a sufficiently vexed relationship to the erstwhile mother country to render such a project appealing. But, as in so much nineteenth-century American commentary on India, there was also an impulse to bring the matter back home—that is, to consider what events on the subcontinent might tell Americans about their own domestic concerns and foreign entanglements, current and projected. Whitman's optimism would emerge as the dominant American disposition toward expansion and empire in the second half of the nineteenth century, to be sure—but American responses to the Sepoy Rebellion complicate that trajectory, emphasizing, at least for a while, risk over triumph and moral debt over material gain.

Fault Lines

As a number of scholars have shown, the 1850s saw an uptick in Americans' interest in various kinds of territorial expansion.[11] The ideology of manifest destiny was instrumentalized in the widespread movement of white Americans westward; various commentators and politicians advocated the acquisition or annexation of such disparate North American sites as Cuba and parts of Canada; and, in perhaps the strangest of these gestures, US-born filibusteros—that is, figures who engaged in quasi-military projects abroad without official US government sanction—ventured into Mexico and Central America, seeking dominion over the nation's southern neighbors. (William Walker, the Nashville-born newspaper editor who invaded Nicaragua in 1855 and ruled as its self-appointed president for nearly a year, is

only the most famous of these crackpot adventurers.) While many of these efforts failed and others remained at the level of ideation—the United States obviously did not overtake all of North America, as some had wished—in some respects the decade's expansionist ethos was quite abundantly realized, as the Gadsden Purchase in 1854, through which the United States acquired parts of present-day Arizona and New Mexico, and the volume of westward migration attest. Of course, the sometimes-giddy enthusiasm for expansion that we see in the decade after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, which annexed much of what had been northern Mexico, was always fraught. Sites in the American West proved to be rife with conflict, as European-Americans fought with indigenous peoples in various places and abolitionists and proslavery forces engaged in guerilla-style warfare in Kansas. Meanwhile, the nation itself faced increasingly pressing threats of fracture or dissolution over the matter of slavery.

Some American media responses to the Sepoy Rebellion emphasized precisely these tensions. Most obviously the sepoys were compared to racial and ethnic others whom white Americans saw as threats, as when a commentator, writing in the *New York Observer* in September of 1857, opined that "the news from India revives our recollections of the atrocities of our North American Indians."[12] Others saw in the Indian conflict "the spectre of a large-scale slave revolt by a non-white populace," as Nikhil Bilwakesh has written, with white slaveholders seeing themselves in the place of assailed British colonizers.[13] Americans' disposition toward slavery informed their attitudes toward the rebellion in myriad ways. One piece insisted that the British were not unusually cruel in their dealings with Indians, just as "the common sense and Christian feelings of the community would be shocked at the assertion that the slaveholders of our Southern States are more unjust and cruel than the slaveholders of ancient Rome or of modern Africa."[14] In other words, colonial ventures and slaveholding were analogous activities—but these British and American instantiations were not record-setting in their atrocity. Many proslavery partisans, meanwhile, so resented British abolitionist agitation that they took satisfaction in the latter's troubles, although fears of a domestic race war tended to overwhelm their schadenfreude. Some abolitionists instead took Great Britain's side, insisting that colonial rule differed markedly from chattel slavery as practiced in the American South. As a piece in *The National Era* asserted, "English rule in India gradually enlightens and improves the condition of the subject race."[15] *The Liberator*, the movement's longest-running newspaper, initially took a pro-British position, but as the historian Elizabeth Kelly Gray has shown, by October of 1857 its coverage was much more critical, while Frederick Douglass, ever the astute rhetorician, used news of the Sepoy Rebellion, Gray notes, "to contrast Indian violence with Americans' peaceful pursuit of abolitionism."[16] Eventually, as Bilwakesh explains, Americans would extract the term *sepoy* from its original context, using it to describe such disparate entities as

"Southern white troops and guerillas, the Federal Government, African American soldiers, Mormons, Spanish imperialists in Cuba, or striking character actors at the grand Opera House in San Francisco."[17] The word, that is, came to signify depravity, violence, or extremity from whatever quarter.

If the 1857 rebellion invited reflection on racial and sectional tensions at home, it also provided Americans with an occasion for thinking through the complications of global ambition. Among the most salient avenues of inquiry was the role of religion in the rebellion—and, by extension, in colonial and imperial ventures more broadly. Those who were invested in the United States' foreign missionary projects (active since the early 1810s) believed, like their British evangelical counterparts, that the rebellion owed to a missionizing failure. That is, a widespread sense emerged that the British—especially the British East India Company, which controlled much of the subcontinent prior to the rebellion—had emphasized profit over faith, discouraging Christianization initiatives out of fear that any interference with native religious practices might sow unrest and thus interfere with commercial ventures. For many such observers, only Christianity could unify India: as a contributor to the New York-based *Biblical Repertory* put the matter, "there is little affection for the British among their eastern subjects. It seems to be impossible that there should be, until Christianity prevails." In the absence of such cohesion, the rebellion, this author insisted, derived from "pure heathenism and pure Islamism."[18]

According to some observers, it was not only a failure to Christianize India that set the subcontinent on this course, but a perceived tendency among the British to cater to native religious practices and biases—and perhaps even to buy into them. Caste, as westerners termed a system of Hindu social hierarchy that they understood only partially, was deemed a key issue. As one piece averred, the British had "pandered to the spirit of caste."[19] Citing the English love of hierarchy as a contributing factor, some wondered if they were not merely countenancing caste divisions but actively engaging them: "Was not high caste," the piece cited above asked, "the idol before which English officers loved to bow?"[20] Thus complicity with—and perhaps even a lurking attraction to—Hinduism's storied commitment to social stratification contributed to the colonizers' missteps. Others worried that a partial exposure to Christianity had done tremendous harm in India. According to the *Biblical Repertory*, the British "went about India, as men entering a cavern filled with bats and unclean birds, with dark lanterns, for fear of disturbing the inhabitants. Enough of light, however, gleamed through [in the form of missionary activity] to arouse and terrify the spirits of darkness. Had they allowed the light to shine freely, those spirits would have fled or quailed."[21] Christianity, this author suggests, was introduced to Indians in dangerously low doses—a reversal of the homeopathic medical theories that were gaining in popularity among Americans at the same time.

This supposed excess of religious tolerance on the part of the British was especially worrying for Protestant Americans who looked with suspicion at their own country's expanding religious diversity. In that light, it is unsurprising that matters related to India were often, through the middle of the nineteenth century, brought into conversations regarding America's own emergent or immigrant religions—most pressingly, Mormonism and Roman Catholicism, respectively. If a lack of religious uniformity doomed British rule in India, what risks inhered in the United States' own ostensibly accelerating fragmentation?

Alongside such worries over the inadequate missionizing of India, the Sepoy Rebellion highlighted how poorly those in the West understood the various religious practices and divisions on the subcontinent. Commentators were taken aback, for example, by the fact that the uprising relied on an alliance between Muslims and Hindus serving together in the army. As one commentator noted, "Mohammedans and Hindus, who have nothing in common, except a hatred of the truth, joined in a crusade against Christians"—despite the fact that, according to this account, the Muslims despise "idol-worship" and the "Brahman is, perhaps, the subtlest and at the same time the grossest idol-worshipper that can be found."[22] Their cooperation, for this author, warranted a scientific simile: "All that was necessary to produce an outbreak of the hostile elements which everywhere existed in abundance, was combination… . India has long been like a vast galvanic battery, pregnant with latent fires. It was only necessary to bring the poles together to produce an explosion. The moment the Mussulman and the Hindoo joined hands the circuit was completed, and the whole fabric of British power trembled at the shock."[23] Another commentator noted, along similar lines, that the sepoys stood "ready, inflammable, and needing but the right torch" to catch fire.[24] The British, most accounts suggested, had been insufficiently attuned to such risks; their "apparently fair prospects" in India were destroyed when "troubles came from a quarter least expected."[25]

Ferocity

This language of "shock" and "explosion" mirrors coverage of the rebellion that appeared in much of the British press, which emphasized native brutality, particularly toward white women and children living in India. Many accounts that appeared in US newspapers and magazines dwelled on such matters, often reprinting British sources verbatim. But some venues approached that reporting more skeptically—especially the *New York Observer* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, which alleged that the *London Times* in particular had exaggerated and misrepresented the scale and severity of native brutality in the interest of urging excessive retaliatory violence.[26]

More broadly, a number of American commentators criticized the violence with which the British responded to the uprising—sometimes on the basis of its stark moral wrongness, but also on the grounds that such retaliation was impolitic and would only lead to more bloodshed. Many such critiques were prompted by a single account, penned by a British official stationed in northwestern India, which circulated widely in US print sources. It narrates in graphic detail a mass execution method whereby British soldiers tied alleged rebels—ten at a time—to large cannons ("9-pounders") and then fired them:

> It was a horrid sight that then met the eye: a regular shower of human fragments of heads, of arms, of legs appeared in the air through the smoke and when that cleared away, these fragments lying on the ground—fragments of Hindoos, and fragments of Mussulmans all mixed together, were all that remained of those ten mutineers. Three times more was this scene repeated; but so great is the disgust we all feel for the atrocities committed by the rebels, that we had no room in our hearts for any feeling of pity; perfect callousness was depicted on every European's face; a look of grim satisfaction could even be seen in the countenances of the gunners serving the guns. But far different was the effect on the native portion of the spectators; their black faces grew ghastly pale as they gazed breathlessly at the awful spectacle.[27]

Though this horrific description initially seems calculated to evoke outrage on behalf of the executed rebels, its author soon insists that the sepoys have forfeited all claims on human pity by virtue of their "atrocities." And yet, the scene invites an emotional response from the reader, who absorbs the narrator's repressed or evacuated horror and perhaps extends a moment of sympathy to those "ghastly pale" native observers, momentarily whitened by what they have seen. Further, the eyewitness-author of this piece, though he disavows any human connection to the executed Indians, nevertheless admires their stoicism. "Nothing in their lives," he notes, "became them like the leaving of them. Of the whole forty, only two showed any signs of fear, and they were bitterly reproached by the others… . They certainly died like men."[28] He attributes this strength to the sepoys' faith, though he does not differentiate between Muslims and Hindus on this point: "Their religion, bad as it may be and is, in all other points, at least befriends them well at the hour of death."[29] But if the sepoys' religious faith enabled them to face such a violent death with equanimity, it also made this execution method especially fearsome insofar as it rendered a proper funeral ritual—in either Muslim or Hindu tradition—impossible. The rebel tied to the cannon, the author notes, "knows that his body will be blown into a thousand pieces, and that it will be altogether impossible for his relatives, however devoted to him, to be sure of picking up all the fragments … ; and the thought that perhaps a limb of some one of a different religion to himself

might possibly be burned or buried with the reminder of his own body, is agony to him."[30] The conspiratorial mixing of Hindus and Muslims—that "galvanic battery" whose explosion shook British India—gives way to a literal mixing of blood, bones, and flesh designed to obliterate sepoy resistance and restore European authority.[31]

As Kim A. Wagner notes, the cannon method, also used by the Marathas and the Mughals in South Asia, was adopted by the British East India Company in the second half of the eighteenth century and was regarded "as the ultimate tool of exemplary deterrence."[32] But if such a tool was calculated to quell further rebellion, it also disgusted American observers. For some, this mode of execution, among other violent acts reported in the US press, signaled a loss of British moral credibility. The Boston-based magazine *Ballou's Pictorial* called the sepoys' "atrocities … revolting," but added that the retaliatory measures the British chose "savor of ferocity." The author cites not just the executions-by-cannon noted above, but also the practice of setting villages on fire and hanging Indian prisoners "by the neck by the light of their burning homes."[33] A piece that ran in the *New York Observer* on September 17, 1857, asserted that "religion, humanity and policy demand that England, in her might, should act as a Christian power"[34] By the following summer, the paper was more fundamentally calling into question the veracity of widespread tales of sepoy "barbarity": "So the Sepoy cruelty vanishes into fiction," the author notes, "while the vengeance of Britain strikes terror into the heart of the world."[35]

Antebellum Americans were deeply engaged by the idea of England—that is, by England as a nexus of aspirations, ideals, rivalries, and resentments, as scholars such as Elisa Tamarkin and Christopher Hanlon have shown.[36] Criticizing England's treatment of Indian rebels, then, entailed a vexed re-examination of longstanding patterns of deference, imitation, and self-differentiation. While American commentators on India typically reserved the term *savage* to describe the rebels, calling out the "ferocity" of the English seems tantamount to questioning their civility and morality. Anglo-Americans had long seen the English colonization of North America—a project they would continue after the Revolution—as benign in comparison with Spain's interventions in the Americas, the so-called Black Legend of Spanish (and, crucially, Roman Catholic) inhumanity toward native peoples. Reckoning with British (Protestant) cruelty in India would seem to blur those comforting and, by the late 1850s, centuries-old distinctions—which may account for some commentators' refusal to acknowledge the domestic parallels (i.e., to white Americans' treatment of indigenous and enslaved people) that others were drawing. It makes sense, then, that even in venues critical of British colonial rule in India, we see a countervailing attempt at recuperation. The *Saturday Evening Post*, for instance, reasserted an alignment with the British despite their conduct in putting down the rebellion by contrasting them with a supposedly greater evil: Russia. Citing a rumor that "Russian agents" were behind the Sepoy Rebellion, the

author avers that, "if the battle in India is to be between Russia and England, our sympathies are with England. For Russia is barbarism—it is tyranny—it is medieval night and the brutal heel. And England is civilization—beautiful, in despite of her evils—glorious, in despite of her shames. With England there is hope, because there is, in some sort, freedom…."[37]

Incompetence and Arrogance

American critiques of the British in India shuttled between the moral outrage detailed above and a disdain for what some saw as the East India Company's poor management of the colony. An article that ran in the New-York-based monthly *The Knickerbocker*, for example, emphasized the latter, admitting that the people of India were better off in the aftermath of the Company's dissolution (which occurred in the wake of the rebellion, though British rule would continue well into the next century). Still, in a nod to western/white supremacy, the author notes that it had provided "the best government the Hindoos had ever had."[38] In other words, even flawed European rule seemed, to this observer, superior to Indian self-government. Nevertheless, charges of mismanagement abounded in the American press, including the claim that the British, in a short-sighted attempt to save money, had understaffed both the army and civil offices, thus leaving too few white men on hand to oversee native workers. Others charged the British with a lack of foresight vis-à-vis the brewing rebellion; a piece in the *Albion*, for example, noted that "There was warning, enough and to spare, of the coming calamity. Were preparations duly made for averting, or meeting it?"[39] The *Saturday Evening Post* was particularly harsh in its criticism of British rule, calling it "a "colossal structure of misrule and oppression" and asserting that "the real cause for the rebellion may be found in that feeling of intense, burning exasperation and hatred which long years of insolent oppression must have engendered in the people of Hindostan." The British presence in India at midcentury, this author insists, comprised "true snobs" and "supercilious scamps"; these less-than-exemplary emissaries, the author notes, stay in India only briefly or "have oscillated between India and England, and … have been at great pains to show the natives that they are not at all related to them either in blood, sentiment, or interest, and have also been accustomed to treat them with all manner of insolence and ignominy."[40] Further, a number of US commentators blamed the rebellion's notable, if short-lived, success on British alcohol abuse. In the annals of colonial decadence, drunkenness figured prominently, as temperance-minded Americans suggested that this vice had rendered the British unable to hold onto India, not to mention undeserving of what they would presume to claim there.[41]

A May 1859 piece that ran in *The New Englander*, meanwhile, moved from excoriating the British to contemplating how they might recover (and, by extension, what lessons the US might glean from their experiences in India): "How to govern this great people… This is the question which will press upon the public mind, and persistently demand an answer. The soundest judgment and the largest philanthropy have been hitherto baffled." The fundamental question, for this author, is how an external force might gain sway over the natives in any colonial context: "any people," he notes, "will cheerfully bear much injustice from a ruler of their own blood and kin, rather than enjoy freedom under a foreign dominion." And, not only did the British fail to perceive that a conspiracy was afoot ("The phlegmatic self-sufficiency of the English character lulled the sentinels to sleep, until the enemy sprang upon them unprepared."), but their general unfamiliarity with native languages rendered them incapable of discerning more carefully.[42]

Further, this author asserts, the British in India laid the groundwork for the rebellion by treating the natives badly: their "ill concealed contempt" for Indians "would inevitably produce a rankling hatred… ." The piece ultimately calls into question the benefits of western dominion writ large, something that most American commentators were unwilling to do: "The English seem to have taken for granted what does not by any means appear evident, that the moment a state was brought under their control, the most glaring evils under which the people were suffering, ceased. But not only have we ample written testimony to the contrary, but we have been informed by eye-witnesses, that those natives from the interior, who had not felt the heel of foreign power, were decidedly more manly, smart, and independent, than those who had been under its immediate influence."[43] So much for taking up the white man's burden. Self-government, for this author, should be the ultimate goal in India, though it must be preceded by a period of British dominion: "for years to come, India must be controlled by the stern hand of an absolute despotism, supported by a faithful army. The Hindus have always been so governed, and they know of no other form. Conciliation is to them a sign of weakness. And weakness is a fit opportunity for violence. But this does not suppose that the people are to be oppressed. On the contrary, they should be taught those lessons which will prepare them to govern themselves."[44]

A piece in the *Saturday Evening Post*, meanwhile, dispensed with this gradualist approach, expressing instead the hope that Great Britain would lose India as a result of the rebellion: This "would be a serious pecuniary loss to them; it would be besides a transient commercial injury to other nations, America included, who have interests there. But it might possibly teach them, as well as other nations, that the everlasting law of justice is not to be violated with impunity." The British subjugation of India, in this author's view, was an act of "robbery for the low lust of gain."

Further, such injustices may have stoked the rebellion; the British, that is, must have inflicted "a long series of bitter, burning wrongs" on native Indians in order to "produce such results as this awful mutiny has disclosed."[45] The Washington-based *Advocate of Peace* called the rebellion an instance of "divine retribution" for the British treatment of Indians in general and sepoys in particular.[46] Some went so far as to question more fundamentally the legitimacy of British rule, at least in the forms it took: "Who gave the East India Company its power?—who suffered its centurial course of idiot avarice and insane brutality to run unwarned and unrepressed?"[47] The Company was granted a royal charter in 1600, just prior to the establishment of permanent English settlements in North America, so there may be an implicit critique of monarchy here as well as a faint identification with others who have resisted British rule, though most evidence suggests that, for American observers, racial and religious allegiances weighed more heavily.

As I have suggested, American authors framed the Sepoy Rebellion as an object lesson for a Great Britain that had lost its moral compass. But this was also, by implication, a cautionary tale for the United States—one of those "other nations" to which the *Saturday Evening Post* alluded. One commentator notes, in cataloguing British missteps in India, that the Europeans in India erred in showing (indeed, in feeling) "contempt" toward Indians: "In saying this we remember our own sin… [;] the contemptuous feeling which prevails in this country … towards the coloured people, is too much the feeling of Europeans towards the natives."[48] *The National Era* made a similar case: "For its mistakes of government in India, England must answer—and is paying the just penalty at this moment. But if she deserves it, what do *we* deserve for our conduct towards the African in this country?"[49] Another piece from the *Saturday Evening Post* extrapolates more broadly from Great Britain's troubles: a calamity such as the loss of India should "instruct men that only they who win by justice and gentleness win truly…."[50] As an author remarked in the same venue just a week later, "Let it be remembered that the forcible conquest of a country, the subjugation of a people, involves such consequences as [the rebellion]."[51]

In an era of rapid and often violent westward expansion, and at the onset of even grander global ambitions, the Sepoy Rebellion—as debacle, as come-uppance, as course correction—invited Americans to think about their own expansionist and imperial prospects. The evidence I have cited suggests that some drew bracing and, crucially, generalizable lessons from Britain's troubles in India, with the implication that the United States would need to pursue its global ambitions rather differently. To judge by the events of the next several decades—especially the military campaigns that the US army waged against indigenous Americans in the West and the bloody American occupation of the Philippines at the turn of the twentieth century—these lessons were both incomplete and short-lived.

Coda: Jessie Brown

Some Americans, I have argued, used the Sepoy Rebellion as an occasion to reflect on the perils of global ambition—but the rebellion also circulated in American culture as source material for popular entertainment, the creators of which treated such weighty geopolitical matters obliquely, if at all. Dion Boucicault's *Jessie Brown, or, the Relief of Lucknow*, a melodrama first performed in New York City in February of 1858, serves as an apt example.[52] The play resonated with American audiences, to judge from its wide circulation: *Jessie Brown* was produced in several cities, including Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC; illustrations of its closing tableau appeared in *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*; and the script went through multiple printings.

Boucicault, an extraordinarily popular Irish-born playwright who had been living in the United States since 1854, capitalized on Americans' keen interest in the Sepoy Rebellion—much like his counterparts in England, who staged elaborate dramas based on current events in India (some of which featured actual veterans of the conflict on stage).[53] Specifically, Boucicault built on the wide circulation, through purported journalism as well as poems, songs, and lectures, of Jessie Brown's experience—an almost certainly apocryphal tale of a young working-class Scottish woman trapped in the besieged city of Lucknow in September of 1857. As the story goes, when all appears to be lost, Jessie hears the distant sound of bagpipes from an incoming regiment and urges her fellows to take heart, thus demonstrating not only the resilience of white womanhood but also the importance of music and other cultural markers in retaining a sense of home and heritage in the midst of a colonial crisis. The Jessie Brown story also worked beautifully as a star vehicle for Boucicault's romantic partner, the Scottish-born actress Agnes Kelly Robertson, some thirteen years his junior, with whom he had eloped in 1853 when she was not quite twenty years old.[54]

Jessie Brown distills a number of the concerns that the Sepoy Rebellion elicited among Americans. Most obviously, the play's attention to differences of color and status between colonizer and colonized aligns with a broader American tendency to see the Indian situation in terms of domestic racial tensions. One of the lead characters (Geordie McGregor, a newly commissioned officer still acclimating to India) calls the sepoys "black rascals" and, in a locution that echoes the dialogue featured in the decade's many novels about American slavery, gives a Muslim house servant named Achmet the disparaging moniker "Dusky." Achmet, meanwhile, voices his frustration with British rule in starkly racialized terms: "For a century," he says to Geordie, "you have had your foot on our necks; we are to you a thousand to one—a thousand black necks to one white foot."[55] Later, the play's arch-villain, Nana Sahib, portrayed on stage by Boucicault himself, refers to the British as having made "us

slaves."[56] Further, in sequences that mirror the concerns of white American slaveholders, the play's European characters nervously debate the trustworthiness of their native attendants. Mrs. Campbell—a widowed mother of two living a mile or so from Lucknow—warns Geordie to beware of Achmet, remarking that she "did not like the expression of his face as you spoke." But elsewhere, white characters voice their entire confidence in the Indians' loyalty. The "native regiments" nearby, Geordie avers, "are faithful as dogs" and Mrs. Campbell, though suspicious of Achmet, initially believes that the rest of the "servants are devoted to us." Randal McGregor, meanwhile—Geordie's older, more admirable brother—insists that the Indians stand ready to "assassinate" the Europeans.[57]

The play's attention to racial injustice is difficult to interpret. Projit Bihari Mukharji, one of a handful of scholars who have commented extensively on *Jessie Brown*, writes that the dialogue noted above, in which Achmet calls out British abuses, entails "an unmistakable critique of race and empire couched in irony."[58] Similarly, Lawrence D. Smith points out that another moment in which an Indian character critiques British violence (when Nana Sahib compares the colonizers to tigers) "passes conspicuously unchallenged" by the play's white characters. Further, the most virulently racist language that the play directs at Indians comes from Geordie, who is hardly an exemplar (e.g., he is described as vain and inexperienced early on; later, he struggles to muster the courage to fight; and, when he drunkenly makes a play for the eponymous Jessie, she reminds him of the time back in Scotland when her working-class suitor Sweenie rescued him from a rushing stag). For all his shortcomings, however, Geordie is eventually ensconced as one of the figures that audiences are encouraged to root for, while Achmet, whose villainy is soon confirmed, meets a horrific death by hanging at the end of Act II. (Curiously, his death is represented as accidental, perhaps so that the play's white heroes and heroine can escape the appearance of vengefulness.) *Jessie Brown*, in other words, draws attention to the injustice of racism and colonial rule, briefly suggesting that the Indians' violence against European colonizers might be justified. But once the rebellion directly imperils Boucicault's white characters, the play retreats into a familiar rendering of European heroism and Indian villainy.

The play, like the larger Jessie Brown myth, also highlights threatened violence against women and children, elements of the conflict that attracted disproportionate media attention in the West. An editorial that appeared in the *Lady's Home Magazine* asserts that stories of besieged women such as Jessie turned American public opinion against the rebels, even though initially "nobody felt any especial interest or sympathy with either party; nay, it might have been that what existed of these was partially with the insurgents; for this revolt was felt by many to be the rising up of the oppressed against the oppressors…."[59] The figure of Nana Sahib represents just such a threat: within the play, he is represented as a dark-skinned,

lustful marauder with designs on the sexual purity of a white woman. His intention, made clear early on via an intercepted communication, is to have the Campbell children murdered and to take their mother, as his lover, to his "zenana"—a term that referred to the area of an Indian home reserved for its female inhabitants but that also (like *harem)* connoted both seclusion and sexual access.[60] Boucicault's rendering of this foreign, non-Christian menace includes some intriguing twists, however. For instance, Nana Sahib's obsession with Mrs. Campbell is described as spiritual rather than simply carnal—he professes that, when he noticed her at some point prior to the action of the play, her "soul entered through my eyes into my heart … I followed you, until like the sun you passed away where I could follow no more … "; subsequently, he sent away his other wives because they "offended your soul in me."[61] Despite this insistence on Nana Sahib's emotional investment in Mrs. Campbell, his actual pursuit of her abounds with the usual melodramatic flourishes: oversized swords are drawn (with obvious phallic references), while the play's white male characters (plus Jessie) risk all to protect her purity. If Nana Sahib's avowal of their linked souls seems intended to evoke the audience's sympathy, albeit momentarily, it also underscores, for an American audience notoriously uncomfortable with sexual unions across racial and religious boundaries, the transgressiveness of his desire. Further, one wonders why Boucicault made the target of Nana Sahib's designs a widow with young children rather than the play's heroine, who would seem to be more central to the plot. Perhaps he feared audiences would find it too scandalous if the scheming rebel were sexually threatening a woman portrayed by the actor's own wife.

Jessie Brown also mirrors Americans' oft-demonstrated confusion with regard to South Asian religions. For instance, a house of worship that figures into the plot of Act II is called both a "mosque" and a "Hindoo Temple" (on the same page in the 1858 Samuel French edition)—though the reference to a "minaret" suggests that the former designation was intended.[62] Further, Boucicault has Nana Sahib invoke Allah repeatedly, despite the fact that the historical figure on which the character was based was Hindu, not Muslim. These inconsistencies may have been unwitting errors, but they fit within a larger nexus of American perceptions. That is, in American discourses on South Asia, Muslim men were represented as more lustful and more violent than Hindus, who were often characterized as passive and gentle (though also as wily and deceptive). The misidentification of the historical Nana Sahib's religion in the play, then, may have been a strategy meant to reinforce the audience's religious prejudices and stereotypes.

If Boucicault's play focalizes Americans' concerns over race, gender, and religious difference, it also engages in an intriguing deflection. Namely, in a play that dramatizes a key crisis in British India, it seems odd that not one of the principal characters is English. Instead, the assailed white figures here are mostly Scottish

(some wealthy, some working class), with one good-natured Irishman in the mix. Characters refer to various English figures—most notably the queen and General Havelock, whose rescue of Lucknow they eagerly await—but they do not actually appear on stage; instead, the force that arrives to save Lucknow (modeled on the 78th Highlanders, a Scottish regiment that was crucial to the city's actual rescue) is described as wearing "the bonnie Highland plaid" and playing "Should Auld Acquaintance be Forgot" on their bagpipes.[63] The play, then, enacts a transatlantic performance of the Indian conflict, with an Irish playwright and a Scottish leading lady, living in the US and performing for an American audience, that is largely evacuated of any English presence.

Lawrence Smith has claimed that, in erasing the English, the play removes the "colonisers … from the picture, leaving the field to a pitched battle between colonial subjects"; "rather than expressing confidence in the British imperial project," he argues, "Boucicault's *Jessie Brown* indicates a widely-felt crisis among lower rank military personnel from working-class and non-English ethnic backgrounds."[64] Smith overstates the case somewhat. Although the British East India Company originated among London merchants and received its charter from an English queen, by the middle of the nineteenth century Scots and other non-English figures played key roles in the colony. Charles Canning, Governor-General of India during the Sepoy Rebellion, was English, but his immediate predecessor, the Earl of Dalhousie, was Scottish, as were many of the colony's soldiers and civil servants. And Boucicault's own characters, including a young Scotsman wealthy enough to buy a commission in the army, occupy a range of social strata. While the play's most admirable figures are working-class Scots—not just Jessie Brown, but her courageous suitor Sweenie—the narrative as a whole minimizes class conflict in order to focus on beating back the rebellion.

Nevertheless, the absence of English characters here is strange. American commentary on the rebellion—and, indeed, on India generally—often used the terms "British" and "English" interchangeably. Americans understood, of course, that Great Britain comprised England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, but they tended to conflate British policies and interventions in India with a narrower Englishness. *Jessie Brown*'s elision of an English presence at Lucknow, then, may have allowed its besieged white characters to appear rather more innocent than otherwise. That is, given the degree to which American commentators were specifically critical of English comportment in India, the play's Scottish characters may have seemed less directly responsible for creating the South Asian powder keg. In other words, American audiences could bracket their criticism of English tactics in South Asia, at least for an evening, in order to enjoy the show.

Another of the play's deflections points to larger anxieties about the rebellion and about imperial ventures more broadly conceived. That is, the play ends with

the arrival of military reinforcements, such that the main characters are saved not only from Indian aggressors but also from the child murders and suicides they are frantically plotting toward the end of Act III, when defeat (and the torture, rape, and murder that they anticipate in its aftermath) seems imminent. But Nana Sahib—who had, prior to the events represented here, ordered the slaughter of English women and children at Cawnpore—remains free. Indeed, the historical Nana Sahib escaped the British forces at Lucknow and was never captured—historians believe that he fled into the northern mountains. Further, audiences would have known that the September 1857 "relief of Lucknow" that the play represents was only temporary. The siege continued until November of that year, when a second set of reinforcements arrived and managed to evacuate survivors, though the city itself was abandoned and would remain under the rebels' control until the following spring. Sir Henry Havelock, the English military leader whose name is invoked within the play, died of dysentery at Lucknow in late November, shortly after the second relief—news that was widely reported in American papers in late January and early February of 1858, just prior to the play's New York debut on February 22.

The triumph that *Jessie Brown* celebrates, then, is partial and short-lived. In some sense that uncertainty is inevitable, given that Boucicault based his plot on events that were still unfolding. But the contingent nature of the play's final tableau also fits with the ambivalence that Americans registered in their broader commentary on the Sepoy Rebellion. Boucicault offered them a feel-good ending that celebrates a plucky heroine's resilience, even as it acknowledges, if tacitly, how complicated the conflict actually was, not just tactically but morally.

Notes

1 Walt Whitman, "Passage to India," in Michael Moon (ed.), *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings* (New York: Norton, 2002), 345–53, l. 7.

2 Whitman, "Passage to India," l. 4.

3 Whitman, "Passage to India," l. 67, l. 155, l. 152.

4 Whitman, "Passage to India," l. 118.

5 Whitman, "Passage to India," l. 253, l. 255.

6 Whitman, "Passage to India," l. 230.

7 See Jill C. Bender, *The 1857 Uprising and the British Empire* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2016), 5–9.

8 "The Present State of India," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*, July 1858, 452.

9 "The Sepoy Mutiny," *New Englander*, May 1859, 358.

10 I have used "Sepoy Rebellion" rather than "First War of Independence" in referring to the conflict because the latter term was not in circulation until the early twentieth century, long after the cultural moment I analyze here.

[11] See, for example, Michael Gobat, *Empire by Invitation: William Walker and Manifest Destiny in Central America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2018); Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2005); A. G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2018); Matthew Karp, *This Vast Southern Empire: Slaveholders at the Helm of American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ Press, 2016); Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld: Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2002); and Shelley Streeby, *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2002).

[12] "India Massacres," *New York Observer and Chronicle*, Sept. 17, 1857, 302. On the varied intersections between indigenous Americans and South Asians (the two categories of *Indians* that Americans discussed), see Nico Slate, *Lord Cornwallis Is Dead: The Struggle for Democracy in the United States and India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 2019), 9–30.

[13] Nikhil Bilwakesh, "'Their faces were like so many of the same sort at home': American Responses to the Indian Rebellion of 1857," *American Periodicals* 21.1 (2011), 2; see also Anirudra Thapa, "Cast in Print: The Indian Mutiny, Asiatic Racial Forms, and American Domesticity," in Anupama Arora and Rajender Kaur (eds.) *India in the American Imaginary, 1780s-1880s* (London: Palgrave Macmilllan, 2017), 175–97.

[14] "Present State of India," 454–55.

[15] Qtd. in Bilwakesh, "'Their faces,'" 16.

[16] Elizabeth Kelly Gray, "'Whisper to Him the Word "India"': Trans-Atlantic Critics and American Slavery, 1830–1860," *Journal of the Early Republic* 28.3 (2008), 399.

[17] Bilwakesh, "'Their faces,'" 2.

[18] "The Friend of India. Serampore, 1857. The Mofussilite. Agra, 1857," *Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review*, Jan. 1858, 32, 36. American commentators typically referred to Hindus as "heathens"; adherents of Islam, a monotheistic and Abrahamic religion, often escaped the label.

[19] "Present State of India," 465.

[20] "Present State of India," 531.

[21] "Present State of India," 453.

[22] "Present State of India," 529.

[23] "Present State of India," 456.

[24] "The Friend of India," 37.

[25] "Sepoy Mutiny," 357.

[26] See, for example, "The London Times on the India Rebellion," *Saturday Evening Post*, Aug. 29, 1857, 2.

[27] "Scenes, Mutinies, and Executions in India," *Eclectic Magazine of Foreign Literature*, Jan. 1858, 84. *The Eclectic Magazine* (1844–1898) reprinted material from British and other European sources.

[28] "Scenes, Mutinies, and Executions in India," 84.

[29] "Scenes, Mutinies, and Executions in India," 84.

[30] "Scenes, Mutinies, and Executions in India," 84.

[31] I discuss this account in relation to Americans' perceptions of Islam in "Imagining Empire: Islamic India in Nineteenth-Century US Print Culture," in John Ghazvinian and Arthur Mitchell Fraas (eds.) *American and Muslim Worlds before 1900* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), 98–110.

[32] Kim A. Wagner, *The Skull of Alum Bheg: The Life and Death of a Rebel of 1857* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2017), 176–77.

[33] "The Indian Mutiny," *Ballou's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, Sept. 19, 1857, 189.

[34] "India Massacres," *New York Observer and Chronicle*, Sept. 17, 1857, 302.

[35] "Mutilations of Women and Children in India: Not One Instance to Be Found," *New York Observer and Chronicle*, June 10, 1858, 181.

[36] Christopher Hanlon, *America's England: Antebellum Literature and Atlantic Sectionalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Elisa Tamarkin, *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2007).

[37] "The Revolt in India," *Saturday Evening Post*, Sept 5, 1857, 2.

[38] "The Death of a Great Power," *Knickerbocker*, Dec. 1858, 619.

[39] "The Sepoy Mutiny in Bengal," *Albion*, July 25, 1857, 355.

[40] "The British in India," *Saturday Evening Post*, Aug. 22, 1857, 3.

[41] "It is absolutely astonishing to see the eagerness with which the mass of European soldiers in India endeavor to procure liquor, no matter of what description, so that it produces insensibility, the sole result sought for" ("Present State of India," *Biblical Repertory*, July 1858, 483).

[42] "Sepoy Mutiny," 358, 363, 366.

[43] "Sepoy Mutiny," 380.

[44] "Sepoy Mutiny," 381.

[45] "India Massacres," *New York Observer*, Sept. 17, 1857, 302.

[46] "Divine Retribution," *Advocate of Peace*, March/April 1858, 37.

[47] "The European Crisis," *Saturday Evening Post*, Sept. 26, 1857, 2.

[48] "The Friend of India," 48.

[49] "The Reconquest of India," *National Era*, Aug. 19, 1858, 130.

[50] "The British in India," *Saturday Evening Post*, Aug. 22, 1857, 3.

[51] "The London Times on the India Rebellion," *Saturday Evening Post*, Aug 29, 1857, 2.

[52] In nineteenth-century print sources, the playwright's surname is often spelled "Bourcicault."

[53] On the English plays, see Lawrence D. Smith, "Spectacular Remedies to Colonial Conflicts: *Tableaux Vivants*, Proto-Cinema and Global Performance in Dion Boucicault's *Jessie Brown*," *Nineteenth-Century Theatre and Film* 41.2 (2014), 37.

[54] For a detailed account of Boucicault's play and other popular renderings of the Jessie Brown narrative, see Smith, "Spectacular Remedies," 29–49. See also Bilwakesh, "'Their faces,'" 7–10; Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1990), 206; and Projit Bhihari Mukharji, "Jessie's Dream at Lucknow: Popular Memorializations of Dissent, Ambiguity and Class in the Heart of Empire," *Studies in History* 24.1 (2008): 77–113.

[55] Dion Boucicault, *Jessie Brown; or, The Relief of Lucknow* (New York: Samuel French, 1858), 4.

[56] Boucicault, *Jessie Brown*, 21.

[57] Boucicault, *Jessie Brown*, 4, 7.

[58] Mukharji, "Jessie's Dream at Lucknow," 94.

[59] "Editor's Department," *Lady's Home Magazine*, March 1858, 160.

[60] Boucicault, *Jessie Brown*, 8.

[61] Boucicault, *Jessie Brown*, 12.

[62] Boucicault, *Jessie Brown*, 18.

[63] Historical accounts of the Siege of Lucknow indicate that many who fought on the British side were Irish or Scottish by birth—and a Black Nova Scotian named William Hall was honored for his service there—but English combatants and city residents were present as well.

[64] Smith, "Spectacular Remedies," 39, 40.

CHAPTER 3

Fakir: How a Word from India Moved Through American Popular Culture for Nearly a Century

Philip Deslippe

Abstract

Through nearly a century of popular usage in America that started just after the Civil War, the term "fakir" acquired numerous successive meanings in the United States as it moved from India to a description of magicians in Orientalist costumes on the vaudeville stage, then a term for ostentatious salesmen on American sidewalks, then to duplicitous con artists and criminals, and finally to the yogis and swamis from India who travelled to the United States and were labelled with the various meanings of the term. More than a simple loanword, the word fakir is one of the earliest, longest-running, and perhaps most influential ways in which American popular culture has engaged with ideas of India, and through a large cache of newspaper and magazine articles, this chapter will trace its history for the first time.

Keywords: fakirs, stage magic, yoga, popular culture

"Fakir— First a magician, then a showman with a worthless exhibit, lastly a cheat. These applications of the term appear to be of American origin…"
—from Our Common Speech by Gilbert M. Tucker (New York, 1895)

Swami Vivekananda's speech at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago is often seen as the formal introduction of Hinduism and yoga to the general American public, and Vivekananda himself is largely depicted as a lone missionary figure. But Vivekananda was surrounded by fakirs in Chicago. As part of the wider Columbian Exhibition world's fair that hosted the Parliament, there were fakirs called "Hindoo Jugglers" who performed feats of magic, and the Midway Plaisance park was described as no less than "the paradise of fakirs… this throbbing picture of oriental life" since it was filled with salesmen.[1] The magazine *Puck* crudely mocked Vivekananda's representation of Hinduism at the Parliament with a cartoon of a dark-skinned man holding a scroll that read "fakir." The term

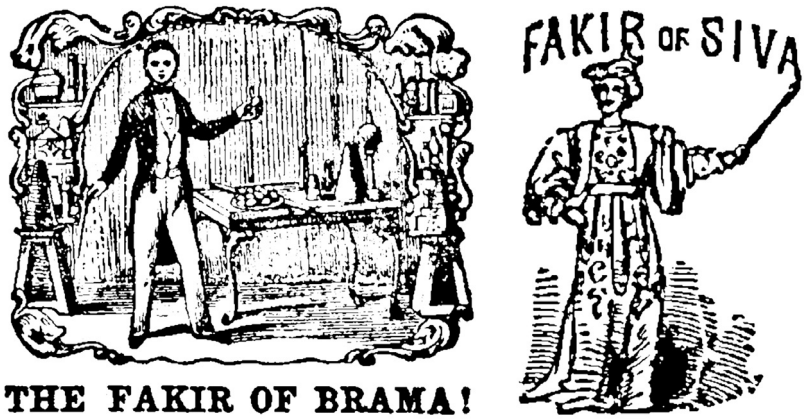


Fig. 3.1 Display Advertisements for The Fakir of Brama (1852) and The Fakir of Shiva (1851). Source: New London Daily Star (New London, Connecticut) and The Daily Commercial Register (Sandusky City, Ohio).

followed Vivekananda for years, even after his death. Upon the completion of his first visit to the United States, he was nominally described as "Hindoo religious fakir" and also attacked as one of many "arrant" and "erratic" domestic religious "fakirs" in the United States who taught "all sorts of follies."[2] In 1902, Vivekananda was crudely eulogized by a Florida newspaper as a "fakir" who had "figured in a clever little hoax upon the American people."[3]

More than a simple loanword, "fakir" had almost a century of common usage in the United States and it was perhaps one of the most influential ways in which American popular culture engaged with ideas of India. Originally a term in India for a Muslim renunciant, it came to America and had numerous successive meanings and connotations. It described religion and asceticism in India, wonder-workers and stage magicians, con artists, and perhaps its most popular usage was as a term to describe animated salesmen and peddlers who would use attention-gaining methods to sell cheap goods and novelties to the public on sidewalks and street corners.

There are two likely routes that the word "fakir" took in its journey from a term that described Muslim ascetics in South Asia to one that referenced salesmen in the United States. The first is through stage magic. Starting in the early-nineteenth century, feats of magic were often associated with India and many stage performers adopted Indian personae to capitalize on the association. Invoking the purported power of Indian ascetics, many stage magicians took on the title of "fakir."[4] Their ranks included the Fakir of Siva, the Fakir of Oola, and the Fakir of Brama. One historian of magic described them as "a vast parade of 'Fakirs,' men of the tricky sphere who annexed the word Fakir to some oriental town and used it to advertise themselves."[5]

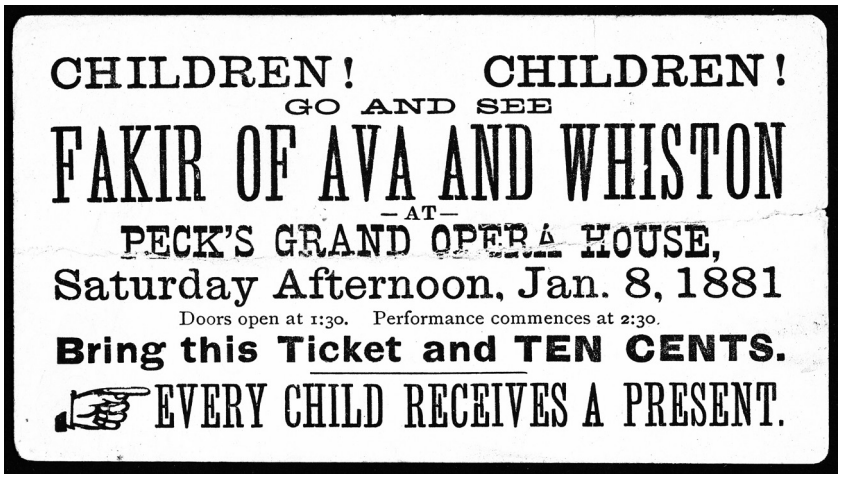


Fig. 3.2 Ticket for Performance by The Fakir of Ava in New Haven, Connecticut (1881). Source: Collection of Philip Deslippe.

The most notable of the many stage magician fakirs was the British-born Isaiah Harris Hughes (1810–1891) who performed as the Fakir of Ava. Hughes was a savvy promoter and had a deft skill of getting local newspapers to provide coverage of his shows instead of paying for advertising. His greatest promotional innovation, and one that would become his hallmark, came in 1857 with the concept of the "gift show." Hughes would give away door prizes at his performances that were mostly trinkets and costume jewelry at first, but later included larger prizes such as furniture, cash, and musical instruments, to the delight of his audiences. The concept was such a successful way to advertise his performances that Hughes compared it to "coining money."[6] Given the similarities between these gift shows and the sidewalk merchants who moved cheap goods as they charmed and entertained crowds, it is likely that the sidewalk fakirs gained their name through Hughes' moniker.

Another possibility is that the term passed more directly from South Asia to the United States through encounters with yogis. According to David Gordon White, early European encounters with yogis occurred in public spaces such as markets and temple sites where merchants and travelers saw "professional beggars… and individuals dressed in the garb of yogis clustered around them in all manner of ascetic poses and self-mortifying displays in order to fill their bowls with alms."[7] Other Western observers made efforts to distinguish between the yogis encountered in the world and the abstract ideal of yoga itself. Jean-Antoine Dubois, a French Catholic missionary, defined yoga as a doctrine of meditation, but also denounced those commonly thought of as yogis as "a tribe of vagabonds."[8] Horace Hayman

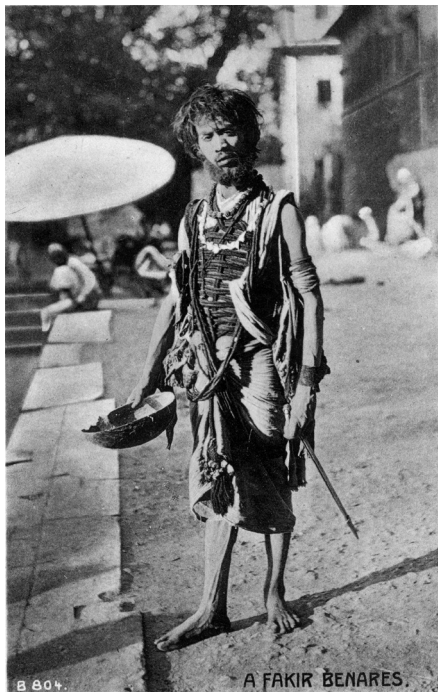


Fig. 3.3 "A Fakir Benares" Postcard (circa 1900). Source: Collection of Philip Deslippe.

Fig. 3.4 Image from Article on "Inauguration Day Fakirs" (1897). Source: *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Wilson, a British Orientalist, placed yogis within Patanjali's "school of philosophy," but also acknowledged them as capricious vagrants who employed "the character… for a lazy livelihood" and had "to their religious personification more of the mountebank than any others" due to the frequency that they told fortunes, sold medical cures, played music, and travelled with performing animals.[9]

Efforts to separate *yoga* from *yogis* were aided by changing views towards the *faqir* and use of the term *faqir* itself. According to Nile Green, there was "an assembly of powerful enemies" in India by the latter-nineteenth century— including Muslim and Hindu reformers, missionaries, British administrators, medical authorities, and Indian nationalists— that shared an opposition to *faqirs* and turned the previously positive characteristics of the *faqir*—sanctified intoxication, divine madness, and holy poverty—into an "immoral nexus" that could be seen as a symbol and cause of poverty and moral decline.[10] The *faqir* became "an increasingly maligned and marginal figure" within India as the term became increasingly interchangeable with the similarly marginalized term *yogi*.[11] It is possible then that the yogis seen

by Dubois, Wilson, and others who moved as vagabonds, sold medical cures, and drew attention to themselves in public squares to raise money, could have been in mind when the term "fakir" was applied in the United States to roaming sellers of trinkets and nostrums who drew attention to themselves in public to make money.

The colloquial use of the term "fakir" for a salesman came into common usage in the United States shortly after the Civil War. In 1871, the *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer* reported that a square in the city center had been "given over to street fakirs, who hawk cheap jewelry, patent soap and tooth-powders to crowds of men and boys."[12] A writer for *Munsey's Magazine* placed the birth of fakirs in New York City in 1874 at the corner of Wall and Nassau streets with a young boy who sold a box of cheap penknives through his loud musical voice.[13] By the late-nineteenth century, fakirs as sidewalk peddlers were a common and widely recognized type throughout the United States. The *Saint Paul Daily Globe* described them as "a class of people living in all large cities" and newspapers in cities such as New York, Saint Louis, and Philadelphia offered long, illustrated portraits of fakirs and their trade to readers who were already familiar with them and eager to learn more.[14] The fakir could even often be found as a stock character in vaudeville that was instantly recognizable to any given audience.[15]

Fakirs were often associated with specific streets or points in a given city, but they were also itinerant and frequently moved where opportunity arose, such as seasonal and large events. In 1883, the *Times Picayune* noted the "large number of fakirs" in New Orleans "during and preceding the Carnival season" and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* described the presence of "all fakirdom" swarming to a midsummer gathering of the fraternal order of Elks to sell them Elk-related items, lemonade, and root beer.[16] No event was more important to sidewalk fakirs than the weeks of shopping before Christmas. One widely syndicated newspaper article published in 1902 told readers that over ten thousand fakirs would be working across the country during the weeks leading up to Christmas, with hundreds of them crowding the sidewalks of cities such as New Orleans, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and Omaha.[17] Another nationally syndicated piece in 1913 gave a detailed portrait of the "Christmas street fakir" to readers and explained how the holidays served as "the harvest time of the whole year" for the sidewalk merchants.[18]

As a salesperson, the fakir could be cast in glowing terms. A syndicated article on fakirs during the Christmas season described the typical holiday merchant as someone "with a wit as incisive as his business acumen; possessor of a soul utterly incapable of being cast down, the ingenuity and imagination of a clever novelist, and the power to make word paintings that rival the alliterative work of circus press agents."[19] The unique confidence and charisma of successful sidewalk fakirs caused many to see them as possessing innate talents that could not be taught, while others described sidewalk fakirs as masterful students of psychology and

human nature. Because their income was almost entirely dependent on their own efforts, sidewalk fakirs were often praised for their drive and industry, no more so when they could move large amounts of otherwise unsellable merchandise or earn a year's worth of money in only a few weeks of frantic selling during the Christmas season.

That same ability to only work for a few weeks or months out of the year, combined with the mobile and freelance nature of their vocation, could also be held against salesmen fakirs, and they were frequently derided as being rootless and lacking discipline. *The Washington Post* referred to street fakirs as "the evolution of the genus hobo" and the *Times* of Philadelphia described the street fakir as the "next brother to the tramp, for he would prefer to go idle rather than work if he could not fake."[20] Sidewalk fakirs throughout the United States were also regularly described as outsiders or foreign. A preacher in upstate New York railed against fortune-telling fakirs as he carefully noted their "long black mustachios" and "sharp aquiline noses."[21] In 1894, several newspapers cast fakirs in explicitly ethnic terms with descriptions of fakirs as "mainly Greeks and Arabians" and "Persian candy men," and a personification of the fakir as the "unspeakable Turk" who "thrusts jewelry in your face and whines for recognition of the bargain."[22] Another newspaper described sidewalk fakirs as "strange a group of nomads as can be found anywhere in the world," and it was common for fakirs at crowded events to be described with the loaded expression "thicker than Egyptians at Cairo."[23]

The most common negative associations with the word "fakir" were fraud and deception. Because of this, and their similar spellings, the words "fakir" and "faker" became almost interchangeable and were used as suffixes that could be easily applied to a wide variety of dubious and fraudulent schemes. A man who ran a fraudulent investment scheme that promised to double the money of investors in Minneapolis by cornering the market in grain was arrested and dubbed a "wheat pool fakir."[24] There were "souvenir fakirs" who sold bootleg emblems and badges at conventions and gatherings for trade unions and fraternal organizations like the Grand Army of the Republic.[25] King Edward VII of England fell victim to a "dog faker" when he was sold an ordinary dog that was made appealing from the "elaborate results obtained by trimming, combing and cropping."[26] At the turn of the century there was a large public controversy over "nature fakirs," writers who made embellished or fraudulent observations about the natural world, that eventually involved President Theodore Roosevelt and the author Jack London.[27]

As the mixed uses of "fakir" and "faker" increased, there were frequent attempts to correct perceived misuses of the terms and establish neat and proper divisions between their meanings and their Indian and American referents. One reader of the *New York Times* wrote to the paper's editor and asked why the word "fakir" was used instead of "faker," since they intended to describe a trickster, not "one of an

order of religious beggars." They ended with a mocking suggestion that by using "fakir," "one might just as well write 'writir' or 'bakir' when one who 'writes' or one who 'bakes' is meant."[28] An article on the differences between American and British English counted the use of "*fakir* for *faker*" as one of many "inexcusable errors" committed by Americans on par with confusing "*one's self* for *oneself*" since according to the author, "*fakir* is a Hindustani word meaning, simply, *beggar*."[29] But "fakir" in the American context was not simply an error or a misspelling, rather it was a complicated and loaded term that had a range of meanings and implications that could refer to America, India, or both.

The attacks on sidewalk fakirs in the United States as lazy, vagrant, foreign, and fraudulent were likely influenced by perceptions of ascetic fakirs in India who were regularly included in travelogues to depict India as exotic and backwards and used as an example for a wide array of negative perceptions and stereotypes of religious life in India such as idolatry, idleness, self-torture, superstition, poverty, naivety, deception, fraud, and filth.[30] Mary Hastings Bradley mentioned "filthy fakirs" alongside "teeming bazaars… veiled women with clinking anklets… jewels of glittering splendor, rainbow silks, rivers of sewage" in her widely syndicated account of hunting in India.[31] Katherine Mayo mentioned fakirs in her polemic *Mother India* as naked and drugged beggars who "stream across the country feeding off the populace." And one famous missionary account of Chundra Lela, a Nepali girl who became a Christian after a youth spent in the "folly and cruelty of Hindu superstition," labelled her as "the converted fakir."

There were so many meanings within the term "fakir" that several of them could be applied to the same subject, and in some cases, multiple connotations of the term "fakir" could be applied to a single subject simultaneously. It was used in no less than three different ways in 1896 to describe various exhibitions of hypnosis. A fakir was someone with genuine inexplicable abilities when used to describe a man from Lahore who supposedly entered into a cataleptic state for a week inside a glass coffin on a train ride to the millennial exposition in Budapest.[32] A fakir was a deceitful faker when it was applied to a hypnotic test subject named Patrick Wilson who humiliated the San Francisco Psychical Society after it was discovered that he had "cruelly deceived" its members.[33] "A fakir described someone who deceptively used genuine extraordinary abilities in an account given of a group of men who "felt no pain" and could create the illusion of being under a hypnotic trance by showing no response when their ears were sewed up to their cheeks or when lit cigars were pressed against their cheeks during hypnotic exhibitions for paying audiences.[34]

The flexibility of the term was consistently applied to yogis, swamis, and other spiritual teachers. "Fakir" pointed to both con artists and wonderworkers in India in a syndicated piece that ruthlessly mocked Yogi Hari Rama, who arrived in the United States as Hari Mohan Singh and remade himself into an enormously

profitable yoga teacher. Yogi Hari Rama was a "fakir" who had "great success in selling (his) Super Yogi Science to the gullible" who "still believe in the 'miracles' of Hindu fakirs."[35] "Fakir" simultaneously implied being a mystic on Indian soil while also being a dubious or credulous imposter when it was applied to several Americans who travelled to India on spiritual pursuits: Henry Olcott of the Theosophical Society, a man from Tennessee named James Brandon who healed and drew large crowds in Pune, and a specious "Charles William de Rousette" who allegedly presided over a temple dedicated to Hanuman and the monkeys who lived around it.[36]

"Fakir" concurrently invoked con artistry, repulsive asceticism, and idleness to a writer for the *Detroit Free Press* who wrote on "the religious graft" operated by "fakirs" and used the example of a Hindu who "for awhile… buried himself in the native life of a loathy colony of fakirs" in India, came to America and "made a fortune… over the gullibility of the smart American people" as another kind of fakir, and then returned to India to "spend the rest of his days in luxurious idleness."[37] The author included American-born "fakers" who worked as Spiritualists and Pentecostal revivalists as part of the "fakirs" who found religion to be "an extremely practical, well-paying proposition." A similar ease in applying to the term to both those inside and outside of India came eight years later when Rustom Rustomjee, the Bombay-based editor of the *Oriental Review*, lectured in several American cities and warned his audiences about the false teachings that "handsome young Swami fakirs" had brought to the United States.[38] Rustomjee's examples of fakirs included the American-born "Omnipotent Oom" Pierre Bernard, the German-born Ernst Otto Haenisch who founded the neo-Zoroastrian group Mazdaznan, and India's Swami Vivekananda.

Another form of fakir that invoked multiple meanings of the term was the "accident fakir" who would fake injuries, most often on trains and in railway stations, to collect money from insurance claims and direct settlements. The "fakir" in "accident fakir" not only implied the faking that they engaged in, but it also invoked the laziness and idleness of fakirs. One speaker at the convention of the American Electric Railway Claims Association described them as those engaged in "the profession… of falling off trolley cars for a living."[39] The most famous accident fakir was a woman named Maud Myrtle Johnson who was known as "The Queen of the Accident Fakirs" after she staged dramatic injuries that resulted in compensation from over thirty different corporations across the country.[40] Johnson's proficiency in staging these injuries was due to her ability to dislocate her knees and ankles at will, and "fakir" in her case was also used to invoke the contortionism and physical deformities used by begging fakirs in India.

Accident fakirs were a serious concern of insurance companies, railroad, and local transit authorities. As they staged accidents in one location and then moved

to another (often changing their appearance and name), they left insurance companies and transit authorities were ill-equipped to identify individual accident fakirs or the larger methods of their trade. In the summer of 1905, Robert B. Armstrong, former Assistant Secretary of the Treasury under Roosevelt and then president of the Casualty Company of America, railed against accident fakirs at a meeting of the International Association of Accident Underwriters in a speech where he called them a "criminal troop" and compared them to check forgers and bank robbers.[41] The only way to eliminate the accident fakir from society, according to Armstrong, was through "co-operation and organization" and he helped to bring together several dozen companies into the Alliance Against Accident Fraud in order to generate publicity about "crooks, including professional litigants, 'fakirs,' false witnesses, shyster lawyers, tricky doctors, ambulance-chasers, and runners" and aid prosecution against them.[42]

The efforts that were made against the accident fakir by insurance companies and rail authorities were not unique. By the turn of the century, the figure of the fakir easily incited moral outrage and served as an effective catalyst for many industries and trades to modernize and organize themselves. One realm in which the fakir incited change was the selling of products. Timothy Spears noted in his history of salesmen that "much of the literature written by travelling men during the last two decades of the nineteenth century seems a direct condemnation of free-wheeling selling methods" that preceded them, and the fakir was commonly used as a specific didactic counterexample for individual salesmen.[43] A modern salesman was called upon to be the opposite of the fakir in numerous ways: their manner of dress, their honest and lasting relationships with buyers, their working of a clearly denoted and assigned territory, and their selling of goods based on scientific methods and appeals to reason. One monthly paper counseled insurance salesmen to "work consciously and enthusiastically" on the basis of a "fair and square business deal," unlike the street fakir who was a "sham" and "counterfeit."[44] An article by the Victor Talking Machine Company in the magazine *Salesmanship* went so far as to describe the way in which "prince among the salesmen" handled their stock with care and concern, since the street fakir roughly handled disposable and gimmicky merchandise "which neither buyer nor seller is called upon to respect."[45]

Advertising was another realm which was influenced by the threat of the fakir. Both companies looking to advertise and publishers looking to sell advertising space were concerned that the presence of fakirs in advertisements would cause general mistrust among the public. The periodical *Western Advertising* saw those in charge of advertising as a needed defense against "the fraud and the fakir," particularly in smaller cities and towns that lacked organizations like the Better Business Bureau.[46] A writer for the *Northwest Journal of Dentistry* described legitimate advertising as "an investment in public confidence" and went as far as to

claim that it was "the duty of every loyal citizen to give up some of his private time for the public welfare—and in no way can you help so easily as to support this movement against the advertising fakir."[47] The *Des Moines Capital* offered itself to advertisers as having "the reputation of being one of the cleanest newspapers in America," in part because it abided by an advertising standard of honesty and guarded its display and classified advertisements by "refusing the copy of the local medicine fakir" as well as "the fakir in the foreign field."[48]

The "medicine fakir," synonymous with the "snake oil salesman" and the "quack," was the bane of the medical establishment in the late-nineteenth century. Local doctors and state-level medical societies saw medicine fakirs who sold various nostrums and remedies as not only fraudulent but doing real harm by both selling items with dangerous ingredients and steering people away from proper medical care. In 1906, the American Medical Association established its propaganda department "to gather and disseminate information concerning health fraud and quackery," and the Pure Food and Drug Act was passed which required drugs to list dangerous and addictive ingredients and established oversight for drugs and penalties for misrepresentation. That same year, Agnes Foster Buchanan praised modern medicine in a Sunday feature for the *San Francisco Call* by contrasting its doctors and surgeons to another fakir.[49] According to Buchanan, the "Eastern fakir" dressed in a "gorgeousness of color" and "richness of tone" with a turban of "multitudinous folds," while the surgeon wore a long and plain apron of "white coarse linen" and a simple cloth to cover the head. The fakir of India traded in fake miracles, while the Western medical doctor performed real miracles as part of their daily work.

In 1947, ninety years after the Fakir of Ava began his gift shows, Republic Pictures released a movie titled *Yankee Fakir* that centered on a pair of colorful salesmen moving through Arizona with their patent medicine show. The film was a period piece, and by this time the term "fakir" had largely become an anachronism. The efforts of advertisers, the medical establishment, heads of industry, law enforcement, and popular culture all helped to hasten the demise of sidewalk peddlers, medicine salesmen, and various swindlers who were known under the term. When "fakir" was used in the United States after the Second World War, it mostly returned to its earlier uses and referred to ascetics and wonder-workers in India.

Numerous terms found their way into American English from India and existed as simple loanwords such as shampoo, jungle, and pajama. But other terms had more complicated histories. "Swami" outgrew its initial use in late-nineteenth-century America as a simple title for an Indian religious teacher. By the 1920s, a silky, and often brightly colored, synthetic fabric used in womenswear named "swami silk" had become popular. Its name capitalized on the association that the American public had with the dress of these teachers, such as "flaming kimono"

of Yogananda and the "flowing orange robe" of Vivekananda. Enough stage magicians and psychics had adopted Orientalist personae by that time that "swami" was also regularly used as a term for a fortune-teller. After the Second World War, sportswriters for newspapers across the country called themselves "swami" as they predicted the outcome of contests. One casino in Reno, Nevada, advertised its snack bar to potential gambling tourists by addressing them as "visiting swamis."[50] The connotations of fabric and forecasting would often combine as people would describe themselves as putting on their "swami robes" to predict the future.

"Guru" has been used as an informal title in recent decades to describe various teachers and experts. There are computer gurus, diet and fitness gurus, financial gurus, and gurus for political campaigns. It is often assumed that "guru" in this sense is a simple transposition of the original meaning of the term in Sanskrit for "teacher" or someone with "weight" or "heaviness," but studies of the influential corporate consultants known as "management gurus" suggests that the word is much more complex and nuanced.[51] Management gurus are charismatic and successful, but the title of "guru" also sets them apart from traditional experts, and it can suggest faddishness, pseudo-credentialing, an appeal to a naïve audience, self-promotion and commercial savvy, excessive devotion, and in some cases the implication of charlatanism. The contemporary meaning of "guru" in the United States would then seem to include over a century of accumulated connotations from the polemics against the earliest Indian spiritual teachers in the late-nineteenth century through the guides of Countercultural spiritual seekers during the late Sixties.

Like "swami" and "guru," the term "fakir" acquired numerous meanings through nearly a century of popular usage in the United States. "Fakir" could point to India, the United States, or both. "Fakir" could be a neutral descriptor and even occasionally have positive connotations, such as sidewalk fakirs at Christmas, but it was most often used with a range of negative implications. A fakir was a wonderworker, stage magician, impoverished ascetic, religious fanatic, lazy mendicant, colorful and animated salesperson, exotic foreigner, dishonest imposter, or criminal faker who preyed on the gullible. The image of the American fakir, never totally removed from its Indian counterpart, was strong enough to serve as a counterexample and catalyst that reformed salesmanship, advertising, and medicine, while inciting many industries to modernize. The term "fakir" in its full history shows how fluid, dynamic, influential, and complicated ideas of India were as they took hold in the American imagination.

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PART II

Missionaries and Political Activists

CHAPTER 4

American Humanitarianism in Colonial South Asia: The Famine Relief of the American Marathi Mission in Bombay, 1896–1900

Joanna Simonow

Abstract

The year 1896 marked the beginning of a prolonged period of hunger in India, during which the Protestant missionaries of the American Marathi Mission (AMM) in Bombay moved to the forefront of US-sponsored famine relief activities in South Asia. In response to changes in North American society that had encouraged American involvement in international disaster relief, Christian donors seemingly threw themselves into efforts to assist Indians. The chapter considers American famine relief in India in the late 1890s as a pivotal moment in the shared history of South Asia and the United States, but does not attempt to reproduce the narrative of unilateral American expansion or burgeoning humanitarian sentiment. The chapter shows how famine relief aligned with the AMM's efforts to gain a foothold in colonial South Asia. It challenges the typical American-centered historiography on humanitarianism by looking at the AMM's famine relief in Bombay as a site of mutual, if unequal, encounters between Indians and Americans and elaborating on some of the complexities this created.

Keywords: American Missionaries, Colonial India, Bombay, famine, humanitarianism

The 1890s saw a dramatic rise in American international humanitarianism.[1] Enabled by the material prosperity of the United States, Americans mitigated the effects of war and famine overseas to demonstrate the alleged moral, economic and religious power of the United States in the world. This included South Asia, where the year 1896 marked the beginning of a prolonged period of amplified hunger. Historians commonly divide this period into the famines of 1896–97 and 1899–1900.[2] Although Americans had shown interest in alleviating social ills in British India before, the scope of the responses of mission societies, philanthropists and the religious press in North America to these famines was unprecedented. In this chapter, I examine US-sponsored famine relief in India in the late 1890s as a defining moment in the history of the encounter of India and the United States, and

some of the multidirectional engagements of both societies that emerged against this background.[3]

The missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), who ran the American Marathi Mission (AMM) in Bombay since 1813, were amongst the most vocal advocates of greater US involvement in South Asia. Missionaries portrayed India as a land of evangelical opportunities and Indians as a people waiting to become Protestants. In the late 1890s, they kept the American public abreast of famine conditions in Bombay and mobilized considerable support for their famine relief efforts in the province. Although historians studying famines in South Asia have cited American missionaries as witnesses to famines in late nineteenth-century India, their relief work has rarely been the subject of historical study.[4] One notable exception is the work of Heather Curtis who has looked at the fundraising of the New York-based *Christian Herald* who channelled money and grain to missionaries in India.[5] Whereas Curtis contextualized such fundraising primarily in relation to the history of the United States, this chapter takes as its starting point the interconnectedness of the histories of South Asia and the United States, and seeks to identify how this interconnectedness further intensified during the famines.

Famine Relief and the Missionary Zeal: The ABCFM in Bombay

The first missionaries of the ABCFM arrived in India in 1813, at a time when the presence of US mariners and merchants in the subcontinent started to diminish. The Anglo-American War in 1812–1815 and the surge of US protectionism temporarily disrupted Indo-US trade relations. Consequently, missionaries rose to the forefront of the Indo-US encounter by outnumbering their other countrymen.[6] Michael A. Verney has argued that missionaries differed from their predecessors in their agenda and view of Indian society. This affected American perceptions of India. Americans no longer perceived India as a continent of commercial opportunity but of heathenism and poverty.[7] The fundraising efforts and reports that missionaries penned during famines in the nineteenth century contributed to this changing American imaginary of India. Yet, as they depicted India as a land ravaged by hunger, missionaries continued to outline opportunities for America. The returns of the US engagement with India, however, had shifted from the commercial to the spiritual realm. In the missionary parlance of the time, drought in India would be followed by rich harvests of converts.

The famines of 1876–78, 1896–97 and 1899–1900 were among the most severe subsistence crises that the people in Bombay experienced in the colonial period.[8] During the first of these three famines, the missionaries of the AMM provided sporadic relief. The AMM largely gave assistance in the vicinity of its mission stations. In Sholapur, where people from rural areas were seeking employment in the cotton

mills, the AMM distributed rice, bread, soup and *conjee* (a sort of rice porridge). With the financial help of other Christian missions in India, donors in England and Scotland, as well as Indian and British philanthropists in Bombay, the Mission fed 300 to 400 people daily from July to mid-September 1877. It also gave medical assistance to people who were brought to the mission stations.[9] In the 1890s, the AMM considerably expanded its famine relief work.

The American aid effort during the famines of the late 1890s became closely associated with the Yale-trained missionary Robert Allen Hume (1847–1929) who devoted much of his time and effort to fundraising, relief work, and reporting to American audiences on the missionary aid efforts in Bombay. The colonial administration even rewarded him with the *Kaisar-i-Hind* gold medal in 1901. It was the first time that an American received the colonial distinction. Hume was born as a third-generation AMM missionary in Ahmednagar to where he had returned in 1874 to step into his parent's footprints. He retired in 1926 and died in Brooklyn.[10] In 1897, Hume, stoked the hopes of American donors by promising them religious rewards for the money they were giving to the famine relief work of the AMM. In an article published in the *Christian Herald* from New York, the missionary assertively claimed that "there will be meetings and joy in heaven between those who in Christ's name have given and those who have received such aid."[11] Revealing as much of the agenda of missionaries as of the expectations of donors, the prophesied harmony of US benefactors and Indian beneficiaries "in heaven" of course presupposed that Indians converted to Christianity. The link between famine relief and conversion, however, was more intricate than missionaries wished to make the donors believe.

The AMM had long experienced difficulties in attracting new Indian members to its Christian community in Bombay. Twenty years after the first missionaries had arrived in India, the AMM counted no more than fifteen converts.[12] This was despite the geographical growth and its expansion into the rural hinterland. The opening of a new mission outpost in Ahmednagar in 1831 which precipitated the missionaries' work among rural low-caste communities (the Mahars and Mangs) facilitated conversions. However, with an average of eleven conversions per year between 1831 and 1855, the AMM was still growing at a rather slow pace in Ahmednagar.[13] The AMM's decision to undertake philanthropic work during the South Indian Famine was prompted by the devastation wrought by the famine, but also by the hope that such work could help them gain a foothold in an environment that missionaries commonly described as hostile. In the 1870s, missionaries of the AMM hoped that helping the hungry would break down resentment against its evangelical work and open access to new and larger audiences. Missionary publications of the time suggest that the AMM could enlarge its influence during the South Indian Famine. Hunger drove people out of the villages into urban areas and the spatial concentration of the rural population in cities and in the punitive environments of aid

camps and poorhouses allowed missionaries to preach to large rural audiences.[14] A tentative rise in the number of conversions can be discerned in Ahmednagar in the aftermath of the famine, but in general the number remained low.[15] The low turn-out of converts was also the result of the AMM's approach to conversion. Unlike their British counterparts, the AMM demanded converts to abandon caste in its entirety and was at pains to evaluate the incentives of applicants, renouncing them in case they failed to provide sufficient evidence to prove their sincere wish to become Christian.[16] This also showed during famine. Although the AMM wished to use famine to advance conversion, it exercised caution in choosing new members. In this context, H.G. Bissell, AMM missionary in Sirur (also Shirur or Ghodnadi), wrote in 1878 that the missionaries "found it necessary to be very careful in receiving candidates for baptism, testing their motives sometimes by weeks of probation and close scrutiny of their conduct."[17] The AMM's views on conversion also showed in its relationship to other mission societies. The aggressive approach of the British Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) had enabled them to convert large groups of Indians from low-caste communities during the South Indian Famine. Between September 1877 and February 1878, the SPG alone gained 16,000 new members.[18] The AMM rejected such mass conversions. In 1877, its missionaries lamented the encroachment of the SPG into its territory and the fact that this rivalling mission society apparently converted "inquirers" of the AMM who, in the Protestant estimation, were not ready to receive baptism.[19]

Despite such earlier experience that had shown that missionaries' work during famines did not necessarily draw (the right kind of) Indians closer to the Mission, the reports and articles that missionaries of the AMM penned in the famine years of 1896–1900 reinforced the claim that famine meant an opportunity to advance the mission movement. As in the 1870s, the pastors of the AMM again preached to the people who crowded governmental relief camps and handed out leaflets to declare famine a sign of God's demand for repentance.[20]

Apart from encouraging conversion, the missionaries in Bombay likewise intended their philanthropic work to help mitigating conflict and opposition. Such opposition had been discernible since the late 1830s when Indian communities protested against the conflation of educational and evangelical work in mission schools.[21] In light of its failure to attract new converts through traditional evangelistic work, the AMM had hoped to make progress by offering free education.[22] Following the conversion of two Brahmin teachers in Ahmednagar in 1839 however, a boycott of the AMM's schools forced three of them to close down.[23] In 1842, parents withdrew their children from a boarding school for girls in Ahmednagar in response to the conversion of three students.[24] When the missionaries of the AMM provided relief during the South Indian Famine, they regarded such work

as an "opportunity to show the Good Samaritan side of the Christian life", hoping it would soften opposition against them.[25] Such hopes however were largely disappointed as protests against the Mission's evangelical work was no less frequent in the aftermath of the missionaries' aid efforts. In 1877, while the famine was still raging, missionaries were advised to move in groups of at least ten to ensure that they stood a chance to break the protest in case their preaching was met with resistance.[26] Three years later, missionaries in Bombay reported that their street preaching regularly resulted in stones being thrown at them, so that seeking police protection became indispensable.[27] During the famines of the late 1890s, it was in particular the sheltering of women and children at the mission stations that incited opposition. In Satara, Bombay, the transfer of a female hospital patient to a mission ward sparked public protest. The missionary who arranged for the accommodation of the women in the mission station, Miss Bruce, claimed that an Indian medical officer had requested her help. His patient was to be discharged from the hospital although she still required medical assistance. The visit of Bruce to the hospital caused unrest and was reported to the Indian press. A debate ensued whether the medical officer was to be persecuted for his actions.[28] Such and other instances incited the wrath of a group of Hindu reformers. In 1897, the Arya Samaj, a Hindu socio-religious reform organization founded in Bombay in 1875, interpreted the activities of missionaries as a deliberate attack on Hinduism. It strove to mobilize nation-wide opposition against missionary famine relief and began to assist Hindu orphans and widows.[29] In providing such relief, the Arya Samaj also intended to demonstrate the capacity of Hindus to assist their co-religionists.[30] Missionaries of the AMM, to the contrary, tended to dismiss the claim that Hinduism offered a source of help. "The famine", Hume wrote to the readers of the magazine of the Women's Board of Missions *Life and Light for Women* in 1898, "made me see more than before something of the awful condition of men, and the inability of Hinduism to help men."[31] Meanwhile, the focus on providing shelter to women and children—a topic I shall return to in the last section of the chapter—led to a growth of the AMM's Indian Christian community. In 1898, the report of the AMM noted a gain of 1158 converts.[32]

Investing in South Asia: US Funds for Famine Relief in Bombay

The material prosperity of the United States and the growing willingness of Christian donors to assist distant people affected by war, famine and natural disasters enabled the AMM to expand its famine relief efforts in the Bombay Presidency in the late 1890s.[33] At the beginning of the famine of 1897–98, however, the financial situation of the AMM had looked bleak and had threatened to halt

the work of the missionaries in Bombay.[34] The annual budget application of the AMM for the year 1897 had been due before the famine drove up food prices and as a result, the approved budget fell short of the actual needs of the Mission.[35] More severe had been the failure of the American Board to attract sufficient funds from churches in these years, which led to a cut of appropriations for missionaries. In 1897, US missionaries received 5 to 10 percent less than before, while the allowances for Indian mission members were even cut by 30 to 45 percent.[36] The AMM reminded the Board of the special needs of Indian converts, arguing that conversion had cut off native Christians from their communities and rendered them dependent on the Mission's allowances. The harsh reduction of appropriations, especially as it occurred during famine, threatened to drive native converts away from the Mission, undoing the missionaries' hard-won success.[37] Missionaries therefore asked the American Board to reverse the reduction. Although the Board was sympathetic to the appeal, church donations further dwindled and the Board considered it impossible to raise the allowances to the previous level.[38] This conflict between the Board in Boston and missionaries in Bombay emerged against a change of donor preferences in the United States. American Christians started to prefer earmarked donations over contributions to general funds in these years.[39] While church attendees in the United States gave hardly enough money to cover the regular expenses of Protestant missionaries abroad, they gave more generously to so-called 'special objects.'[40] Touting famine relief in India and the assistance of "native helpers" as such "special objects", missionaries were able to partly fill their funding gap. Additional money came forward from other fundraising bodies who collected money in support of a wider group of American and non-American missionary societies in South Asia. Reverend Charles C. Creegan, ABCFM secretary of the US Middle District noticed that such fundraising efforts drew money away from the ABCFM. Donations of his congregation were diverted to the *Christian Herald* who had appealed to its readers to aid the famine-affected population in India.[41] The New York *Christian Herald* was the largest US sponsor of missionary famine relief in India. It had emerged as a leading religious journal in North America in the 1890s, after Louis Klopsch (1852–1910) had purchased the paper and made the controversial Reverend Thomas De Witt Talmage (1832–1902) its editor. Before the *Christian Herald* started to raise money for famine relief in India in 1896–97, it had gained experience in mobilizing funds for the famine-afflicted in Russia and Christians in Armenia. In 1899, it renewed its efforts to collect money for India and again solicited large sums in support of the famine relief of missionaries. It invested the bulk of the money to purchase grain surplus in Kansas that was shipped to India on the *City of Everett* in 1897 and on the *Quito* in 1900.[42]

The rise of American imperial aspirations and the growth of criticism of British imperial governance in the US contributed to the willingness of donors in the United

States to support the relief work of missionaries in India.[43] The editorial board of the *Christian Herald* made no secret out of its efforts to use the aid as a sign of Christian America's alleged moral and religious superiority. To spread this message widely, it sought broad media coverage. It invited journalists, philanthropists, and politicians to farewell the crew members in America as well as to greet them upon their arrival in India. When the ships landed at the docks of Bombay and Calcutta, the stars and stripes alongsidethe Christian cross were waving on deck; and when dockworkers unloaded the cargo, the names of the mission societies that had donated money surfaced in bold letters on the sacks of grain.[44] The US government was indirectly involved in the aid mission as well. US Congress had voted in favour of bearing the costs of the aid shipments to India, hoping that it demonstrated the strength of the US agricultural sector and its aspirations to dominate the global grain market.[45]

As Heather Curtis has demonstrated, the decision of the editorial board of the *Christian Herald* to raise funds for India a second time in 1899 was also motivated by the wish to reunite US evangelicals who had grown apart during the Philippine-American War.[46] The atrocities committed by US soldiers in the Philippines, brought to public attention by the Anti-Imperialist League, led religious leaders to speak out against US colonialism.[47] The *Christian Herald*, in an effort to defend US expansionist policies and to counteract criticism levelled against the sanctity of "Christian America", emphasized the "good" Christian aid could achieve in India.[48] It did so without criticizing British imperialism. Such criticism, however, was currently growing in the US, where press reports of the British war against the Boers in South Africa appeared alongside accounts of Indians dying of famine in the British colony. The combination of war and famine diminished US sympathies for British imperialism and instead created US solidarity with Indians and the Boers.[49] Analogies between the fight of Boers in South Africa and the struggle of the forefathers of the United States for national liberation appeared in the public debate on the Anglo-Boer War in the United States.[50] The *Cleveland Leader* called the disproportionate investment in defence of the Empire in South Africa at the expense of famine relief in India "one of the sorriest spectacles which our poor human nature has presented in many years" and added that this was "especially disheartening in view of the fact that it is the work of the nation which claims to lead the van in human progress and stands for all that is best in civilization."[51] The *San Francisco Call*, which reproduced the statement, carried a cartoon that showed how civilization demanded John Bull to stop pouring money into its war machine to assist its famine-stricken colonial subjects (figure 4.1).

Protest against British war spending even mounted in the heart of the empire, London, where the *Illustrated Missionary News* noted in June 1900 that "war has slain its hundreds, but famine its tens of thousands."[52] While even some British missionaries were outspoken in their criticism of British war spending, US missionaries

Fig 4.1 US Criticism of British war spending during the Indian Famine of 1899–1900. Source: *San Francisco Call*, 14 May 1900, 4. With courtesy of the California Digital Newspaper Collection.

remained silent during the controversy and even defended the colonial state against criticism at times. When the Committee of One Hundred on India Famine Relief (hereafter Committee of One Hundred) assembled in the Chamber of Commerce in New York for the first time in May 1900, its members consulted the missionaries Henry C. Potter (1834–1908) and Justin E. Abbott (1853–1932) who had recently returned from India. Members of the committee raised concern over the "drain of wealth" from India to Britain and the insistence of the colonial administration on relief through labour during the public meeting.[53] Potter and Abbott discouraged such criticism, referring to the allegedly demoralizing effect of gratuitous relief on the Indian society. They also defended the free market paradigm and praised the Indian Civil Service as "the best civil service in the world."[54] This did not go unnoticed by Dadabhai Naoroji (1825–1917), the first Indian member of the British Parliament and author of the bestseller *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (1901), who responded to Potter revealing his discontent about the Reverend's arguments.[55]

The Committee of One Hundred united New York's leading business philanthropists, including the mining magnate William E. Dodge Jr. (1832–1903) and John D. Rockefeller Jr. (1874–1960). It had formed in response to American missionaries

who had gathered during the Ecumenical Missionary Conference in 1900 and had called for a "larger national movement" to aid the people afflicted by famines in India.[56] The committee quickly spread throughout North America from its headquarters in New York in the weeks that followed its inception, eventually becoming the second largest contributor (after the *Christian Herald*) to the famine relief work of missionaries in India.[57] Contrasting with the evangelical outlook of the *Christian Herald*'s fundraising campaign, the Committee of One Hundred presented itself as a "citizen's movement" that intended "to show the sympathy felt by the citizens of New York for the victims of the famine in India."[58] The formation of the Committee of One Hundred points to the diversification of Christian-inspired fundraising for India in 1900 and to growing disagreement among evangelicals. First, advocates of Christian nationalism emphasized the superiority of the United States, while early proponents of Christian internationalism started to push against imperial and civilizational hierarchies, reflected in antagonistic views on the suitable engagement of the United States with India. This cleavage was still tentative, but it would widen in the following decades.[59] Second, although Rockefeller Jr. had been brought up under the influence of evangelical Protestantism which motivated his and his father's philanthropic endeavours, he had come under attack by evangelicals like Klopsch and Charles Sheldon. Sheldon sharply criticized New York's capitalists for enriching themselves on the one hand, and easing their conscience by contributing a fraction of their wealth to philanthropic purposes on the other. Prior to the formation of the Committee of One Hundred, Sheldon had decried that the dividends distributed to shareholders of the Rockefeller corporation could have saved millions of people in India. The *Christian Herald* continued to oppose Rockefeller in the early twentieth century, but eventually lost out to the financial potency of the Rockefeller Foundation.[60]

Differences between the two committees mobilizing relief for India surfaced again in the disagreement about the composition of the committee in India that was in charge of distributing the funds and grain from the United States. When the Committee of One Hundred came into existence in May 1900, it rejected the idea of contributing the money to the all-white and all-missionary committee that distributed the aid sent from the *Christian Herald*. The Americo-India Famine Relief Committee that was set up to administer the donations to the Committee of One Hundred separately from that of the *Christian Herald,* served to ensure its perception as "a civic agency" that provided aid irrespective of differences of "race or creed."[61] Differences that in New York seemed fundamental, however lost traction in Bombay. The Americo-India Famine Relief Committee merely counted one Indian member, the moderate Congress politician Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar (1855–1923); and whereas it forwarded a part of its donations to a small group of Indian institutions, the bulk of its funds still benefited missionaries.[62] Differences

between the two committees were also challenged by the overlap of membership and notably by the person of Robert A. Hume. In 1900, the missionary of the AMM became the chairman of the interdenominational missionary committee and simultaneously served as the secretary of the Americo-India Famine Relief Committee.

The Meaning of American Aid in British India

The missionary presence in India enabled Americans to occupy a special position in domestic, imperial and international efforts to relieve the famines of the late 1890s. Doubts about the effectiveness of colonial institutions in India, had led to the decision of donors in the United States to send donations directly to American institutions in the subcontinent. The majority of donations that were mobilized across and beyond the British Empire (including India) otherwise went into the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund.[63] Semi-official committees were in charge of distributing the money thereby collected and in doing so aimed to foster adherence to colonial expectations of charitable aid. Funded institutions were to identify the "deserving poor" through a rigorous assessment of needs to prevent those purportedly "undeserving" from receiving assistance.[64] The colonial administration further wished to channel charity into particular areas of work such as the provision of "comforts": milk, *ghee* (clarified butter) and vegetables to young children and the infirm, as well as garments and blankets. Charitable funds financed orphan care and the relief of "respectable persons" who the colonial state believed were inhibited by caste, class and social norms to join labour gangs.[65] Such money was also used to open relief works in villages for people who were unable to seek relief in distant government-run centres.[66] The structural set-up of American famine relief in India gave missionaries considerable latitude to design their "charitable work" to their own ideas. This, however, did not lead to a conflict with the basic principles of colonial famine relief. Similar conceptions of poor relief on the one hand, and the need to appease the colonial state on the other hand, account for the fact that missionaries organized aid largely in accordance with colonial expectations and standards.[67] The writings of Hume are evidence of this. Echoing the basic principles of the Indian famine codes, he stressed the importance of a stringent need assessment and the employment of those afflicted by famine to prevent indolence.[68] In addition, the AMM created relief camps that resembled British colonial institutions. Its "largest single relief camp" was set up in Sholapur, where famine sufferers conducted labour that corresponded with the sort of work demanded at official public works. At the peak of the famine, over 2400 famine-sufferers were digging, breaking stones, and fetching lime and sand to earn their livelihood in the missionary relief camp. In adherence to official standards, the relief camp was

situated within the compound of the AMM in Sholapur station, "on open ground just outside the yard" and was overseen by guards who maintained discipline.[69] At times, American missionaries even occupied positions normally held by colonial administrators. At the request of the provincial government, Robert Ward of the Methodist Episcopal Church managed a poorhouse in Godhra in the Bombay Province (today in Gujarat) in 1900. The portrayal of Ward's famine relief work in missionary publications was infused with the idea that Americans were more sympathetic to the needs of Indians than British colonial officers. In "Some Fruits of the Great Famine" Ward is depicted as a benevolent superintendent who "made it a point always to be accessible to the complaints of the people."[70]

Despite the many convergences of British and American famine relief, American missionaries intended their aid to be discernible as Christian American. To this end, each recipient of money from the Americo-India Famine Relief Committee "was handed a small printed slip saying that, since God has given him the money, he should thank him, do with the money what would please him, and ask him to bless the crops sown with his money." Hume who oversaw the distribution of the funds opined that in light of the note, peasants were likely to identify the next harvest as the consequence of "God's satisfaction with American charity."[71] The representation of Christian America in India was not limited to periods of famine or the relief work of missionaries. When Abbie B. Child (1840–1902), the editor of *Life and Light for Women*, visited Bombay a year prior to the onset of famine conditions in the province, she had witnessed the particular microcosm that missionaries of the AMM had generated:

> The dear old stars and stripes over the porch, and Mrs. Hume on the veranda, gave us a more quiet but no less hearty greeting, and the school gathered about us for a song. The refrain was 'Welcome to India!' 'Welcome to Bombay!' 'Welcome to Miss Child!' 'Three Cheers for Boston!' 'Three Cheers for Bombay.'[72]

As the waving American flag, the presence of Mrs. Hume on the veranda, and the conspicuous three cheers to Bombay and Boston suggest, the missionaries of the ABCFM were upholding national and cultural markers that identified them as Americans.[73] As the visit of Child and the presence of Mrs. Hume indicates, women were a prominent part of this gendered exhibition of Protestant America in the mission field. The first American women to join the Protestant missionary movement in South Asia had accompanied their husbands. Harriet Atwood Newell, the earliest woman missionary of the ABCFM who set out to live and work in India never arrived in the country but died together with her newborn on the sea in 1812. Succeeding generations celebrated her bravery and devotion to the missionary movement and her tragic fate curiously drew more women into missionary work.[74]

Since women were denied ordination, they mainly became teachers and organizers of women's clubs and bible study groups.[75] The demand for additional female teachers and trained missionaries who could support the work of the Mission by targeting Indian women in particular created new opportunities for single women in the 1860s and 1870s. After the inception of the Women's Board of Missions in 1868 that financed single women and collaborated with the ABCFM to meet the demands of personnel of the foreign mission movement, American women ventured abroad in greater numbers to aid the mission movement.[76] During the famines of the 1890s and in their aftermath women played a prominent role in overseeing the education of the female survivors and children sheltered in the mission stations. Their gender purportedly cast them as their natural custodians. As women oversaw the education and training of the new members in the aftermath of the famines of the late nineteenth century, they further consolidated their role in the mission movement. They likewise reinforced traditional gender roles and conveyed Protestant notions of femininity and conjugality.

Raising Indian Members of the AMM

At the end of the protracted famine period of the 1890s, the AMM accommodated 3000 Indian children in boarding homes and orphanages.[77] Some of them were also received by missionary families. This was, to a certain extent, a continuation of earlier practice. From the early years of the AMM, the American Board and donors in the United States had encouraged the adoption of children in India whom it regarded as being particularly receptive to the Christian message. In the nineteenth century, American missionaries in India occasionally took the custody of children, who were either orphaned or placed in the care of missionaries by their parents.[78]

Whether the children were to be raised in institutions or family homes, the AMM hoped to turn them into members of the Mission through their education and gradual conversion. At the same time, the missionaries were cautious about the extent of such a transformation. Since Indian members of the Mission were to serve as intermediaries between the AMM and Indian communities, missionaries were anxious to limit the children's adaptation to their new American Protestant environment. Other mission societies shared this approach. The India Mission of the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), an evangelical Protestant denomination from New York that worked in Akola in Bombay sheltered thousands of Indian children in the aftermath of the famine of 1899–1900.[79] In a 1911 article in the *India Alliance* of the C&MA, the author, Ruth Andrews, claimed to be the daughter of an American missionary couple who had taken in an Indian orphan in 1900.[80] Although it is not certain whether the story titled "My Adopted Sister" drew on the

memories of Andrews, it shed light on how missionaries strove to preserve the children's "Indian-ness". After the adoption of an Indian child, Andrew's mother considered it important "to keep her like her own people." The Indian girl hence kept her name (Durie), ate separately from the family, consumed Indian food and wore Indian clothes.[81]

The idea that educating Indian converts too much along the lines of American Protestants was a danger to the advancement of the missionary movement had also surfaced in debates about the training of adult Indian missionary members. The AMM began to scale up the training of native members in the 1850s. In 1896, it counted 362 Indian workers, of whom 20 were ordained pastors, 23 preachers and 66 bible women.[82] This count included Sumantrao Karmarkar (1861–1912) and Gurubai Karmarkar (1862–1933).[83] The later missionaries were born as the children of Indian pastors in Ahmednagar and Belgaum. They had joined the AMM in Bombay in the 1880s, but their frustration over gender and racial barriers that prevented them from pursuing higher degrees in medicine and theology in India had led them to seek education in North America in 1888. They did so against the resistance of missionaries in Bombay and the American Board, who feared that their exposure to American culture would diminish their "Indian-ness" and reduce their ability to earn the trust of Indian communities they wished to convert.[84] Managing to pursue their education in the US nevertheless, Gurubai Karmarkar became the second Indian woman to graduate from the Women's Medical College in Pennsylvania, following in the footsteps of Anandibai Joshee (1865–1887).[85] Sumantrao Karmarkar in the meantime, earned degrees in theology from Yale and Hartford. When they returned to India in 1893, they brought with them new contacts to American donors and changed ideas on missionary work. The fruits of such influences showed when the Karmarkars joined the Indian YMCA and YWCA. Their dual involvement left traces as some Y-methods made inroads in the more conservative AMM.[86] Sumantrao Karmarkar, who made himself a name as "the premier evangelist of Bombay" at the turn of the twentieth century, also became known for his tent meetings and the use of a stereopticon he had brought with him from the US to attract Indian audiences.[87]

After their return to India in the 1890s, the Karmarkars contributed to the famine relief of the AMM. They were part of a larger group of Indian members of the AMM, who visited relief camps and villages during the famines. They were going from house to house to identify women who were susceptible to the gospel and parents who were willing to give their children to the missionaries.[88] Indian members of the AMM camped near labour gangs, in which the famine-afflicted worked to earn a subsistence wage, to speak to the women who either laboured on the public works or had accompanied their family members. They also visited government relief works to assist Indian Christians in practicing their faith and to spread the gospel

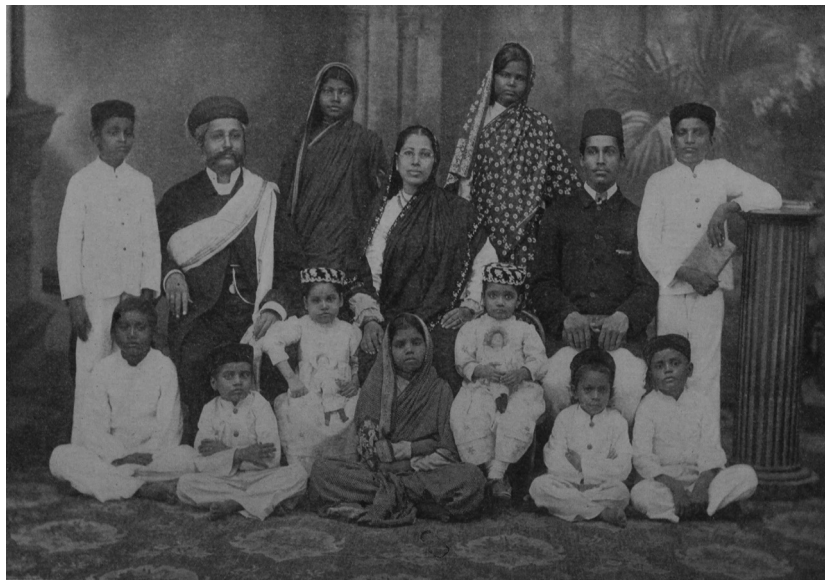

Fig. 4.2 'Karmarkar Family'. Source: *Life and Light for Women* XXIX, no. 3 (March 1899): 120.

among non-Christian workers.[89] Belonging to their wide range of activities during the famines, the Karmarkars also took custody of a number of children. The photo above (figure 4.2) shows the Karmarkars and a group of these children.[90]

To the left and right of Gurubai Karmarkar, who occupies the centre of the picture, are girls the couple had adopted. The different status of these girls within the composite family is rendered visible through the embroidered hats and dolls that distinguished them visually from the other children who although they lived with the missionaries, had not yet become part of the nuclear family. Information on the rearing and lives of these children is scarce. One of the adopted girls, who was given the name Prithi Hannah after her conversion, died in 1900.[91] Another boy, named Vishvasrao, had been taken in by the Karmarkars at the age of six, was raised by them and later followed his foster parents' example.[92] He went to America to study medicine in Pennsylvania and worked as a doctor at a hospital in Pittsburgh during the influenza pandemic of 1918–19, when he contracted the virus and died.[93] The ABCFM commemorated him tellingly as "the best product of India's life", while the Mayor of Pittsburgh and the Governor of Pennsylvania sent their condolences to his foster mother.[94]

To finance the education of the children, the AMM depended on the generosity of American donors. Since the Armenian massacre of 1894–96 had recently pushed missionaries to open orphanages in Armenia, orphan care had become a part of the

ABCFM's work.[95] Emily C. Wheeler had worked as a missionary in Armenia until she began to channel her energies into supervising child sponsorship campaigns in 1896 and now jointly raised money for children in Armenia and India.[96] Substantial assistance for the sheltering of children at the AMM was also coming from the *Christian Herald* who convinced its readers to subscribe to an annual contribution of 15 US dollars per child.[97] Fundraising efforts continued to shape American perceptions of India in the following two decades. Stories like the one Ruth Andrews had written about Durie in 1911 intended to solicit money for orphan care. That the child tragically died only shortly after her adoption was meant to prove the importance of missionary work, since the child's timely conversion allowed her ascendance to heaven. Andrews reminded her readers that "little Durie would not now be waiting for us in heaven, if we had not been able to take her in and provide for her."[98]

Conclusion

In 1900, Robert A. Hume was convinced that the aid brought to Indians in the previous years had drastically altered the relationship between India and the United States. "Today multitudes of people in the United States of America who never before had any interest in India now have become interested in all that affects this country", Hume wrote enthusiastically.[99] According to Hume, missionaries had helped building American compassion for famine-stricken Indians which resulted in a bond of affection. This, he prophesied, was to serve as the foundation of future US involvement in South Asia. That this bond was never purely affective but equally material is evidenced by the movement of money, grain and people between India and the United States in these years.

To fan the willingness of Christian donors to engage in humanitarian work in South Asia, missionaries portrayed India as a country of evangelical opportunities. The AMM fueled the surge of American humanitarianism and directed it to South Asia. The missionaries of the AMM saw famine relief primarily as a means to gain ground in a mission field that proved inhospitable to its evangelicalism. As donors gave unprecedented sums to support the relief efforts of American missionaries, the AMM could expand their activities in the province. While the AMM had long struggled to raise the number of Indian converts, the famines of the 1890s allowed them to make some progress in this regard. The migration of the famine-afflicted population to urban centres in search of labour and relief gave missionaries access to larger rural populations. The sheltering of women and children in the mission stations proved another way by which the AMM expanded its influence over Indian society. On the other hand, the resistance of Hindu reformers to the missionary advance in Bombay points to the limits of the attempts of missionaries to exploit

famine. US-sponsored famine relief accelerated conflicts between Indians and missionaries in Bombay—conflicts were at odds with the agenda of many donors in the US who viewed famine relief as a suitable channel to improve Indo-US relations. Efforts by American donors to formally distance themselves from British colonialism were evident in donors' preference to give to committees controlled by US missionaries. Such distance was tempered by the AMM's adherence to British colonial standards of famine relief and its cooperation with colonial administrators. The study of missionary famine relief in the 1890s thus also shed light on the conflicting demands that American missionaries faced in British India. Last but not least, the ubiquitous presence of men like Hume in the famine relief funds and committees in India and the United States should not gloss over the fact that American famine relief in India was not a white men's enclave. Despite the many self-celebratory depictions of American aid that presented hagiographic accounts of male missionaries who seemingly single-handedly saved thousands of children and women from starvation, American women and Indian mission members (men and women alike) were at the forefront of missionary famine relief. Their stories are much more difficult to trace. When we do, they reveal that the change that the AMM aimed to bring about in the hearts and minds of famine-stricken Indians, primarily affected itself and its relation with South Asia.

Notes

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[33] "A most successful year," *Missionary Herald* XCIV, no. V (May 1898), 176; While the bulk of the money was coming forward from the United States, the Marathi Mission noted that donations also came from India, England, Scotland, Turkey and Japan. Report of the American Marathi Mission for the Year 1897 (Bombay, 1898), 82.

[34] Report of the AMM for the Year 1896 (Bombay, 1897), 2.

[35] "Appropriations for India," *Missionary Herald* XCIII, no. I (January 1897), 1; "Indian Famine Relief," *Missionary Herald* XCIII, no. III (March 1897), 86.

[36] "Memorial from the Prudential Committee," *Missionary Herald* XCIV, no. I (January 1898), 2.

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[39] D.G. Dawson, "Mission Philanthropy, Selected Giving and Presbyterians," *American Presbyterians* 68, no. 2 (1990), 121–32.

[40] Eighty-Seventh Annual Report of the ABCFM (Boston, 1897), 18.

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[42] For a study of the *Christian Herald's* humanitarian campaigns in book-length see Curtis, *Holy Humanitarians*. Also see H. Curtis, "Depicting Distant Suffering: Evangelicals and the Politics of Pictorial Humanitarianism in the Age of American Empire," *Material Religion* 8, no. 2 (June 2012), 153–82.

[43] Tyrrell, *Reforming the World*, 98–119 here in particular 114.

[44] Lambert, *India, the Horror-Stricken Empire*, 194.

[45] Tyrrell, *Reforming the World*, 100–101.

[46] Curtis, *Holy Humanitarians*, 125–34. Moreover, Ian Tyrrell pointed to the role of Mary and Margaret Leitch, missionaries of the ABCFM who had worked in Ceylon, in convincing Klopsch to raise funds for famine relief in India in 1899. Tyrrell, *Reforming the World*, 111–12.

47 On US Anti-Imperialism see the introduction of I. Tyrrell and J. Sexton (eds) *Empire's Twin: U.S. Anti-Imperialism from the Founding Era to the Age of Terrorism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 1–18.

48 Curtis, *Holy Humanitarians*, 126, 138.

49 Tyrrell, *Reforming the World*, 114.

50 P.A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880–1910," *Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (March 2002), 1341–42.

51 Reproduced in "England's war and famine in India," *San Francisco Call* (14 May 1900), 4. Since Anglophobia was much more widespread among Democrats, the case of the Cleveland Leader—a daily associated with the Republican Party—stands out. See Kramer, 1341–42.

52 Cf. "Famine v. War," *Illustrated Missionary News* 18 (June 1900), 104.

53 "To Give Aid to Famine Sufferers," *New York Times* (10 May 1900), 6. The focus on labor in the administration of famine rested on the assumption that famines in India were caused by a lack of entitlements rather than to a lack of food. In addition, demanding labor supposedly facilitated the identification of the deserving poor while also encouraging "thrift" and "industriousness"—virtues held in high esteem in Victorian England. See D. Hall-Matthews, "Historical Roots of Famine Relief Paradigms: Ideas on Dependency and Free Trade in India in the 1870s," *Disasters* 20, no. 3 (September 1996), 216–30; L. Brennan, "The Development of the Indian Famine Codes Personalities, Politics, and Policies," in Bruce Currey and Hugo Graeme (eds) *Famine as a Geographical Phenomenon* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2012), 91–111.

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56 Report of the Ecumenical Conference on Foreign Missions (New York: Ecumenical Missionary Conference, 1900), 48; "To Give Aid to Famine Sufferers," *New York Times* (10 May 1900), 6.

57 Whereas the *Christian Herald* raised $641.072, the Committee of One Hundred had collected a sum of $252.988.42. See "Final Report of the Committee of one Hundred on India Famine Relief". Richard Roger Bowker Papers, Letters (Committee of the One Hundred on India Famine Relief 1900), New York Public Library; Curtis, *Holy Humanitarians*, 125.

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61 "The India Famine Fund," *New York Times* (12 June 1900), 9.

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63 Brewis, "'Fill Full the Mouth of Famine,'" 887–918; G. Brewis, "The Making of an Imperial Ideal of Service: Britain and India before 1914" (Unpublished dissertation, University of East London, 2009), 149–65.

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Sacred': The Sanatana Dharma Sabha Movement, the Reform of *Dana* and Civil Society in Late Colonial India," *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 47, no. 1 (January 2010), 107–39; M. Kasturi, "*Gurus* and Gifting: *Dana*, the *Math* Reform Campaign, and Competing Visions of Hindu *Sangathan* in Twentieth-Century India," *Modern Asian Studies* 52, no. 1 (January 2018), 99–131; N. Chatterjee, *The Making of Indian Secularism: Empire, Law and Christianity, 1830–1960* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 51–74; F. Osella, "Charity and Philanthropy in South Asia: An Introduction," *Modern Asian Studies* 52, no. 1 (January 2018), 4–34.

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[87] Ross Pripas-Kapit, "Educating Women Physicians," 127; Report of the American Marathi Mission of the ABCFM of 1912 (Ahmednagar, 1913), 12; Report of the American Marathi Mission of 1909 (Ahmednagar, 1910), 159.

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[96] Hazen, *A Century in India*, 85.

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[98] "My Adopted Sister," 637.

[99] A Year's Work in India, 62.

CHAPTER 5

‘One fifth of the world’s boyhood’[1]: American ‘Boyology’ and the YMCA’s work with early adolescents in India (c. 1900–1950)

Harald Fischer-Tiné

Abstract

Using age as a key analytical category and building on recent research on childhood and colonialism, the chapter analyzes the activities of the Indian YMCA’s ‘Boys’ branches’ established in all major Y branches in India, Burma and Ceylon between 1901 and 1950. The Y’s boys’ work scheme, designed to channel the energy of Indian males in the age group 10-17 into the healthy direction of ‘useful manhood’, reached the peak of its influence during the two decades preceding the independence in 1947. The chapter reconstructs the wider transnational trends that led to the Y’s increased attention to boys rather than young adults. The focus is on the medico-sociological American discourse of ‘boyology’, a specific body of educational and disciplinary knowledge that emerged around the turn of the twentieth century and was designed to solve the so-called ‘boy problem. The influence of U.S. boyology can be discerned in contemporary manuals designed for social workers and educators in South Asia as well as in their practical programs.

Keywords: YMCA, Indian nationalism, American Missionaries, boyology, history of childhood and youth, scouting

Echoing a global tendency among Christian and secular organisations that became discernible shortly before the First World War, the largely US-led and financed Indian Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) launched a separate Boys’ Department in the first decade of the twentieth century. It gradually widened the scope of its activities in order to attract young males aged ten to seventeen. This trend gained further momentum during the interwar period, when boys’ work became increasingly popular not only in North America, but in various ideological and political quarters all over the globe. In the South Asian YMCA branches, it reached the peak of its influence in the two decades preceding the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947.

In this chapter, I will first reconstruct the wider transnational trends that led to the new focus on boys. I will then flesh out the genesis and specificities of the

Indian Y's boys' work schemes. In this context, I introduce the two main pillars of the association's secular program for boys,[2] namely 'physical work' and camping and scouting, and discuss their ambivalent relationship with Indian nationalism. This analysis of these "adult-sponsored children's leisure activities"[3] places particular emphasis on the way YMCA boy experts oscillated between an idiom of universalism and the impact of cultural and racial stereotyping. As a result, Indian boys were either considered as equal or inferior to their North American and European peers, the latter position being congruent with the widespread views of the British officials and 'domiciled European' population in colonial South Asia. While the significance of colonial discourses cannot be denied, the YMCA's boys' work in India, Burma and Ceylon[4] was not simply an extension of imperial schemes. In many ways, it tried to promote its own profile as being distinct and superior to British imperial practices. Most obviously, the medico-sociological American discourse of 'boyology' shaped contemporary manuals designed for social workers and educators as well as the practical programs targeted at South Asian youngsters.[5] This quasi-scientific approach to working with young adolescents was seen as more advanced than imperial schemes, because it supposedly fostered the boys' capacity for 'self-government' and democracy. This purported superiority of American methods brought new responsibilities. As one YMCA 'boyologist' put it: "As our country is the home of democracy, other countries are constantly looking to us for the solution of the world's problems."[6] In this respect, the Y secretaries involved in boys' work in South Asia were perfectly in line with the wider trend of a *messianisme démocratique* that pervaded US civil society and politics from the late 1890s onwards.[7]

The close analysis of Indo-US entanglements in the field of 'informal education'[8] undertaken in this case study, then, allows one to assess novel aspects of youth work conducted in early twentieth-century South Asia. Simultaneously, it reveals how both global currents in the perception of 'boyhood' and adolescence as well as transnationally circulating models of 'harnessing youth' through character building, habit formation and citizenship training played out in a peculiar colonial context.

Contours of the "Boy Problem" in the United States and India

The boys' work programmes organized by the YMCA's Foreign Department were not unique. They must be seen in the context of the imperial mobilization of youth that was typical of the late Victorian and Edwardian British Empire and from there radiated across the Atlantic and to the wider world — including, of course, British colonies.[9] The establishment of the Boy Scout and Girl Guide Movements by Boer War veteran Baden-Powell in the late 1900s is probably the one outcome of this

imperial concern for the young that has received the most scholarly attention.[10] The Scouts, however, were preceded by two-and-a-half decades by another organisation that is less well studied, but also played a significant role as a template for youth organisations all over the 'Anglosphere' and beyond: the Boys' Brigade, first founded in Glasgow in 1883.[11] The Brigade, arguably "the first youth group to emphasize the specific nature of boyhood and to develop a programme and philosophy for this stage of life",[12] was soon copied in several British colonies. About a decade after its founding, it was also adopted in the USA where it enjoyed a certain popularity in the two decades preceding the outbreak of the Great War.[13] Much like the Boy Scouts, the Boys' Brigades developed their global appeal not least through their use of flamboyant uniforms, paramilitary drill and outdoor leisure programmes. The existing research leaves little doubt that the influence emanating from such 'crypto-imperial' youth organisations that were established with a view to nurturing civic virtues and inculcating the spirit of service for nation and empire was also strongly felt in North America.[14]

However, there was another current at play at the same time: the quasi-scientific discourse of 'boyology'. Embedded in the transformations of the broader understanding of childhood and fuelled by a motley crew of educators, psychologists, sociologists and social commentators of various backgrounds during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a vivid debate crystallized around (male) children as a potential risk for society.[15] The so-called 'boy problem' soon became a media-hyped phenomenon that generated sensationalist press reports on both sides of the Atlantic, which in turn triggered "cultural anxiety and concentrated reforms in society and education and juvenile justice".[16] According to the self-proclaimed experts, this new peril was partly due to the youngsters' lack of moral grounding in an urban world that simultaneously contained dwindling physical challenges and ever-increasing temptations through the lurid attractions of consumerism and an emerging leisure and entertainment industry.[17] As a result, the negative figures of 'degenerate' or 'deviant' youths, such as 'the hooligan' or the 'juvenile delinquent', were seen as imminent.

While there were some influential British publications on the 'boy problem',[18] the concern about the male child was particularly strong in the United States — a country, after all, that had had to cope with the "visceral effects of modernity"[19] and particularly with the loss of its 'frontier' and the 'character-forming' challenges it provided. It is unsurprising, therefore, that American scholars, youth organizations and 'boy workers' had a massive impact on the emerging field of 'boyology'.[20] With more popular cultural commentators sharing this concern about the potentially devastating effects of 'over-civilization', the "boy problem grew into a national epidemic" around the turn of the twentieth century.[21] As a result, 'boyology' became the undergirding element of "informal middle-class character building" efforts all over the country.[22] Even future US President Teddy Roosevelt (1858–1919) jumped

on the 'boyology' bandwagon, issuing public warnings in the late 1890s against American youth leading a 'life of slothful ease'.[23]

After 1900, Christian boy workers increasingly cited the work of scientifically-minded youth experts such as the tremendously influential psychologist G. Stanley Hall (1846–1924). Strongly shaped by the popular social Darwinist theories of the day, Hall's eponymously titled book ushered in the age of psychosocial *adolescence* studies in 1904.[24] They also referred to the more practically oriented writings of YMCA activists such as Luther Halsey Gulick (1865–1918), who popularized Hall's 'recapitulation theory' in his publications, lectures and speeches. This theory posited a correlation between the stages of child development and the epochs of human evolutionary history. According to Hall and his epigones, every individual passed through the various stages from savagery to civilization.[25] George Walter Fiske, another popular YMCA boyologist, explained this phenomenon as follows:

> "In many senses it is true that the savage is a child and the child a savage. […] Both live self-centred, egoistic lives and are little influenced by public opinion. […] Both are apt to shun labor, responsibility and care; having little foresight, worrying little and laughing much. Creatures of physical appetite, they are seeking for the creature comforts and the untrammelled delights of an out-of-door life."[26]

Leisure activities such as swimming, sitting around campfires and 'playing Indians' acquired an entirely new significance in view of this model.[27] In the genre-defining book *Boyology*, first published in 1916, YMCA boy worker Henry W. Gibson explains the psyche of early adolescents in using a similar logic. Thus, for example, Gibson emphasizes the 'uncivilized' conflict resolution strategies normally resorted to among his pupils, namely "the battle of words followed by the battle of fists". He elucidated that the twelve or thirteen year old boy "like his savage ancestry" saw no alternative to settling "his disputes in the primitive physical fashion", because "[a]rbitration ha[d] not yet come into his vocabulary or understanding".[28] According to Gibson and other Y experts, it was therefore the task of the YMCA boys' worker to apply their educational and disciplinary knowledge with a view to transforming this potentially destructive savage fighting spirit into "a strong impulse to do great things", thus ultimately producing a man who would be able to act as "defender of home, church, and country".[29]

To a considerable extent, these various agendas and strands of knowledge, which can only be broadly summarized here, shaped the North American Y's approach to the 'boy problem' and influenced the public debates and policies related to it. Luther H. Gulick, for example, disseminated the insights of 'boyology' to a broader audience in his capacity as a Professor at the YMCA International Training School in Massachusetts (today's Springfield College) for more than fifteen years.[30] His

contemporaries describe Gulick as a missionary "by instinct and inheritance", who left no stone unturned in spreading the "new gospel of health, happiness, wholesome living and efficiency" developed for America's youth to wider audiences even after he had left the College in 1901.[31] Meanwhile, his home institution in Springfield not only produced the first Boys' Work Secretary of the Y's International Committee, appointed in 1900,[32] it also trained scores of secretaries who would later work around the world, not least in South Asia.[33] In the early 1920s, the training of experts in this rapidly expanding field was further professionalized when a special four-year BSc program was designed by the College authorities in Massachusetts with a view to attract "men of unquestioned character [...and] genuine aptitude" and educate them to become boys' workers.[34] At least half dozen of the Springfield trained Y volunteers served in the Boys' departments of South Asian cities and many more worked as physical directors, in which capacity they also had a formative influence on Indian pupils and high school students with their "scientific program of body building and character building."[35] It was mainly through men like John H. Gray (class of 1904), John W. Storey (class of 1906), Harry Crowe Buck (class of 1910), Harold Gething Beall (class of 1911), and other graduates of the YMCA International Training School that this particular type of knowledge first reached the Indian subcontinent.[36] 'Scientific Boyology' was taught at the International Training College well into the 1930s, as is evident from some of the theses submitted at Springfield. G. Stanley Hall's recapitulation theory, for instance, featured prominently in the 1932 Master thesis of a Springfield alumnus from Madras, while Gibson's standard work informed the teaching material used for training Boys' workers at Springfield.[37] Moreover, long-term Springfield College President Laurence Doggett (1896–1936) and G. Stanley Hall frequently communicated directly. In 1917, for example, Doggett contacted the prominent psychologist, who was also President of Clarke University, to recommend one of his alumni serving in the Indian YMCA for a scholarship at Clarke.[38] It is also safe to assume that, at the same time, the writings of professional American boys' workers as well as those of other popular and academic boyologists of various backgrounds circulated in the region through the libraries that were staple features of all urban YMCA branches in India, Burma and Ceylon.

That said, the fact that western experts and missionaries thus strove to transfer their educational knowledge to South Asia does not necessarily mean that those at the receiving end were interested in it at all. Let us therefore briefly explore the situation that the aspiring boys' workers from the United States and Canada confronted in the Indian subcontinent.[39]

The public controversy about the best ways to channel the potentially destructive energy of boys and early adolescents in the age group ten to seventeen in British India, was largely restricted to the minuscule elite minority who received an English education.[40] Predictably, the question of colonial imposition and the supposed risk of

'de-nationalization' through western-style educational institutions for male children and adolescents[41] loomed large in discussions of the Indian variety of 'boyology'.[42] The humiliating fact of colonial subjugation together with the imperial discursive strategy of representing colonized subjects as either child-like or effeminate played a crucial role in this context. It persuaded many Indian reformers and political activists from the last two decades of the nineteenth century onwards that it was not only vital to stop the 'degeneration' of the race by reinvigorating the younger generations, but also to do so in specifically indigenous ways.[43] In spite of the fundamental asymmetries between the colonizers and the colonized, some of the concerns that had triggered the transatlantic discourse on the 'boy problem', resurfaced in the elite debate around the effects of 'Western education' in the Indian sub-continent.

Especially in the half-century between the 1880s and the 1930s, countless articles in English and vernacular Indian newspapers and journals were devoted to reflections on how to acquire scientific and technical knowledge from the West and at the same time stop the combined processes of cultural alienation and moral corruption. The latter were regularly depicted as inevitable side effects of a 'Western education' perceived as materialistic and superficial.[44] The alienating, 'artificial' and unhealthy character of student life was stressed by many of the emancipatory indigenous elites organized in the Indian National Congress from 1885 onwards.[45] The exclusive focus on book-learning, the allegedly corrupting influence of the urban environment in which institutions of higher education were usually situated and the complete lack of physical education characteristic of colonial schools and high-schools were other items that featured regularly in the 'snagging lists' of Indian critics of formal education under the Raj.[46] Speaking in 1913 and using a vocabulary strikingly similar to the one deployed by Teddy Roosevelt, Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), a prominent Hindu reformer from the Punjab province, tried to persuade an audience of local high-school students of the necessity 'to develop grit and determination'.[47] According to him, 'building character', 'leading a strenuous life', and the cultivation of 'good habits' was indispensable, because 'discipline [wa]s the secret of success' both for one's own personal development as well as 'for the progress of the country'.[48] Rai's stance was fairly typical. As Carey Watt has observed, "emergent definitions of the ideal Indian citizen" articulated by Indian nationalists and social reformers from the 1900s onwards were "rather conservative and tended to stress expectations of obedience, self-discipline and self-sacrifice."[49] Sharing his view, German historian Franziska Roy has emphasized that youth movements and organizations in late colonial India, were "permeated" by a "sense of necessary self-purification to counter a perceived decadence or 'lack of modernity', and this was to be achieved through selfless service".[50]

Thus, ironically, both the diagnosis and the cure proposed by the emancipatory elites in India were astonishingly similar to the ones advocated by social reformers

in Britain and North America and even, for that matter, Western purity activists and temperance campaigners already active in South Asia.[51] The self-targeted 'middle-class-civilizing mission'[52] agenda advocated by South Asian nationalists and reformers helps us understand why extracurricular learning and structured leisure activities of the kind offered by the practice-oriented 'boyologists' of the Indian YMCA converged with quite a number of similar indigenous revitalisation endeavours. Clearly, these efforts were seen as potentially healthy and much-needed supplements to the one-sided and 'bookish' instruction imparted in high schools and colleges.[53] A partial overlap, at least, with the overarching Y-project of "harnessing the power of youth"[54] was what could be expected from the small minority segment of the predominantly high-caste, middle class, urban elites. Significantly, this social group not only produced the principal carriers of the Indian nationalist movement, but it also constituted the main target group for the American Y 'secretaries' in South Asia. It is to the latter's background and agendas that we turn next.

The Development of Boys' Work in the Indian YMCA

South Asia's first branch of the Young Men's Christian Association had been founded by Britons in Calcutta as early as 1857, but the movement developed only slowly in the region during the following years. Its growth was hampered by the fact that the early branches run by British YMCA members aligned with the official colonial politics of keeping the social distance between rulers and the ruled. Almost without exception, therefore, the British 'sahibs' organized in the first YMCA branches were at pains to exclude "natives" from their ranks.[55] The spread of the Y movement in the Indian subcontinent gained new momentum only in the 1890s under the dynamic leadership of young American secretaries. These new volunteers were college-trained, many of them graduates from Ivy League universities. They completely restructured the organization from 1890 onwards and gave up the 'whites only' policy, claiming to afford "its privileges alike to all young men without distinction of race, rank and religion."[56] Their reforms and the new focus on winning the hearts, minds and bodies of South Asians prompted continuing growth rates over the next years.[57] Nevertheless, around the first decade of the twentieth century, it became apparent that the ambitious goal of "evangelizing the world in this generation", set by YMCA functionary John Mott at the turn of the twentieth century,[58] seemed to be unachievable in South Asia, due to the severe limitations of the social segments targeted by YMCA programs. Some of the larger YMCA city branches therefore began to enhance the usually targeted age group of youngsters in the college-age (roughly between eighteen and twenty-five), by setting up of distinct Boys' Division, especially designed to cater to the needs of younger teenagers.

The authorities of the Madras YMCA led this reorientation towards the youngest and established a Boys' branch as early as 1901. Its membership rose from 38 to 100 during the first decade, reaching 169 in 1914.[59] In 1902, the Y's Rangoon branch opened a Boys Brigade, which offered bible classes as well as outdoor sports and "drill" for over 50 boys.[60] However, it was initially targeted only at European and 'Anglo-Indian' (i.e. mixed-race) children. It became a full-fledged boys' department, accommodating Burmese, Chinese and Indian teenagers, too, in 1906.[61] The third branch to offer "Boys' work on the American plan" was Calcutta in 1903,[62] where a new building was erected for the purpose.[63] This had become possible through a generous donation of 50,000 Rs by the department store tycoon (and former U.S. Postmaster General) John Wanamaker from Philadelphia.[64] Wanamaker was one of the most prominent sponsors of the Y-movement's international work and had financed several other YMCA buildings in Asia and the Middle East before. With C.S. Paterson from Montreal, who assumed office in December 1904, the Calcutta boys' branch also employed the very first North American full-time 'boys' secretary' in Asia.[65] The membership had doubled to 124 within the first four years of its existence. It reached about 300 by 1915 and peaked at more than 450 in the mid-1920s.[66]

In 1905, it was resolved that boys' work would "become a regular as well as most important feature of the larger centres, at least where schoolboys are accessible".[67] This specification clearly shows the elitist bias in the early phase of the programme: Throughout the 1900s and 1910s the YMCA leadership took the stance that only high-school boys (preferably those with a sound knowledge of English) would constitute a worthy target group for their 'character building' efforts. Y secretary W. B. Hilton, who was in charge of the boys' branch in the Rangoon YMCA, stated in a report that early adolescents in South Asia could be subdivided into four classes, namely: "A. Coolie Class, B. Servant Class, C. Clerk Class; D. Wealthy Class" and explained that it was almost exclusively the high school boys stemming from class D, that "Y.M.C.A. branches for Indian boys in Calcutta Madras and Rangoon carry on work for".[68] Accordingly, the next Y branches that would follow suit by launching special boys' programmes were also situated in big cities with sizeable communities of 'native' pupils in English medium educational institutions. Bangalore, Bombay, Lahore, Allahabad, Colombo, Delhi, Calicut and Jubbulpore all started boys' work schemes before 1919.[69] following the same logic, an internal report lamented that the Y had not managed to offer boys' work in Poona, despite the fact that in the western Indian city:

> 4,797 high school boys challenge the Young Men's Christian Association. Fifteen hundred of them are sons of the influential people of the higher classes […]. No other agency is making any attempt to direct the lives of these potential leaders of Indian affairs. The Association

> has in this open field a big opportunity to prove its value to the community and help make clean and strong and honest the youth of this old land.[70]

Not all the local ventures were successful either. In fact, most of the boys' branches founded between 1906 and 1918 had to be shut down after two or three years, be it because the membership figures remained too low, or for the simple reason that no suitable 'boys' secretary' could be recruited. The various branches' reports therefore constantly reiterated that "the work suffered from the lack of trained, permanent leadership".[71] This happened in most cases because the high-salaried Americans, Canadians or Europeans, regarded as qualified for the job, were too expensive for the smaller Y branches, whereas 'native leaders' were either considered not sufficiently trained, or reluctant to perform the task.[72] We will have to come back to this point later.

To be sure, the developments on the Indian 'mission field' were strongly shaped by such internal dynamics. At the same time, however, one has to take into account the broader global trends and the shifting international strategies of the YMCA. Partly driven by the surge of 'boyology' debates in the United States, Boys' work had acquired a central place in the YMCA's activities on a global scale by the 1910s. In 1914, the first *World Conference of Y.M.C.A. Workers among Boys* was held in Oxford with 75 international delegates in attendance.[73] One of its resolutions underscored that it was "essential for the YMCA work to begin when the life of the growing man can be most surely influenced; that is, during boyhood and adolescence" and accordingly stipulated that "the World's Committee should give an adequate place to Junior Work and develop means by which its interest may be best served".[74] However, these ambitious plans were scuppered by the outbreak of the Great War and the subsequent reallocation of Y funds for 'army work'.

It was therefore only in the 1920s, that the new prominence given to the global 'boy problem' finally translated into concrete action. This move towards 'applied boyology' became most drastically visible in the organisation of the Second *World Conference of Y.M.C.A. Workers Among Boys*, held on the shores of the bucolic Lake Wörth at Pörtschach, Austria in 1923 and described by American Y officials as "the outstanding event of the period".[75] The conference, — manifestly shaped by the upsurge of internationalism and the general quest for a stable world order characteristic of the early interwar years —[76] was designed to map the 'place of boyhood in the world'.[77] It was much bigger than the original gathering in Oxford and attracted more than 950 delegates from 51 countries, including three representatives from India and Burma.[78] In a well-received address, the American Y leader John R. Mott famously declared "Boyhood" to be "the greatest asset of any nation", reminding his audience "not only of the primacy of […boys'] work, but also of its immediacy".[79] The general enthusiasm that spread among Y workers in the

wake of Mott's speech and the huge gathering more generally, catalysed the efforts to develop more numerous and more sophisticated boys' work schemes in most countries where the YMCA was present.

In the next decade, the efforts were hence intensified and the approaches became more nuanced and diverse. As a result, in Southern India, various schemes of work specially targeted at illiterate village boys were developed.[80] Alongside this, several local YMCAs became involved in scouting, occasionally co-operating with a number of provincial, national and international Boy Scout associations (of which more will be said later),[81] and in the second half of the 1930s, Canadian boys' work secretary John Dunderdale enriched the boys' work programme in South Asia with a specially developed 'leadership training' course for early adolescents. The course design reflected the increased emphasis placed on "the problem of leadership training" by the World Alliance of YMCAs from 1929 onwards,[82] and was offered annually in Madras, before most resources of the Indian Y were, once again, reallocated to 'war emergency work' after 1940.[83]

In sum, one can observe that the Indian YMCA's boys' work scheme was significantly expanded in the interwar period. However, unlike other activities of the association, the history of the boys' work programmes was not a straightforward success story. Growth was interrupted by repeated local failures and severely hampered by the chronic shortage of staff and funding. The latter problem became especially serious after the Great Depression dried out the donations from the United States and Canada in the early 1930s.[84] All such difficulties notwithstanding, in 1940, no less than twenty-one local associations all over India, Burma and Ceylon conducted boys' work of some kind or the other.[85]

Malleable Lads, Modern Menaces, and 'Native' Suspicions

The debates following the inauguration of the first separate boys' branches in Madras, Rangoon and especially the capital Calcutta allow an interesting glimpse on the YMCA secretaries' perceptions of the boy-problem in India. Most notably, they address the question of whether or not schemes of informal education developed in the West soon after this innovation had spread to the subcontinent "under American influence" were universally applicable.[86] During a meeting of the Y secretaries working in South Asia in 1907 held in Lanauli, a small hill station near Bombay, several participants addressed the prospects of the new boys' branches. P.E. Curtis, a YMCA secretary representing a branch with a majority of British members, stressed the importance of devising special programmes for European Boys in the subcontinent, observing that the white boy was "…neglected in India and we get hold of him only when practices detrimental to his moral, intellectual and spiritual life have taken root in him".[87]

Although Curtis does not mention the class background of the envisaged target group with a single word, his intervention clearly points to the problem of the so-called 'domiciled community', or 'poor whites' in British India.[88] As colonial administrators, well-heeled businessmen or high-ranking military officers normally sent their sons to Britain for the entirety of their education,[89] it was only European families of the lower middle classes, the working class (such as railway employees) and the 'white subalterns' in the imperial bottom drawer,[90] who faced a 'boy problem' in British India. The practices regarded as detrimental to the European "moral, intellectual and spiritual life" are not specified any further, but many other contemporary statements made by YMCA workers and other Western missionaries would suggest that the proximity to the Indian population with their allegedly immoral religious and recreational practices are being alluded to here.[91] Combined with the tropical climate, intermingling with 'natives' was widely held to create "a thirst of that thrilling recklessness of absolute self-abandonment", in Europeans tempting them to lead "lives as purely animal as the most sensual rajah."[92] It was this widely shared assumption in "the degenerative impact of the tropics",[93] which had both orientalist and environmentalist overtones that rendered the 'white boy problem' particularly pressing in colonial South Asia.

Curtis was not quite sure about the best method to save the endangered white boy from these pernicious influences. While he showed some sympathy for the British "Boys' Brigades system" with its "military training",[94] he also acknowledgeed that the original could not be transferred unaltered to the context of a colonial society without the risk of potentially embarrassing cultural misunderstandings:

> The [Boys' Brigade's] uniform as laid down by the authorities at Glasgow is not suitable for India. Apart from the fact that the cap is no protection from the heat of the sun, its style is not unlike the headgear worn by one of our native troops. No lad wants to be a butt for the ridicule of others, and no plan is more effective in driving away a boy than to ridicule him. He objects to being called a Goorkha.[95]

Being confused with a 'native' soldier, then, was regarded as a humiliation for a European boy and the Boys' Brigade-cap did not adequately protect him from 'the perils of the midday sun'.[96] Curtis ultimately rejected the British Boys Brigade template because of a combination of cultural and climatic incompatibility and instead supported the American Boys' Club model. This example clearly brings out the tensions that still existed between the older British-dominated YMCA branches in India, which were at pains to keep the social distance between the rulers and the ruled, and the more liberal associations run led by US secretaries. At the same time, it demonstrates the growing importance of both the theoretical 'superstructure' of American boyology as well as its applied methods.

The second speaker to address the 'boy problem' at the Lanauli meeting was the Indian Christian H. G. Banurji, who worked under C. S. Paterson in Calcutta. Unlike Curtis, he focused exclusively on the prime target of the newly created branch in the 'second city' of the Empire': the Indian high school boy.[97] It is fascinating how Banurji, on the one hand, stresses the equality of boys all the world over, underscoring that "the Bengali boy [wa]s no exception". The Calcuttan Y secretary finds it nonetheless necessary to mention that "the same boyish elasticity and impressionableness of character that are so common in other lands and climes" were also typical of the Bengali boy. This is particularly revealing, as he underscores that this malleability was by no means based on innate 'racial traits' of the Bengali, but emanated from the fact that Bengali lads shared 'universal boyish qualities'.[98] Such statements betray the felt need to resist the colonial gaze and counter the widespread colonial stereotype, according to which it was precisely the climate that rendered 'the Bengali male' soft, weak and 'effeminate'.[99]

Banurji's speech also is one of the few sources that dwell in some detail on the concrete social evils, against which the urban boys' work was supposed to serve as a protective shield. The "wholesome recreation" offered at the boys' branch was meant to do more than merely guard pubescent teenagers against the "multitudinous temptations" of "impurity" in the city — the phrase of the period that referred to prostitution. Nor was its sole purpose to counteract "[e]vil companionship, the theatre, and the perusal of obscene books",[100] which would otherwise have filled up the spare time and corrupted the character of boys in the colonial metropolis. They were also designed to fight against still more devastating temptations. As Banurji elaborates, there existed a novel drug problem, which threatened the health and morals of high-school boys' and hence required immediate action:

> Besides the very common and pernicious habit of smoking, Cocaine has gradually made its influence felt amongst our boys and can now count its victims in scores, if not hundreds. It seems an almost helpless task to stamp out this disease […] — so strong is its hold upon those whom it can once bring into its clutches.[101]

It is striking how this description of the local problems and constellations reminds of similar contemporary accounts about the drug menace in the big North American cities.[102] From this perspective, at least, the Canadian and American boyologists serving in Calcutta and Rangoon must have felt well prepared for the local challenges.

Banurji's speech is valuable for yet another reason. Towards the end of his talk, he mentioned "one of the great barriers to the work in Calcutta",[103] namely the reluctance of local parents to send their children to the YMCA because of its being identified as a Christian and Western institution. Given the spirit of patriotism

accompanying the anticolonial Swadeshi movement that took shape precisely around this time,[104] such an open collaboration with Westerners — even ones unrelated to the colonial rulers — would have been frowned upon by many. Besides, the fear that the Christian Association would use their influence over boys to convert them loomed large in the minds of many Hindu and Muslim parents. Although the actual conversion figures remained extremely low, such anxieties were not completely unfounded. Thus, an internal report triumphantly mentions that in 1909 "the first convert from Hinduism was baptised" in the Calcutta branch.[105] In order to dispel such concerns by patriotic and/or religiously conservative South Asian clients, the boys' secretaries and other YMCA authorities would increasingly emphasize over the coming decades, that parents could rest assured "that while their boys [we]re spending leisure hours at the Y.M.C.A., they [we]re surrounded by an environment that [wa]s healthy, congenial and uplifting", but not proselytizing.[106] It was hoped that the anxieties held by nationalistically inclined South Asian elites about the alleged lack of 'grit' and 'character' among Indian youth would make them eventually turn to the Y's boyologists, who made grandiose promises about the effects of their methods on national progress and the prospects of gaining political autonomy. Calcutta boys' work pioneer C. S. Paterson even declared in 1936 that Indian independence would necessarily end in a disaster "until courageous, well-trained and public-minded leaders [we]re developed" with the help of the Y.[107]

However, the Association did not have to grapple only with widespread parental distrust and nationalist suspicions. As we have seen, finding suitable Indian Y members who were willing to work as boys' secretaries also proved to be difficult throughout the entire period under study. The experienced boys' worker and General Secretary of the World Committee of YMCA's in Geneva, Tracy Strong, spent several months in India in 1933 inspecting the boys' branches. Summarizing the impressions gathered over his tour, Strong provides an interesting cultural interpretation of the problem of 'native leadership':

> Men who see the unique opportunity for work with boys in the Young Men's Christian Association are not numerous. In a country like India, the situation is still more difficult. Boys' Work is new. Many persons are suspicious of the intentions of a man who associates with boys. Parents fail to appreciate what a man outside the family can do to help them with their sons. There is neither prestige nor security in the position of a Boys' Work Secretary, so that men hesitate to specialise. […] On the other hand, it is almost essential that the leadership of the Indian boys must be given by Indians who understand the language of the boy and the social background of which he comes.[108]

According to Tracy, then, a commitment to boys' work was often misread in the Indian cultural milieu as a sign of paedophilic propensities, while, at the same time,

Fig. 5.1 Problematic position *in loco parentis*: an Indian YMCA secretary with a high-school student (Madras (c. 1924). Source: Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota (KFYA).

career prospects were much more attractive in other fields of specialisation. Both factors combined made the recruitment of Indian boys' workers so challenging. The Y authorities undertook various, at times quite costly, attempts to solve this persisting problem: in the 1940s a 'training fellowship' was introduced, allowing selected Indian candidates to undergo special boys' work training in the United States.[109]

Let us now move from the motives that led to the setting up of the scheme and the intrinsic problems it faced over decades, to the precise methods that were developed and implemented in the boys' branches.

Working out Indian Boyhood: Sports, Games and Physical Culture

The available sources leave no doubt that Y secretaries regarded the 'physical programme' as the centrepiece of boys' work in most Indian divisions. This was completely in line not only with the widely shared insight that power is primarily exercised by enacting rituals on and through the body,[110] but also with the general strategy of the YMCA's International Committee in New York. In a report on the

latter's "Boys work in the Foreign field", Secretary Donald Dutcher singled out the "attraction of up-to-date physical equipment" — i.e. modern gyms and swimming pools — as a particularly efficient method of spreading the gospel of Y-boyology across the world. Writing in 1920, he opined that

> The physical privileges, which have been developed as a specialized contribution of the Association to the community, meet the need just as much and are as popular with boys abroad as they are in North America. The gymnasium and bath controlled by a trained physical director are as much needed and as much appreciated in foreign communities as they are at home. Herein is an opening wedge to the confidence of any community in our work.[111]

The belief in the "opening wedge" function of sport and physical culture meant at least for the bigger Indian boys' branches that they would collaborate closely with the 'physical directors' that were employed from the end of the 1900s onwards. Like some of the boys' secretaries, almost all of the early physical directors working in the Indian mission field had received their training at Springfield College. After 1920, additional sports experts were trained locally in the YMCA College of Physical Education in Madras.[112] The Calcutta branch pioneered the trend of professionalizing its sports offerings for boys, first in 1903 through the installation of "up-to date physical equipment" imported from the United States in the new building, and later in 1908, when John H. Gray (1879–1964), the first full-time physical director working for the YMCA in Asia, "took over the charge of gymnasium work" for the boys.[113] A few years later, Gray also pioneered the popularisation of 'scientific' playgrounds in India. It was under his aegis that a fully equipped demonstration playground was inaugurated in the Calcuttan suburb of Ballighata. As the mouthpiece of the American playground movement emphasized a few years later, it was "opened along the lines of similar demonstration playgrounds in America", its object being "to influence all India to adopt the best from our American playgrounds". In the long run, it was hoped, "these transplanted American institutions" would play a significant part "in the up-building of the new India, as they are also in the new China".[114] It was also owing to the influence of Gray, who was not only a Springfield graduate but also a Columbia trained medical doctor, that regular physical examinations of all boys who wanted to become members of the Calcutta YMCA's boys' branch were introduced in 1915.[115] This should not come as a surprise, as Springfield Professor Luther Gulick had pioneered anthropometric measurements and medical examinations for the Y's work in America.[116] His methods were firmly anchored in the curriculum of the YMCA Training College by the 1890s.[117] Physical tests also played a role in the Allahabad branch, where the responsible boys' secretary had introduced a selection process for applicants that was partly inspired by the Canadian Standard Efficiency Tests (CSET).[118]

There is reason to believe that the impact of medicalisation that pervaded the boys' work through medically trained physical directors, also had a racist dimension. Some of the prominent physical directors working for the Y in South Asia quite actively spread elements of racial stereotypes that were prevalent in the white establishment of British India.[119] Arthur G. Noehren, the National Physical director of the Indian YMCA and, like Gray, a medical doctor,[120] for instance, made the sweeping generalisation in a report written in 1926 that "the average [Indian] student is muscularly flabby, and since such weakness depresses the normal working of all physiological systems, he builds up no power of resistance to chronic ailments and bacterial infections."[121] In his expert opinion that was clearly shaped by imperial race science, South Indian adolescents "must still be considered subnormal", whereas students in the Bombay Presidency provided "an example of actual physical deterioration" when contrasted with their ancestor "Shivaji and his martial followers".[122] Y physical director H. Beall, who worked in the princely state of Hyderabad, seconded Noehren's gloomy assessment. After conducting a "graded physical efficiency test", in fourteen schools near the city of Secunderabad, he confirmed that "the average South Indian is twenty pounds lighter and 50 per cent weaker muscularly than the average Englishman or American".[123] The tendency toward medicalisation seems to have further increased in the 1930s and 1940s. A bulletin handed out to boys' workers in 1941, for example, advised group leaders to arrange for a "thorough medical examination" of each group member. In case no medical doctor was available, the group leaders were expected to at least record the height and weight of the children and compare the results with an official table worked out by the Public Health Department of the provincial government of Bihar and Orissa.[124]

Due to financial constraints, many branches could not afford the construction of a modern gym, let alone a swimming pool. As a result, 'non-equipment' work, in the forms of gymnastics, 'drill' and especially team sports also played a major role in the scheme. Established British sports such as field hockey, badminton, cricket and especially football (soccer) could be offered even by the smaller associations, and proved to be extremely popular.[125] Next to such more established physical activities, the boys' secretaries also were at pains to promote specifically American pastimes, most notably the YMCA-invented signature games of Volleyball and Basketball, considered to be "the true forerunners of democracy".[126] Indian teenagers seemed to be particularly receptive for the latter, and it was not without pride that Calcutta's long-term boys' secretary C.S. Paterson could report that his branch had conducted "the first basket ball [sic!] tournament in India" in 1906.[127] That individual 'manly' sports such as boxing also quickly enjoyed a growing popularity among the Y's young clientele seems only logical, given the persistence of colonial stereotypes and 'self-images of effeteness', especially among the urban Hindu middle classes, that provided the bulk of 'native' YMCA members. Moreover, the

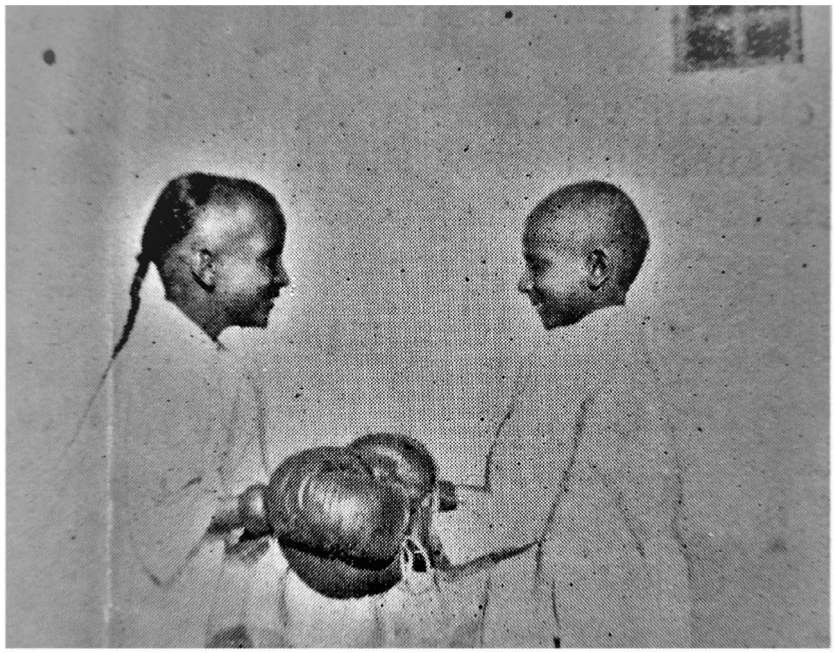

Fig. 5. 2 Box training at the Madras YMCA boys’ branch (c. 1926). Source: KFYA.

pursuit of martial leisure activities tied in perfectly with the ‘man-making mission’ advocated by some of the more influential Indian nationalists in the period under survey.[128] Subsequently some of them supported, and others copied the Indian Y’s method of using sport and physical culture in their programs for boys with a view “to try and direct their mentality, their activities and their lives in the right channels”.[129] The notion, what precisely were ‘the right channels’, however, could differ hugely. Whereas most YMCA secretaries regarded “all these political movements and tremendous upheavals” of the interwar period as a threat to Indian boyhood,[130] many Indian reformers and political activists used their programs precisely to make them part of such movements.

Experiencing Modernity Outdoors: Camping and Scouting

As one might have expected, given the close interlinkages of Y-boyology and G. Stanley Hall’s social Darwinist flavoured recapitulation theory, camping, scouting and related outdoor activities were other crucial components of the programme offered by the various boys’ branches in India, Burma and Ceylon. In 1910, the

Madras branch organized "the first boys' camp in India" at Pollavaram,[131] and in 1920, Frank V. Slack, one of the leading American Y functionaries working in India, stated that Scouting and 'the camp of four or five days' had become the Association's main means to attract Indian high school students.[132] The YMCA Training School prided itself on the fact that "Springfield ha[d] introduced American Camping methods in all parts of the world",[133] and India was a prime example. A leading Y functionary declared in 1933 that scouting and camping were still regarded as the "most effective methods for developing character" in the Indian boy.[134]

The chief advantage of these outdoor activities, according to Strong, was that the boys could be isolated from their families and the cultural influences they usually were exposed to. This was deemed to be necessary "because of the nature of the Indian boy", allegedly shaped by "collective living and thinking, with all its dangers." This mindset, Strong claimed, dismissed individual ideas, ambitions, and achievements as being of secondary importance and made Indian adolescents constantly expect control "from the home, the school, the caste, the religious community and the government".[135] It was therefore only in the splendid isolation of the camp, under the benevolent guidance of professionally trained Y boyologists, that the Indian or Burmese teenagers could be "given … an opportunity for self-expression, for participating in all kinds of wholesome activities and in learning how to live with those of other castes and religious communities".[136]

It is somewhat ironic that in an 'eastern' context scouting and camping thus not only allowed the Indian boy to re-enact the 'primitive' civilizational stages of his forebears, as it did for western boys, but that it also provided a closed social space that was decidedly 'modern'. It was a sanctuary of sorts, shielding him from the pressures and prejudices of his own deeply hierarchical, 'semi-civilized' society. The protected and purportedly culturally neutral space of the camp permitted him to encounter a 'progressive' world that valued equality and social responsibility as much as it cherished "self-expression, self-development" and "the individual's growth".[137] From the late 1920 onwards, Y experts working in India often used the maxim "*for* boys and *by* boys" to underscore the importance of 'self-help' and individual commitment.[138] Taking over responsibility and expressing personal preferences was key to the program. According to J. H. Dunderdale, another influential Y boyologist working in India, the "choices a boy makes when he is free to do as he pleases are the ones that count in character development."[139]

In contradistinction to the organising of occasional camps, the Y's engagement in full-fledged scouting activities proved to be problematic in the South Asian colonial setting.[140] As Carey Watt has elucidated, the rapid spread of scouting in British India in the 1910s and 1920s was characterized by utter "chaos and confusion".[141] The reason for the uncontrolled growth of more than a dozen major Scout organisations, competing with one another, between 1908 and 1920 was the

reluctance of the Government of India to support and encourage the movement. Their hesitant stance was caused by the widespread anxiety among colonial officials that Indian adolescents might use the paramilitary training that was part of the scout program to prepare for an open rebellion against British rule.[142] The shock of the 'terrorist outrages' conducted by members of secret revolutionary societies — most of them former high school or college boys — with a propensity for physical culture and martial arts that had attracted thousands of adolescents especially in Bengal between 1908 and 1914 was still looming large after the Great War.[143] From the mid-1920s onwards, new threats emerged in the form of openly militant revolutionary bodies such as the Hindustan Socialist Republican Army and similar organisations.[144] The resulting anxieties concerning Indian 'anarchy' and 'terrorism' were mostly projected on the country's youth and continued to haunt the British residing in India well into the 1930s.[145]

It was against this backdrop that the Boy Scouts Association of India, founded in 1912, adopted a policy of admitting only Europeans and 'Anglo-Indians' while strictly excluding Indian boys, which led to the founding of several independent Indian Scout Associations during the 1910s and early 1920s. Even after a superficial amalgamation had taken place in 1921, racial segregation was still the order of the day, well into the 1930s.[146]

In light of these persisting segregationist tendencies of the colonial authorities, the Indian Y's scout work that started as early as 1909, when the Bombay branch established the first YMCA Scout troop "on the foreign field" was outright ground-breaking. To be sure, initially, most troops would be racially segregated. The Rangoon boys' branch, for instance, would entertain three separate Scout units for European and Eurasian, Chinese, and Indian boys by 1915.[147] After the end of the First World War, however, more and more branches under North American leadership offered mixed-race scouting events. The Lahore branch became particularly active in this respect.[148] A first "united camp for Indian and English boys" was organized in the Punjab in 1922 in spite of the suspicions expressed by "both the Indian and English public".[149] Daniel Swamidoss, one of the Indian delegates at the Pörtschach conference, reassured his international audience that the Indian and European boys participating in this experiment knew "no racial barriers, and by their noble conduct dispelled the scepticism of their elders".[150] In like vein, a report from 1926 proudly mentions that the Lahore branch's annual scout camps in Murree were "attended by boys of all Communities, Indian, Anglo-Indian and European, and have done much to promote Fraternity and Fellow Feeling [sic!]".[151] Along similar lines, the Indian YMCA's monthly mouthpiece extolled a Boys camp organized in Madras for Christian, Hindu and Muslim boys in 1928, during the peak of communal tensions in India, as "a demonstration of the possibility of these communities living together in an atmosphere of brotherhood."[152]

Fig. 5.3 Tea time at the 'united scout camp' organized by the Lahore YMCA (1922). Source: Springfield College Digital Collections.

Scouting excursions thus served, as experimental spaces where new, more egalitarian forms of living together could be tried out to prepare future citizens. The Y's boys' secretaries were eager to demonstrate these beneficial effects not only to the parents of the boys and the citizens of the cities their branches were situated in, "but to a large number of officials as well."[153] In 1929, Lahore Boys' worker Waldo Huntley Heinrichs (1891–1959) was particularly successful in including the British military — who were still observing the YMCA's scouting activities involving 'native' boys with mixed feelings — among the addressees of these demonstrations. He had invited several high-ranking British officers to the annual scout camp and decorated the place alternately with the Star-Spangled Banner and Union Jack flags. In his diary, he summarizes dryly:

> "Brigadier Mathew Lannowe inspected camp for us this A.M. All boys were in their element and best form. We had massed yell assembly and then inspection, flag signals, football, fencing, wrestling & swimming finals. Old Boy and Mr. Duncan were very pleased with the show."[154]

Fig. 5.4 An Indian Scout patrol from Patiala (Punjab) posing in front of the British and American Flags in Murree Hills (1929). The group participated in a scouting contest staged during the Lahore YMCA's annual camp. Source: Yale University, Divinity College, Special Collections (YDSPC).

Fig. 5.5 A show for ‘foolish lime juicers’? — British army officers inspect a tent pitching during the same event. Source: YDSPC.

Due to his military credentials, Heinrichs — a former Air Force pilot and highly decorated war hero —[155] was in a perfect position to impress and appease the British officers. He shrewdly put on a "show", highlighting the martial aspects of scouting. This was to demonstrate that the American method of working with 'racially mixed' troops was best suited to transform Indian adolescents into disciplined, obedient and socially responsible future citizens (and potentially even reliable soldiers).[156] In private, however, Heinrichs made no bones about his belief in American superiority. Convinced that "indecision, lack of push and pigheadedness" were quintessential British qualities,[157] he regarded the "old boys" (i.e. colonial army officers) as hopelessly old-fashioned and out of touch with reality, occasionally even ridiculing them as "foolish old bull-headed lime-juicers".[158]

Conclusion

This chapter has reconstructed the production and circulation of a specific body of educational and disciplinary knowledge that emerged around the turn of the twentieth century and was designed to solve the so-called 'boy problem'. 'Boyology' was informed by the latest debates in psychology and sociology but, from its very inception, it also had a practical side. It provided knowledge that could be immediately applied to counter what was perceived as a most dangerous threat: the corruption of (male) youth under the conditions of modernity. As shown, the transatlantic boyology discourse was particularly pronounced in North America and it were US and Canadian scholars and boys' workers, who crucially shaped both the debates and the applied programs. Analyzing the transfer of such programs to South Asia has demonstrated that it was likewise not — as one might have expected — the British colonial state, but a US-sponsored Christian lay organization that became the most important player in the dissemination of such 'scientifically' informed boys' work in the subcontinent. It has also become apparent that North American experts and their know-how aside, US and Canadian donors pumped a good deal of capital into projects concerned with the moral and physical 'uplift' of early adolescents in South Asia.

The YMCA's position in the Indian subcontinent during the last decades of the Raj was ambivalent. On the one hand, the impact of the broader 'Anglo-Saxonist' sentiment that informed public debates in North America in the early 1900s is evident,[159] and there were undeniable sympathies with the British imperial 'civilizing mission' among many American and Canadian Y secretaries working in the region. Besides, the association needed the approval of the colonial authorities for its work and there were many instances of close cooperation with colonial officialdom. On the other hand, however, there was an equally widespread sense

of American superiority and the desire to spearhead a civilizing mission that was not only state of the art, but also more liberal, democratic and 'progressive' than the British imperial variety. These tendencies became stronger after the end of the First World War for two reasons. First, more Indians with open sympathies for the anticolonial nationalist movement reached positions of influence in the YMCA and championed the Association's spreading the "dharma of citizenship".[160] Secondly, the United States' newly acquired geopolitical significance palpably boosted American self-confidence in the interwar years. The work of the YMCA's boys' branches in India, Burma and Ceylon reflects these developments.

As this case study has demonstrated, there were constant attempts to recruit patriotic Indians for the kind of citizenship training that the boys' branches offered. The concerted efforts to overcome the religious and caste differences that undermined political mobilization and national unity expressed themselves in the ostentatious egalitarianism in the microcosm of the boys' branches. The broader citizen-making agenda that foresaw an independent India in the not-to-distant future was equally noticeable in how 'Indian boyhood' was prepared for political participation through physical empowerment and the inculcation of civic virtues in the neutral environment of the camp.

However, the study has also left little doubt that — in spite of its undeniable liberal aspirations (and partly liberating effects) — the YMCA's boys' work program clearly contained "traces of empire".[161] For instance, the paramilitary elements of the crypto-imperial scout movement had a strong impact on the Y's programs and imperial racialism, imperial medicine and the practice of 'social distancing' and ethnic segregation remained ubiquitous in the Y-microcosm in spite of the frequent lip service to racial equality and meritocracy. Likewise, as shown by their discussions of the 'nature of the Indian Boy', YMCA boy experts oscillated between an idiom of universalism that considered Indian youngsters as equal and the impact of cultural and racial stereotyping that held 'natives' generally to be inferior and was widespread among British officials and the 'domiciled European' population in colonial South Asia. Ironically, it was the quasi-imperial scouting scheme, in the first place, that made the Y attractive to patriotic Indian parents in search of ways to instil manliness and morality in their sons.

A second point deserves to be mentioned here. Due to the paucity of other sources, the case study is based to a large extent on material produced by the Young Men's Christian Association itself. Predictably enough, such in-house sources tell us a lot about the agendas, visions and plans of the YMCA functionaries and boys' work experts. They say much less about their actual implementation on the ground and almost nothing about the perspective of their main targets: Indian, Ceylonese and Burmese boys. In fact, the latter appears to be more acted upon than acting themselves in the copious documentation pertaining to the program. The question

of Indian agency (let alone resistance) in this story is indeed a dicey one, but there are at least some hints one can gain by reading the one-sided source material against the grain. Thus, the refusal of many Indian Y-members to work as 'boys' secretaries' indicates that indigenous Y members remained autonomous and took decisions based on cultural preferences and individual career prospects rather than on considerations pertaining to the Association's needs or the undergirding ideologies driving its activities. There were, in other words, clear limits to the imposition of an American program on South Asian societies.

This leads me to the final issue: How successful and how significant was the transcultural circulation of the boyology program through an American-sponsored civil society organization ultimately? Was it, after all, not only a mere footnote in a story that was largely written by colonial administrators and Indian nationalists? The sheer figures for the peak year 1941, when 21 boys' branches with between 50 and 450 members were operational, would seem to give a clear answer when contrasted with the demographic realities. Claims by Y-officials to reach out to "400 million Indians" with a view to, "educating them in the rights and duties of citizenship,"[162] would appear like megalomaniac fantasies that were completely out of touch with reality. Yet, it would be misleading to reduce the Y' intervention in the Indian subcontinent exclusively to the modest figures of those actually reached directly. In the realm of boys' work, as in a number of other fields, the most important effects of YMCA programs in India and its neighbouring countries were not reached by its immediate intervention, but owing to the fact that Y-ideologies and methods were adopted by the colonial state, emulated by competing indigenous organizations and endorsed by the postcolonial government.[163] One might well speculate that this, at least to some extent, also holds true for the boys' work. Its primary goal of 'harnessing the power of youth', at least, seems to have been quickly embraced by the representatives of the Nehruvian state. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of the Indian Republic, reassured the leading American Y functionary Dalton McClelland in 1949, that the "YMCA ha[d] a definite future and an important place in the new era" and that the Government of India, in its broader nation-building effort, counted particularly on its "programme to build good citizenship and its emphasis on character-building".[164]

Notes

[1] This contribution draws on chapter 4 of my forthcoming book: Harald Fischer-Tiné, *The YMCA in Late Colonial India: Modernization, Philanthropy and American Soft Power in South Asia* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023). The title alludes to a YMCA Report from 1933: Tracy Strong, “The Y.M.C.A. and one Fifth of the World’s Boyhood: A Report on the Boys’ Work of the Y.M.C.A. in India” [May 1933]; World Alliance of YMCAs Archives, Geneva [henceforth WAYAG] Box: India. Boys’ Work, 1922–1949.

[2] In what follows, I will focus solely on the “secular” dimensions of the programme. As one might expect from a Christian association, religious schemes played an important role too, but this differed extremely depending on the respective target group and would require extensive contextualisation that is beyond the scope of this article. The same caveat needs to be made about the sole focus on boys at the expense of female adolescents. Though on a drastically lower scale, there were also special programs for girls carried out by the YWCA. However, not only did the discourse on girls and young women differ considerably from the ones on boys, the two Y’s were operating largely independently from each other and it would hence be difficult to do justice to their work done in South Asia in one single study. A thorough historical analysis of the Indian YWCA still remains a desideratum, but a beginning has been made in: K. Phoenix, “A Social Gospel for India,” *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 13, no. 2 (2014), 200–22. See also the same author’s as yet unpublished PhD thesis K. Phoenix, “‘Not by might, nor by Power, but by Spirit’: The Global Reform Efforts of the Young Women’s Christian Association of the United States 1895–1939,” unpubl. PhD dissertation (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2010).

[3] I have borrowed the phrase from H. Hendrick, *Children Childhood and English Society, 1880–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 81.

[4] Until 1948, the Indian YMCA was not only active in British India itself, but also in the British colonies Burma and Ceylon.

[5] The term “boyology” was first coined in a YMCA publication published in the United States during World War I. See H. W. Gibson, *Boyology or Boy Analysis* (New York: Association Press, 1916). For a brief contextualisation see also K. Kidd, “Boyology in the Twentieth Century,” *Children’s Literature*, 28 (2000), 44–72.

[6] A. T. Leary, “America’s Greatest Problem—its Youth,” unpubl. Graduation Thesis (International Young Men’s Christian Association College, Springfield, MA, 1917), 67.

[7] The phrase is borrowed from L. Tournès, *Américanisation: une histoire mondiale, XVIII-XXI siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2020), 134. See also ibid., 134–50 and 191–95. For a fascinating account of the bidirectional transmission of democratic ideas and practices between the USA and India in a *longue durée* perspective see N. Slate, *Lord Cornwallis is dead. The Struggle for Democracy in the United States and India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019).

[8] For a succinct definition and discussion of informal education and its role in helping children and adolescents in “the acquisition of the “correct” emotional toolbox”, see S. Olsen, *Juvenile Nation: Youth, Emotions and the making of the Modern British Citizen, 1880–1914* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 7–11.

[9] This topic has been dealt with by British historians from the 1970s onwards. The “classic” survey study remains J. Springhall, *Youth, Empire and Society: British Youth Movements, 1883–1940* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1977).

[10] The literature on the scout/guide movement is extraordinarily rich. See, for instance, K. Alexander, *Guiding Modern Girls. Girlhood, Empire, and Internationalism in the 1920s and 1930s* (Vancouver:

UBC Press, 2017); B. R. Jordan, *Modern Manhood and the Boy Scouts of America: Citizenship, Race, and the Environment, 1910–1930* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2016); N. R. Block and T. M. Proctor (eds), *Scouting Frontiers: Youth and the Scout Movements First Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009); T. M. Proctor, "(Uni)Forming Youth: Girl Guides and Boy Scouts in Britain, 1908–39," *History Workshop Journal* 45 no. 2 (1998), 103–134; S. Pryke, "The Popularity of Nationalism in the Early British Boy Scout Movement", *Social Hi*story 23, no. 3 (1998), 309–24; R. H. Macdonald, *Sons of the Empire: The Frontier and the Boy Scout Movement, 1890–1918* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1993); S. Mills, "Scouting for Girls? Gender and the Scout Movement in Britain", *Gender, Place & Culture* 18, no. 4 (2011), 537–56.

11 The most recent study on the Brigade is an unpublished PhD thesis; C. J. Speckman, "The Boys' Brigade and Urban Cultures, 1883–1933: A Relationship examined," unpubl. PhD thesis (University of Portsmouth, 2016). See also the slightly outdated J. Springhall, B. Fraser and M. Hoare (eds), *Sure and Steadfast: A History of the* Boys' *Brigade, 1883 to 1983* (London: Collins, 1983).

12 H. Hendrick, *Images of Youth: Age, Class, and the Male Youth Problem, I880–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, I990), 161.

13 D. I. MacLeod, *Building Character in the American Boy: The Boy Scouts, YMCA and their Forerunners, 1870–1920* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 87–93.

14 A. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton University Press, 2018), 266. See also M. Honeck, *Our Frontier is the World: The Boy Scouts in the Age of American Ascendancy* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2018); and Jordan, *Modern Manhood and the Boy Scouts of America*.

15 On the shifting conceptions of childhood in the long nineteenth century, see P. Stearns, *Childhood in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2011), 71–83 and Hendrick, *Children, Childhood and English Society*, 9–15.

16 J. Grant, *The Boy Problem: Educating Boys in Urban America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 5.

17 R. Snape, "Juvenile Organizations Committees and the State Regulation of Youth Leisure in Britain, 1916–1939," *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth* 13 no. 2 (2020), 247–67, here 248–49; and R. J. Park, "Boys' Clubs are Better than Policemen's Clubs: Endeavours by Philanthropists, Social Reformers, and Others to Prevent Juvenile Crime, the late 1800s to 1917," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 24, no. 6 (2007), 749–75.

18 See especially E. J. Urwick, *Studies of Boy Life in our Cities* (London: Dent, 1904). For an analysis of the strongly class-flavoured boy problem discourse in the United Kingdom see Hendrick, *Images of Youth*.

19 S. Fitzpatrick, "The Body Politics of US Imperial Power," in Brooke L. Blower and Andrew Preston (eds), *America in the World, Volume III, 1900–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 566.

20 In addition, there was a specific Protestant variety of the popular "boy-problem" debate in America. Whereas psychologists and sociologists tended to stress crime, delinquency and vice as the main perils for adolescents, a number of influential religious educators placed comparatively more emphasis on the dangers of "effeminization" and over-refinement that were allegedly threatening the younger generation. See P. Setran, "Developing the 'Christian Gentleman': The Medieval Impulse in Protestant Ministry to Adolescent Boys, 1890–1920," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 20, no. 2 (2010), 165–204; and A. M. Hornsby, "'The Boy Problem': North Carolina Race Men Groom the Next Generation, 1900–1930," *Journal of Negro History* 86, no. 4 (2001), 276–304, here especially 280.

21 Hornsby, "'The Boy Problem'," 281.

[22] K. B. Kidd, *Making American Boys: Boyology and the Feral Tale* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), 2.

[23] T. Roosevelt, "The Strenuous Life", in Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life: Essays and Addresses* (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1906), 1 and 9. See also S. Watts, *Rough Rider in the White House: Theodore Roosevelt and the Politics of Desire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); Arnaldi Testi, "The Gender of Reform Politics: Theodore Roosevelt and the Culture of Masculinity," *The Journal of American History* 81, no. 4 (1995), 1509–33.

[24] G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence: Its psychology and its relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion, and education*, vols. I & II (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1904). On the influence of social Darwinism on his work, see Lester F. Goodchild, "G. Stanley Hall and an American Social Darwinist Pedagogy: His Progressive Educational Ideas on Gender and Race", in: *History of Education Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (2012), 62–98.

[25] L. H. Gulick, *A Philosophy of Play* (New York etc.: Charles Scribners & Sons, 1920). For a concise contextualisation of Gulick's work and audience see also H. P. Chudacoff, *Children at Play: An American History* (New York and London: 2001), 72–73.

[26] G. W. Fiske, *Boy life and self-government* (New York: Young Men's Christian Association Press, 1910), 45. See also A. R. Pixley, "Religious Education and the Boy Problem," unpubl. BA Thesis (International Young Men's Christian Association College Springfield, MA, 1911); and P. E. Hitchcock, "The Boy Problem – and how it is dealt with in the Elementary School", unpubl. Thesis (International Young Men's Christian Association College Springfield, MA, 1917).

[27] Kidd, *Making American Boys.* See also L. Paris, *Children's Nature: The Rise of the American Summer Camp* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2008), 189–225.

[28] Gibson, *Boyology or boy analysis*, 70.

[29] Ibid., 72–73.

[30] L. H. Gulick, "The Alleged Effemination of our American Boys'," *American Physical Education Review* 10, no. 3 (1905), 213–220. See also J. B. Nash, "Luther H. Gulick", *Journal of Health, Physical Education, Recreation* 31, no. 4, (1960), 60 and 114; and C. Putney, "Luther Gulick: His Contributions to Springfield College, the YMCA, and 'Muscular Christianity'," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 39, no. 1–2 (2011), 144–69.

[31] H. M. Burr, "Dr Luther Gulick, 1865–1918: A Symposium," *American Physical Education Review* 23, no. 7 (1918), 414.

[32] C. H. Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America* (New York: Association Press, 1951), 462.

[33] On the role of Springfield graduates in spreading the Y-gospel in South Asia and elsewhere, see L.L. Doggett, "The Training School and the Foreign Field," *The Association Seminar & Springfield Student* 17, no. 4 (1909), 131–43; "A College for Leaders: A Springfield Institution serving the Youth of the World," promotional pamphlet, 1926, Springfield College Archives and Special Collections [henceforth SCASC], s.a [1935]; L. L. Doggett, *Man and a School: Pioneering in Higher Education* (New York: Association Press, 1943); P. Vertinsky and A. Ramachandran, "The 'Y' Goes to India: Springfield College, Muscular Missionaries, and the Transnational Circulation of Physical Culture Practices," *Journal of Sport History* 46, no. 3 (2019), 363–79 and S. Hübner, "Muscular Christian Exchanges: Asian Sports Experts and the International YMCA Training School (1910s to 1930s)," in L. Tournès and G. Scott-Smith (eds), *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2018), 97–112.

[34] "Training for Work with Boys: International YMCA College", promotional pamphlet, 1926, SCASC.

[35] C. S. Moffat, "The Western Influence of Physical Education on India," unpubl. M.Ed. Thesis (Springfield College, 1950), 42; see also "International YMCA College: A Worldwide Influence in Religious-Social Leadership," promotional pamphlet, 1923, SCASC.

[36] Doggett, "Training School and the Foreign Field," 135–38.

[37] G. F. Andrews. "History of the Playground Movement and Organization and Administration of Playgrounds," unpubl. M.Ed. Thesis (International Young Men's Christian Association College Springfield, MA, 1932), 104–6, SCASC; and L. H. Libby, "The Leader's Handbook", unpublished thesis-cum-textbook (International Young Men's Christian Association College Springfield, MA, s.a. [1917]), SCASC.

[38] Letter from Laurence L. Doggett to Granville Stanley Hall, May 15, 1918, SCASC.

[39] As indicated above, India was the most important, but by no means, the only mission ground of the Indian YMCA. It was also responsible for dozens of branches in Burma and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

[40] There were debates in the vernacular public spheres and several isolated attempts to provide high quality secondary and tertiary education in Indian languages as well. However, these likewise reached relatively small segments of the population. See, for instance, H. Fischer-Tiné, *Der Gurukul Kangri oder die Erziehung der Arya Nation: Kolonialismus, Hindureform und 'nationale Bildung' in Britisch-Indien (1897–1922)* (Würzburg: Ergon-Verlag, 2003) and H. Mukherjee and U. Mukherjee, *A Phase of the Swadeshi Movement: National Education, 1905–1910* (Calcutta, Chuckerverty, Chatterjee & Co. Ltd, 1953).

[41] There were several girls' schools and high-schools, too, but compared to the overall number of educational institutions in the region they remained almost a *quantité négligeable* well into the twentieth century.

[42] N. Kumar, "India's trial with Citizenship, Modernisation and Nationhood," in Laurence Brocklin and Nicola Sheldon (eds), *Mass Education and the Limits of State Building, c.1870–1930* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 297.

[43] M. Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); I. Chowdhury, *The Frail Hero and Virile History: Gender and the Politics of Culture in Colonial Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998); S. Sen, "Schools, Athletes and Confrontation: The Student Body in Colonial India," in J. H. Mills, and S. Sen, *Confronting the Body: The Politics of Physicality in Colonial and Post-Colonial India* (London: Anthem Press, 2004), 58–79; S. Topdar, "The Corporeal Empire: Physical Education and Politicising Children's Bodies in Late Colonial Bengal," *Gender & History* 29, no. 1 (2017), 176–197.

[44] See, for instance, Sripadrao Satavlekar, "Mahāśay gurukul aur mistar kālej kī bāt cīt", ["A conversation between Mahashay Gurukul and Mister College"], *Saddharm Pracārak*, 12 April 1911, 7–8.

[45] See, for instance, B. C. Pal, *Swadeshi and Swaraj* (Calcutta: Yuganyanti Prakashak, 1954 [[1]1907]), 257.

[46] M. Brunner, "Schooling the Subcontinent: State, Space, Society, and the Dynamics of Education in Colonial South Asia," in Harald Fischer-Tiné and Maria Framke (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Colonialism in South Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), 252–65.

[47] L. Lajpat Rai, "Exhortation to the Youth to develop Grit and Determination," in B.R. Nanda (ed), *The Collected Works of Lala Lajpat Rai, Vol. IV* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2004), 401.

[48] Ibid., 403–5.

[49] C. A. Watt, "Philanthropy and Civilizing Missions in India c. 1820–1960: States, NGOs and Development," in C. A. Watt and Michael Mann (eds), *Civilizing Missions in Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia: From Improvement to Development* (London: Anthem Press, 2011), 283.

[50] F. Roy, "The Torchbearers of Progress: Youth Volunteer Organisations and National Discipline in India, c. 1918–1947," unpubl. PhD Dissertation (University of Warwick, 2013), 2.

[51] On the distribution of edifying literature and temperance propaganda targeted at adolescents by Christian missionaries in colonial South Asia, see Olsen, *Juvenile Nation*, 123–29.

[52] For the 'middle-class character of civilizing missions see, for instance, Michael Adas, 'Contested Hegemony: The Great War and the Afro-Asian Assault on the Civilizing Mission Ideology,' *Journal of World History* 15, no. 1 (2004): 31–63.

[53] Roy, "The Torchbearers of Progress," 43–44.

[54] *Harnessing the Power of Youth*, loc. cit.

[55] *Young Men of India*, 3 April 1923, 18.

[56] Kautz Family YMCA Archives, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN, International Work: India [hereafter KFYA, IWI], Box 89, Folder "A Brief History 1854–1900"; E.C. Worman, *A Brief History of the Young Men's Christian Association in India Burma and Ceylon 1854–1900*, unpublished manuscript (n.d.) 12.

[57] S. B. Harper, *In the Shadow of the Mahatma: Bishop V.S. Azariah and the Travails of Christianity in British India* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2000), 49–53.

[58] J. R. Mott, *The Evangelization of the World in This Generation* (London: Student Volunteer Missionary Union, 1900).

[59] David, *YMCA and the Making of Modern India*, 231; and Young Men's Christian Association, Madras, *Twenty-fifth Years' Service in Madras, 1914* (Madras, Methodist Publishing House, 1914), 19.

[60] A Year's Retrospect: Being the Annual Report of the Rangoon Young Men's Christian Association, from the 1st Dec. 1901 to the 30th Nov. 1902, 3; KFYA, International Work Burma [hereafter: IWB], Box 4, Folder "Rangoon Annual Reports 1902–1915".

[61] *Report of the National Council of Young Men's Christian Associations of India and Ceylon to the tenth National Convention at Calcutta, November 23–27, 1920* (Association Press, Cuttack 1921), 57–58.

[62] Hopkins, *History of the YMCA in North America*, 660.

[63] *YMCA Year Book and official Rosters. 1903–1904* (New York: National Councils of the Young Men's Christian Associations of Canada and the United States of America, 1904), 27.

[64] I. H. Nish et al., *Flaming Milestones. Calcutta YMCA: A Story, 1857–1982* (Calcutta: Calcutta YMCA, 1983), 18.

[65] K. S. Latourette, *World Service: A History of the Foreign Work and World Service of the Young Men's Christian Associations of the United States and Canada* (New York: Association Press, 1957), 117.

[66] *Annual Report of the Young Men's Christian Association of Calcutta for 1907* (Calcutta, 1908) 16 and *Young Men's Christian Association of Calcutta: Annual Report 1915* (Calcutta: Edinburgh Press, 1916), 25; and *Young Men's Christian Association of Calcutta: Annual Report 1926* (Calcutta: Edinburgh Press, 1927), 13.

[67] United Theological College Archive, Bangalore [henceforth UTCAB], YMCA. "Report of the Indian National Council, Proceedings of the Seventh national Council, Bangalore Dec 29th 1904—Jan 2nd 1905", 4.

[68] W.B. Hilton, "Report on Y.M.C.A. Work with early adolescents in India" [18 August 1922], WAYAG, Box India, Boys' Work 1922–1949.

[69] F.V. Slack, "Facts about Boys' Work in India" [May 1920], KFYA, International Work: Subject Files [hereafter: IWSF], Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field"; 10–24.

[70] Ibid., 23.

[71] Strong, "The Y.M.C.A. and one Fifth of the World's Boyhood".

[72] KFYA, IWSF, Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field" [May 1920], 3.

[73] H. Johannot, "The Field of Action," in Clarence Prouty Shedd et al., *History of the World Alliance of Christian Associations* (London: SPCK, 1955), 615.

[74] "Report of the First Conference of YMCA Workers among Boys," WAYAG, T1, box 42, 3–4.

[75] *Year Book of the Young Men's Christian Associations of North America for the year May 1, 1923 to April 30, 1924* (New York: Association Press, 1924), 18.

[76] On interwar internationalism see, for instance, G. Sluga, "Remembering 1919: International Organizations and the Future of international Order," *International Affairs* 95, no. 1 (2019), 25–43; D. Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 2012); and the contributions in D. Laqua (ed), *Internationalism reconfigured: transnational ideas and movements between the world wars* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2011).

[77] C. E. Heald (ed), *The Place of Boyhood in the Nations of the World: being the report of the second world conference of Y.M.C.A. workers among boys, held at Pörtschach am Zee* (sic!), *Austria, 30th May to 10th June, 1923* (Geneva: World's Committee Young Men's Christian Associations, Boys' Division, 1923).

[78] Ibid., 351; and Sherwood Eddy, *A Century with Youth: A History of the YMCA from 1844 to 1944* (New York: Association Press, 1944), 107.

[79] J. R. Mott, "Boyhood, the Greatest Asset of any Nation," in C.E. Heald (ed.), *The Place of Boyhood*, 259.

[80] M.S. Cherian, "Boys Work in Villages," *Young Men of India* 49, no. 8 (1937) 209–10; see also A. Kanakaraj, *Lighthouses of Rural Reconstruction: The History of the Y.M.C.A's integrated Rural Development in South India* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2000), 96 and 110.

[81] K.T. Paul (ed.), *Young Men's Christian Associations of India, Burma and Ceylon and the European Association (Central Association), Report of Committee of Enquiry appointed by the National Council Y.M.C.A. together with the Allegations and Correspondence* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1927), 45–46.

[82] Johannot, "The Field of Action," 656.

[83] Dunderdale, *The YMCA in India*, 85.

[84] Latourette, *World Service*, 141–44.

[85] Boys Division, National Council of Y.M.C.A.s India, Burma and Ceylon, *Report 1940* (Travancore: London Mission Press, 1941), 6.

[86] Nish et al., *Flaming Milestones*, 18.

[87] P.E. Curtis, Work among European Boys; in: KFYA, IWI, Box 86, Folder "'Rough Report of the Secretaries' Conference, Lanauli. January 10–15, 1907," 45.

[88] S. Mizutani, *The Meaning of White: Race, Class, and the Domiciled Community in British India, 1858–1930* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[89] D. Washbrook, "Avatars of Identity: The British Community in India," in Robert Bickers (ed), *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 180; and Elizabeth Buettner, *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 146–187.

[90] H. Fischer-Tiné, *Low and Licentious Europeans: Race, Class, and 'White Subalternity' in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2009); and S. De, *Marginal Europeans in Colonial India, 1860–1920* (Kolkata: Thema, 2008).

[91] Most outspoken in this regard is a BA thesis on the temptations young Europeans were exposed to in India submitted at Springfield during the First World War. The author devotes an entire chapter to the corrupting influence Indian *nautch* (dancing) girls. See T. B. Hill, "The Problems of European Young Men in India," unpubl. Thesis (International YMCA College Springfield, MA, 1917), SCASC.

[92] E. C. Carter, *The Men of India and Ceylon* (New York: Foreign Department: International Committee Young Men's Christian Association, 1908), 8.

[93] D. M. Pomfret, *Youth and Empire: Transcolonial Childhoods in British and French Asia* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 25; Specifically for the South Asian context see also S. Mizutani, "'Degenerate whites' and their spaces of disorder: Disciplining racial and class ambiguities in Colonial Calcutta (c.1880–1930)," in A. Tambe and H. Fischer-Tiné (eds), *The Limits of British Colonial Control in South Asia: Spaces of Disorder in the Indian Ocean Region* (Abingdon: Routledge,

2009), 155–91; and E.M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), 177–85.

94 Curtis, Work among European Boys, 46.

95 Ibid., 46–47. The term "Goorkha" refers to Nepali soldiers serving in the British Indian army.

96 D. Kennedy, "The perils of the midday sun: climatic anxieties in the colonial tropics," in John Mckenzie (ed), *Imperialism and the Natural World* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 118–40.

97 H.G. Banurji, "Boys' Work: Amongst Indian High School Boys," in: KFYA, IWI, Box 86, Folder "'Rough Report of the Secretaries' Conference, Lanauli. January 10–15, 1907", 48–52.

98 Ibid., 49.

99 For this colonial stereotype and its effects particularly in Bengal see J. Rosselli, "The Self-Image of Effeteness: Physical Education and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Bengal," *Past and Present* 86 (1980), 121–48; and I. Chowdhury-Sengupta, *The Frail Hero and Virile History: Gender and the Politics of Culture in Colonial Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998).

100 Banurji, "Boys Work: Amongst Indian High School Boys", loc. cit., 50.

101 Ibid., 48. While Banurji's account may have been somewhat exaggerated, there is strong evidence that several Indian cities, including Calcutta, indeed faced a growing cocaine problem in in the first two decades of the twentieth century. See R.N. Chopra and G.S. Chopra, "Cocaine Habit in India," in *The Indian Journal of Medical Research* 18, no. 3 (1931), 1016–24. See also J. Mills, "Decolonising drugs in Asia: the case of cocaine in colonial India," *Third World Quarterly* 39, no. 2 (2018), 218–31; and J. H. Mills, "Drugs, Consumption, and Supply in Asia: The Case of Cocaine in Colonial India, c. 1900–c.1930," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66, no. 2 (2007), 345–362.

102 For accounts of moral panics about the "cocaine craze" in early twentieth century America see, for example, J. Spillane, *Cocaine: From Medical Marvel to Modern Menace in the United States* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 105–22; J. Jonnes, *Hep-Cats, Narcs and Pipe Dreams: A History of America's Romance with Illegal Drugs* (New York: Scribner, 1995), 31–36.

103 Banurji, "Boys' Work: Amongst Indian High School Boys," loc.cit., 52.

104 S. Sarkar, *Swadeshi Movement in Bengal 1903–1908* (2nd rev. ed., Ranikhet: Orient Blackswan, 2010).

105 KFYA, SF, Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field"; C. S. Paterson, *Memorandum on Boys Work in the Foreign Field (from its inception to 1918)* [1919], 5.

106 Young Men's Christian Association, Madras, *Twenty-fifth Year's Service in Madras, 1914* (Madras, Methodist Publishing House, 1914), 19.

107 Leaflet entitled: "Help Wanted: Men," KFYA, IWBF, Box 153, Folder "Charles S. Paterson," s. a. [1936].

108 Strong, "The Y.M.C.A. and one Fifth of the World's Boyhood," 12–13.

109 Report of the General Board of Young Men's Christian Associations of India, Burma & Ceylon 1938–1947, to the fifteenth National Convention at Matheran, February 26–28, 1947, with Proceedings of the Convention, Calcutta 1947, 18; [WAYAG, Box INDIA Management, Mission, National Reports 1891–1950].

110 A. Burton, "The Body in/as World History," in Douglas Northrop (ed), *A Companion to World History* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 279. Specifically on the crucial role of such body politics in colonial formations see also Kris Manjapra, *Colonialism in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 201–2.

111 Donald I. Dutcher, "Boys' Work in the Foreign Field," [1920], KFYA, SF, 1; Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field".

112 For an extensive discussion see Harald Fischer-Tiné, "Fitness for Modernity: the YMCA and physical education schemes in late colonial South Asia (c. 1900–1940)," *Modern Asian Studies*, 53 no.2 (2019),

512–59; Vertinsky and Ramachandran, "The 'Y' Goes to India"; and M.D. David, "The Missionary Muscular Culture in Modern India", in Teotonio R. De Souza (ed), *Discoveries, Missionary Expansion, and Asian Cultures* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1994), 195–209.

113 C. S. Paterson, Memorandum on Boys Work in the Foreign Field (from its inception to 1918) [1919], 5; KFYA, IWSF, Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field".

114 "The World at Play," *The Playground* 10, no. 8 (1916), 270. The spread of playgrounds in South Asia through the YMCA is a fascinating topic in and of itself, though, unfortunately, it cannot be dealt with in-depth in the context of this study. For a contemporary overview, see Andrews, "History of the Playground movement," 74–90.

115 C. S. Paterson, Memorandum on Boys Work in the Foreign Field (from its inception to 1918) [1919], 5; KFYA, IWSF, Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field," 15.

116 L. H. Gulick, *Manual for Physical Measurements in Connection with the Association Gymnasium Records* (New York: The International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations, 1892).

117 W. J. Baker, *Playing with God: Religion and Modern Sport* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 56 and E. L. Johnson, *The History of YMCA Physical Education* (Chicago: Association Press, 1979), 73–74. For a detailed account of the methods taught and practised at the Springfield College in the post Gulick era see B. G. Sherman, "Medical and Physical Examination of Y.M.C.A. Boys," unpubl. Post-graduation Minor Thesis (Y.M.C.A. College, Springfield Massachusetts, 1916), SCASC.

118 C. S. Paterson, *Memorandum on Boys Work in the Foreign Field*, loc. cit., 20. On the CSET in Canada, see Patricia Dirks, "Canada's Boys – an Imperial or National Asset? Responses to Baden-Powell's Boy Scout Movement in Pre-War Canada," in P. Buckner and R. R. Francis (eds), *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity* (Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2006), 121–25.

119 I have described this phenomenon elsewhere as "somatic Orientalism". See Fischer-Tiné, "Fitness for Modernity," 547–53.

120 *Biography of Arthur G. Noehren, Physical Director, Young Men's Christian Association, Madras, India*, KFYA, BF, Box 162, Folder "Arthur G. Noehren".

121 A. G. Noehren, "The YMCA and Health Education," in Young Men's Christian Associations of India Burma, and Ceylon, Report of National Council, 1924–1926, 172 [Record Collection of the YMCA, New Delhi, henceforth RYND].

122 Ibid.

123 H. G. Beall, "The 'Lloyd Adams Fitness Shield'—A Graded Physical Efficiency Test for Indian Boys," *American Physical Education Review* 26, no. 7 (1921), 319.

124 Suggestions for Group Leaders: Bulletin No. 4 (issued by Boys' Division, National Council Y.M.C.A.s India, Burma & Ceylon); KFYA, SF, Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field".

125 As early as 1914, the Madras Boys' branch, for instance, reported the existence two football-clubs with 70 members. YMCA, Madras, *Twenty-fifth Year's Service*, 19, [WAYAG].

126 F. Crane, "A Philosopher's Viewpoint of the Foreign Work," *Physical Training* 21, no. 3 (1924), 94.

127 C. S. Paterson, *Memorandum on Boys Work in the Foreign Field (from its inception to 1918)* [1919], 5; KFYA, SF, Box 9, Folder "Boys' Work on Foreign Field".

128 S. Banerjee, *Make me a Man! Masculinity, Hinduism, and Nationalism in India* (New York: SUNY Press, 2005), chapters 2 and 3. See also A. Valiani, *Militant Publics in India: Physical Culture and Violence in the Making of a Modern Polity* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and H. Fischer-Tiné, "'Character Building and Manly Games': Viktorianische Konzepte von Männlichkeit und ihre Aneignung im frühen Hindu Nationalismus," *Historische Anthropologie* 9, no. 3 (2001), 432–55.

129 S. Singha, "North India," in C. E. Heald (ed), *The Place of Boyhood*, 292.

130 Ibid.

[131] C. S. Paterson, *Memorandum on Boys Work in the Foreign Field* (from its inception to 1918) [1919], 7; KFYA, IWSF Box 9, Folder “Boys’ Work on Foreign Field”.

[132] F.V. Slack, “Facts about S’ Work in India” [May 1920], 10; KFYA, IWSF, Box 9, Folder “Boys’ Work on Foreign Field”.

[133] “Springfield Men Leaders in the Camping Movement,” *The Springfield Student* 30, no. 7 (1939), 1.

[134] Strong, “The Y.M.C.A. and one Fifth of the World’s Boyhood”.

[135] Ibid., 10–11.

[136] Ibid., 15.

[137] Ibid., 10. For a persuasive analysis of such intercultural complexities in a similar context see also J. C. Wu, “A Life of Make Believe: Being Boy Scouts and ‘Playing Indian’ in British Malaya (1910–1942),” *Gender & History* 26, no. 3 (2014), 589–619.

[138] See for instance, *A Decade of Progress, 1928–1937. The Madras Boys’ and Girls’ Exhibition* (Madras: Boys’ Division National Council Y.M.C.A., India, Burma and Ceylon, 1937), [WAYAG. Box INDIA Boys’ Work, 1922–49].

[139] J. H. Dunderdale, *Why bother with Boys* (Nagercoil: London Mission Press, 1941), 21.

[140] There was also a number of Girl Guides groups in India, some of which were related to the YWCA. The complex issue of girl guiding, however is in many ways distinct from the scouting problematic and hence beyond the scope of this chapter. For a brief overview, see Alexander, *Guiding Modern Girls*, 40–44 and 134–38.

[141] C. A. Watt, “The promise of ‘character’ and the spectre of sedition: The Boy Scout movement and colonial consternation in India, 1908–1921,” *South Asia* 22, no. 2 (1999), 38.

[142] Ibid., 41–42.

[143] Roy, “Torchbearers of Progress,” 53–56.

[144] See J. McQuade, *A Genealogy of Terrorism: Colonial Law and the Origins of an Idea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), chapters 2–4; M. Silvestri, *Policing “Bengali Terrorism” in India and the World: Imperial Intelligence and Revolutionary Nationalism, 1905–1939* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 25–73; D. Ghosh, *Gentlemanly Terrorists: Political Violence and the Colonial State in India, 1919–1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); and K. Maclean, *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India*: *Violence*, *Image*, *Voice and Text* (C. Hurst & Co., 2015).

[145] S. Sen, “Anarchies of Youth: the Oaten Affair and Colonial Bengal,” in S. Sen, *Disciplined Natives: Race, Freedom and Confinement in Colonial India* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2012), 13–41; Kama MacLean, “On the Art of panicking quietly: British expatriate Responses to ‘Terrorist Outrages’ in India, 1912–33,” in H. Fischer-Tine (ed), *Anxieties, Fear and Panic in Colonial Settings Empires on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* (Cham: Springer, 2016), 135–66; and H. Fischer-Tiné, “Mass-Mediated Panic in the British Empire? Shyamji Krishnavarma’s ‘Scientific Terrorism’ and the ‘London Outrage’, 1909,” ibid., 99–134.

[146] Watt, “The promise of ‘character’,” 54.

[147] Ibid., 15.

[148] J.C.L. Nasir, “Boys Work at the Lahore YMCA,” *The Young Men of India* 49, no. 8 (1937), 208.

[149] D. Swamidoss, “India,” in C.E. Heald (ed.), *The Place of Boyhood*, 288.

[150] Ibid., 289–90.

[151] Young Men’s Christian Association, Lahore, Annual Report for 1926, 7. [RYND].

[152] “Boys’ Camp in Madras,” *Young Men of India* 40, no. 5 (May 1928), 303.

[153] E.C. Worman, “Report on Boys Work, 1924–1926,” in *Young Men’s Christian Associations India, Burma, and Ceylon, Report of the National Council, 1924–26*, 160.

[154] Waldo H. Heinrichs, Diaries, entry for 20 September 1929. Yale Divinity School Special Collection [henceforth YDSPC], Rec. Gr. 115, Series I, Waldo Huntley Heinrichs Papers, Box 7, Folder 61, Diaries 1916.

[155] Facts on Waldo H. Heinrichs of Lahore and his work, KFYA, IWBF, Box 89, Folder "Biographical Data, Waldo Huntley Heinrichs".

[156] Michael Brunner has shown that the British military leadership in the Punjab – the main recruiting ground of the colonial army – became interested in the potential of scouting as preparation for military service during the interwar period. M. Brunner, *Education and Modernity in Colonial Punjab: Khalsa College, the Sikh Tradition and the Webs of Knowledge, 1880–1947* (Cham: Springer, 2020), 213–15.

[157] Heinrichs, Diaries, entry for 13 July 1916, YDSPC.

[158] Heinrichs, Diaries, entry for 14 January 1916, YDSPC.

[159] P. A. Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule between the British and United States Empires, 1880–1910," *The Journal of American History* 88, no. 4 (2002), 1320–35.

[160] K.T. Paul, "Citizenship in Modern India," *Young Men of India* 31, no. 1 (1921), 34.

[161] I borrow this phrase from Satadru Sen, *Traces of Empire: India, America and postcolonial Cultures. Essays and Criticism (*New Delhi, Primus Books 2014).

[162] Youth World Service and Restoration Project No. 4: India's Model Youth Project – $ 8,000, KFYA, IWI, Box 60, Folder "Boys' Town, Madras, 1949–52".

[163] This is particularly evident in the case of the Indian Y's rural development and physical education programs.

[164] Cited in David, *YMCA and the Making*, 365. For an analysis for disciplinary varieties of citizen training in Nehruvian India, see also Watt, "Philanthropy and Civilizing Missions," 293–302.

CHAPTER 6

Taraknath Das: Race and Citizenship between India and the U.S.A.

Neilesh Bose

Abstract

Taraknath Das (1884–1958), an itinerant nationalist and anti-colonial activist who spent considerable time in the United States through educational and activist networks, remains a relatively under-studied figure in North American or South Asian histories. Given his centrality to the Ghadar movement, educational training in the USA, and his role in North American and European inter-war anti-colonial movements, his movements, and many writings, serve as a window into entangled histories of race and citizenship between the United States of America and colonial India in the late colonial era. Seen alongside other "expatriate patriots" such as Mohandas Gandhi and Shyamji Krishnavarma, Das is a central figure in the history of overseas nationalism in the early to mid-twentieth century. This paper will focus on his relationship with the United States of America, as the space provided a fertile ground for his activism, his relationship to citizenship, and overall politics of nationalism.

Keywords: citizenship, Indian revolutionaries abroad, transnationalism, race, Taraknath Das, Asian American

The itinerant nationalist and anti-colonial activist Taraknath Das (1884–1958) remains a relatively understudied figure in the history of India as well as the history of the United States of America. Given his centrality to the *Ghadar* movement,[1] his education in the USA, and his role in inter-war anti-colonial movements, his life serves as a window into entangled histories of race and citizenship between the United States of America and colonial India in the late colonial era. Seen alongside other "expatriate patriots" such as Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948) and Shyamji Krishnavarma (1857–1930), Das appears as a central figure in North American history of overseas Indian nationalism[2] in the early to mid-twentieth century. Building upon legal and cultural histories of South Asian histories in the United States of America,[3] this chapter advances conversations in legal history on citizenship and race by focusing on the specific history of Das' applications for citizenship in the early twentieth century. After a brief expose of life in the USA from his entry in

1906 to 1925, I discuss his three applications for citizenship, resulting in his final receipt of it in 1914. Additionally, I briefly examine the rise of the Taraknath Das Foundation, showcasing his life at the crossroads of US and Indian histories. Das' life story shows the lived experience of citizenship at the crossroads between Indian anti-colonial nationalism and Asian exclusion in the early twentieth century.

The US life of Das

Born in 1884 in Majhipara in western Bengal, north of Calcutta, Taraknath Dasr was reared in the actively nationalist milieu of the Bengali youth of his generation. One of the first members of the radical revolutionary group *Anushilan Samiti*, he traveled abroad to Japan in 1905, to acquire revolutionary anti-colonial training like many of his contemporaries. In 1906, Das crossed the Pacific Ocean from Japan and entered North America via Seattle. Immediately, he began to find work on the railroads and in odd jobs, before moving to San Francisco. From a northern Californian base, he found in Washington and Oregon a burgeoning community of Indian laborers working in lumber and shingle mills, small-scale agriculture, celery farms, and various seasonal labor.[4] In these spaces he would encounter primarily Punjabi Sikh laborers, a marked departure from his formally educated Bengali nationalist context in India. In 1907, darting between Berkeley and a growing community of South Asian migrants in British Columbia, he witnessed and then wrote about two particular riots in September of that year, including the Vancouver anti-Asian riots. At this point, Das began the Hindustani Association. Interviewed by the *Daily Province* in Vancouver, Das entered the Canadian record by noting how his goal was to look after the immigration rights of Hindus. Das also wrote about the 1907 Bellingham in Washington state, the first visible moment of organized expulsion aimed at South Asians, and began to develop a cross-border system of support and information-gathering between BC, Washington, Oregon, and California.

Part of Das' access to the burgeoning world of surveillance was his work for the newly created Immigration and Naturalization Service in Vancouver from July 1907 to April 1908, when he started the *Free Hindusthan*, a mouthpiece of a growing anti-colonial movement. The first edition in April included long pieces about famine in India, designating causes in British policy, articles about Indian religion, the German revolution of 1848, and a lengthy analysis of the challenges facing the movements of Indian laborers across imperial spaces. By 1909 the paper appeared alongside many others, like *Swadesh Sevak*, the *Aryan*, in a circulation of nationalist papers in BC, Washington, Oregon, and South Africa.

Das and Gandhi

The cause of restricting immigration to Canada and the United States of America from India was part of a longer imperial history of the British Empire seeking to regulate and reduce immigration from India into various settler dominions within the empire, including South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. South Africa is another key node in the broader network of imperial policies as well as circuits of growing anti-colonialism into which Das fit during the early twentieth century. Das' life and work in the Pacific Northwest, where BC played a pivotal role, compares to the work of Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), who began to develop a politics of anti-colonial protest and nationalism in the settler spaces of South Africa in the 1890s and 1900s. Both deployed similar techniques and methods of initiating institutions and newspapers that endured long after their departure from Canada and South Africa. Though not exactly planned from the onset, both landed in a space where they found Indian workers exploited, harassed, and the targets of violence and discrimination. Furthermore, both emerged at a time when the basis for immigration restrictions circulating throughout the empire was targeted directly at Indians. Canada and South Africa, along with Australia and the United States of America shared an investment in the 1897 Natal Act passed in British Natal, which mandated a literacy test in a European language for all migrants entering Natal, to be cited by Australia and Canada numerous times in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

In 1907, the year Das entered British Columbia, Mohandas Gandhi had lived in British South Africa for nearly fourteen years. The Southern African region holds a long history of Indian presence, stretching back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the Dutch East India Company would purchase and transport slaves originating from India into their Cape Town settlement. In terms of the British Empire, Indians had been noticeably present since 1860, when the first batch of indentured laborers sailed across the Indian Ocean into the port of Durban, to work primarily in sugar cane plantations but also in other sorts of agricultural and manual labor as well as for private estates. By the time of Gandhi's arrival in 1893, nearly 100,000 laborers had arrived in South Africa and several thousand Indian traders and professionals arrived, as "passenger" Indians (those who paid for their own passage). Gandhi belonged to this latter category. Before he arrived in the British-controlled portions of Southern Africa, the neighboring South African Republic, where Johannesburg, the home of business, mining, and capital accumulation was based, passed Law 3 of 1885, which had named all the "native races of Asia," and banned them from owning property, prohibited them from exercising the franchise, and mandated registration of all Asiatics. In 1894, one year after Gandhi entered the region, the British Empire sought to appease its

growing European settler community by passing a range of laws targeting Indians in the settler colony of Natal, targeting Indians. In 1894 it barred the franchise to Indians. In 1895, it imposed a 3-pound tax on all ex-indentured laborers who failed to return, with punishment of deportation. Finally, in 1897, it passed a law restricting immigration, based on education, health, age, and literacy in a European language (the Natal Formula), which effectively barred any new Indian migrants from entering the country.

In these years, Gandhi began to organize politically and formed the Natal Indian Congress, with many of his business and trader colleagues there in 1894, which met monthly and was galvanized primarily by the disenfranchisement of Indians proposed that year and passed into law in 1896. In the 1890s, his politics then were based on Indians' right to franchise in the settler state of British South Africa. This occurred in the context of rising and violent opposition to Indian presence in the region, as after one trip back from London in 1897, at disembarkation in Durban, a crowd of white youths were so agitated that they nearly beat him to death.[5] Nonetheless, for Gandhi, imperial citizenship maintained its allure, and throughout the various wars the British Empire fought in the 1890s against African groups like the Zulu, as well as during the Boer War of 1899–1902, he supported and volunteered for the war efforts.[6] In the first decade of the twentieth century, his politics began to shift away from petitions and associations and into journalism, organizing, and communal living.

With the support of the Natal Indian Congress, and other notable Indians, Gandhi assembled a small staff and printing press and began the *Indian Opinion* in 1903, a newspaper published in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil, and English. In 1904, Gandhi relocated the publishing office to his settlement in Phoenix, near Durban, a communal living experiment in which all would share the labor of maintaining the space equally without regard to gender, race, or caste. Read by Das and many associates in India and North America, it provided inspiration for the *Free Hindusthan*. In the first few years, the newspaper was moderate and kept reiterating its faith in British law, but it also began to highlight the plight of indentured laborers in South Africa, the poor conditions in which they worked, and how they were treated in estates, including cases of severe punishment, mental breakdown, and suicide.

Just as a large component of Gandhi's politics in his South Africa period (1893–1915) derived from his exposure to indentured laborers, Das began to politically develop into an anti-colonial organizer through his exposure to laborers in BC. His organization of South Asian laborers and students to oppose racist treatment and immigration legislation, and his assistance to Indian migrants to Canada appear as analogues to the work of Gandhi. Both men appear on two sides of the growing nationalist movement that opposed British rule. Both men were activists but Gandhi transformed into a theorist of non-violence and created a

political message that separated itself from the older nationalist approaches from the days of *Anushilan* in Bengal. *Indian Opinion* was an inspiration for Das and *Free Hindusthan* also circulated amongst Indians in South Africa.[7] Whereas Gandhi was building a new approach to non-violence in the years just before the First World War, Das continued with older messages of organized revolution.

As an indication of how Indian nationalism in the early twentieth century existed in multiple registers, this split between Das' older approach and the newness of Gandhi occurred mostly clearly in correspondence between Das, Count Leo Tolstoy, the famous Russian writer and Christian pacifist, and Mohandas Gandhi. At the moment of the launch of *Free Hindusthan*, on May 24, 1908, Das sent a letter to Tolstoy, asking for advice about the independence struggle and for help in publicizing *Free Hindusthan*. After receiving this and another letter in July of 1908, with a copy of the first issue, Das received a lengthy response from Tolstoy.

Tolstoy offered with a long and detailed response titled "Letter to a Hindoo" on 14 December 1908. In his ornate letter, adorned with citations from the Vedas and several mentions of Krishna, Tolstoy offered an assessment of Das' position on resistance to tyranny (as discussed in *Free Hindusthan*) with a recourse to religion. Tolstoy proposes that the reason for the domination of 200 million people by a small alien group lies in the lack of a "reasonable religious teaching which by explaining the meaning of life would supply a supreme law for the guidance of conduct and would replace the more than dubious precepts of pseudo-religion and pseudo-science with the immoral conclusions deduced from them and commonly called civilization."[8] As a response to Das' embrace of a resistance to aggression, Tolstoy claims that "you, an adherent of a religious people, deny their law, feeling convinced of your scientific enlightenment and your right to do so, and you repeat (do not take this amiss) the amazing stupidity indoctrinated in you by the advocates of the use of violence."[9] As a way out of the predicament of this indoctrination, Tolstoy advocates a peaceful resistance to the violent deeds of the administration, the law courts, the collection of taxes, and soldiering. With this, Tolstoy claims, no one will be able to enslave you.[10] Tolstoy's position adheres to a new perspective of a growing modern theory of non-violence, developed in this period by Gandhi in South Africa. Gandhi's own ideas were developing partially in relation to his engagements with Tolstoy in 1909 and 1910.

Das then engaged in a detailed reply, published as a series of four articles in *Twentieth Century Magazine* in 1910. This magazine, an early twentieth-century English language periodical published in Boston, was likely in Das' orbit through his connections with sympathizers in the USA, like Jabez Sunderland and Robert Morss Lovett. He disagreed vehemently with Tolstoy's conclusion that India's slavery was due to Indian complicity. He disagrees with Tolstoy's contention that "in the absence of true religious consciousness and the guidance of conduct flowing

from it, lies the chief, if not the sole cause, of enslavement of the Indian people by the English"[11] by arguing that the idea that true religious consciousness comes by a manifestation of love with non-resistance. This is not, for Das, true, as he argues that the idea of non-resistance "has led to the people of India to dullness and fatalism, and fatalism has led them to ignorance and superstition, and there is the remote cause of our downfall." Like Tolstoy, he cites Krishna, for a different purpose, as he shows that Krishna taught in the Gita "to give up your lethargy and effeminacy and rise up to fight the battle for the right" and that "whenever righteousness is dwindled by the acts of the unrighteous, I incarnate myself in the shape of popular spirit to save the followers of the right and truth and destroy the evil."[12] Resistance to tyranny is not, for Das, inconsistent with the spirit of love.

From 1909, when Gandhi began to write Tolstoy from London, he revealed that he had been reading Tolstoy's writings for some time and they informed his emergent ideas about Indian nationalism, violence, and non-violence. In his first letter, dated 1 October 1909, Gandhi mentioned that he has been given his "Letter to a Hindu," an English translation of Tolstoy's response to Das. Gandhi in his *Indian Opinion* printed the letter Tolstoy sent to Das, and this led to the christening of the Tolstoy Farm in Johannesburg with his friend Hermann Kallenbach. A year later, on a ship between England and South Africa, he wrote the soon-to-be blockbuster *Hind Swaraj*, a short but powerful critique of industrialization, the violence of Western civilization, and violent methods used by young revolutionaries, in the form of *Hind Swaraj*. This book is a short but remarkable account about the state of politics in the world at the time, the assumptions behind modern education, science, law, and medicine, and a sketch of revolt against the ideologies of colonial rule. Echoing Tolstoy's 1908 declaration in his letter to Das, in the context of arguing that the rule of violence only begets slavery and subordination to an endless cycle of violence, "it is not the English who have enslaved the Indians, but the Indians who have enslaved themselves."[13] This notion of Indian complicity in the manners of colonial rule emerged as a centerpiece of Gandhi's detailed critique of Indian nationalism as it existed at the time and his evolving ideas of non-violent political action.

When Das entered British Columbia in 1907, the province had been entangled in a global history of immigration restrictions based on identifying and restricting Indian migrants within the British Empire. The travails of British Columbia followed about a decade later than the same exact politics of exclusion in Natal, the white settler colony on the eastern edge of British South Africa. From the 1890s, the British Empire in Natal had been caught up in detailed agitations and protests against Indian migration, out of fear of Indians out-competing white traders as well as a racialized opposition to Indians. In the Natal context, this was also matched by a careful sense of the colonial office in London not to inflame sentiments amongst nationalist Indians who may see policies affecting Indians in one of the

British Empire as ammunition for their opposition to British Indian rule. The 1897 Immigration Act, which restricted immigration based on a literacy text, itself based on US immigration legislation based partially on US Southern state laws aimed at curbing suffrage of African Americans. This "Natal Act" became the standard for restricting Asian immigration into the white settler colonies during this period and was introduced eight times in the BC provincial legislature, though reserved by the British Empire.[14] Das, therefore, lived and worked in BC at the very same time that the global circuits of exclusionary legislation aimed at Indian migrants were taking shape throughout the British settler imperial dominion world.

In the fall of 1908, Das left the northwest to attend Vermont's Norwich University, a military training academy. Suspended in 1909 because of his advocacy of war against their ally, the British Empire, he returned to Seattle and earned a BA in Political Science. In 1910, he began researching an MA on employer liability law, worked with laborers in Berkeley, and earned an MA in 1911. In this period, he served as an interpreter from Hindi and Punjabi in the St. John's trial in the spring of 1910, in which a few individuals and members of the police implicated in

In 1913, along with the newly arrived Har Dayal, and others like Santokh Singh, Sohan Singh Bakhna, Das started the Pacific Coast Hindusthan Association, later known as the *Ghadr Party*. The party saw a rise of infiltration from a new surveillance network, led by the Anglo-Indian immigration official William Hopkinson in its San Francisco core location but branches throughout the networks in Oregon, Washington, and California as well as various regions throughout the world. Despite Hopkinson trying his best to declare Das an anarchist and alert local authorities of the dangers he posed to the United States, Das received citizenship in June of that year, on his third try. As a newly naturalized US citizen, he immediately traveled to Canada to help those trapped in the Komagata Maru, held immobile in Vancouver's port since May of that year, due to recently passed legislation that only admitted immigrants who entered on a continuous journey, making it nearly impossible for Indians to enter Canada.

In 1914, the US also convened hearings on bills aimed at restricting the immigration of "Hindus laborers." Only visible in recent years to the US and Canadian authorities, were tied to anarchism and radicalism, as by 1917's Immigration Act that created a "Barred Zone" including all of Asia, Indians were tied in the combined US-Canadian imagination to both labor and insurgency. After leaving the US as a citizen in 1914 and spending much of that year between Vancouver and Victoria (which also held a Ghadr branch and where Das worked with a colleague both in a grocery storefront and organizing Ghadr members on the island), Das spent the next three years in various points northwest, as well as in Europe. In the spring of 1917, he and forty-two others, ranging from Ghadrites like Santokh Singh and Bhagwan Singh and Germans like the former consul-general Franz Bopp were

tried on sedition and allegations of conspiracy, referring to a series of planned revolutionary uprisings from 1914 to 1917, planned by the Ghadr party, the Berlin India Committee, and Indian revolutionaries. The nearly six months-long trial cost $450,000, included 150 witnesses, summoned to testify against the Indian and German alleged conspirators, resulting in a six-hour jury deliberation which found Das and 28 others guilty. Das was imprisoned in Leavenworth Prison in Kansas for a year alongside anarchists of various types, labor leaders, Germans like Bopp, and radicals the world over.

On June 5, 1918, Das entered Leavenworth as inmate 12489, in leg irons and handcuffs. During the time of Das' imprisonment, the population there swelled to include criminals, court-martialed soldiers, German immigrants of various types, Mexican revolutionaries, socialists, anarchists, IWW members, approximately 400 other "foreigners." After he served his time from June of 1918 to October of 1919, he was based both in the East Coast, and in NY, as well as Germany for much of the inter-war period. During this time he organized on behalf of numerous Indian independence movements, along with his wife, Mary Keating Morse, classified as white. He appeared as a key figure in the Friends of Freedom of India, an organization based in New York after World War I that focused on both Indian independence and opposing deportations of Indians from the USA to India.

Like his counterpart Shyamji Krishnavarma,[15] who together with V.D. Savarkar, worked in Das' time in London, Paris, Geneva, followed the tenets of European politics, and posed the US as a role model for the future of India. Das' *Is Japan a Menace to Asia* was published in 1917. It was cited as evidence in the Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial as evidence of his conspiracy, in which he wrote and agitated against the British Empire, with the aid of German support. As a reflection of his early training in politics and formal political science at the University of Washington, and his Indian nationalism, he argues that Japan's rise to power was not a menace to Asia, but rather a force of containing European aggression. Written from the explicit point of view of an insider in the global colour line of his moment, he mentioned Japan's rise in the world as a check to 'white men's countries' in Australia, Canada, and South Africa. Das by 1917 had lived experience in this sort of a settler colonial world, through his work as an interpreter in the immigration service and at numerous trials in BC and Oregon.

Das' *Is Japan a Menace to Asia* was published in 1917 and cited as evidence in the Hindu-German Conspiracy Trial as evidence of his conspiracy, in which he wrote and agitated against the British Empire, with the aid of German support. As a reflection of his early training in politics and formal political science at the University of Washington, this work sets out to explain how Japan's rise to power was not a menace to Asia, as often depicted by liberal-imperial European powers worried about how this rise could affect European privileges in China, or the power

of British Indian merchant capital, but rather, a political assertion of power that would make European and North American powers respectful of human rights (his term). With a very supportive introduction by the Chinese nationalist the Rt. Hon. Tong Shao Yi, Das shows that Japan's rise to power in the early twentieth century, noting the imperialism in Korea, aggression in China, and role in Asian politics was not a 'menace to Asia' but rather a force of containing European aggression. Written from the explicit point of view of an insider in the global colour line of his moment, he mentions how Japan's rise counters 'white men's countries' in Australia, Canada, and South Africa, as these areas would be possibly be changed given the rise of an alternative world system. This is where Das by 1917 had lived experience on the sides of how such a white state would be authorized, through his work as an interpreter in the immigration service, at numerous trials in BC and Oregon.

As Krishnavarma argued in *Indian Sociologist* in 1917, Das' 1923 *India in World Politics* upholds the model of the United States of America as an exemplary republican form and inspiration for a future independent India. This 1923 book as noted by a number of sources, emerged out of his time in jail in March 1918 to June 1919. With fifteen chapters the book covers India's role in the British Empire, to the Central Asian context, China relations, Anglo-French, German, Russian, and Turkish relations, military relations, Suez Canal, Persian Gulf, and how Anglo- relations with Afghans, Japanese, Chinese, and Americans, are all impacted by India. It is a consideration of the future of India as a world power. Approximately 15 years after the appearance of Gandhi's seminal *Hind Swaraj*, Das' text reads in the opposite direction, a look outward, as opposed to the world of the self. With a foreword by noted American man of letters, Transcendentalist, sympathizer with Indian independence, and scholar of English literature, Robert Morss Lovett, the work begins with an assessment of the importance of India to the British Empire, and like Gandhi in Hind Swaraj, notes how central the idea of empire is to the British and to Indians alike. Though much of the work reads as a compendium of his political science and diplomacy training in its sketches of how India relates to central Asia, China, Japan, and various other parts of the world, a signification mention of the US constitution shows his political leanings (as the "greatest document of the world"), interpreted by Das as an inspiration to Chinese nationalists, and also to Indian nationalists, but also asks whether the US would ally with the British Empire (as this is written during and after his imprisonment and the Hindu-German conspiracy trial), and also states like many of his generation that the US should not ally with a nation that holds so many in subjugation.

In this work, after having reviewed the many ways that in the post-WWI period India could be seen at the center of a British world system, he felt that India's role in the future would be pivotal for many relationships in the world. In the final chapter, listing the possibilities for India's future—a) continued subjection b) some kind

of autonomy in British imperial systems, like dominion c) conquest by someone else and d) independence. In discussing the prospect of independence, he explores how India should be seen—if an independent nation—as a place form which Indians could occupy adjacent lands, such as the Iran and parts of Central Asia:

> Irrigation and the hand of Indian cultivators could regain vast regions which today are virtually deserts; schemes are feasible which would bring not only profit but honour; and by interesting the Indian people in great schemes beyond their own borders, giving them an inkling of what their future may be as a colonizing race… Abandoning all ambiguity it is abundantly clear that India's real future lies not only in industrialism, but in territorial expansion; that is to say, racial expansion.[16]

India's horizon, for Das, was broadened with the consciousness of a nationalism in which migration to Africa and the Americas had to be addressed, and obviously, this is taken partially out of his own struggles and activities in the inter-stitial spaces of BC and the western US. This selection at the end of his text is his positive quotation of the early twentieth century race theorist Putnam Weale, who saw the role of Indians as partially the role of the sub-imperial settler, and this is an issue that runs through the work of Gandhi.

In 1923, after *India in World Politics* came out, his citizenship was under scrutiny, the US government set upon him to revoke his citizenship, and to expel him out of the country. Though he was enrolled as a PhD student in Georgetown's School of Foreign Service, he eluded the agents on his tail, as he had eluded Hopkinson a decade earlier. He then escaped to Europe after his 1924 marriage to Morse, after a whirlwind one year of writing a thesis, accepted in 1925. He lived most of the inter-war years in Germany and Italy, and returned to the US after the war, to teach at universities in New York and DC. He died in New York in 1958.

Citizenship Applications and a History of Race

Das applied for US citizenship three times and received it on his third attempt. Soon after arriving in the USA in the late part of 1906, he filed an application for citizenship, in Oakland, CA, and the county clerk refused to accept the application. He then wrote a letter to the Commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization in Washington demanding to admit him as a "Hindu." The bureau declined, saying a Burmese applicant had been denied. Das then made recourse to anthropology, citing that Burmese and others in Asia were "Mongoloid." Unlike "Mongoloids," Hindus, according to him were Caucasian and therefore, white. Such a categorization fit the prevailing views in anthropology and would find confirmation later in

the 1911 *Dictionary of Races or Peoples*. By that rationale he felt that he should be eligible for naturalization. This attempt did not yield any results.

In 1908, the number of East Indians entering the USA totaled 1800, about 700 from Canada, and 1100 from India. At that time, Das served in the US Immigration and Naturalization Service in Vancouver, working with the officials on the LPC cases. This experience, of coaching increasing numbers of Indians aiming to enter the USA, as well as the 1911 *Dictionary of Races*, informed a shifting landscape of racial parameters for figures like Das. This dictionary was created to define the diversity of populations entering the USA at that time. In this dictionary "Hindus" appears as an entry, after about 20 years of discussions about race and ethnicity outside of white or black. This put into official language a popular usage of the term "Hindu," to refer to all from what was then colonial India, as it was a term of "race," not religion, as Muslims, Sikhs, and others could be "Hindu."

In 1912, he filed his second citizenship application in Coquille, Oregon, in the Cooks County court. At a hearing on May 20, 1912, he was denied, not on grounds of race as before, but on grounds of failing to file a proper landing certificate in his true name. Two years later, in January of 1914, he filed his third application for citizenship in San Francisco at their district court. This application brought forth scrutiny to his file by Hopkinson, the head of a growing surveillance apparatus that linked the US, Canada, and the British Empire. Hopkinson claimed Das to be an anarchist, to assure deportation from the USA. The British ambassador Bryce was alerted to his file and recommended using the "free white person" clause in the naturalization act, a topic of debate at that time.

In the meantime, hearings on immigration in the Senate were convened after Das' file was submitted, but his case was not brought up because it was under consideration by the court. The attempts by Hopkinson and Bryce were futile as on June 6th, 1914, Das' citizenship was granted. Immediately, he traveled to Sumas, on the Canadian border, to learn more about and potentially help those in the Komagata Maru case. He did not get to enter Canada, but was in touch by phone and letter with Harnam Singh, Husain Rahim, and Bhag Singh.' As mentioned in the Canadian press, he was the only "American Hindu" involved in the entire affair, and wrote a telegram to the Governor General of Canada, only to be ignored. Soon after his receipt of citizenship, the US passed the "Barred Zone" Act of 1917, excluding from the United States all peoples living within a constructed geographic area referred to as the "Barred Zone," including almost all of Asia except Japan and the Philippines. The "Barred Zone" Act was intended to prohibit the entry of migrants from India.

At issue in Das' era was the definition of race for "Hindus," as found in the *The Dictionary of Races*, published in 1911. As is the case with most immigration applications, immigration officers, as well as judges in cases that required adjudication, required interpretation of the definition. It states on hand that "in the broadest

sense, any native of India, so defined for convenience in this dictionary"[17]. It also mentions the "more ordinary religious sense," in which it would apply to only two-thirds of the population who are "Hinduized." In the second paragraph it does note that "in immigration questions, where the immense population of India is beginning to arouse some concern, all natives of India are indiscriminately known as "Hindus."[18] There was another category to be used, of "East Indian." Though it mentions that "ethnologically speaking, the term 'East Indian' has no meaning," the entry in that category discusses the "Caucasian features" northern Hindus.[19]

His citizenship applications show a history of racial formation from the perspective of an actual claimant's life and work. Das offers a guideline into this process as his life and citizenship history parallels the history of the United States of America compiling data on naturalization and simultaneously creating mechanisms to exclude Indians from naturalization, though he was never de-naturalized. During this period, particularly from 1910–1917, immigration officials were facing a "Hindu" menace, in which many lawmakers in the USA proposed various measures to exclude Hindus from entry into the country.[20] Das was at the center of this world, and was at the center of the Hindu German conspiracy trial, in 1917, one of the 14 "Hindoos" convicted alongside 15 others in San Francisco. During this decade, the legal history of disenfranchisement proceeded to focus on Indians, such as the 1910 Alien Land Act, the 1913 Alien Act, and the 1920 Initiative. In 1920, deportations of Indians began much to the oppositions of groups like Friends of the Freedom of India, and other allies to Indians. Most scholars refer to Ozawa and Thind, as well as the statistics and abstractions regarding race in this time period. Das is an individual case not often studied in this history, deserving close scrutiny given the range of his movements and politics after he received his citizenship.

The Early 1920s, Bhagat Singh Thind, and the Departure of Das

Six years after the Barred Zone Act, Bhagat Singh Thind's applications for citizenship proceeded on a similar trajectory to Das. Thind petitioned for naturalization in 1920, Unlike Das' case, Thind's citizenship was revoked in 1923 by the US Supreme Court. The decision by George Sutherland emphasizes that the clause "free white persons" did not accord with a scientific definition of Caucasian. Instead, the popular definition of "white" would not include Thind by virtue of the alleged inability for subjects like Thind to assimilate into the US.. As mentioned in the decision, Hindus would never be able to abandon "physical group characteristics [which] render them readily distinguishable." Such a condition was contrasted with Europeans who "quickly merge into the mass of our population."[21] As noted by Munshi, this rendered Hindus "virtually unassimilable."[22]

Such a move countered the Ozawa decision only a few months earlier, which ruled that a Japanese migrant, Ozawa, was declared ineligible for naturalization because of a scientific definition of race, not through skin color or through common understandings. This decision led to the cancellation of Thind's citizenship, written about by Ray Chase and Sakharam Pandit soon after the decision became publicized. In this book, Chase and Pandit refer to how in the common definition of white, as understood through geography textbooks and anthropology of the time, American students would have learned that Indian immigrants would have been included in the Caucasian race, and that plenty of Indians (like Das, though he is not mentioned by name) did receive citizenship. Chase and Pandit mention that the only logical reason for the opposition to Indian citizenship was the recent influx of Hindu laborers on the "Pacific Coast, creating an economic situation that led to agitation and the growth of prejudice against Hindus in the minds of certain classes whose interests were affected."[23] At issue was the ability for Indians to be considered white, as upheld in earlier cases,[24] and then, denied for Thind.

In 1923 and 1924, Das found his way to DC, after spending the early 1920s with the Friends for Freedom of India in NY. He worked with associates like Sailendranath Ghose and Lala Lajpat Rai, soon after his release from Leavenworth. In DC, he worked at a desk at the Library of Congress and enrolled in Georgetown University's new School of Foreign Service, submitting a PhD thesis in 1924, before marrying Mary Keating Morse, a white woman sympathetic to the cause of Indian independence. Because of the 1922 Cable Act, which mandated the loss of citizenship to any alien ineligible for citizenship, the new Mrs. Das was under threat of losing her citizenship, as the US was in the midst of a denaturalization drive of Indian naturalized citizens. The newly married couple left for Europe, where they stayed for most of the inter-war period. Contrary to popular folklore, Das never had his citizenship taken away, as did forty-three other naturalized citizens in the 1920s.[25]

While de-naturalization of Indian migrants had intensified in the 1920s, many of the spaces frequented by Das grew into hotbeds of intellectual and political ferment, such as Howard University in Washington, DC. An institution Das maintained regular contact with through his death, in the mid-1920s a group of Black political scientists and intellectuals rose to particular prominence in the emergent field of international relations brewing after the Great War. As Das' lifelong interests focused on international relations as well as colonized peoples in the world system, the "Howard school" of Black intellectuals from the 1920s through the 1950s pursued parallel interests from the point of view of critiques of racism as well as the African diaspora, colonialism in Africa, and African American lived experiences. Termed the "Howard School," by Robert Vitalis, this cohort included luminaries such as Philadelphia-born Rhodes Scholar Alain Locke (1885–1954), renowned political scientist, long time chair of the Howard department, and later UN mediator and

Under-Secretary Ralph Bunche (1903–1971), and Eric Williams (1911–1981), future President of Trinidad and Tobago. Shaped by an abiding interest in comparative colonialism, the school's focus, in its teaching and publications by leading members formed a close parallel to Das' interest in federations, world politics, and the future of independent states, with India at Das' center of vision.[26]

Such issues at the core of international relations also consumed Merze Tate (1905–1996), one of the most pivotal, and heretofore relatively under-recognized, members of the school also focused on the various issues concerning colonized people in the context of the post-World War I moment of promises yet denials of self-determination to the colonized. The first Black woman to receive a PhD at Radcliffe as well as the first Black woman to study at Oxford in the 1920s, Tate taught at various institutions such as Morgan State University and Bennett College of North Carolina, but joined Howard's political science department in 1942, teaching there until her retirement in 1977. Tate published academic monographs *The Disarmament Illusion* in 1942 and *United States and Armaments* in 1948, as well as scores of articles in the 1950s and 60s, establishing herself as an authority on US Empire, the US conquest of Hawaii, and various issues relating to internationalism. Though Tate is receiving more recognition in this era,[27] the other figures (all men), such as Locke, Bunche, Williams, and others of the time have been the subject of numerous biographies and scholarly investigations. Tate taught in India as a Fulbright scholar in 1950–51, at Santiniketan, the university founded by the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore, about which Das, and many of his generation, wrote about extensively. Tate's time in India not only oriented her to studying the world of Asia in the Cold War period, from the point of view of the colonized and the recently independent, but also pushed her to revise her views on race, difference, and essentialism. A unique figure in African American letters and intellectual life, Tate maintained a scholarly interest in international relations in the traditional sense, but also a commitment to internationalism, as well as a considerable study of the histories of the colonized and perspectives on imperialism from the conquered peoples of the world, much like Das. As the world outside the USA was central to Tate's life and work, the world of the USA was central to Das' formation as a scholar and an activist.[28]

History of the Taraknath Das Foundation: 1930–1958

After finishing his thesis and escaping the country during a rise in de-naturalization attempts, he and Mary returned to the US and established the foundation on July 4, 1930, in Cleveland, Ohio. It was incorporated in DC December 1935. The foundation began its work as Das assumed the position of a special lecturer in Far

Eastern Affairs at Catholic University in DC during the 1934–35 academic year. His lectures at Catholic and Howard were printed later in 1936, as *Foreign Policy in the Far East*. The first deposits to the foundation's account began with his earnings through his position there. As mentioned in the foundation's reports and correspondence, it aimed to "promote human welfare, friendly relations and cultural co-operation among nations."[29] Mary and Taraknath Das were the co-founders, with Mary serving as President from 1930 to 1948.It featured Representatives from Fiji, British West Indies, Germany, India, Israel, Japan. Its initial executive Committee including Harry J. Carman, Ralph G. Starke, Leon I. Cohen. John J. Meng, John T. Seaman, T Das, as Director and Secretary-Treasurer, Harry Jacobsen, Anne Z. Bose, Mon mohon Das, Satish Chandra Ghosh, Govind Behari Lal, Haridas T. Mazumdar, Swami Nikhilananda, Sulamith Schwartz, Patricia D. Sprague, Carlton W. Washburne, Ellen Watamull. The advisory board featured individuals based in New York, Calcutta, Wisconsin-Madison, Harvard, Virginia, Brooklyn College (Felix Gross, who later became President), Noni G. D. Joardar, Prafulla Mukherji, an engineer from Pittsburgh, Pitman B. Potter, among others.

In its early years it donated funds to the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the American Historical Association, the American Society for International Law, American University, Columbia University, and the University of Virginia. For the Taraknath Das Library, at first based in the United States, and then sent to India in the late 1950s, the foundation bought books in various stores in the US and London and also acquired numerous works for students and researchers. These include the Scheduled Caste leader Jogendranath Mandal's historic resignation letter in Pakistan, Dr. Norman Kiehl's article on Indian students in the USA, and a reprint of Dr. Holmes' paper on Transcendentalism and Indian thought.

It also donated funds to the State University of Iowa for the Sudhindra Bose Memorial Fund, to honor Sudhindra Bose who taught Indian history there for 20 years. From the late 1940s, it sponsored a lecture series about India, called the Mary Keatinge Das Memorial Lecture series. From 1948 to 1954, it held an annual lecture, including a range of distinguished speakers that represented the Das' interests in the politics of India, India-US relations, and aspects of religion in India. The inaugural speaker was Columbia University professor of history Robert Livingston Schuyler, in 1948, followed by Swami Nikhilananda, of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Centre, in 1949. These two poles of interest—in reformist Indian religion and US-India relations—remained key staples of the lecture series through 1954, with lectures by scholars of religion such as Ryusaku Tsunoda, and political figures such as Eleanor Roosevelt, the US ambassador Chester Bowles, and the Indian ambassador to the US Gaganvihari L. Mehta. The Foundation also helped create the Library of Congress and the American University's Annual Benoy Kumar Sarkar Memorial Lecture, "India, the U.S., and World Peace," by Pitman Benjamin

Potter, Grozier Professor of International Law at the American University and Watamull Visiting Lecturer, University of Delhi, 1949–50.[30]

In 1957, just before his death in 1958, the foundation helped established the Taraknath Das Centre in the campus of Jadavpur University in independent West Bengal. This centre maintains a research center for scholars and collects news clippings and primary sources about international politics, attached to the university's department of international relations. As a key figure in the growth of international relations as a discipline, since he completed one of the first PhDs of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in 1925, Das aimed to make primary sources and research possible for scholars based in India. As of 2021, the centre maintains a staff that organizes and catalogs such sources relevant to several sub-fields, including human rights, racism, religion, and the environment. As of 2006, materials since 1957 have been digitized and are in the process of being made accessible to a broader public. Materials are primarily in English but also in Bengali and other Indian languages. In addition to these clippings and contemporary sources, the centre maintains the Taraknath Das Collection, of rare books and ephemera donated by Das himself. Since 1957 and through the present day, the Taraknath Das Centre receives an annual grant from the Taraknath Das Foundation.

There is little to no recorded documentation of the foundation's activities from the late 1950s through the 1980s. From 1982, Dr. Leonard Gordon, then professor of South Asian history at Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, joined the board of trustees. At this time, Professor Kathryn Linden of Columbia University served as director and with Gordon began to advertise modest scholarships for Indian students at American universities, an enduring concern of Das for most of his life. In 1984, after the death of his niece, Nilima Das, the funds of the foundation were increased as Linden, Felix Gross, and Gordon negotiated the transfer of the life trust which Das had left for his niece to the foundation. Nilima Das died in 1984, just as Kathryn Linden was retiring[31]. She, as well as president of the foundation at that time, Felixs Gross, and the present director, just about to assume these duties, negotiated with the trustee of Dr. Das's estate, Leon Cohen, to transfer the funds to a new account, which now serves as the operating account of the foundation. Even though the amounts available for each scholarships are modest, the competition is fierce, and only allows for three to four recipients a year.

Presently, Taraknath Das funds have been deposited at twelve universities across the United States of America, including the University of Pittsburgh, N.Y.U., the University of Washington, the University of Virginia, Howard University, Yale University, the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, American University, and the University of Hawaii Manoa. At Columbia University, the fund is called the Mary Keatinge Das Fund and it supports lectures and conferences on India.

Since 1982, the foundation has commenced a regular award acknowledging an individual or institution that has contributed to knowledge of India, India-US relations, or Indian arts and culture. The roster of winners reads as an index of the major figures in American academia, journalism, and the arts of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. Both Indians prominent in the US landscape as well as significant American leaders in these fields have been honored by the foundation. The first award was given to R.K. Narayan in 1982, and the last award was given to Sree Srinivasan of the South Asian Journalists Association in 2015. In between other writers such as Anita Desai, scholars such as Ed Dimock and A.K. Ramanujan, dancers such as Indrani, and scientist-doctor-writers such as Siddharta Mukherjee and Abraham Verghese have received the award. In addition to award winners, the trustees have featured pivotal figures in American arts and letters related to India, such as Edward Dimock, Indrani, Somdev Bhattacharji, Morton Klass, Barbara Stoler Miller, Sidney Aronson, Owen Lynch, Bharati Mukherjee, and Ainslee Embree.

Though the foundation was begun to assist Indian students, it grew into an entity with a great visibility in the American public culture, linked to education and the arts about India. It began as and still is an entity designed to support immigrant students in the US. From the late twentieth century, it began to recognize major figures in American scholarly and artistic circles who have focused on India. The foundation is a far cry from the world of post-1956 Indian-American life, as large-scale professional formations developed in the USA from that moment onward. Such large amounts of visibility, resources, and Indian-American populations would have been unimaginable during Das' time in the country. However, the goals and overall tenor of many organizations begun in the wake of larger scaled movements to the USA focus on directing resources and expertise to India do resonate with the lifeworld of Das. For though he devoted most of his life to studying and political work in the United States, the betterment of India was never distant from any of his many projects and the education of Indian students in the USA would only contribute to those goals.

Conclusion

Other travelers to the US in the same time period wrote about their travels, including wellknown nationalist figures such as Lajpat Rai,[32] Sudhindra Bose,[33] and Bhai Parmanand.[34] Unlike those figures, he applied for and maintained US citizenship and started a foundation to help Indian students, leaving a specific imprint on US society. The USA is the space where he saw a liberal democracy at work. Like Krishnavarma, he interpreted the princely states as a model for a future, but

unlike him the USA remained a key influence from the beginning of his political life through the end of his life.

The United States of America is an important context for the development of Indian itinerant nationalists like Das. The USA not only comprised the literal space where he researched his PhD at the Library of Congress after studying at universities like Norwich, Berkeley, and Washington, but for the constant reference to the US as a model for democracy. The USA as an idealist reference point erased any presence of the ongoing displacement and dispossession of indigenous peoples, as well as poised the United States through the image it presented to the world.[35] Racial terminology underwent a checkered and scattered history until 1952, the year the US passed the Immigration and Nationality Act, which eliminated race as a category within criteria of naturalization. This same year, Taraknath Das traveled to Calcutta to deliver a series of lectures at Jadavpur University. At this site of intense opposition to US power, he was roundly castigated for his support of the USA. As his history in the US demonstrates, Das comprised one of the few "East Indians" who studied in the USA, yet was also indelibly marked by such a history in his own post-U.S. travels and endeavors. He returned to the US in 1952 and stayed in New York until his death in 1958, with a foundation set up in his name since the mid-1930s. This foundation now serves as one of the main conduits between India and the United States of America. The geographies of Das and the spaces in which he lived in this period do not conform to an easily understandable "India" any more than the United States of America was clear on how it categorized race during his lifetime.[36]

His complex set of movements, writings, and activism brings to light not so much the then unstable category of "Hindu," but how the "Hindu" menace represented by Das and others poses a broad ancestor to the many individuals, movements, and forms of activism who fit only ambiguously into categories of race, religion, and ethnicity. The texture of his life, and in particular his relationship to US citizenship, shows a crucial part of a "minor archive," one that is often missed by national histories or positivist legal arguments. Building on Munshi's ground-breaking studies of Thind and Ghadiali, Das' life is one of many that comprises a "crucial register through we collaborate in reconstructing forgotten histories, projecting alternative futures, and re-envisioning the meaning of citizenship."[37] Das' relationship to US citizenship does not raise timeless "prejudices of the homeland," as argued by earlier scholars of Asian American Studies. Instead, a close look at Das shows how a significant portion of the twentieth century's history of race and nation is not complete without an analysis of how both American and Indian histories come together in one person's life.

Notes

[1] For studies of the Ghadr movement, see Maia Ramnath, *From Haj to Utopia: How the Ghadr Movement Charted Global Radicalism and Attempted to Overthrow the British Empire* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011, Tilak Raj Sareen, *Activities and Ideology of the Ghadr Party*, 2 volumes (Delhi: Navajivan Books, 2017), and Harish K. Puri, *Ghadar Movement: Ideology, Organization, and Strategy* (Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University, 1993). Recent advances in the study of the Ghadr movement feature the special edition titled "The Ghadar Movement" *Socialist Studies* 13, no. 2 (Fall 2018): 1–153 and Gajendra Singh, "Jodh Singh, the Ghadar Movement and the Anti-Colonial Deviant in the Anglo-American Imagination," *Past and Present 245*, no. 1 (2019): 187–219.

[2] The relationship between India and the United States of America, particularly through African American voices, is often studied through the many encounters with Gandhi by American social activists, such as Howard Thurman, Benjamin Mays, and Pauli Murray in addition to Martin Luther King, Jr. See Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012) and Lynn Burnett, "Black Americans Make Contact with Gandhi," https://crossculturalsolidarity.com/african-americans-make-contact-with-gandhi-the-1930s/, accessed 14 February 2021.

[3] Important milestones in this literature include discussions in Asian American studies about South Asian American histories, such as Sucheta Mazumdar, "Race and Racism: South Asians in the United States," in *Frontiers of Asian American Studies*, ed. Gail M. Nomura, et al (Pullman, WA: Washington State University Press, 1989), 25–38. A response to Mazumdar is found in Susan Koshy, "Category Crisis: South Asian Americans and Questions of Race and Ethnicity," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 7, no. 3 (Winter 1998): 285–320. An important work establishing the legal history of race and naturalization law is Ian Haney-Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: NYU Press, 1996), especially chapters 1, "White by Law," and 4, "Ozawa and Thind." Subsequent work includes Falguni Sheth, *Toward a Political Philosophy of Race* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009), esp. chapter 7. Recent contributions include Sherally Munshi, "'You Will See My Family Became So American,': Toward a Minor Comparativism," *American Journal of Comparative Law* 63, no. 3 (Summer 2015): 655–718; idem, "Manners of Exclusion: From the Asiatic Barred Zone to the Muslim Ban," in *Deepening Divides: How Territorial Borders and Social Boundaries Delineate the World*, ed. Didier Fassin (London: Pluto, 2020), 118–143.

[4] According to official immigration statistics, 5,786 Indians were admitted to the United States between 1899 and 1910 and nearly all went to California and Washington. See *Dictionary of Races or Peoples* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1911), 54.

[5] For primary source accounts of this event, see Mohandas Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1950), 57–58 and Fatima Meer, ed., The *South African Gandhi: An Abstract of the Speeches and Writings of M.K. Gandhi, 1893–1914* (Durban: Madiba, 1995), Document 51, 232.

[6] The historiography of Gandhi's life in South Africa is vast and recent critical work has focused on his racialism and embrace of the British Empire during his South African period, as in Goolam Vahed and Ashwin Desai's *The South African Gandhi: Stretcher Bearer of Empire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015).

[7] Das' handwritten mailing list of 43 Indians in South Africa, as well as records of a shipment of copies of *Free Hindusthan* to South Africa were found by Canadian authorities in 1908. See Tapan Mukherjee, *Taraknath Das*, 15.

[8] Bartolf, ed., 18.

[9] Ibid., 25.

[10] Ibid., 26.

[11] Ibid., 50.

[12] Ibid., 52.

[13] Bartolf, ed., 25.

[14] The "Natal Act," was a part of an inter-imperial set of discussions between settler colonies in Australia, Canada, South Africa, and other regions in the 1890s, focused on how specifically to exclude Asiatics (in this instance, referring primarily to Indians) without naming race explicitly in the legislation. See Adam McKeown, *Melancholy Order: Asian Migration and the Globalization of Borders* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), esp. his "The 'Natal Formula' and the Decline of the Imperial Subject, 1888–1913" chapter, pp. 185–214, Jeremy Martens, "A Transnational History of Immigration Restriction: Natal and New South Wales, 1896–97" *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 34, 3 (2006): 323–344, and John Price, "Canada, white supremacy, and the twinning of empires" *International Journal* 68, 4 (December 2013): 628–638.

[15] For a detailed analysis of Krishnavarma's political work cf. Harald Fischer-Tiné, *Shyamji Krishnavarma: Sanskrit Sociology and Anti-Imperialism* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2014).

[16] Taraknath Das, *India in World Politics*, 126.

[17] *Dictionary of Races or Peoples*, 75.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 53.

[20] See Munshi, "Manners of Exclusion," 6–8 for details of this process.

[21] See Thind, 261 U.S. at 206.

[22] Munshi, "You Will See My Family," 672.

[23] Chase and Pandit, *An Examination of The Opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States Deciding Against the Eligibility of Hindus for Citizenship* (Los Angeles: S.G. Pandit, 1926), 9.

[24] Lopez mentions these precedents in which Asian Indians were classified as Caucasians (4 cases from 1910 to 1917) as well as the 1909 Najour case in which a Syrian migrant was classified as Caucasian and therefore eligible for citizenship. See Lopez, *White By Law*, chapter 4.

[25] See Mazumdar, "Race and Racism: South Asians in the United States," 30.

[26] On the "Howard School," see Robert Vitalis, *White World, Black Power Politics: The Birth of American International Relations* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 11–14, and chapter 9.

[27] Barbara D. Savage is currently writing a biography of Tate.

[28] Merze Tate's major books include T*he Disarmament Illusion: The Movement for a Limitation of Armaments to 1907* (New York: Macmillan, 1942), *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965), and *Hawaii: Reciprocity or Annexation* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1968). According to Vitalis, she also produced two manuscripts on the railways and the mining sector, never published. See Vitalis, *White World, Black Power Politics*, 164.

[29] Taraknath Das Foundation Annual Report, 1951.

[30] This material is culled from conversations with Leonard Gordon as well as files of the foundation located at Columbia University.

[31] Personal email from Leonard Gordon, 2 April 2020.

[32] *The United States of America: A Hindu's Impression* (Calcutta, 1916).

[33] *Fifteen Years in America*, 1920.

[34] *The Story of My Life*, 1934, esp. chapters 8 and 9.

[35] Others saw the U.S. model of a federation in this way, such as Kwame Nkrumah and Michael Manley from a comparable context of the African diaspora.

[36] Marian Smith documents this history of confusion from various points, such as the 1790 naturalization law, to 1870, to 1906, to 1924, and finally to 1952. See Smith, "Race, Nationality, and Reality: INS Administration of Racial Provisions in U.S. Immigration and Nationality Law Since 1898," *Prologue Magazine* 34, no. 2 (Summer 2002): https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/summer/immigration-law-1.html, accessed 11 January 2021. However, the elimination of race from consideration only results in many cases in cementing an unequal nation-state order, as Munshi 2020 shows in her essay on the "Muslim" ban.

[37] Munshi, "You Will See My Family", 717.

CHAPTER 7

Socialism, Nonviolence, and Civil Rights: The American Journeys of Rammanohar Lohia

Nico Slate

Abstract

On May 28, 1964, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, a prominent Socialist member of the Indian parliament, was arrested in Jackson, Mississippi, for attempting to enter a "whites only" restaurant. Lohia was not new to the United States, nor to being arrested while fighting injustice. In the summer of 1951, he spent over a month traveling across the United States, encouraging a range of audiences to take up civil disobedience in the struggle against American racism. He met with dozens of activists, intellectuals, and political figures, including Walter Reuther, Pearl S. Buck, Norman Thomas, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Albert Einstein. By examining Lohia's American journeys, this paper will explore the larger intersection of socialism and civil rights within and between the United States and India.

Keywords: Socialism, civil rights, African American, Cold War, Non-alignment, diplomacy

On May 28, 1964, Dr. Rammanohar Lohia, a prominent socialist member of the Indian parliament, was arrested in Jackson, Mississippi. His "crime" was attempting to enter a "whites only" restaurant. After the U.S. State Department sent an apology to the Indian Ambassador, Lohia informed reporters that both the State Department and the Indian Embassy "may go to hell." American leaders should apologize "to the Statue of Liberty and to three billion citizens of the world." Lohia's math is revealing. Those "three billion citizens," far more than the population of India, represented all "dark" or "colored" people—terms of racial solidarity pioneered by the African American intellectual and antiracist activist, W.E.B. Du Bois. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, Du Bois had articulated a transnational and transracial conception of "colored solidarity." Lohia embraced such an expansive antiracist politics. When he explained that he courted arrest in Mississippi in order to show his support for the "revolution against color inequality," Lohia meant not just the American civil rights movement, but related struggles against racism and imperialism throughout the world.[1]

Lohia's transnational understanding of American racism mirrored the global lens with which he viewed Indian politics. Born in Fazibad District in the United

Provinces in 1910, Lohia studied in Bombay, Benares, and Calcutta before traveling to Europe to advance his education. After completing his Ph.D. in Berlin, he returned to India in 1933, eager to contribute to the anticolonial struggle. He was soon arrested. His education continued in Nasik jail, where he befriended a remarkable cohort of young radicals, including Minoo Masani, Yusuf Meherally, Asoka Mehta, Achuyut Patwardhan, and Jayaprakash Narayan. In 1934, under Narayan's leadership, the Congress Socialist Party emerged as the voice of the Indian anticolonial left. Lohia edited the new party's journal, the *Congress Socialist*, while maintaining ties to a range of leading anticolonial figures, including Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. In 1936, Nehru asked Lohia to assume leadership of the Foreign Department of the All India Congress Committee, a position that cemented Lohia's status as one of the most globally-aware figures in the struggle for India's freedom.[2]

In 1944, at the height of the Quit India movement, Lohia was arrested and imprisoned in Lahore Fort, where he underwent long periods of solitary confinement, forced sleep deprivation, and other forms of physical and mental torture. After 1947, Lohia's many years of service to the independence movement could have earned him a comfortable position in the new government. Instead, he chose to help find a new Socialist Party. Jawaharlal Nehru, his former friend, became his main political adversary. Like Nehru, Lohia was a critic of both capitalism and communism. Unlike Nehru, Lohia was skeptical of centralized political power and state-driven industrialization. He advocated, in the words of historian Ramachandra Guha, "a new political and economic system based on the decentralization of political power, on the use of small-scale technology, and on fulfilling the basic needs of the poor rather than on the creation of wealth per se." At a time when the Nehruvian state became increasingly bureaucratized, Lohia remained committed to grassroots organizing and to local struggles for equality and self-determination. His protest in Mississippi earned him, by his count, his 21st arrest since 1939. With a typical mixture of boldness and humor, he told reporters, "The fact that I had not been arrested in America was something of a blemish on my record."[3]

Lohia was not new to the United States. In the summer of 1951, thirteen years before he was arrested in Mississippi, Lohia spent over a month traveling across America. He met with dozens of activists, intellectuals, and political figures, including Walter Reuther, Pearl S. Buck, Norman Thomas, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Albert Einstein. It was his interactions with African American audiences that may have been the most consequential. Four years before the arrest of Rosa Parks sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the "classic phase" of the civil rights movement, Lohia encouraged a range of audiences to take up civil disobedience in the struggle against racism. While scholarship on the "long civil rights movement" has recognized the chronological breadth of the movement, historians are still working to understand how a variety of rich protest and organizing traditions

coalesced in the 1950s to generate what nearly all contemporaries saw as a new and distinctive phase of the long black freedom struggle. How can we explain both the continuity and the radical rapture that was the civil rights movement? Lohia was one of the most prominent voices advocating civil disobedience in the years just before mass-based protests would erupt. Examining the impact of his calls for civil disobedience offers a unique perspective on the birth of a new movement, and on the transnational history of nonviolence more generally.[4]

The story of nonviolence is often told as a simple tale. Mahatma Gandhi pioneered a new method, Martin Luther King, Jr adopted the method, and history was made. As Lohia's experience makes clear, many figures helped translate Gandhian nonviolence into the American context. Equally important, nonviolence was but one of many transnational facets of the civil rights movement. Lohia's American journeys were one small part of the global history of the long African American freedom struggle. Even focusing solely on ties between African American struggles and India, the range of linkages goes beyond nonviolence to include conceptions of caste, color, class, religion, gender, and sexuality. Many Indians had criticized American racism and had suggested a connection with struggles in the subcontinent. The key point is not just that a range of Indians and African Americans had long fostered solidarities that had little or nothing to do with nonviolence. What makes this history especially rich is that the many dimensions of those solidarities were interconnected, as figures like Lohia linked their belief in nonviolence to their other commitments, hopes, and strategies. Indeed, we cannot understand Lohia's role in the spread of nonviolence without also examining the way Americans engaged his other core beliefs, especially his socialism.[5]

Lohia's two American journeys offer a unique window on the intersection of socialism and civil rights within and between the United States and India. A rich historical literature now exists on the relationship between the civil rights movement and the Cold War. On the one hand, historians have demonstrated that American presidents, diplomats, and supreme court justices were moved to oppose the most overt forms of Jim Crow in order to protect America's reputation in the midst of the Cold War. On the other hand, the red scare took a heavy toll on several of the most prominent African American activists, particularly W.E.B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson, and devastated the popular front coalitions that thrived in the 1930s and early 1940s. Lohia's arrest in Mississippi is a classic example of why American powerbrokers came to see Jim Crow as a Cold War liability. If a prominent Indian politician was humiliated because of his color, how could the United States ever hope to win India's support in the struggle against the Soviet Union? But Lohia's own politics complicated the use of his arrest within a Cold War morality play. As an anti-communist socialist, Lohia strove for independence between the United States and the Soviet Union. His repeated calls for a "third camp" in global affairs

influenced how Americans saw him and his antiracist activism. While Lohia was at pains to distinguish his politics from Nehru's non-alignment, Americans responded with equal skepticism to any effort to avoid "taking sides" in the conflict between communism and "freedom." Lohia responded to such skepticism by attacking the very idea that the world could be divided between free countries and slave countries. As the twin "evils" of caste and racism made clear, both the United States and India had a long way to go to achieve the promise of freedom and democracy.[6]

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

In 1936, soon after becoming the secretary of the All India Congress Committee's Foreign Department, Lohia wrote W.E.B. Du Bois in the hopes of establishing "the closest relations with our Negro comrades of America." Du Bois had recently published an article in the Bombay-based journal, *The Aryan Path*, calling for Indians and African Americans to come together as "colored peoples" to fight against racism, imperialism, and economic inequality. It was the economic that Du Bois ultimately prioritized. By embracing "the newer ideals which look upon labor as the only real and final repository of political power," he wrote, "the union of the darker races" would be able to create "a new and beautiful world, not simply for themselves, but for all men." Such a blend of antiracist solidarity and socialist utopianism resonated with Lohia. He told Du Bois he was "anxious to learn of the experiences of your people in their fight for freedom and a higher standard of living." "We here attach the highest significance to the Negro Front of anti-Imperialism," he explained. "Anxious as we are to secure their active sympathy for our cause," he wrote, "we are even more anxious to know in greater detail of the Negro fight and extend it our fraternal support." Lohia promised to give the African American struggle "as much publicity in this country as is possible." He would also champion the vision of global solidarity pioneered by Du Bois. As editor of the *Congress Socialist*, he published an essay by the "Eurasian" author Cedric Dover, "Towards Coloured Unity," that suggested a "Congress of Coloured and Colonial Peoples." Born in Calcutta in 1904, Dover had become a devoted disciple of Du Bois, and perhaps the most outspoken South Asian advocate of "colored solidarity." By corresponding with Du Bois and Dover, Lohia helped connect the global antiracism espoused by Du Bois and Dover to the anticolonial nationalism of the Indian National Congress.[7]

Lohia located the struggle against British rule within a broader fight against imperialism, racism, and other forms of oppression throughout the world. The first pamphlet that he authored as secretary of the Foreign Department of the Congress Party was entitled *The Struggle for Civil Liberties*. It was a fitting topic for a man who would be arrested over twenty times for his non-violent political

activism. In a chapter on "Civil Liberties in America," he wrote that the U.S. was the best in the world at the "theoretical justification of extensive civil liberties." In practice, he added, "America has its Tom Mooney and Billings, Tampa, Scottsboro, Sheriffs and vigilantes to put down rural agitation and smash worker's strikes, laws of sedition and criminal anarchy and suppression of freedom in education." For readers less familiar with American politics, Lohia narrated the Scottsboro case in which nine African American teenagers—the youngest only thirteen—were "held in an American prison on the charge of assault and rape on two white girls." "In Alabama," he concluded, "the Courts and the State administration are ridden by race-hatred and the fiendish desire legally or illegally to lynch Negroes." Like Du Bois, Lohia linked racism to economic oppression. He wrote, "The Negroes are underprivileged and live under the dictatorial rule of their economic masters, the former slave-owners of the South." Importantly, Lohia connected the infamous treatment of the "Scottsboro Boys" to cases involving the arrest of socialists and labor organizers. He linked racial discrimination and economic inequality while describing share-cropping as a "vicious system of land tenure" maintained by "the ku-klux-klan and sheriffs together with the State judiciary." Lohia recognized how the suppression of civil liberties was bound up with white supremacy and economic exploitation in a system that mocked true freedom even while pretending to defend it.[8]

That system extended beyond the borders of the continental United States. "In the American colonies Philippines, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Hawaii, Samoa and Guam," Lohia wrote, "peaceful assembly for the redress of grievances is often prohibited, the right of free speech is severely curtailed by laws of sedition and repressive measures such as use of military, banning of organisations and exiling of 'undesirables' are not an uncommon practice." Lohia linked imperial racism within and beyond the borders of the United States. The "Scottsboro affair and repression in colonies," he wrote, "demonstrate the ruthless oppression of imperialist interests when they find a convenient sanction in the mob hysteria of racial domination." Those "imperialist interests" needed to quash free speech in order to maintain their rule. "And above it all," Lohia wrote, "are the laws of sedition and of assembly, the restrictions on Negroes rights and on freedom in education, that choke all efforts for the reform of abuses in justice and administration and national economy." As historian Daniel Immerwahr has documented, Americans have long been adept at forgetting, ignoring, and denying the many imperial possessions beyond the continental United States. Lohia not only pierced the veil of American colonial denial, but he also linked the exterior and interior dimensions of American imperialism by recognizing the relationship between foreign occupation, Jim Crow, and economic inequality.[9]

Lohia turned to the history of capitalism to explain the American juxtaposition of laws defending free speech and the practice of widespread repression of that

speech. "The conception of civil rights first arose in the struggle between feudal absolutism and modern industry," he wrote. Industrial capital "like the poacher turned gamekeeper, has no use left for its former ideas, now that it is engaged in a deadly combat with the masses both at home and in the colonies." Unlike many critics of the United States who tended to focus solely on the many hypocritical elements of American society, Lohia recognized the many people and organizations fighting to redeem American democracy. He praised organizations like the ACLU and the NAACP for fighting for civil liberties and civil rights, ad concluded, "The fight for racial minorities consists of campaigns against lynching and for Negroes' civil rights and for civil forms of Government for the colonies." Yet again, he linked struggles against racism and imperialism, following the fight for freedom across the borders of nations and movements.[10]

Lohia connected his analysis of the United States to the Indian struggle for freedom from British rule. In a chapter on "Civil Liberties in England," he suggested a link between American racism and British imperialism. "What the American ruling caste did to the Negroes and the emigrant workers at home," he wrote, "the English could conveniently shift upon the colonial peoples." He concluded, "A titanic world struggle is going on before our eyes between the forces of status quo and reaction and those of progress." The Indian independence movement could not be understood without recognizing that "a large part of the world is today more or less a prison-house." Lohia's choice of analogy was deliberate. He recognized that British rule depended on the rampant use—and misuse—of police power. In India, "All manner of violations of civil liberties take place. The law is repressive and loose. Justice is severe. The executive acts on speculation. Police excesses are manifold. Private violence is permitted. And none of the liberties is safe." Lohia connected such draconian policing to American imperialism. "The reasons given by the American Union for the repressive regime in the American colonies," he wrote, "could as well be applied to the repressive administration in India." In his foreword to Lohia's volume, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote, "I hope that many will read it and that it will help us in combating the suppression of civil liberties here and the ever-increasing encroachment by the State on what little remains." Lohia would later suffer the repressive tactics of Nehru's government, but in 1936 both men were fighting together against British rule and the global behemoth of imperialism and white supremacy.[11]

Two years later, in 1938, Lohia published another pamphlet under the aegis of the All India Congress Committee. Entitled *Indians in Foreign Lands*, this pamphlet carried a foreword by his fellow socialist J.B. Kripalani, who praised Lohia for arguing, in Kripalani's words, that Indians abroad "must feel their unity, solidarity and identity of interest with the natives of the soil, the Negro, the other Asiatics living alongside with them and such white-settlers who themselves are the underdogs

of capitalist and imperial exploitation." Lohia made such solidarity central to his argument. Indians were a distinct minority in most countries outside the subcontinent. "Indians cannot therefore live an isolated racial existence," Lohia argued. "They have to combine with the other races to advance culture and prosperity in their own colonies and further the fight for freedom and democracy throughout the world." He envisioned "a united front of Indian and other oppressed races, eminently the African" that would "combat European supremacy and resist imperialist exploitation." Such a coordinated resistance was necessary given the strength of the imperial powers and the heavy legacy of colonial rule. "Neither Indians nor Africans can singly resist their conditions of political and economic inferiority and of cultural backwardness," Lohia wrote. "They must make common cause with each other" and with all groups, regardless of their color, who were "exploited or who cannot tolerate the denial of humanity that is a daily practice in the colonies." Rejecting racism and economic inequality, Lohia called for "a united front of all oppressed races and the exploited masses."[12]

Lohia recognized the challenge of forging such a united front. In the United States, he told his readers, Indians had long fought to align themselves with whites in order to avoid the brunt of American racism. For the first few decades of the twentieth century, several dozen Indians had been able to gain citizenship by claiming legal whiteness. Such claims often involved distancing Indians from other people of color. One aspiring U.S. citizen, Bhagat Singh Thind, told the United States Supreme Court that "the high class Hindu regards the aboriginal Indian Mongoloid in the same manner as the American regards the Negro speaking from the matrimonial standpoint." In 1923, the Court rejected Thind's claim of whiteness. Writing for the majority, Chief Justice Sutherland declared, "It is a matter of familiar observation and knowledge that the physical group characteristics of the Hindus render them readily distinguishable from the various groups of persons in this country commonly recognized as white." Lohia castigated American laws "based on popular prejudices of colour and features." But his emphasis on solidarities of color also called into question whether Indians should attempt to claim whiteness in the first place. Ultimately, he argued, "American opinion must be sufficiently progressive so as to appreciate the need for closer collaboration of the human races."[13]

Such collaboration should, according to Lohia, eventually lead to some form of world government. In a piece called "Some Fundamentals of a World Mind," written in September 1949, he declared, "Peace can come only via a World-government and this can come only via a new world-view. All those who desire a World-government must aspire to achieve a world-view of equality and against class or caste or regional inequalities." As his emphasis on equality makes clear, Lohia's vision of world government went far beyond the newly-formed United Nations. His conception of world government required the fundamental transformation of

the modern nation-state. He envisioned a form of government that would afford respect, dignity, and voice to all citizens of the world. Put differently, the key was not just to establish world government but to make it a government that was truly democratic. "Socialism must acquire a world-mind and a world-view," he argued. Such a world-view did not require centralization. Indeed, he wrote, "Communism is equal to socialism minus democracy, plus centralization, plus civil war, plus Russia." His vision was socialism plus democracy minus centralization, minus civil war, and extending throughout the world. But if socialism required a world-view, the only viable forms of world government would be focused on ending economic inequality. "When a country like India is ground by poverty and torn by religions and castes," Lohia admitted, "it might seem ridiculous to make the submerged and hungry landless labourer a world citizen." But it was not ridiculous if the process of becoming a world citizen demanded an end to hunger and inequality. Lohia found meaning in the possibility that "this movement for World Government in conjunction with socialism may be that lever which raises these submerged millions to a new hope and endeavor."[14]

Lohia's socialism was fundamentally a kind of anti-imperialism. In July 1950, in a piece entitled "Economics After Marx," he declared, "That imperialism and capitalism have jointly developed in capitalist history is clearly established by the American case." Demonstrating the racism at the heart of American territorial expansion, he reminded readers that "the old inhabitants of these territories, the Red Indians, were almost exterminated in wars and skirmishes." Lohia used the history of American Indians as a window onto the intersection of racism, colonialism, and capitalism within the history of the United States. His justifiable emphasis on the genocidal history of the United States led him to overlook the degree to which new forms of resistance were developing within America. "Capitalism must either harden into a world-hierarchy of castes," he declared, "or it must be blown up with the advent of liberated economies and the U.S. will meanwhile obstruct either solution and be generally negative." While such a statement could be justified when it came to many facets of American history and contemporary policy, Lohia uncharacteristically overlooked the degree to which people and organizations within the United States were working to attack the "world-hierarchy of castes." When he traveled to the U.S. the following year, he would see first-hand that it was a mistake to treat the United States as a homogenous block of racist imperial power. He would create new relationships with many Americans who were working to cultivate the solidarities of resistance he had long championed. And he would work with those Americans to fight injustice within and beyond the borders of the United States.[15]

The Colors of America

Lohia's first trip to the United States came close to being cancelled. Scheduled to leave in June 1951, Lohia found himself facing trial in Mysore on charges of "criminal trespass and unlawful assembly." On June 3, he had led a march of tens of thousands of people in support of a "People's Charter" he had drafted. At the heart of the campaign was the struggle for land redistribution in recently-independent India. The prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, had moved away from the radical socialism he had once embraced along with Lohia when both men were young anticolonial activists. While still committed to eliminating poverty, Nehru had come to champion state-led industrialization and to reject large-scale redistribution. Meanwhile, his government maintained colonial-era laws limiting speech and assembly, laws that Lohia would challenge again and again, often ending up in jail just as he had during the days of the Raj. Fortunately for his American audiences, however, Lohia did not serve a long prison sentence in the summer of 1951. He was able to leave India in time to complete his tour of the United States.[16]

Lohia's American tour was sponsored by the Foundation for World Government. The foundation's president, a historian named Stringfellow Barr, had met Lohia in Europe. In addition to covering Lohia's travel costs, Barr arranged for a young white lawyer named Harris Wofford to accompany Lohia throughout the tour. Wofford had lived in India for several years and had penned a book with his wife, Clare, entitled *India Afire*. In their book, the Woffords wrote warmly of Lohia, who they described as "a famous young friend of Gandhi," "one of the first rank independence leaders," and "a rare combination of satirical politician and romantic poet." They offered a sympathetic portrayal of Lohia leading a peaceful march and being teargassed and arrested, and quoted him at length on the oppression of the Nehru government. In America, Wofford served as guide and scribe, taking careful notes that he published at the conclusion of the trip, offering a rich and detailed chronicle of Lohia's journey.[17]

At his first press conference in the United States, Lohia declared, "I come from the oldest, but not the wisest, country, to the youngest and most vital." He was openly critical of the Indian government, and mixed his criticism of the status quo with an expansive vision of world government. "If there is any hope for world citizenship," he declared, "we must start speaking honestly wherever we are." Asked how his foreign policy would differ from Nehru's "neutralism," Lohia said, "I consider the present government's policy not as neutral, but as one of alternate service to both camps. Anyway, it has done nothing to create a new force in world affairs." Rather than pursuing true non-alignment, Nehru's government was trying to appease both superpowers. By contrast, Lohia envisioned a foreign policy that

would work against the Cold War status quo and for a world government based on equality both within and between nations.[18]

Lohia linked his vision for world government to an end to racism in the United States and abroad. At Fisk College, an African American institution in Nashville, he spoke on "the awakening of Asia and Africa." "There is no doubt that when Africa is liberated, and African peoples are represented in the United Nations," he declared, "it will have a great effect on race relations in the United States." But African Americans should not wait for African independence to claim their rights. To the president of Fisk, the renowned African American sociologist Charles Johnson, Lohia asked, "Why not a little jail going? Resist some of this injustice directly, and non-violently, and go to prison if required?" According to Wofford, Johnson "seemed sad as he stood in his parlor, shaking his head negatively, 'No, we're not like India. We're such a minority here, just thirteen million.'" It's not known how much Lohia pressed Johnson, but what is clear is that Lohia rejected the common argument that African Americans, as a minority, should not attempt to use non-violent civil disobedience.[19]

At the Highlander Folk School, a racially-integrated and socially-radical educational community in the hills of Tennessee, Lohia again encouraged civil disobedience in the struggle against racism. Originally focused on labor organizing, Highlander would later become central to the civil rights struggle. Yet in 1951, the school had yet to become a major site for discussion of non-violent strategy. Lohia helped push the school leaders toward embracing nonviolence in the struggle for civil rights. To an audience of "several dozen farmers and coal miners, and that many more children," Lohia explained, "There is the usual way to remove injustices, through an election and a change of government every five years. But there is also the way of non-violent direct action, which includes the violation of unjust laws. For instance, we use this way of struggle against our unjust land tenures—what you call sharecropping." The director of Highlander, Myles Horton, was moved by Lohia's defense of nonviolence and decided to accompany the distinguished Indian visitor on the next leg of his journey into rural Alabama.[20]

Lohia's dark skin created anxiety in the group as they journeyed deeper into the South. "Every time we stopped to eat in a Southern town," Wofford wrote, "we wondered whether Lohia would be taken for Negro." The fact that they had no incidents does not indicate an absence of racism, but rather the ability of many white Americans—even in the rural South—to distinguish between locals and those who were sufficiently "foreign" to deserve special treatment. "We're getting good at spotting foreigners," one waitress explained. "I knew he wasn't no 'Nigra' soon as he sat down. Besides, a colored man wouldn't come in here." Should Lohia have refused to eat anywhere that was closed to local people of color? Whereas other Indian visitors found it useful to distance themselves from African Americans,

Lohia made a point of connecting with African Americans whenever possible. He talked about the challenges of union organizing with John Henry, a black member of the Farmers Union. Perhaps even more daring, Lohia did not hesitate to challenge the racial thinking of his white audiences. In a small farming town in rural Alabama, Marion Junction, he was asked about caste. He denounced caste in India, then shared with the audience, in the words of Wofford, "his dream that all mankind would become mulatto." Lohia explained that he believed in the ancient Indian definition of race: "All who can produce children of each other are of the same race." There was but one race—the human race.[21]

Lohia linked his racial transgressions to his vision of world unity. In Washington, at a gathering that included Tom Stead, a congressman from Oklahoma, Lohia declared, "I do not speak as an Asian. I have no truck with those who speak as Asians, or Europeans, or Americans. It is time for us to try to have a world mind." He detailed his vision of a Third Camp, a system of mutual assistance pacts between countries not aligned with the U.S. or the Soviet Union. Such countries should pursue socialism at home and peace abroad. He again distinguished his approach from Nehru's policy of "shuttling to and fro between both camps." Ultimately, Nehru would end up in the "Atlantic Camp via its British sub-section." "He is basically a British satellite," Lohia concluded. By contrast, "Socialism is not a middle path, one which is somewhat less distasteful than Communism. Our very method of tearing down is different from Communism in that we reject violence. And our method of creating the new is decentralization." After distinguishing himself from Nehru, Lohia went on to set his views apart from mainstream American politicians as well. "Congressman Stead says he is for capitalism," Lohia stated. "Both capitalism and Communism go in for centralization, and for the leadership of one country over the world. And that places Mr. Stead nearer to Communism than I am."[22]

Lohia linked his anti-Communist socialism to his anti-Capitalist views on racism, caste, and nonviolence. What emerged from many of his events, particularly his events at African American institutions, was an integrated approach to reshaping politics at the national and international levels. At Howard University, he "spoke against caste inside a country, and internationally, where a few Brahmin powers, armed with a UN. veto and vast economic power, dominate the fifty-odd low caste nations." It was nonviolence that offered the only path to attacking caste across geographical scales. "I believe that civil disobedience is a weapon of universal application," he declared. "And I am not being oblique—I mean it can be used on the race question in this country." "If I were an American," he stated, "I would explore civil disobedience, by Negroes and Whites." Lohia was aware that there were dangers of using nonviolence—particularly when the oppressed group was outmanned and outgunned. "I know that the Negro is a minority," he admitted, "but I believe that if there is an action with courage, there will be a response from other

sections of the people, and the minority can be transformed into a majority. In any case, to the destruction of the caste system in all its forms we must dedicate our lives." One young African American man approached Lohia after his talk and asked him what kinds of preparations were necessary "in terms of self-discipline and 'purification.'" "Evidently he had been reading Gandhi," Lohia explained. "I told him not to worry about preparations, just to go ahead and do the best he could." Lohia linked his socialism and anti-racism to anti-imperialism, particularly in the case of Africa. Asked what the socialist party would do that Nehru had not done, he answered, "If the socialist Party became the Government of India—if it had been the Government during these three years—the movement for a free and united Africa would be something to count in this world."[23]

Lohia's global understanding of racism included the American North, as he made clear while touring Harlem with a member of the Urban League. According to Wofford, "He saw tenements which were fire traps," "saw bitter faces," and "smelled violence in the air." Lohia asked, "How are you fighting this thing?" After arguing that current efforts were "insufficient both for the demands of the world situation closing in, and for the demands of the awakening Negro population in America," Lohia detailed a variety of non-violent techniques and "urged that peaceful resistance be applied, with American ingenuity, as an essential part of any approach to the racial problem."[24]

Wofford's account of Lohia's packed schedule reveals a man constantly interconnecting struggles: the struggle against racism and caste and the struggle for a world without poverty and war. To a gathering of Unitarians, Lohia declared, "If a movement for world government is developed by genuine people, who mean it, and it generates people's passion, then there will come a time when the governments themselves can be challenged by civil resistance." In San Francisco, Lohia spoke to an audience of some 7,000 people in the Civic Auditorium. His comments were broadcast via America's Town Meeting of the Air to more than five million Americans. Asked if India was too superstitious to be democratic, Lohia replied, "Democracy is a virtue and an advantage which every people should have, not matter if they are superstitious or not." After defending India against American condescension, he acknowledged that Indian democracy was far from complete. "I concede that India, for instance, is suffering from the singular vice of the caste system," he added. "We are trying to destroy it. But, incidentally, I might also suggest that you are also suffering from this superstition of the caste system—and you might also want to destroy it." Thus, Lohia attacked injustice in India and the United States and challenged his American listeners to confront their own caste system.[25]

Towards the end of his trip, Lohia returned to Harlem to speak again with members of the Urban League. His focus was on civil disobedience—not just as a strategy of antiracist activism but as a bridge between African American struggles

and world peace. According to Wofford, "Lohia described the opportunity for a creative world role which history was thrusting upon the Negro people in America. By practicing non-violent direct action against segregation, by peacefully violating unjust racial laws wherever they exist, by willingly going to jail, the Negro—and the white who joined him—would thus strengthen the camp of peaceful change throughout the world." Several of the African American leaders argued that nonviolence was not a part of American culture. In reply, Lohia offered the example of the Pathans of India's Northwest frontier—a famously martial community in which many had embraced Gandhian nonviolence under the leadership of the "frontier Gandhi," Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Lohia concluded, "I am sure that there is a great deal of violence underneath the surface in America. It is going to take you by surprise unless you have the weapon of non-violent resistance."[26]

At some point on his trip, Lohia learned about the decision of the city of Norwalk, Connecticut to extend an invitation to an African American family that had been forced out of Cicero, Illinois. Lohia praised that decision repeatedly, including to a group of CIO labor leaders and workers in Asilomar, California. "Norwalk is an expression of the American spirit which makes me, as a world citizen, proud," he said. He repeated the same point to a larger audience at Stanford University. "Norwalk is one of those splendid manifestations of the American spirit of which an American and of which I, too, as a world citizen, are proud." His self-identification as a world citizen did not prevent him from proudly embracing his identity as an Indian. It was his patriotism that drove Lohia to criticize what he saw as the failings of his nation's government. As he repeatedly had during his time in the United States, he criticized Jawaharlal Nehru for "shuttling back and forth between the Atlantic and Soviet camps…without in any way building up a new force which would result in a world government or a world parliament, or equality among nations or preservation of peace." Lohia's criticisms of India's failings were not limited to Nehru or to foreign policy. It matters that his opposition to global inequality was so often framed in terms of caste. "The present United Nations are constructed on the basis of an international caste system," he told his audience at Stanford. The five countries with veto power were "the Brahmins of the world," he asserted, and concluded, "A new world order must definitely start with the premise that the international caste system has to be ended." In framing international politics in terms of caste, Lohia demonstrated the integrity of his vision for democracy—not just on the global stage but within India itself.[27]

Echoes of America in India

Soon after returning to India, Lohia wrote several of his new American friends that they should "strive for socialized medicine and Negro rights and a world comparatively equal in prosperity and productivity, and unrestricted entry, stay, or travel, and a programme for civil disobedience whenever necessary." Ultimately, their goal should be a "world parliament and government which would give Americans a deeply satisfying sense of security." At least, that is what Lohia recalled ten years later when he authored the forward to the new edition of *Lohia and America Meet*. There is no reason to doubt his memory given that such bold goals were a consistent part of Lohia's message throughout his adult life. Such consistency of radical resistance defined his relationship to politics in the United States and India, and helped to inspire the devotion of his supporters in both countries. After Lohia returned to India, Harris Wofford wrote him, "Maybe one of these days some of your proscriptions for USA will be carried out. I'm sure civil disobedience would be the best thing for our health—but it must be a healthy dose of it." Wofford helped prepare such a "healthy dose" of civil disobedience by publishing *Lohia and America Meet*, and thus helping publicize Lohia's message in the United States and India.[28]

Reading *Lohia and America Meet* inspired the veteran pacifist A.J. Muste to write Lohia a letter expressing "hearty agreement" with Lohia's call for civil disobedience to fight racial oppression in the United States. Muste told Lohia about the efforts of people like George Houser and Bayard Rustin who had "pioneered in this application of Gandhian methods in the U.S." Wofford himself continued to advance Lohia's message, particularly his call for civil disobedience in the struggle against American racism. In November 1955, Wofford asked an audience at the Hampton Institute, a predominantly African American university, "Do not we here, in carrying on the work which the lawyers of the NAACP have started so well, need to adopt and adapt the principles and practices which Gandhi demonstrated in South Africa?" Wofford's speech was covered in the African American press and copies were distributed widely. One copy made its way to E.D. Nixon, a veteran activist with the NAACP and A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Nixon would have recognized in Wofford's speech a continuation of Randolph's earlier efforts to encourage African Americans to use Gandhian methods against American racism. He gave the speech to a young African American pastor who had recently arrived in Montgomery, Alabama, named Martin Luther King. Muste, Houser, Rustin, Nixon, and eventually King—all influential advocates of Gandhian nonviolence, all determined opponents of American racism—were all inspired to some degree by Lohia's call for civil disobedience.[29]

It is impossible to disentangle the many strands of influence and inspiration that drove the rise of non-violent civil disobedience in the American civil rights

movement. As Lohia understood, the progress of a social movement depends upon the interaction of thousands of courageous acts, many of which are lost to history. Yet the vast complexity of the story of nonviolence should not diminish the significance of visionary individuals like Lohia. Consider perhaps the most famous act of civil disobedience in the movement. What inspired Rosa Parks to keep her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, in December 1955? In contrast to popular narratives that portray Parks as merely a "tired seamstress," historians have chronicled the decades of activism that Parks contributed to the movement both before and after she kept her seat on that bus. Of the many experiences that helped define that activism, one that Parks herself would highlight was her visit to the Highlander Folk School just three months before she launched the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Had Lohia, by inspiring Highlander's staff to focus more on civil disobedience, contributed in some way to the fateful decision that Parks made on that bus in Montgomery? Harris Wofford would later celebrate that chain of influence. Lohia himself would offer a more ambivalent reading of his influence on Parks and the civil rights movement more generally. In the forward to the second edition of *Lohia and America Meet*, he offered a brief history of his time at Highlander and the influence of the school on Parks, and then concluded, "Let the glory belong to others. It is enough to have striven for and been an unknown cause of what has happened. What still smarts sometimes is the uncertainty as to whether one has really been the cause of what happened, however remote and however partly."[30]

While Americans continued to learn from Lohia, he himself shared lessons from the United States with Indian audiences. In an article on the Highlander Folk School that Lohia published in his journal, *Mankind*, he told audiences about Highlander's impact on Rosa Parks. "The idea of passive resistance, non-violent disobedience has been tried in America, too, and it is working," he declared. Here he was not assessing his own legacy; he was using the civil rights movement to encourage Indians to carry forward the legacy of nonviolence within India itself. Lohia's article on Highlander offered a careful survey of the ways in which freedom was limited in the South. He linked racism and economic oppression, noting that the South "was the colonial empire of the financial and industrial East" and that "the actual disenfranchisement of the Negroes meant that eleven southern states furnished the national congress with a solid block of elected representatives with political and economic philosophy which was the anti-thesis of democracy." He praised Highlander for its emphasis on empowering oppressed people. "Most change of any permanent character comes from those who most need the change," Lohia wrote. "But many times, those who need change, do not know how to change things." Highlander's approach was leadership training. "If one man teaches two men, and those two men each teach two more," Lohia explained, "the law of

multiplication will take care of the matter, not unlike a chain reaction." Ultimately, he placed his hope for change in the spread of mass movements rather than the charismatic actions of lone radicals—including himself.[31]

Lohia stayed connected to the civil rights movement after returning to India. In October 1956, he published an article by Harris Wofford in *Mankind*. The article focused on "civil disobedience in Alabama." That same year, Lohia published an essay on "The Meaning of Equality." "When material inequality among the nations and within a nation becomes so gross as to be outside the competence of the individual," he wrote, 'his conscience becomes so elastic as to suit it." Yet despite the "elastic" nature of the conscience, feelings of solidarity were still possible. "The sight of a leper or beggar, an ill-clad or an emaciated man may not move a more fortunate national of the same country to kinship," Lohia explained, "but it does move him to anger and pride and the desire to do something about it, unless he has become so loathsome and meanly selfish as to feel contempt." Such a complex motivation for change could ramify beyond national borders. In Lohia's words, "This national kinship achieved through the backdoor of selfish pride or hurt is sometimes to be found as unifying sentiment amongst all coloured peoples and, more rarely, among all the poor or oppressed peoples of earth, white or coloured." It was that kind of expansive "unifying sentiment" that Lohia aimed to encourage.[32]

Lohia understood the connections between discrimination based on color throughout the world. In January 1960, he wrote a close friend about the treatment of "the Negroes and the coloured peoples," and connected this discrimination to color prejudice within India. He had "been speaking on the colour of the skin being no criterion of beauty," Lohia explained, "but there is either not much of a comprehension or else the dark ones have imbibed the teaching of the white colour being superior in such a deep way that they cannot easily get rid of it." In a piece on "Beauty and Skin Color" that he published a few months later, he wrote, "The tyranny of colour is among the great oppressions of the world. All women are oppressed and mankind is poorer for lack of adequate expression to their talents or gifts. Coloured women, who are more numerous, suffer greater oppression."[33]

Lohia continued to link his global vision to the need for profound change on a local level. In a piece on "cosmopolitanism" published in October 1960, he criticized those who prioritized global links over real local change. "More than anything else," he declared, such cosmopolitanism had "been the cause of India's degradation in the past decade. In essence, cosmopolitanism, is the doctrine of superficial or premature universalism, of need to imitate not out of devotion but of wish for vain elegance, of reconstruction without revolution." What is striking is that Lohia could attack hollow cosmopolitanism while continuing to advance a profoundly transnational vision of social change. His journal *Mankind* solicited several articles on African American struggles for a special edition on "World Satyagraha" planned

for 1960. And his own history of global trouble-making demonstrated the power of one individual to act across the borders of race and nation.[34]

Consider a letter Lohia received from Margo Skinner, in Lohia's words, "a teacher, a socialist of long-standing and a sensitive writer." "I wonder if you have any sense," she wrote, "how much real influence you have had and have. It stretches into the remotest and most undreamt corners." Skinner gave the example of a friend in New York:

> An elegant French Marquise of the 18th Century with one of the clearest minds I have ever found in a woman, to whom listening to a record of yours of that Stanford speech has opened new vistas of thinking and who has been picketing Woolworths in support of the Southern Sit Downs as a result, still looking like a French Marquise, or rather like Marie Antoinette on the way in a tumbril with her furs and a large sign-board hung around her delicate white neck, saying 'No service in the south, no purchase in the north' and she did not do it once.

Inspired by Lohia's speech, Skinner's friend kept picketing for weeks, "walking up and down four or five hours on her delicate high arched feet in expensive high heels." Skinner concluded that it was impossible "to estimate the importance of any one simple good act." Skinner's emphasis on action must have resonated with Lohia. While he appreciated the power of his speeches and writings to inspire others to take action, Lohia continued to believe in the primary importance of personal action against injustice. While he found meaning in his ability to influence the struggle against racism through his words, he could not resist the opportunity to offer his own satyagraha against racism in the American South.[35]

Lohia arrived at Morrison's Cafeteria in Jackson Mississippi alongside Dr. A. Daniel Beittel, the white president of the nearby African American Tougaloo College. During his first trip to the U.S. in 1951, Lohia had eaten in a variety of Southern restaurants without encountering any difficulty. Like most Southern eateries, Morrison's would normally have served an Indian visitor. But a few days before Lohia arrived in Jackson, Dr. Savithri Chattopadhyay, an Indian professor at Tougaloo, Jerrodean Davis, a Black Tougaloo student, and a white faculty member had all gone to test segregation at Morrison's café. To their surprise, they were served. The following day, Jawaharlal Nehru died. Chattopadhyay and another Indian professor traveled to Jackson to send a cablegram expressing their grief to India. On their return to Tougaloo, they were refused service at a different branch of Morrison's. The manager explained that the chain had banned anyone from India in response to the fact that Jerrodean Davis, the African American student, had been accidentally served after being mistaken for Indian. Unfortunately for the management at Morrison's, they put into practice such an unusual extension of Jim

Crow only a few days before Dr. Lohia arrived in town. Lohia was refused service not because he was mistaken for African American, but because the management of Morrison's had come to see anyone from India as a danger to Jim Crow.[36]

Lohia did not plan to court arrest in opposition to Jim Crow. But when the opportunity arose, he was ready. After being refused service alongside Dr. Beittel, Lohia continued on to Tougaloo where he discussed the ongoing civil rights movement with a gathering of young activists, including Bob Moses, a prominent member of the Student Nonviolence Coordinating Committee (SNCC) who was renowned for his courage and dedication, as well as for his quiet, self-effacing personality. Lohia encouraged the young activists to be patient in the face of obstacles, to focus as much on community organizing as on splashy marches, and to take time to refine their long-term goals. Segregation was not the only evil that needed confronting. Lohia explained what he called "the seven revolutions," which included "women's rights as well as the problems of caste, and colour which had brought him to Mississippi."[37]

The following day, he returned to Morrison's along with a white Tougaloo professor, Ruth Steven. Dressed in khadi, the white homespun cloth associated with Gandhi, Lohia tried to enter the restaurant. When the manager refused entry and asked him to leave, Lohia replied, "I tell you with greatest humility, I am not leaving." Shocked that this strange foreigner was standing his ground, a policeman asked, "Did you understand the manager?" According to one press report, "Lohia replied jovially that he would not leave." The policeman placed Lohia and Steven under arrest. "Now brother," Lohia told the policeman, "your job's over." Lohia and Steven were placed in a police van and driven around for twenty minutes before being released.[38]

The arrest was covered by dozens of newspapers across the country, from the *Atlanta Constitution* and the *Nashville Tennessean* to the *Minneapolis Morning Tribune* and the *Arizona Republic*. *The Detroit Free Press* placed the news within a larger story on integration in New York's schools. Lohia's arrest was under the heading "Other Racial Developments." In Toronto, the *Globe and Mail* told their readers about Lohia's stand against Jim Crow. Not surprisingly, it was the African American press that covered the story in the greatest detail. In most accounts, Lohia emerged as a courageous and witty advocate of freedom. Questioned on his motivations, Lohia explained that he felt compelled to court arrest. After being refused service at Morrisons' the first time, if he had not returned, "he would have been furthering segregation." "They're treating me as if I was a foreign dignitary who was badly treated," Lohia told reporters. "This has nothing to do with the state department or the Indian embassy. I went to Jackson almost as an American." He called for a thousand white people to "flood areas of Mississippi to protest racial injustice," and explained that he himself was considering returning to Mississippi to continue participating in the struggle against racism. Ultimately, he decided to

continue with his schedule and travel to Europe. After all, the problems of America were not isolated but rather connected to injustices throughout the world. "In my society," he declared, "we have color and caste problems." It would not be right for him to stay in America when his own country had its own injustices. "Both segregation and India's caste system are evil and both must go," he explained.[39]

A few weeks after Lohia was arrested, the *Tampa Bay Times* carried a letter from an Indian student at the University of Florida named S.K. Garg. "I read with great sorrow about the humiliating treatment accorded to Dr. Rammanohar Lohia," Garg wrote. He praised Lohia as "one of the most creative minds that modern India has given to the world" "Through his books and articles," Garg wrote of Lohia, "he has outlined a new international society devoid of distinctions based on capital, power, race and religion." After summarizing Lohia's intellectual contributions, Garg detailed how his political methods also resonated with the civil rights movement. "Opposed to violence," Lohia had "given a new direction to social struggle in India through advocacy of Gandhian civil-disobedience." In a powerful statement that was at once personal and global in scope, Garg concluded, "It is an irony of the human situation that men of the caliber of Dr. Rammanohar Lohia should have to go through personal sacrifice to remind us of our obligations toward each other. Finally, one can only hope that examples set by him and others shall inspire millions throughout the world to stand for human rights."[40]

Conclusion

One of the highlights of Lohia's first trip to the U.S. was his meeting with Albert Einstein. According to Lohia, the "main burden" of his talk with Einstein was the "problem of effectiveness in politics" and its relationship to the "problem of understanding politics, of knowledge." They began the conversation in German but soon switched to English so that all of their companions could understand. Einstein asked Lohia whether the injustices committed by the governments of India or China could be a result, in the words of Lohia, "of ignorance rather than bad faith." Lohia replied that he had "no great interest in that question, for these politicians were suffering from the chronic disease of not wanting to step out of their state of ignorance." Lohia then asked, "if it were possible to devise instruments of knowledge for the social sphere, to which he was used in the scientific sphere." Einstein replied, "Not until the good men became the powerful men, would it be possible to drive evil out of politics." Lohia agreed that it was a mistake to abjure power "as an act either of seeming sacrifice" but rejected Einstein's emphasis on goodness in politics. "How banal are these good men of Einstein," he later wrote. "It is not enough to be good. It is also necessary to be wise."[41]

The key to wisdom, for Lohia, was independence of mind. To a gathering of American anti-communist liberals in July 1951, he declared, "We must not look for a monolithic application of principles to foreign policy. The monolithic approach is that of the Communist." "There are some liberals who make a judgment about their particular situation and apply it everywhere," Lohia lamented. "I would leave that task to the Communists—and to those liberals who have become so accustomed to answering Communists that they have imbibed some of their ways." As he wrote in an essay entitled "Some Fundamentals of a World Mind," "The greatest tragedy that these systems have inflicted on the world is the complete subordination of idea to force. Thinking is propaganda in the service of force that either system represents."[42]

Perhaps more than anything else, it was his fierce independence that made Lohia such a controversial and impactful figure. In the foreword to *Lohia and America Meet*, he wrote, "Nothing frightens a man away from action so much as the dread of being found alone or in a very small crowd." In the words of scholar Daniel Kent-Carrasco, "The poor political performance of Rammanohar Lohia as the leader of different socialist parties during the 1950s and early 1960s contrasts with the novelty and audacity of his thought." That audacity drove the multifaceted nature of his radicalism. Like his fellow socialist, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Lohia opposed multiple oppressions, including economic inequality, racism, casteism, and sexism. As "intersectional" as he was international, Lohia fought for justice across borders of many kinds.[43]

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PART III

Social Sciences, Development Initiatives & Technocracy

CHAPTER 8

Constructing an Indian Sociology: 'Karimpur', U.S. Area Studies and Cold War Social Science[1]

Sujeet George

Abstract

The Cold War era saw the village emerge both as a signifier and as an object of enquiry of developmental modernization. The work of development experts ran parallel to attempts by social scientists to formulate a distinctive sociology of/for India. Through a case study of the social-anthropological work undertaken in Karimpur—the fictive name given to a north Indian village by the American missionaries William and Charlotte Wiser—the chapter examines an alternate pathway to the development of the Indian sociological discipline from missionary ethnography to Area Studies. Situating the work on Karimpur within a wider tradition of village and Area studies, the chapter offers a revision to the disciplinary legacies of a distinctive mode of understanding Indian village society.

Keywords: modernization, social anthropology, Cold War, village studies, postcolonialism

> One may say that India is being discovered once again by the west and this time not by indologists but by social scientists.[2]

The end of British rule in India and the task of building a new nation was as much an endeavour to forge new forms of knowledge as it was about inaugurating processes and institutions to establish a democratic republic. The Nehruvian drive to centralized planning, the inauguration of a range of developmental projects with foreign assistance especially from the United States, and the tensions and fissures of a new democratic polity have come to constitute some of the key characteristics of this moment in postcolonial India.[3] The decades after formal independence saw the Indian state make significant investments to establish new institutes of higher learning and research to assist in the process of planning and in the larger project of building a new nation.[4] The thrust towards 'scientific industrialism' and a belief in the crucial role of science for development meant an inordinate focus on the development of scientific research institutions in this period.[5] Nevertheless, the new Indian state was also aware of the need to reimagine the socio-cultural ethos of

an ancient civilization. In this vein, the humanities and social sciences were actively engaged in drawing the contours of and directing the trajectory of the 'human sciences' since the mid-twentieth century.[6] Social science also became a crucial tool to gauge the realities and irregularities of developmental projects and to determine the extent to which the possibilities of postcolonial imaginations could draw flight or needed to be tempered. As a period of significant social transformations and upheaval, the era of planning saw the Indian state as well as various non-state actors and philanthropic foundations engage in extensive programmes to better understand the changes that were being brought about in this period. Many social scientists found opportunities to establish university departments and institutes of social sciences as well as secure consultancy roles as experts for non-state foundations and foreign universities.[7]

This chapter engages with some of the key debates within the disciplines of Indian sociology and social anthropology in the period between 1950 and 1980 to examine how sociologists comprehended the momentous transformations that were being engineered in Indian society. Social scientists pinpointed the village as a crucial site for developmental intervention and analysis. Such efforts ran parallel to the attempts to formulate a distinctive form of sociology of/for India.[8] Through a specific case study of the longer-term social-anthropological work undertaken in Karimpur, a village in north India, the chapter seeks to examine an alternate pathway to the development of the sociological discipline in early postcolonial India. In addition, by situating the social anthropological work on Karimpur within a wider tradition of village and area studies, the chapter offers a revision to the legacies of a distinct mode of understanding Indian village society that fell out of favour by the 1970s to newer trends within the sociological discipline.

Situating Village Studies

The period after the end of the Second World War saw renewed efforts to reimagine human society and to formulate ways of imagining "one world that can no longer be split into *isolated fragments*".[9] As the world order was being recast, new international organizations were being established, and older patterns of making sense of the world were being challenged and remoulded.[10] This was a period of intellectual and material transition and the social sciences were intimately involved in formulating the vision of a new world. As empires were dismantled and new nations were forged, the social sciences and humanities too responded to the multiple rumblings of change. A number of transnational institutions, actors and ideas were involved in the creation and circulation of new forms of knowledge and vocabularies to comprehend a rapidly changing world. These changes occurred at the global as

well as at the local levels, at times in conversation with each other, often feeding off each other's research, and occasionally existing in a state of mutual antagonism. Recent studies in the disciplinary histories of the social sciences have focussed on the intellectual legacies of empires as well as the impact of the interwar period in shaping the language and rhetoric of the disciplines.[11] At the same time, new lines of enquiry have stressed the significance of the Cold War as a crucial determinant to understand the development of social sciences since the 1950s.[12]

Studies in the history of sociology in India especially in the years immediately after the end of British rule have focused on the ways in which such endeavours were imbricated within larger ideological projects peculiar to the period. The development of sociology in India in this period was inflected by concerns that specifically emerged from the ideological petri dish of the Cold War. Chief among these include the uniquely Cold War-era projects of modernization that were initiated by the USA. Couched variedly in a language of economic development, technical assistance and food aid programs, the US entered into the sphere of Indian development planning through President Truman's Point Four Program in 1949.[13] A slew of policy measures, initiated through US Federal programs as well as through the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, sought to overhaul India's perceived agricultural and industrial stagnancy. The immense poverty and purported social backwardness were adjudged as the undesired afterlives of empire as well as the basis of vulnerability to Soviet communism. Social scientists and policy-makers became crucial conduits to comprehend the problem and proffer solutions. These intellectual pursuits coming from varied vantage points sought to better understand the immense social change being brought about in Indian society.[14] In the Indian context, the development of postcolonial social sciences went hand-in-hand with the establishment of a broader curriculum of school and higher education. Two differing routes through which many of the initial debates in developing Indian social sciences were charted included assistance from the UNESCO and the Ford Foundation respectively.[15]

The programs of the UNESCO in India in the 1950s were part of a wider thrust of the international organization to "knit together social science scholars of the world,…raise the level of social science research in the world,…[and] promote research in fields crucial to the establishment of a peaceful world order".[16] The notion of the international and the alternative vision of a intercultural dialogue proposed by the UNESCO was a strong reason for the creation of a community of social scientists who could argue and collaborate beyond ideological constraints. The work of organizations such as the UNESCO in this period point to the alternate pathways that were, often unsuccessfully, pursued in the development of a global vocabulary of social science. As the historian of the Cold War, Odd Arne Westad, has argued, the ideological project of the Cold War was played out in the Global South.[17]

Over the next decade UNESCO's initiatives in India focussed on developing the tools and methods for the effective teaching of social sciences at the university level as well as detailed analyses of the rural development projects being undertaken by the government of India. The overall research agenda of the UNESCO was geared toward a better understanding of the relations between the East and the West with a special focus on the peasantry in South Asia which was seen to be in transition due to the changes being introduced by the state.[18]

In a similar vein, the work of the Ford Foundation developed towards utilizing the social sciences to grasp the many changes being brought about in the countryside. Unlike the UNESCO, however, the work of the Ford Foundation was part of a larger US intervention and assistance towards modernizing the Indian peasant and his agricultural practice. According to Douglas Ensminger, the Ford Foundation representative to India and Pakistan, the foundation considered the development of social sciences in India as an intrinsic part of the larger project of modernization envisaged for the country. Implementing change, according to Ensminger, would be futile without putting in place the means to evaluate it through sound methodologies.[19] A common tension in the objectives of both organizations was the delicate balance between universal expertise and local knowledge. Their work involved the onerous task of holding onto a universal notion of social science while comprehending a multiplicity of social realities in India.[20] At a disciplinary level, fieldwork emerged as one of the defining features of social anthropology in this period.[21] An intermingling between the global hue of the post-war international formations and contemporary anthropological currents thus shaped the trajectory of Village Studies in India. On the one hand the expectations and novelty of a new nation had to be balanced with the purported permanence of the village as a site of analysis. On the other hand, a detailed exegesis of the changes being implemented could be possible through an intensive and sustained interaction between the ethnographer and the villagers.

One of the early ventures of the Ford Foundation involved a longer-term study on cultural change in India. It was jointly conducted by Cornell University and the University of Lucknow. Headed by the cultural anthropologist Morris Opler, the project petered out over time due to disagreements in distribution of work roles and responsibilities between the Cornell and Lucknow teams. While the project failed in its empirical objectives it managed to train many Indian sociologists and cultural anthropologists. For Ensminger, the onus of failure was on Opler, who had failed to "show how study findings could be used in planning and development."[22] Regardless of the failure of this project, Ensminger and Ford Foundation continued to invest in, what they considered, programs that would assist in the development of social sciences in India. Ensminger's central role in the community development projects of the Ford Foundation in India and his close association with many

members of the Planning Commission meant that the thrust of their social science initiatives continued to be on comprehending development and social change through the tools of social science.[23]

Beyond these early institutional attempts to understand the process of social change in India, the academic discipline of sociology too witnessed the development of methods and programmatic statements to dissect the unfolding social realities. In an ironic sense, much scholarship in this period while enthused by the prospect of delineating social change argued about the entrenched nature of the Indian social ethos. Such attempts in the 1950s were part of wider intellectual ventures to inaugurate a specifically *Indian* sociology.[24] The predominance of modernization theory as the guiding logic for the post-war world as well as the ascendancy of the village as the pivot around which the developmentalist agenda could be forged meant that a distinctive form of social enquiry termed as 'Village Studies' developed within social anthropology in India. In the two decades between 1950 and 1970 the village in India emerged as a key site to observe the makings of the drama of modernity. The systematic study of villages and an appraisal of the impact of development projects on the lives of the people became the foremost question for social sciences in India. As the sociologist Andre Beteille remarks, "It will not be unreasonable to claim that village studies, more than any other enquiry, brought the work of social anthropologists to the attention of scholars in such diverse fields as political science, economics, demography, history, and geography in the first two decades after Independence."[25]

The study of Indian villages and typical characterizations of the village community had a long tradition during British rule, and it was reimagined by Gandhi's use of the countryside as a point of anti-colonial contestation and mobilization.[26] The proliferation of a range of rural development programmes during the interwar period made the village a synecdoche for the larger idea of the Indian nation.[27] Not surprisingly, the project of building an Indian sociology sought to endow its intellectual aspirations onto the village. On a methodological level, however, the very formulation of an Indian village as a self-contained representation of Indian society across the country was a matter of academic debate. M.N. Srinivas, the doyen of Indian sociology, saw in the village an ideal unit to base one's fieldwork. Trained under Indian sociology pioneer G.S. Ghurye in Bombay and later under A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and E.E. Evans-Pritchard at Oxford, Srinivas forged a distinct idea of Indian sociology with the village at the epicentre of his wide-ranging analysis.[28] As the preeminent Indian sociologist in this period, Srinivas's ideas and his methods, especially his espousal of fieldwork as a desideratum for social anthropological research, had a profound impact on the discipline. His work on Rampura, a village in Mysore, was part of a range of studies on specific Indian villages that emerged in the mid-1950s.[29] Two edited volumes that were published in 1955 are

conventionally recognized as heralding a new phase in the study of Indian villages. Edited by Srinivas and McKim Marriott respectively it brought together a range of social anthropologists who went to be key figures within Village Studies, including Oscar Lewis, Bernard Cohn, Alan R. Beals and E. Kathleen Gough. McKim Marriott's edited volume was part of a distinct brand of Indian sociology developed at the University of Chicago that adopted a 'civilizational' perspective to understanding Indian villages.[30] The leading figure in this endeavour was the anthropologist Robert Redfield who, just like the UNESCO, sought to forge transnational associations to better understand societies. Redfield's formulation of the village as a site of analysis to understand non-Western societies was developed through his ethnographies in the Mexican village of Tepoztlan and the Yucatan peninsula in the 1920s and 1930s. By the middle of the twentieth century Redfield took forward his idea of the urban-folk continuum to develop a sociological understanding based on an exchange of ideas between cultures. In this perspective, culture could bind the unknowns. Redfield through his Comparative Civilizations project at the University of Chicago forged a programme to make sense of the complex interplay between tradition and modernity in Indian society. His work, along with his collaborator Milton Singer, provided the impetus for a distinct 'Chicago school' of anthropology to which can be traced the intellectual genealogy of the work of Marriott and Bernhard Cohn.[31]

Concurrent to these ventures, US assistance to community development projects in different parts of India as well as the five-year planning programmes initiated by the Government of India (GOI) saw a remarkable impetus to study social change as was being undertaken across the country. S.C. Dube, who had spent the first years of his academic life doing 'classical' anthropology by studying Indian tribes, had by the mid-1950s moved to situating community development programs as worthy of scholarly analysis and judgement to improve the programs that were being studied.[32] Arguably the most sustained critique of the viability of village as a category of analysis came from Louis Dumont and David F. Pocock. In 1957, in a programmatic essay 'For a Sociology of India' published in their self-founded journal *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, Dumont and Pocock argued for the centrality of caste rather than the village to understand Indian society. Insisting on the hierarchical nature of Indian society as the foundational attribute, Dumont and Pocock refuted the characterization of a village as a singular community.[33]

The intellectual orientations of Redfield, Dumont and Srinivas as sketched above have come to be considered as exemplars of specific traditions of academic Indian sociology that were set in motion in the 1950s. Apart from investigating different villages in a vast and heterogeneous country, Srinivas, Dube, and Redfield and his 'Chicago School', shared a methodological fidelity and sustained a dialogue in the coming years. A classic analysis of this period conventionally highlights these endeavours as separate coming as they were from vastly contrasting intellectual

vantage points. The critique offered by Dumont and Pocock has come to be seen more as an anomaly. Indeed in the decades since Dumont's structural edifice built on understanding Indian society through the framing category of hierarchy failed to sustain itself and was not favourably received.[34] While acknowledging the heterogeneity within the differing strands of Village Studies they shared with Dumont a point of convergence that was unique to that period. The sociologist's fascination with cataloguing Indian culture through an analysis of village relations, caste hierarchies, birth, marriage and death rituals took for granted a broader category within which these differences were subsumed. Although the notion of the village as a unified category was successively challenged by various sociologists, it was substituted by another unitary category of analysis: the nation. The predominance of modernization theory has led to an implicit acknowledgement of the stability of the nation-state. Sociology in this period took for granted both the contours and legitimacy of the nation-state. In this the various sociological figureheads were all implicitly on the same side of the modernization divide. Redfield, Srinivas and Dumont while coming to interrogate the status of the village from a range of interpretative directions still held onto the belief in the nation-state as an unimpeachable political reality and social fact. A tension between tradition and modernity was paralleled by another between ideals of civilization and the nation-state. Most analyses of the village studies have focussed on the frictions within the first pairing between tradition and modernity. This chapter argues that a corresponding dialogue in determining social change in postcolonial India needed the resolution of a tension between the idea of India as an ancient civilization and its new nation-state form in the era of decolonization. The idea of the village came to encompass the ideals of an ancient Indian civilization, and the winds of change were thought to irrevocably cast away that which had hitherto been permanent.[35]

Karimpur and Village India between contending Traditions

In 1963 an updated version of an old classic *Behind Mud Walls* (BMW) was published by the University of California Press with a foreword by the American anthropologist David G. Mandelbaum. The book had been originally published in 1932 by the Presbyterian missionary couple William and Charlotte V. Wiser as an account of the five years they had spent in a village in North India. Since its publication, the descriptive account of Karimpur—the name given by the Wisers to the village—has come to be regarded "as the best story in English on village life in India".[36] The book was a trailblazer in a genre of village narratives that would become *de rigueur* by the 1950s. The protracted research in Karimpur by the Wisers between 1925 and 1930 was funded by the American Presbyterian Mission, and was one part of a long

and sustained engagement between the missionary couple and the villagers from the northern part of, what was then, British India.[37] In the decades since the Wisers were involved in a rural reconstruction project, the India Village Service (IVS).[38] Rooted in a language of "ecumenical Protestantism" and drawing support from interdenominational Christian groups, the IVS sought to build rural infrastructure including sanitation, health, and modern farming practices through community-driven initiatives.[39] In this the Wisers were part of a wider group of US rural reconstruction experts like Albert Mayer and Spencer Hatch who were actively involved in development projects through the interwar and post-war period.[40] This was a period of intellectual transition for the couple as their fieldwork in Karimpur as well as their experience with the IVS saw them slowly disengage from the missionary work of the Presbyterian Church. At the same time their reputation through the reception of *Behind Mud Walls* incorporated them within a wider circle of American anthropologists.[41] With the closing of the IVS by the mid-1950s, the Wisers retired from service and planned to return to Karimpur. In addition, they decided to restudy the village that had brought fame and widespread attention to their work.[42] In the three decades between the publication of their book and their return, the field of in-depth description of village life through close contact and observation which the Wisers had pioneered had been impacted by various schools of thought involved in understanding the village as a site of analysis.[43]

In September 1957 the Ford Foundation approved a grant of USD 14,000 to be distributed over a two-year period to the Wisers in preparation of material on Indian villages. The original funding was meant to cover the research and writing of two books: one to examine the changing Indian villages and the second book to analyze the caste system as it influences change.[44] William Wiser's untimely demise soon after put paid to the hopes for this planned research by the couple. The revised publication of *Behind Mud Walls* with three additional chapters was thus a compromise on a larger research plan of the Wisers. After the death of her husband, Charlotte Wiser continued to visit Karimpur over the next decade and published another additional chapter in 1970. Building on her long engagement with the people from Karimpur, she published another book *Four Families of Karimpur* in 1978 which examined the lives of four families across three generations from different occupations and castes.

Even as Charlotte Wiser was in the last phase of her association with Karimpur, in 1967 an anthropology graduate student Susan Wadley took her first steps towards conducting fieldwork in the same village. Over the next few decades, Wadley would go on to publish extensively on the oral folk traditions and everyday life histories of the villagers of Karimpur. Wadley was a product of the intellectual churnings around the study of non-western civilizations that had begun at the University of Chicago in the 1950s. Her training at Chicago in the 1960s was shaped by key figures

in the American Village Studies cosmos, including Milton Singer, Bernard Cohn, and McKim Marriott.[45] At the same time the sway of French structuralist thought in this period helped her formulate questions of folk literature and caste and in this Louis Dumont's intellectual impact was considerable.[46]

Focussing on the postcolonial destinies of Karimpur as represented in the later writings of Charlotte Wiser and some of the works of Susan Wadley, this section situates this research within the body of Village Studies scholarship that developed in this period.[47] Such a move entails two methodological strategies. At one level, I make a case for continuity in analyzing specific villages through longer-term fieldwork or through restudies. Thus, the work of Charlotte Wiser between the 1950s and 1970s as well as Wadley's fieldwork from the late 1960s until the 1980s can be imagined as a continuum that helps in charting social change over a long time span.[48] At a conceptual level, the purported continuum between the latter works of Charlotte Wiser and Wadley had a more substantive basis in the ethnographic experience of Wadley herself. As she describes it, in 1984 more than a decade after she first visited Karimpur, she learned about how local village lore had coalesced the image of Charlotte Wiser and herself into a single figure described by a villager as "someone from America…[who] asks the village people about their conditions…gives medicine and help to people who are poor."[49] As Wadley remarks, "To me, the differences of missionary and scholar, of age…of method and theory all made us distinct. But I clearly saw differences where people in Karimpur and surroundings did not."[50] This slippage between personhood and perception, I argue, offers the possibility to initiate a fruitful dialogue to examine the work on Karimpur by both Charlotte Wiser and Wadley. Such a framing does not intend to collapse or disregard the variances of viewpoints and methodologies that emerge through the works of both writers. Instead, the strength of the analytical category of Karimpur is accorded greater viability by acknowledging the ambiguous space of ethnographic work that emerges in this particular instance precisely because of the close relationship between Charlotte Wiser and Susan Wadley.

The Wisers had been trained in American rural sociology in the interwar period. William Wiser got a doctorate from Cornell University for his work on the caste system in Karimpur, while Charlotte Wiser wrote a Master's thesis on the crops grown and food consumption practices in Karimpur.[51] Charlotte Wiser's worldview and her understanding of village life cannot be neatly boxed within a tradition of missionary ethnography. While the initial reception of the work of the Wisers was within a developing domain of rural reconstruction, it was evidently part of a larger conversation on ways to understand the non-West. Thus, Charlotte Wiser was in correspondence with the anthropologist Margaret Mead and with many young graduate students interested in doing fieldwork in India after the end of the War.[52] Despite the recognition and respect for their work in *Behind Mud Walls*, her

conceptualization of her own work on the Indian village was remarkably modest. In correspondence with a graduate student keen on developing an ethnographic study in an Indian village, for instance, Charlotte Wiser emphasizes that her own knowledge was only about a few villages in North India. She directs the student to contact other key Indian sociologists from this period including D.N. Majumdar and D.P. Mukerji for a more comprehensive (a more 'academic' perhaps) engagement with the possibilities of doing fieldwork in India.[53] Charlotte Wiser's later work on Karimpur since the 1950s occurred in a period when Village Studies and immersive fieldwork was arguably the most prominent methodological model within Indian social anthropology.

The 1950s was also the period when the study of non-Western societies received a boost in the US through a combination of federal funding as well as through non-state actors such as the Ford and Rockefeller foundations and the Carnegie Endowment. Such an impetus was driven namely by a realization that US strategic interests during the Second World War were hampered due to a lack of knowledge of many parts of the world. The Cold War context reformulated this objective as a means to counter the spread of communism through the development of social science expertise as well as building networks of intellectuals in the Third World.[54] In the context of South Asian studies, the University of Chicago developed a strong cross-disciplinary faculty initially through the efforts of Redfield. Another direction for formal language training as well as funding for dissertation writing was through the American Institute for India Studies (AIIS).[55] Wadley's training and her career have been within this field of South Asian Studies in the USA.[56] Trained at the University of Chicago, Wadley over the years also contributed to the administrative aspects of the running of the AIIS.[57] The development of her work has thus been characterized by productive cross-fertilization between the traditions of US Area Studies and Village Studies.

The first edition of *Behind Mud Walls* rather tellingly ends with a chapter that is titled 'Let All Things Old Abide'. In a sense the chapter can be read as the epitaph for a specific mode of governance that could see the "developing new order" on the horizon. As the concluding chapter describing late-1920s British India, this account occurs at an interesting moment in the trajectory of the Indian National Congress-led anti-colonial struggle. While Gandhian nationalism had by then held sway over the public for over a decade, the fissures within the nationalist space were beginning to appear, especially through the figure of B R Ambedkar and demands for caste-based electoral representation.[58] This was also the period when Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India's first Prime Minister, rose to prominence after the Lahore Session of the Indian National Congress. The anxieties of the Wisers as seen in this concluding chapter are both at the level of the interpersonal and at a more general level of politics. They are apprehensive of their own position

in a changing world order. At the same time, the impending new order threatens to disrupt the perceived social equilibrium that they have witnessed and narrated.[59]

By the time Charlotte Wiser returns to the field in the 1950s an even stronger sense of change is in the air in the Nehruvian era of planned development. The community development initiatives seem to have brought about some tangible changes, both at a material level as well as in the hopes and expectations of the villagers. As Charlotte Wiser remarks, the level of change in the decade between 1960 and 1970 was disproportionately higher compared to the changes in the three decades prior.[60] The postcolonial state is a more active agent in Wadley's account too, but the succeeding decades bring about varying degrees of social churning along with the visible changes brought about by governmental legislations. A prominent trope that comes up repeatedly in the accounts of both Charlotte Wiser and Wadley is the increased "intrusion of the state" into the everyday lives of the villagers. This stands in contrast to the narrative from the colonial period where the weight of the colonial state is seen primarily in its regimes of taxation. Development projects, in contrast, necessitate various government agencies and administrators to be a constant presence in the village. The Village Level Workers and Assistant Development Officers are a common sight, and the institutions of governance continue to penetrate deeper into the lives of the villagers.

The three decades immediately after the end of British rule in India witnessed massive efforts to overhaul the agricultural capacities of the Indian countryside. With an impetus on mechanized agriculture aided by state-supported inducements to use fertilizers and 'improved' seeds, the Indian rural landscape witnessed a dramatic transformation in this period.[61] The impact of such a concerted state-driven, developmentalist agenda was evident in Karimpur as well. Most significantly, the impact of such change is dramatically narrated in the introduction of everyday technologies into the farming practices and everyday ethos of the village population.

The agrarian economy of Karimpur primarily experienced the impact of technology through the range of machines and farming equipment that were introduced since the second five-year plan (1956–61). When Charlotte Wiser states that the decade between 1960 and 1970 had, in her opinion, brought about the most noticeable changes to the village, the characterization is depicted through the noticeable changes brought about in farming practices. The shift from the first ox-drive thresher in early 1961 to a power threshing machine in 1970 signals the rapid transformation in the threshing and winnowing of wheat by the farmers.[62]

The 1960s brought in its wake a range of high-yielding varieties of seeds, chemical fertilizers and tube wells to irrigate fields. As Wadley's account details the advent of these measures gradually changed the political economy of the village. The community development officers and state-driven propaganda on farming became the means through which farmers chose the crops to grow, the loans to procure,

and the prices at which to sell the produce. The impact of intensive agriculture in this account highlights the penetration of the state into the village life through the financing of loans and integrated rural development programs. The increased role of the state comes at the cost of loosening the networks of obligation, collaboration and community association between the various groups in the village.[63]

The processes of social change brought into effect by various state legislation and rural development measures brought about a gradual realignment of the social hierarchies undergirding many of the Indian villages. William Wiser's work on the jajmani system—a purported system of mutual dependence and reciprocity between the various castes comprising the village—was arguably an overtly optimistic interpretation of the power dynamics that balance the caste pyramid within an Indian village.[64] BMW as well the *Four Families of Karimpur* continue in this tradition of visualizing a synchrony between the various village castes, often at the cost of eliding the forms of discrimination and power asymmetries that keep the gears of the caste machine moving. In a sense, the work of the Wisers views caste in an instrumentalist fashion whereby its very existence is interpreted as being crucial to the enactment of village life as witnessed by them. Charlotte Wiser nevertheless charts the changing social norms brought about through the 1950s and 1960s in a more subtle manner in *Four Families* by detailing the shifts in work opportunities as witnessed across generations of the same four families.

Arguably the most distinct impact of the various developmental initiatives of the Indian state was in altering the social relations between the various caste groups in the village. Coupled with an increasing impetus to technology-driven agriculture, the postcolonial Indian state initiated a series of legislation aimed at reforming land holdings. Karimpur's experience with the abolition of landlordism (*zamindari*) in the 1950s and the consolidation of land holdings since the late 1960s highlights the shifting power and caste dynamics through the prism of land ownership.[65] Wadley uses long-term survey data collected initially by the Wisers in 1925 and her own fieldwork in 1968 and 1984 to map the shifting axes of land and power among the various caste groups. A gradual decline in the holdings of the Brahmin caste, from owning seventy-four per cent of the land in 1925 their share had dropped to fifty-eight per cent by 1984.[66] Access to landholdings increased for historically marginalized improved negligibly through these state legislations. More importantly, rapid mechanization of agriculture was coupled with increasing urbanization resulting in steady migration of the village population. The lower castes sought to improve their prospects by migrating to the expanding cities like Delhi and Bombay while increased educational prospects among the upper-castes led to a rejection of farm work and the search for stable bureaucratic jobs.

The changing dynamics within the caste network are interpreted with a certain amount of discomfort by the villagers, especially by those who have seen a gradual

effacing of their historical hold over other groups. The upper-caste Brahmins with greater access to improved educational facilities and political opportunities continue to hold an important position within the village. However, many of the members of the community lament the loss of power due to increased possibilities provided to the poorer sections to cultivate and subsist. This change is interpreted as the consequence of a pro-poor state that has cast away the upper-castes. At the same time, the shifting relations between the Brahmins and other castes are imagined as the breakdown of order and the loss of love that previously existed. The experience of the lower caste groups offers a more sombre picture; the breakdown of relations is often seen as the collapse of an inequitable power equation.[67]

Social Change and the sociological Discipline

The decline of modernization theory in social science by the 1970s has often been interpreted as the inability of its precepts to find an audience in the Third World. In another sense, the semantic metamorphoses of the village were part of a larger disillusionment with the failed promises of postcoloniality and the concomitant interrogation of the idea of the nation. This period also saw a more sustained interrogation of the impact of agrarian modernization on the rural countryside, thus offering a more nuanced understanding of the Green Revolution.[68] With the opening of the Indian economy in 1991 and a rapidly globalizing nation, social scientists predicted an increased interlinking between the Indian village and the expanding urban centres leading to a gradual effacing of the distinctive characteristics of the village. The nebulous bond between the village and the city in postcolonial India, Ashis Nandy argues, increasingly renders the village merely as an abstraction for policy-makers to enumerate, or as a frozen image on celluloid to be consumed.[69] The decline of the village thus has occurred across domains—from its obsolescence as a heuristic device, its decreased centrality in the country's politics, and finally to its disentanglement from the popular imagination. The disentangling of the category of the village from the aspirations of the nation-state was also accompanied by shifts within the academic discipline. Social anthropology moved on from a singular focus on the village to interpreting specific categories such as gender, caste or religion.

In 1976, M.N. Srinivas—by then the preeminent Indian social anthropologist of the day—published *The Remembered Village*, an account of the village of Rampura in south India. The loss of his fieldnotes meant that Srinivas' account was written from his memory of the ethnographic work conducted in 1948. The tension between the authenticity of the participant-observer and the fickleness of human memory has meant that *The Remembered Village* has had a tumultuous legacy within the Indian sociological discipline. What came to be considered the abiding

feature of the work was the impression that "Srinivas has succeeded in evoking the totality of village life…[and] has been able to vividly capture the human element and convey the 'feel' of Rampura".[70] Srinivas, it was suggested, had managed to highlight village life in a narrative form, rather than merely focussing on social structures and relationships which had been characteristic of his earlier works. In the years ahead the discipline of anthropology, especially in the US, would also emphasize the significance and necessity of developing a *literary* consciousness in ethnographic writing.[71] Drawing especially on the turn to literary theory inspired by the work of the historian Hayden White in the 1970s, anthropologists sought to think reflexively on textual production and the employment of rhetorical devices in the crafting of ethnographic writing. In the same period, coming from a specifically French tradition, the works of Henry Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, among others, foregrounded the idea of the everyday as a mode of existence which in its invisibility challenges the universalizing impulses of modernity. Studies of the everyday, of the commonplace, the fragmentary and the truncated, gained salience for their destabilizing of grand narratives.[72]

By the time Susan Wadley published *Struggling with Destiny* in 1994 the mode of intensive study of a single village was seen as an anachronism, a relic of a time when the discourse of development held sway as gospel over large parts of the world.[73] How then do we situate the works by anthropologists on Karimpur and other similar villages? Karimpur catalogues the impact of the shifts in agricultural technologies and of their longer-term ramifications on the framing of social relations in the Indian countryside. Life stories of Karimpur offer a rich tapestry of the social mores of an Indian village undergoing rapid transformation. The documentation of change brought about in Karimpur over the three decades between 1950s and the 1980s highlights the material transformations introduced through state-driven legislations and programmes. These transformations in turn have refashioned historical forms of social networks based on caste affiliations. Correspondingly, the legislative measures to alter landholding among the villagers along with incentives to adopt high-yielding seeds and state loans to dig tube wells have modified the agricultural patterns and encouraged migration from Karimpur to adjacent towns and cities. Further, the intergenerational narratives offer a longer-term perspective on these changes and their differing impact and outlook among different generations within the same family. Such a move to focus on life histories also shifts the focus of transformation from structures to individuals.

Conceptualizing social change and situating it within the work of Charlotte Wiser and Wadley also highlights the tensions within their individual approaches. For Wiser, change is in the balance between the Old (customs, ways of living) and the New (often, the introduction of technology). For Wadley in the 1980s and the late 1990s, the technological changes brought about in the Indian countryside are

signifiers of a larger change in the social mores of the rural hinterland. Technological change went hand-in-hand with changes in agricultural practices. This in turn brought about slow, longer-term changes in the labour force and in the social relations between different caste groups in the village. The change is articulated, for instance, in a shift within Wiser's understanding of the nature of the *jajmani* system.[74] For her the village invariably continues to stand as a universal category, whereas Wadley is cognisant of the question of subjectivity when examining the subjects of her ethnography. The emphasis on the everyday, on understanding forms of social change, articulating voices that are individual and yet general: all these may be characterized as attributes which highlight the contemporaneous developments between the field and the discipline. At a broader level, it signifies a gradual disentangling of the theoretical force of modernization theory with its presupposition of nation-states.

The later writings of C. Wiser as well the works of Wadley developed parallel to the disciplinary developments charted above. Wiser's final work *Four Families of Karimpur* is revealing in its avowed intent to erase the facade of objectivity cherished by the ethnographer. The strength of Wiser's intergenerational account is drawn from an intimate knowledge of the subjects of the narrative. In this perspective, C. Wiser's observations gain legitimacy through a personal familiarity with the field in comparison to 'academic' accounts enacted from an impersonal distance. This is not to suggest that C. Wiser continued to write outside the academic fold. Until the last decade of her life, she continued to actively participate in university symposia and annual conferences, as well as publish for a university audience.[75] Susan Wadley's Karimpur oeuvre, undoubtedly, conjures a wider panorama of the village and its customs. Her delineation in *Struggling with Destiny* of the everydayness of village life and its imperceptible impinging upon by the state offers an evocative rendering of the asymmetric interplay between the state and its citizenry in the postcolony. At a theoretical level, by the 1980s, Wadley's work increasingly aligned with McKim Marriott's developing agenda for an 'ethnosociology' of India. Marriott's methodology claimed an Indian mode of thinking which required the development of native categories of analysis. Such a research agenda sought to counter Dumont's structural civilizational model, while expanding the comparative framework to understand civilizations that had been developed at the University of Chicago through the 1950s and 1960s. In attempting to move away from traditional European sociological categories, Marriott's ethnosociology was thus part of a wider disciplinary shift to study non-Western people and the cultural 'other'. By the 1980s, the paradigm of Area Studies had been thrown into crisis with the sustained interrogation of modernization theory as well as the theoretical gauntlet thrown down by the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism*. The attempts to develop categories of analysis rooted in non-Western thought were thus part of a

wider shift from Area Studies to Postcolonial Theory. Anxieties about the legitimacy of Area Studies as well as a critical examination of its work gathered pace with the splintering of the Soviet Union and the breakdown of the bipolar world.[76] The decline of the Area Studies paradigm and the rise of Postcolonial Theory through the 1980s and 1990s has been interpreted as a phase of transition from one mode of analyzing the non-West to another although the larger governing logics of power and the effects produced remain.[77]

In understanding the legacies of both Area Studies and in-depth accounts of Indian villages, there has been a tendency to gloss over the exact nature of the relationship between the two fields of enquiry. Retrospective accounts of Village Studies consider it as a genre by itself which developed through dialogue between social anthropologists. The legacy of Area Studies has been vexed due to its close association with the US Cold War project.[78] Through the 1970s studies of villages showed a remarkable tendency to embrace ideas from adjoining disciplines and thus enrich the contours of the field. Conversely, the domain of Area Studies and its gradual shift to Postcolonial Theory was brought about through the Gramsci-inspired Subaltern and the work of Said. In terms of its varied intellectual inflections, it would be difficult to argue for Village Studies as being a product solely of the development of US Area Studies. Further, rather than thinking of a radical, linear break in the move from Area Studies to Postcolonial Theory, the case study of Karimpur suggests the pathway from Area Studies to Postcolonial Theory was not a straight line, but instead was crooked and split. Multiple intellectual traditions and lines of enquiry existed in parallel that did not entirely fit this disciplinary-intellectual trajectory. Beyond the distinctions of Area and Village Studies, one may conceptualize the development of ancillary strands of social science in and of India. It may be beneficial to conceptualize a distinct form of Cold War social science that emerged in the immediate context of the formation of a new nation-state. Exhibiting a remarkable ability to assimilate elements from various schools of thought multiple lines of enquiry developed which were articulated in a conceptual milieu that took the validity of the nation-state form as axiomatic. Over time, even as the project of postcolonial nationhood began to fray at the edges, social science research, especially the social anthropological versions of Village Studies, sought to place the citizen-subject at the centre of enquiry through a range of rhetorical and narrative strategies. Karimpur's representation through this period thus complicates a neat story of the passing of some figurative ideological baton. The work of Wiser and Wadley emerged from the Village Studies tradition which confronted the methodological as well as empirical difficulty of upholding a unitary idea of the village. These accounts ruptured the neat correspondence between the village-nation dyad and simultaneously emphasized the everyday life stories of the villagers. An emphasis on individual subjectivity, an acknowledgement of the power of the

'small voices of history' as well as a repudiation of metanarratives and theories of totality—some of the distinctive attributes of Postcolonial Theory—were thus being developed within the Village Studies tradition in parallel to developments within the wider academic milieu.

Further, across disciplinary orientations the genre of village studies as practised in India in its various avatars has had a rich tradition of studying villages over the longer-term, of restudying villages after an interval, or undertaking studies to complement surveys and fieldwork done by an earlier set of anthropologists.[79] In recent times, there have also been attempts to revisit the villages made famous by anthropologists during the heyday of Village Studies in the 1950s to re-examine the changes that have been brought about from the time these accounts were written over half a century ago.[80] Restudies, or studies across generations, offer the possibility of understanding social change through a reading of the thick descriptions and individual profiles of the villagers. At the same time, using a specific village as both a focus of analysis and as an analytical category helps in moving out of the very widespread fixation on particular figureheads and pioneers of sociology and social anthropology in post-independence India.[81]

Village Studies and the Present

Studies in the history of modernization theory have largely focused on the intellectuals who were at the forefront of presenting these ideas to the Third World during the high noon of the Cold War era.[82] Couched variedly in the language of progress, of democratic values or of economic freedom, modernization theory has been seen as a process of circulation of ideas and people, often unidirectional from the West to the Third World. It is only in recent years that the remit of such histories has been expanded, and the working of the ideals of modernization in the countries of the Global South has been brought to the fore.[83] In India, the development of social sciences, especially of sociology and social anthropology, was closely aligned with the questions and debates on the tenability of the ideals of modernization. The sociologist's concern with tradition and modernity in the context of India can be situated within a specific moment in the life of modernization theory in the social sciences as well as in the developing history of newly-formed nations. Understanding social change, and cataloguing and characterizing the nature of changes brought about by the postcolonial nation-state was arguably the most significant question that was addressed by sociologists. The village in this mode of analysis became the site and focal point to delineate the processes of change and assertions of tradition. This was done in varied ways: either through the development of an understanding of what constituted Indian tradition, or by analysing the

shifts in relations of power among people, examining patterns of labour migration, the interplay between state institutions and democratic politics, and the shifts in agricultural land holdings.

The variegated destinies of Village Studies as a genre of social anthropology in India have come to be explained either in terms of an intellectual shift towards peasant studies, or as evidence of the limited utility of a single village as a unit of analyses.[84] The decline of Village Studies since the 1970s has thus been characterized as the denouement of a paradigmatic approach to understanding Indian society and social change. And yet Karimpur as a site of micro-study continued to thrive through the latter writings of Charlotte Wiser as well as the anthropological works of Susan Wadley. Rather than situating Village Studies merely as an intellectual endeavour peculiar to a specific conjuncture, this chapter argues that Village Studies is representative of traits characteristic to the larger intellectual history of the development of social anthropology in postcolonial India. The work on Karimpur between the 1950s and 1980s, as exemplified in the writing of C. Wiser and Susan Wadley, highlights the coterminous development of Village Studies that drew upon varied traditions: the M. N. Srinivas-influenced attempts to study Indian villages through intensive fieldwork imbibed from British social anthropology, the US Area Studies tradition, especially the Chicago School which saw the village as a key site to understand Indian civilization and the interactional dynamic between tradition and modernity, the developmentalist approach to initiate change at the village level through community development projects, and lastly, the Louis Dumont-inspired French structuralist tradition which challenged the *method* of Village Studies while retaining it as the *field* of enquiry. Karimpur as an analytical category is thus emblematic of a coalescing of intellectual traditions, differing funding agendas, and varied institutional collaborations.

The intensive study of Indian villages in this period was part of a broader impetus to inaugurate a 'national' sociology on/of India. A number of these attempts to reimagine the place of social sciences for a better understanding of the world were steadfastly global in their outlook, transnational in their collaborations and methods, and rooted in the pursuit of a thorough understanding of Indian society through intensive fieldwork. The creation of a national sociology can be imagined as one of the responses that emerged to the ideological weight of modernization theory. A focus on transnational entanglements highlights movements, exchanges and influences; such a conceptualization also proffers an acknowledgement of the limits of Americanization that endured during this period of social science research. Influences from multiple vantage points inflected on the development of ideas, and academic currents changed depending on the modified contours of academic theory and its use in the analysis of social realities. This is visible in the context of Karimpur too, where the analytical vector of the village bears traces of the shifts in

the discipline itself. The representation of Karimpur can definitely be understood as part of a wider Indo-US entanglement that flowered through the twentieth century across contexts, peoples and places. Emphasizing the multifarious influences that shaped the understanding of Karimpur underscores the need to resist a characterization of such encounters between American actors and Indian settings as functioning in a binary, dialectical relationship. In the years since the end of British rule and an increased focus on modernizing projects in India, the portrayal of rural life and social mores in Karimpur took aspects from various traditions that cannot be neatly compartmentalized as being merely an instance of the Indo-US encounter. Instead Karimpur offers the possibility of imagining a specifically Cold War social science in India that was polycentric in its intellectual lineages, and existed simultaneous and coterminous to similar lines of enquiry which emerged in universities in India, the US and other Western spaces in the West.

Second, through a thick description of life stories of villagers, charting change across intergenerational family members, examining the changing caste and political dynamics through the prism of changes in labour migration, village studies offer a rich archive of rural change brought about through the programmes of agrarian modernization. In chronicling the life stories of the villagers the genre of Village Studies is a veritable archive on the everyday histories of early postcolonial India. In this the multiple case studies of villages across the breadth of the country offer a historical record to understand rural change over the longue durée.

Finally, the chapter argues for locating the development of sociology in and of India as being necessarily heterogeneous and contextualize it in parallel with developments in the wider social science field in this period. The unviability of village as a category of analysis corresponded with the splintering of its original referent, the nation. As historical and social scientific accounts of the contingent nature of nationalism emerged through the late 1970s and the 1980s, it was no longer possible to argue for a convenient and natural association between the village and the Indian nation. The question of individual subjectivity, a focus on everyday lives and histories, and the emergence of 'the fragment' as modes of analysis to counter narratives of totality were all developments that are mirrored within the chronicles of Karimpur in the first three decades of postcolonial India.[85] The narrative style of a thick description of everyday lives thus catalogued both the dreams and the dissonances within the project of postcolonial nationhood.

Notes

[1] The title of the chapter is a nod to McKim Marriott's programmatic essay published in 1989 urging for the development of an Indian social science "from the realities known to Indian people". M. Marriott, "Constructing an Indian Ethnosociology," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 23, no. 1 (1989), 1–39.

[2] *Sociology in Indian Universities: Report of the University Grants Commission Review Committee*. University Grants Committee, New Delhi: 1966, 7.

[3] For an overview of the early years of the Planning era, M. Kudaisya, "'A Mighty Adventure': Institutionalising the Idea of Planning in Post-Colonial India, 1947–60," *Modern Asian Studies* 43, no. 4 (2009), 939–78. On the US developmental intervention in this period, P. Kumar, "'Modernization' and Agrarian Development in India, 1912–52," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 79, no. 3 (2020), 633–58. The vagaries of the early postcolonial experience with democratic processes are laid out in T.C. Sherman, W. Gould, and S. Ansari (eds), *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947–1970*. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014) and, O. Shani, *How India Became Democratic: Citizenship and the Making of the Universal Franchise* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[4] The establishment of the Indian Institutes of Technology and central research centres for pure and applied sciences were part of a range of measures to encourage the teaching of science at the university level and above. Technical and financial assistance from the USA as well as Europe was crucial in this. Consider for example, R. Wittje, "The Establishment of IIT Madras: German Cold War Development Assistance and Engineering Education in India," *TG Technikgeschichte* 87, no. 4 (12 January 2021), 335–58. For a general overview of the nature of science under Nehru, D. Arnold, "Nehruvian Science and Postcolonial India," *Isis* 104, no. 2 (1 June 2013), 360–70.

[5] S. Visvanathan, *Organizing for Science: The Making of an Industrial Research Laboratory* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985).

[6] J. Isaac, "The Human Sciences in Cold War America," *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 3 (September 2007), 725–46.

[7] For an overview of the key figures involved in the early history of social anthropology in India, P. Uberoi, S. Deshpande, and N. Sundar (eds), *Anthropology in the East: Founders of Indian Sociology and Anthropology* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2008), 1–63.

[8] S. Patel, "At Crossroads: Sociology in India," in S. Patel (ed), *The ISA Handbook of Diverse Sociological Traditions* (Great Britain: SAGE, 2010), 280–91.

[9] The phrase is from Nehru's *Tryst with Destiny* speech delivered to the Constituent Assembly on the eve of Indian independence. Emphasis added. J. Nehru, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru: Second Series, Vol. 3: (June–August 1947)* (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1985), 135–136.

[10] Glenda Sluga details the aspirations of the '1945 moment' in G. Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 79–87.

[11] Consider the essays as well as introductory overviews published in two recently edited volumes. J. Adelman, (ed), *Empire and the Social Sciences: Global Histories of Knowledge*. (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019), 1–13 and G. Steinmetz, *Sociology and Empire: The Imperial Entanglements of a Discipline* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013), ix-52.

[12] The role of the Cold War in the development of social sciences as well as the longer-term legacies of the interwar period in shaping some of the core ideas of social science is a matter of continued historiographic debate. For an emphasis on the longer-term influences in the development of social sciences, D. C. Engerman, "Social Science in the Cold War," *Isis* 101, no. 2 (2010), 393–400. For a

reiteration of the centrality of the intellectual and institutional impact of the Cold War on the social sciences, consider, M. Solovey and H. Cravens (eds), *Cold War Social Science: Knowledge Production, Liberal Democracy, and Human Nature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

13 The last decade or so has offered a range of studies contextualizing the US context in the Global South during the Cold War. Illustrative works include, N. Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2011) and D.C. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2018).

14 For an engaging overview of some of the key figures in Indian sociology, consider, T. N. Madan, *Sociological Traditions: Methods and Perspectives in the Sociology of India* (New Delhi: SAGE Publications India, 2011), 119–216.

15 For an analysis of the role of US foundations in attempts to instill a globalist vision through national networks of intellectuals, I. Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012). On the work of the Ford foundation in India, N. Sackley, "Foundation in the Field: The Ford Foundation New Delhi Office and the Construction of Development Knowledge, 1951–1970," in J. Krige and H. Rausch (eds), *American Foundations and the Coproduction of World Order in the Twentieth Century* (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 232–60.

16 R.C. Angell, "UNESCO and Social Science Research," *American Sociological Review* 15, no. 2 (1950), 282–87.

17 O.A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

18 Ministry of Education, Administration-5. File F.7–3/53.A5. National Archives of India, New Delhi.

19 Papers of Douglas Ensminger, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University (hereafter Ensminger Papers). Box 12, Folder B19.

20 The role of UNESCO in initiating knowledge transfers across the Global North and South is detailed in, P. Selcer, "The View from Everywhere: Disciplining Diversity in Post-World War II International Social Science," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 45, no. 4 (2009), 309–29. For an elaboration on the contrasting intellectual and organizational tensions involved in bringing together experts from diverse backgrounds at the UNESCO, T.T. Rangil, "Citizen, Academic, Expert, or International Worker? Juggling with Identities at UNESCO's Social Science Department, 1946–1955," *Science in Context* 26, no. 1 (March 2013), 61–91.

21 In the context of India, the emphasis on fieldwork came in through the British social anthropology tradition of Bronislaw Manilowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown. By the end of the Second World War the centrality of fieldwork was acknowledged within the US anthropological tradition as well. A. Gupta and J. Ferguson, "Discipline and Practice: 'The Field' as Site, Method and Location in Anthropology," in A. Gupta and J. Ferguson (eds), *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science* (California: University of California Press, 1997), 1–46.

22 Ensminger Papers, Box 12, Folder B19.

23 Ensminger Papers, Box 12, Folder B21.

24 The broad strokes of the institutional networks that emerged in the early days can be gleaned from, M.N. Srinivas, and M.N. Panini, "The Development of Sociology and Social Anthropology in India," *Sociological Bulletin* 22, no. 2 (1 September 1973), 179–215.

25 A. Beteille, "Sociology and Social Anthropology," in V. Das (ed), *The Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology (*New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 37–62.

26 C. Dewey, "Images of the Village Community: A Study in Anglo-Indian Ideology," *Modern Asian Studies* 6, no. 3 (1972), 291–328.

[27] S. S. Jodhka, "Nation and Village: Images of Rural India in Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar," *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 32 (2002), 3343–53. For a bird's-eye view of the historical lineages of the category of village in colonial British India, S. D. Gupta, "Site of deficiency and site of hope: the village in colonial South Asia" in H. Fischer-Tiné and M. Framke (eds), *Routledge Handbook of the History of Colonialism in South Asia* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), 309–318.

[28] S. Deshpande, "Fashioning a Postcolonial Discipline: M.N. Srinivas and Indian Sociology," in P. Uberoi, S. Deshpande and N. Sundar (eds), *Anthropology in the East: Founders of Indian Sociology and Anthropology* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2008), 496–536.

[29] M.N. Srinivas, *India's Villages*. (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1966).

[30] M. Marriott (ed), *Village India: Studies in the Little Community* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961).

[31] For a systematic analysis of Redfield's intellectual lineages and legacy, N. Sackley, "Cosmopolitanism And The Uses Of Tradition: Robert Redfield and Alternative Visions Of Modernization During The Cold War," *Modern Intellectual History* 9, no. 3 (November 2012), 565–95.

[32] Dube arguably represents the classic example of the range of collaboration that emerged between American social science research and Indian participants. His work on community development emerged from his involvement with the Cornell India Project directed by the anthropologist Morris Opler. Dube's earlier account of Shamirpet in Hyderabad represents a different tradition within Village Studies in this period. For an introspective account of Dube's oeuvre, S. Dube, "Ties That Bind: Tribe, Village, Nation and S. C. Dube," in P. Uberoi, S. Deshpande and N. Sundar (eds), *Anthropology in the East: Founders of Indian Sociology and Anthropology* (Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2008), 444–95.

[33] L. Dumont and D. Pocock (eds), *Contributions to Indian Sociology*. No I, April 1957.

[34] Consider a recent essay by Axel Michaels and responses to it by Arjun Appadurai, Veena Das and others in *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, Volume 54 (3), 2020, 357–413.

[35] My reading of the tensions between the nation and the village and between the modernizing impulse and the desire for rootedness is developed from, C. Geertz, "After the Revolution: The Fate of Nationalism in the New States," in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 2017), 252–73.

[36] William Henricks Wiser and Charlotte Viall Wiser papers, 1915–1975. Archives 13 1119 SPP 115|131. Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

[37] Papers of William and Charlotte Wiser, Record Group 128, Box 7, Folder 52. Yale Divinity Library, Yale University (hereafter Wiser Papers).

[38] Wiser Papers, Record Group 128, Box 1, Folder 2.

[39] The phrase is from Hollinger, David A. *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World But Changed America*. Princeton University Press, 2019. Hollinger considers the central role of American Protestant missionaries in shaping a uniquely liberal mid-twentieth century ideal which was interactional and mutually-constitutive, thus highlighting the ways in which American perceptions of itself were fundamentally shaped by the missions and the Protestants in the field.

[40] Consider, Sackley, Nicole. 'Village Models: Etawah, India, and the Making and Remaking of Development in the Early Cold War'. *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 4 (1 September 2013): 749–78 as well as Fischer-Tiné, Harald. 'The YMCA and Low-Modernist Rural Development in South Asia, c.1922–1957'. *Past & Present* 240, no. 1 (2018): 193–234 on the range of US actors involved in this period.

[41] One illustrative anecdote is of a young McKim Marriott writing, sometime possibly in 1950, seeking practical advice about fieldwork in India. Marriott addresses the work of the Wisers as having suggested to him "the richness and practical significance of the social organization of Hindu (sic)

villages, and the possibility of extending research along the lines you began." Wiser Papers, Record Group 128, Box 16, Folder 16.

42 Wiser Papers, Record Group 128, Box 1, Folder 1.

43 N. Sackley, "The Village as Cold War Site: Experts, Development, and the History of Rural Reconstruction," *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 3 (November 2011), 481–504.

44 Ensminger Papers, Box 13, Folder B21.

45 S.S. Wadley, "In Search of the Hindu 'Peasant's' Subjectivity," *India Review* 7, no. 4 (9 December 2008), 320–48.

46 S.S. Wadley, *Shakti: Power in the Conceptual Structure of Karimpur Religion* (Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, 1975).

47 Bruce W. Derr too published on Karimpur in this period, and was Wadley's collaborator through the 1970s and 1980s. In this chapter I only focus on the works of C. Wiser and Susan Wadley for the sake of argumentative brevity and coherence. The intellectual and affective entanglements between C. Wiser and Wadley, I argue, are substantive enough to justify such a narrative strategy.

48 For an overview of the varied trajectories within Village Studies, J. Breman, "The Village in Focus," in J. Breman, P. Kloos and A. Saith (eds), *The Village in Asia Revisited* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 15–76.

49 Wadley, Susan S. *Struggling with Destiny in Karimpur, 1925–1984* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), xvii.

50 Ibid.

51 C.V. Wiser, "The Foods of an Indian Village on North India," *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 42, no. 4 (1955), 303–412.

52 Apart from her academic career and work at the American Museum of Natural History, Mead was also involved with the UNESCO in the late 1940s as part of its 'Food and People' series to create awareness on food and nutrition, as well as varied food customs across cultures.

53 Wiser Papers, Record Group 128, Box 16, Folder 12.

54 The rise of Area Studies as part of a peculiar American project of nation-building is argued in, I. Kamola, *Making the World Global: U.S. Universities and the Production of the Global Imaginary*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 29–61.

55 A brief explication of the context of the early development of South Asian Studies is in, N.B. Dirks, *Autobiography of an Archive: A Scholar's Passage to India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 265–290.

56 Wadley, *In Search of "Hindu" Peasants' Subjectivity*, op cit. fn 46, 325–326.

57 Wadley contributed her time and expertise to a number of committees within the AIIS, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. She was variously involved with Committee of Ethnomusiclogy and the Fellowship Selection Committee of the AIIS over the years. M.L.P. Patterson and J.W. Elder. *A History of the American Institute of Indian Studies, 1961 to 1998* (Madison, Wisconsin: Center for South Asia, 2010).

58 The broad strokes of the gradual churnings among caste groups and the rise of lower caste political consciousness brought about by universal suffrage and representative democracy is elaborated in C. Jaffrelot, *India's Silent Revolution: The Rise of the Lower Castes in North India* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2003). For the colonial context of the rise of lower caste consciousness, A. Rao, *The Caste Question: Dalits and the Politics of Modern India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 93–142.

59 W. Wiser and C. Wiser, *Behind Mud Walls: Seventy-Five Years in a North Indian Village, Updated and Expanded Edition*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 117–134.

60 Wiser, *Behind Mud Walls*. 238–239.

[61] For an account of the contradictory impulses of development and agrarian transformation in postcolonial India, A. Gupta, *Postcolonial Developments: Agriculture in the Making of Modern India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998). For an overview of the key themes and historiography on the Green Revolution in India, G.D. Stone, "Commentary: New Histories of the Indian Green Revolution," *The Geographical Journal* 185, no. 2 (2019), 243–50.

[62] Wadley, *Struggling with Destiny*, 273–275.

[63] ibid. 163–192.

[64] W.H. Wiser, *The Hindu Jajmani System: A Socio-Economic System Interrelating Members of a Hindu Village Community in Services* (Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House, 1969). William Wiser's doctoral thesis submitted in June 1933 at Cornell University was a separate work, also on the caste system in India titled, 'Social Institutions of a Hindu Village in North India'. Wiser Papers, Record Group 128, Box 17, Folder 6.

[65] Longer-term studies of agrarian societies in postcolonial India have sketched this across varied regional contexts. The geographer-anthropologist Vinay Gidwani delineates this dynamic in Gujarat, V.K. Gidwani, *Capital, Interrupted: Agrarian Development and the Politics of Work in India* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008).

[66] Wadley, *Struggling with Destiny*, 166

[67] Wadley, *Struggling with Destiny*, 210–248.

[68] Critiques of agriculture driven by high-yielding varieties of rice and wheat and its impact on the Indian villages had been evident since the late 1970s. The turn towards environmental history in the 1980s as well as the publication in 1989 of Vandana Shiva's *The Violence of the Green Revolution* gave an impetus to understanding the tensions between techno-agriculture, increasing financialization of the food production system, and marginalization of the peasantry.

[69] A. Nandy, "The Journey to the Past as a Journey into the Self: The Remembered Village and the Poisoned City" in *An Ambiguous Journey to the City: The Village and Other Odd Ruins of the Self in the Indian Imagination (*New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1–41.

[70] While the quote is from T.N. Madan's review, it was part of a series of essays by Srinivas' contemporaries who were individually reviewing *The Remembered Village*. Madan in this instance is stating Srinivas' achievement as a broader opinion of most of the contributors. T.N. Madan, "M. N. Srinivas's Earlier Work and The Remembered Village: An Introduction," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 12, no. 1 (1 January 1978), 1–14. Quote on page 9.

[71] Consider the edited volume which examines the narrative strategies, tropes, and modes of figurative writing in ethnographic accounts, C. James, and G.E. Marcus (eds), *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

[72] For an overview of the themes within this terrain, A. Lüdtke, "Introduction: What Is the History of Everyday Life and Who Are Its Practitioners?," in A. Lüdtke (ed), *The History of Everyday Life: Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), 3–40.

[73] Reviews of the monograph highlighted the thick description and evocative rendering of village life while being unconvinced with the efficacy of the methodology. Consider an illustrative review of the book, M. Moffatt, "Village and Personal Agency in South Asia," *American Anthropologist* 98, no. 1 (1996), 172–74.

[74] Wiser et al., *Behind Mud Walls*, 284.

[75] Wiser, for instance, talks of her participation at the 1978 edition of the annual conference of the American Association of the Advancement of Science in a letter to a friend. She and Susan Wadley also continued to collaborate in this period. Wiser Papers, Box 16, Folder 8.

[76] For an early overview of the post-war context to the rise of Area Studies in the US as well as its contested histories consider the introduction in, D. Szanton (ed), *The Politics of Knowledge: Area Studies and the Disciplines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 1–33.

[77] H.D. Harootunian, "Postcoloniality's Unconscious/Area Studies' Desire," *Postcolonial Studies* 2, no. 2 (1 July 1999), 127–47.

[78] B Cumings, "Boundary Displacement: Area Studies and International Studies during and after the Cold War" in C. Simpson (ed), *Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences During the Cold War (*New York: The New Press, 1998), 159–88. I am thankful to Nikolay Kamenov for this reference.

[79] For an overview, op. cit. Breman "The Village in Focus," 53–59.

[80] A recent project at SOAS, London has conducted fieldwork in three Indian villages associated with the anthropologists Adrian Mayer, F.G. Bailey and David Pocock to examine the changes brought about in these villages over fifty years since the publication of the original accounts. These were contrasted with field notes and interviews with Mayer and Bailey (Pocock had passed before the commencement of the project). E. Simpson, A. Tilche, T. Sbriccoli, P. Jeffery, and T. Otten, "A Brief History of Incivility in Rural Postcolonial India: Caste, Religion, and Anthropology," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, no. 1 (January 2018), 58–89.

[81] An account focussing on Bailey's Bipisara considers the status of some of the questions around democratic practice and village lives, T. Otten and E. Simpson, "F G Bailey's Bisipara Revisited," *Economic and Political Weekly* 51, no. 26–27 (5 June 2015), 7–8. Similarly the anthropologist Anand Pandian returned to Louis Dumont's site of enquiry in south India to ponder on Dumont's work and the traces of the 'white man's house' left behind, A. Pandian, "The Remembering Village: Looking Back on Louis Dumont from Rural Tamil Nadu," *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 43, no. 1 (1 February 2009), 121–33.

[82] For an account of the intellectual history and legacies of the idea of modernization, D. Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2011). For specific case studies in the context of Indian social science, op. cit. Sackley, *Cosmopolitanism and the Uses of Tradition*, fn 27, and S. Sharma, "The Chicago School Goes East: Edward Shils and the Dilemma of the Indian Intellectuals, circa 1956–67," *Modern Asian Studies* 54, no. 6 (November 2020), 2087–2111.

[83] D.C. Engerman, and C. R. Unger, "Introduction: Towards a Global History of Modernization," *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 3 (1 June 2009), 375–85.

[84] S.S. Jodhka and P. D'Souza, "Rural and Agrarian Studies," in Y. Atal (ed), *Sociology and Social Anthropology in India* (New Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2009), 118–84.

[85] The fragment would become a strong rhetorical device that the Subaltern school would employ as a means to counter grand narratives of national culture. Consider, G. Pandey, "In Defence of the Fragment: Writing about Hindu-Muslim Riots in India Today," *Economic and Political Weekly* 26, no. 11–12 (March 1991), 559–72 and P. Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993). For a critique of the Subaltern studies project, S. Sarkar, "The Decline of the Subaltern in Subaltern Studies," in *Writing Social History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 82–108. Especially 101–103 for the limits of the fragment as a strategy for historical rendering.

CHAPTER 9

The Development of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University

Prakash Kumar

Abstract

The establishment of India's first agricultural university at Rudrapur in Uttar Pradesh in 1960 represented a certain change in India's higher education project. Conceived in the shadow of growing United States-India collaboration in launching projects of agrarian modernization, the institution self-consciously embraced some of the core features of American land grant institutions. This was a deviation from the era after independence when plans for university education were couched in Gandhian frameworks. The new university came to instead own up the Indian state's new desire for agricultural development.

Keywords: postcolonial moment, Indo-US cooperation, Land Grant, agricultural university, Uttar Pradesh, development, Green Revolution

On November 17, 1960, Jawaharlal Nehru dedicated India's first agricultural university to the nation at Rudrapur, Nainital district, in what was then the state of Uttar Pradesh. The establishment of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University was a part and parcel of India's postcolonial project of higher education that sought to cater to the needs of a widespread rural constituency. But as an institution the Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University (or UPAU) came to draw upon several lineages as it was impinged by changing priorities. Its planning and progress in the years after independence were contingent on early postcolonial imaginaries of progress for village India. But these motivations underwent a change in terms of narrowing of focus as nationalist ideals became encumbered by the desires for development in the 1960s. Along the way, UPAU abandoned some of the early founding ideals and embraced others. In particular, the stakeholders primed the institution to play a role in the execution of the "new strategy" in agriculture."

There were countervailing forces at work that determined the course of UPAU's development from the time it was conceived through the years of its early growth. From 1955, an American team from the University of Illinois was stationed in the state to assist raising UPAU in the image of American land grant colleges. These

initial American impulses rooted for maintaining the original spirit and core principles of land grant movement in the United States that stood for bolstering rural life, creating opportunities for rural populace, and taking action for building rural leadership.[1] But these impulses had to come to terms with the regional state's priorities in India that sought to implant its own control, method and vision on to the emerging university. The state chose key administrators from its cadre of Indian Administrative Service (or IAS) and appointed them as vice-chancellors at the top of the pyramid of executive officials to impose its vision on the university. However, significant political elements of state were at odds with the IAS personnel for determining the destiny of the university and the rupture between them provides a window into the distance between technocratic and political visions arising out of the state. The cross-cutting relationships between experts and political elements and between Indian priorities and American ideals, then decided the fate of the university. But the guiding principle that the university must stand as the sentinel of a new system of agriculture using high-yielding variety seeds in the region was never lost sight of. The Indo-US entanglements in Uttar Pradesh in the end seemed to abandon the village in their search for "development." The university went against some of the fundamentals of both early Gandhian inspiration and Land Grant ideals that made rural communities a supreme priority.

There is now a growing historiography on the impact of American Land Grants in foreign countries. A few of these studies focus on the transplanting of the land grant model abroad. They have unearthed new materials from the realms of diplomatic history to show the engagement of American personnel with local actors and visions among postcolonial nations.[2] Others like Tim Livsey have fruitfully engaged these stories to explore the project not of any simple one-way transplanting, but rather of a much more contested and negotiated process of decolonization and development in which British colonial efforts, nationalist history and Cold War politics were altogether implicated in postcolonial nations.[3] This paper is in line with latter works that emphasize appropriation and local adaptations of familiar Cold War efforts at building of American hegemony. It takes the historiography forward by adding another layer of analysis pertaining to the local Indian state to the existing trends that decipher the relative role of transnational and local actors in local development. In this sense, this chapter is as much a critique of Indian development as it is a critique of American hegemony in the post-World War II global order.

Imagining "Rural University" in a Pre-Development Framework

The idea of a rural university first came from a new commission that the Government of India set up to suggest new pathways in higher education. The

expert commission, called University Education Commission, submitted its report in 1949, laying a roadmap for the direction of university education. It contained new sovereign India's plans and programs that mirrored its dreams and ambitions at the postcolonial moment.[4] As the report dwelled widely on the future shape of higher education in India, it gestured towards a framework of rural education that was to be sculpted through a network of "rural universities." Recognizing the centrality of village India in any future project of intellectual growth, taking cognizance of the existence of a very large mass of rural youth, and the need for developing India's agriculture, the commission proposed a specific part of the university system to cater to the rural and agricultural constituency.

The membership of the commission was revealing in some ways and showed which way the new nation was looking for ideas and inspirations. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, an eminent educationist, chaired the commission along with other literati, educationists, and scientists. Many of the committee members were graduates of Oxford, like Radhakrishnan himself, and of Cambridge, reflecting India's immediate colonial past and connections with the metropole. There were other members, who were products of key local institutions. Two of the three foreigners[5] of note on the committee were Americans: one was Arthur E. Morgan. Morgan was the first chairman of Tennessee Valley Authority (or TVA), the multipurpose development project of New Deal era in the United States that was set up in 1933. Although TVA is understood as a behemothian, top-down model of development, Morgan himself was known for pushing for communitarian principles within the TVA, emphasizing democratic participation of communities and their educational upliftment and social growth. The second American was John J. Tigert, a former Commissioner of Education in the United States, and thus closer than Morgan to the field of higher education specifically. The committee's composition and subsequent report reflected the postcolonial elite's new modernist imaginaries and revealed where India was scouting for ideas to shape its future programs. It is in the latter regard that the presence of the two prominent Americans is insightful as it draws attention to the fact that sources of imaginaries in the postcolonial moment lay in a far wider geography than the one shaped by colonial history alone.

The Radhakrishnan Commission's recommendations on rural universities are particularly important in historiographical terms as an archive of thoughts and practices that bore relevance before the onset of the development decade in India. This is important because the examination of polity, society, and economy in Nehruvian years is predominantly done within development frameworks. State-initiated and bureaucratically implemented, many of such projects were implicated in state-building, working with fixed models and assumptions of making equal impact on all sections. The commission's chairman, Radhakrishnan was a bridge in temporal terms from the early independence era in India to the time of launch

of statist development projects in the 1950s and 1960s. He would go on to serve as the first Vice President of sovereign India from 1952 to 62 and then as President from 1962 to 1967. The report that the commission penned under his leadership is helpful precisely for its "pre-development" orientation, providing a window to the ensemble of competing ideas of those times. Before development swept everything else with its specific vision, the Radhakrishnan Commission gave representation to ideas that were not dominantly anticolonial and not yet developmental.

The framework of rural universities recommended by the commission was bereft of the familiar pursuit of goals that later development regimes would go on to advocate. To the contrary, it represented a sweltering critique of liberalism.[6] The report's abiding concern was the preservation of India's villages, not its repackaging to become a more productive space. The report chased "original thinking" that would avoid the pitfalls of the liberal market regime that had seen villages swept aside in the wave of commodification, industrialization and urbanization elsewhere in the world. It argued that "liberal education in a modern spirit" would only deepen a belief in the inadequacy of villages, trigger an exodus from villages, and bring an end to India's village life. Breaking ranks with such trends, as seen in the west, it suggested an alternate path and a different future for India's villages: "Rural life should be made so interesting and productive, so full of opportunity and adventure, that it will be preferred. The aim of rural education should be to make it so.[7]

The task at hand at the postcolonial juncture was a "reconstruction" of Indian villages in the Gandhian fashion and rural universities were to be of service to that end. This reconstruction plan was built upon Gandhian civilizational critiques while idealizing the local autonomy of villages and espousing village-based industries. But the commission's thinking also broke ranks from the extreme threads in Gandhian thought, extolling for instance, that industrialization was one of the "great basic changes in human living" that needed to be "guided into wholesome channels," thus marking its rupture from a comprehensive critique of industrialization and western civilization. It embraced a contrarian interpretation of the Tennessee Valley Authority and praised elements of decentralization that it contained—not its much-hyped and explained "top-down" modernity. It also applauded the actual or imaginary place for "smallness" in the American industrial framework. There is reason to believe that such a move to focus on participatory elements of TVA would have been inspired by the American member, Arthur Morgan, widely credited for TVA's democratic and participatory elements.[8] Even more clearly, the commission countered Gandhian emphasis on complete autonomy of villages, saying it would be a mistake to "atomize India into unrelated villages." The villages should exercise independence as well as interdependence—"Not the greatest degree, but the best degree of local self-sufficiency should be the aim."[9]

On technology specifically, the Radhakrishnan Commission on education envisioned creating a rural world with experts and expertise. This purposeful engagement with technology by no measure shared space with Gandhian anticolonial critique of technology in a totalizing way. But it did take exception to the elitism of modern science that arguably kept expertise distant from meeting the day-to-day concerns of citizens. To be sure, there was a need for science, and there was a need for specialists in rural India. But expert engagement with the rural denizens had to occur on the terms of village and villagers. "A movement for village reconstruction should not be forced beyond what people appreciate and want. The village people should not be coerced or dictated to, but they should be helped by competent specialists. So far as possible these specialists should be men and women from villages who have been trained in rural secondary school, rural colleges and rural universities."[10] This was an exhortation for embedding the future universities locally, making them become an organic part of village life, and a disapproval of "high modernization" by the state. It had an example or model in mind. The Danish "people's college" was the ideal rubric after which India's rural universities could be modelled.[11]

Indeed, the rural university framework anticipated minimizing the role of the state, even if the measure was being imagined by the state's functionaries. Although the report was short on the specifics of how such institutions would be set up, and what the alternate sources of funding might be, it clearly sought dissociation from any foreseeable centrally devised, bureaucratically implemented project that "development" would summon later. The committee envisioned village trusts that would collectively finance and run these universities. The commission also spoke of the ills of "political democracy"—and it is here that the critique of liberalism is very clear—which doubles as a thinly-veiled critique of the Nehruvian vision and his invocation of science that often "accelerates the tendency towards a population composed of subject masses and ruling classes."[12] Rural universities, to the contrary, were called upon to bring expertise that would not estrange rural people from "village life" but rather would bind them to rural India's "great traditions." After all, "No man who is cut off from that tradition becomes a good farmer."[13]

Some threads then stand out in the 1949 vision. One is the clear de-emphasizing of the state's role. This was a trend that would lose out to the countervailing emphasis to impute a dominant role to state bureaucracy soon after. The broader questions of democracy and freedom that the commission alluded to have stayed relevant. South Asia scholars have developed these questions of democracy and citizen-making through a focus on education and the role of higher institutions of learning. The question they have importantly raised is that of the significance of higher education in the realms of pedagogy, expertise, and society.[14] These studies provide an important platform to critique efforts at building "development" by the

universities, either in showing their disinvestment from questions of identity or in their becoming one with larger statist efforts at marginalizing. Extending the argument of Ajantha Subramanian, one might say that the portrayal of a "socially disembedded" meritocracy has implications for analyzing the "limits and possibilities of democratic transformation in India."[15]

Indo-US Cooperation: Planning India's First Agricultural University

The 1949 report picked a renewed salience after a wave of excitement built on the idea of an agricultural university in the 1950s. This new excitement was the result of new diplomatic initiatives between the United States and India. The initial diplomatic pathway for the establishment of agricultural universities in India with American support was provided by President Harry Truman's "Point Four" speech in 1949, wherein he promised technical aid to postcolonial nations. The United States and India signed an agreement in January 1952 and a program of long-standing aid was born funded initially by Technology Cooperation Administration or its mission office in India, the TCM and subsequently after 1961 by TCA's successor agency, the United States Agency for International Development.[16] Under the umbrella of TCM or the "mission" housed at the American Embassy in New Delhi, another important agreement was between US and India—Operational Agreement No. 28 signed in April 1954 that specifically provided for collaboration on agricultural education and research. Two key Indo-US teams were formed to suggest the path forward in India and it is in these US-India entanglements that the American "land grant" vision for agricultural universities found favor in India. According to Read Hadley, it was the dominance of TCM by land grant graduates and aficionados that allowed for the import of land grant vision into India. He also called TCM's Frank Parker "the godfather" of the American initiative on agricultural universities in India. Parker was a soil expert at USDA and he had left that post to become the Chief Agricultural Advisor to Government of India, Ministry of Agriculture.[17]

Two joint committees of Indian and American agricultural experts were formed under the auspices of the above agreement five years apart. In that specific sense, Point Four had certainly opened up space for the way agrarian modernity was now imagined in the post-independence era in India. There was a self-conscious marking of rupture from the colonial precedence and an openness to seek institutional inspiration from the United States. Both committees drew a direct line from the 1949 commission on the need for a rural university, almost as if seeking a link with local dynamics in India after independence. Both were equally captivated by the idea of integration of agricultural research, education, and extension and saw agricultural universities as the appropriate institution to bring that integration.

The resolution forming the first committee emphasized that American colleges and research institutions, "particularly the Land Grant colleges, who have a long history of agricultural development work… would provide some useful guidelines" in strengthening agricultural education and research institutions in India.[18] The committee comprising of five Indian and three American specialists visited institutions in the United States from January to March in 1955 and followed it up with a visit to Indian agricultural institutions and submitted their report later that year. While still following the lead of the earlier Radhakrishnan committee, the joint committee was also unapologetic in charting new direction. Gone were the Gandhian ideals of preservation of villages that guided the Randhakrishnan Committee's imaginary of a rural university. To the contrary, the new report emphasized the unviability of India's villages and the need for productivity and their connection to industries. What is more, it drew comparisons with American history to make the point that the productivity of Indian farming lands could best be maintained by taking its excessive populations to other pursuits. The current situation in India where seventy-five to eighty percent of the population was directly involved in agriculture existed in the United States "more than a 100 years ago," whereas currently only fifteen percent of the United States' current population was engaged in agriculture and could meet the needs of the nation. American past was where India was located currently and had to come out of it. The reversal from Radhakrishnan Committee's guiding principles could not have been clearer.[19] Was it the case that India was coming out of Gandhian shadows and entering the realm of Nehruvian goals. Surinder Jodhka has reflected on the contrast between Gandhian and Nehruvian visions of progress and the respective place they accorded to Indian villages with impeccable clarity. In Gandhian vision the village was a site of authenticity representing true India. In contrast, in Nehruvian vision, the village was a site of backwardness, available for modernization. The move from Radhakrishnan Committee to the Indo-US committees seems to travel the distance from Gandhi to Nehru on villages that Jodhka astutely noticed.[20]

In concrete terms, the first joint US/India report led to the "inter-university contract program" between the two countries wherein specific land grants from the United States were invited to become involved in undertaking projects of agricultural research and education. These were the University of Illinois (Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh); Ohio State University (Punjab and Rajasthan); University of Missouri (West Bengal, Orissa, Assam, and Bengal); Kansas State University (Bombay and Andhra Pradesh); and the University of Tennessee (Madras, Mysore, and Kerala). By the time the second joint Indo-US committee submitted its report, the idea of establishing one agricultural university in each state had been broadly accepted, even though the actualization of those goals were to be met as per plan provisions and availability of funds.[21]

The ideal of "integration" between research, education, and extension is what the Indo-US modernizers seemed to be captivated the most by. Extension was a buzzword in India since the 1952 launch of community development projects that was followed by the launch of National Extension Scheme in 1953. Administered earlier by Community Project Administration within the Planning Commission, by the middle of the decade community development was put under a separate ministry. Along these lines elsewhere, the terms of reference of the first joint committee emphasized that the members must study such integration in American and Indian institutions and suggest measures to achieve such integration.[22] The second Indo-US committee was briefed to evaluate the progress made in such integration in initiatives undertaken by the five land grants in India since 1955.[23] In a move to enhance the integration of extension with agriculture, the committee asked that the separate ministry of community development in India be brought under one umbrella ministry looking after agriculture, extension, and food.[24] This suggestion saw the adviser from community development, Ibne Ali protesting that such a step that would make his ministry redundant. Ali added his "note of dissent" to the committee's report but was in a singular minority. The majority group on the committee from among Indian members responded to the note of dissent, expressing regret that a controversy had been raised by one of the members in a situation where facts should have left no ground for equivocation. The community development programs in operation seemed "weak" and were falling short in meeting the crisis of food shortage, implying that there was a need to conjoin extension to the goals of raising agricultural yield.[25]

The conflict between the majority and Ibne Ali was superfluous at best and to an extent marked turf wars between different ministries and the personal ambitions of different ministers. There was no doubt in anyone's mind about the merits of "extension" and a realization that the latter was the need of the hour and so was its "integration" into research and teaching. The real difference of opinion was over what type of extension to embrace and how best to integrate it so that the nation's need for additional food production could be met.

Uttar Pradesh Takes the Lead

The first mechanism for putting the integration model in place started to take shape in the state of Uttar Pradesh. It was due to the prior incipient presence of Americans at Allahabad Agricultural Institute (or AAI). Since 1952, under Point Four, American agronomy, animal husbandry, and extension specialists had been at work at the institute. But even prior to this, since 1944, Allahabad Institute had an extension department of its own engaged in teaching the subject and undertaking extension

projects locally in the vicinity of the institute. What is more, the University of Illinois already had a head start at Allahabad, having established a "sisterhood" relationship with AAI a few years before such relationships between American land grants and other Indian institutions would emerge in other states. As soon as the 1954 agreement was signed, the Uttar Pradesh government specifically asked for a specialist to be assigned who might help the state develop the "blueprint" of a rural university. The University of Illinois sent Harold W. Hannah, Associate Dean of College of Agriculture, to Uttar Pradesh. He served in the role of regional adviser on agricultural research and training to UP State Government from 1955 to 1957. In September 1956, he prepared a comprehensive plan for the potential establishment of a rural university in the state.[26]

Things started moving quickly towards the realization of a university in Uttar Pradesh during the tenure of Harold or Hank Hannah—the first of several such advisors—in the state. The state's first Chief Minister Govind Ballabh Pant was the moving spirit behind the idea of such a university. Before Hannah would prepare to leave in 1957, the state government had selected a specific site for such a university—the State farm at Tarai, in Nainital district. Hannah in all produced two critical reports that were major landmarks in the process of envisioning and implementing the plan for a rural university. In many ways, Hannah was himself a strong advocate for the university. Indeed, it seems that many forces and events had to intersect in order for the plan for a university to come together: political and administrative support for a university at the state level; US/India agreements and the presence of Hank Hannah in Uttar Pradesh; the availability of Tarai farm and adjoining areas, newly colonized and freshly settled by ex-servicemen and migrants from West Pakistan; and a fertile tract that was waiting for inputs from a university dedicated to improving agriculture.

In Chief Minister Govind Ballabh Pant and Agricultural Secretary, Aditya Nath Jha, Hannah found willful partners as a state-level desire picked up for building a new agricultural university. Indeed, through Pant, Hannah had a direct line to Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru whom he met in 1957 to plead the case for a university in Uttar Pradesh.[27] He carried a fourteen-page dossier of a plan for reviving agricultural education and research that he intended to leave with the Prime Minister's office as he did not expect the meeting to last that long on the prime minister's busy docket. This was similar to the report that he had compiled at the request of the state's agricultural secretary. It contained the vision he had been peddling at the state level with considerable encouragement from Indian political and bureaucratic quarters.

Hannah's report to the Prime Minister competently made the major pitch—the need to meld education, research, and extension in a single institution of higher education. He belabored the point that local agricultural institutions in the state

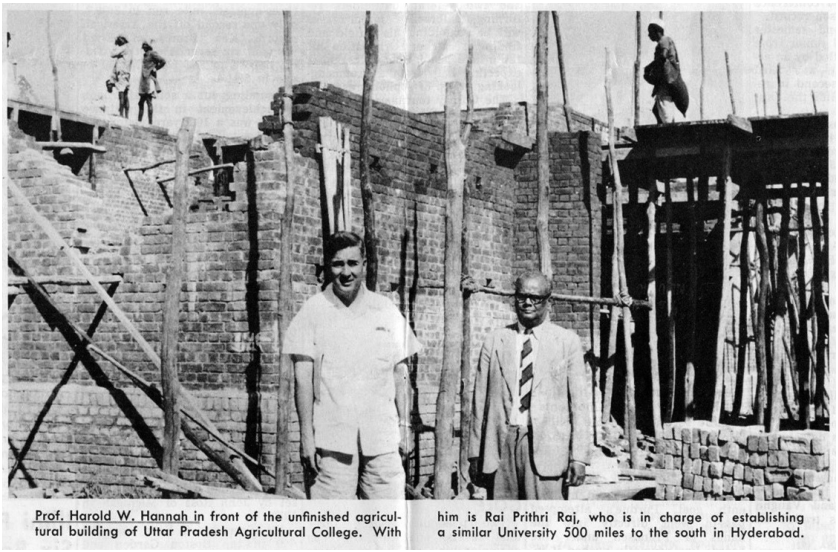

Fig 9.1 Harold Hannah Standing Next to the Upcoming Building of College of Agriculture, UPAU. Source: Harold Hannah Papers.[28]

(and country by extension) were so apart from each other in their activities. He brought the comparison with American Land Grants to bear on them and pointed out how well the latter achieved "integration." He desired for the same to be done by agricultural institutions of research and education in India so that these "inseparable activities" could be pooled and would "have meaning for rural people in India." A few specific disciplines that were of especial need to the extension effort were underrepresented and had to be beefed up. They were home science, agricultural economics, rural sociology, agricultural engineering, and animal husbandry. They currently constituted "gaps" in the higher agricultural education system.[29]

Having the prime minister's ear, he also surmised the meaning of a true rural university in a land grant vision and its relevance to rural India. He did so because while there was this all-around clamor at the center and in states for establishing rural universities, he suspected a lack of appreciation for what the latter really was and what it was purported to do.[30] A rural university was a university "with a rural bias" with regard to "location, problems attacked, services rendered and background and experience of students admitted." He took pains to clarify that "their purpose was not simply to turn out technical men in agriculture and engineering," but rather to create the widest possible opportunities for higher education to the rural folks. Just as the land grants had done in the United States,

India's rural universities could provide access to youth from rural areas to qualify for "positions of leadership in all walks of life in India."[31]

Harold W. Hannah had repeatedly been raising these themes for the last two years. In his official monthly pamphlet, *Illinois in India,* he wrote early on of the "tremendous economic and social gap" between folks in the city and country and between the commercial and educated classes in India. One way of bridging this gap was to take education and modernization to the rural areas.[32] Creating rural universities, he thought, would serve that objective. Writing again in the same series, he elaborated upon the role of an agricultural university by giving the example of the College of Agriculture at Illinois whose graduates were uniformly divided between pursuing professions in farming and farming management on the one hand and business and industry on the other hand. The agricultural college also did not have to be circumscribed by any narrow definition of agriculture. Rather, its teaching program should focus on basic sciences, applied sciences, humanities and the social sciences. Such rounded teaching would impart "competence and understanding" in the widest sense and thus train a leadership in village India, something which improvement of rural life fundamentally demanded. Now that he had the attention of the prime minister, Hannah summed up those convictions on higher education and pleaded with him that Uttar Pradesh government's request to the center for such a university be favorably reviewed and approved.

Harold Hannah asserted that the concept of rural university espoused by earlier expert committees and leaders in India contemplated the broad-based vision that he was now espousing. He had the Radhakrishnan Commission's report in mind specifically. He argued that India's first education commission and the new US-supported vision had things in common. They were both pursuing the ideal of giving rural areas access to "increased breadth of educational opportunities."[33] This is the broad-based vision of access to rural areas for higher education that would get compromised later as the new universities after they were set up, would embrace a technocratic, functionalist, and instrumentalist mandate of supporting agricultural development broadly and the "new strategy" around high-yielding varieties more specifically.

The Tarai: Colonization, Agriculture, and University

From early on, the statist imaginary in Uttar Pradesh melded the vision of a university with the agenda of agricultural development of a region called, the Tarai. Geographically, Tarai was where the southern foothills of the Himalayas merged into the Gangetic plains in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The rockier portion next to the mountains was called Bhabar and the more fertile though swampy area

next to the plains was called Tarai. The area in question more specifically was the Nainital Tarai. This area was "rich in vegetation" but infested with wildlife, shrubs and malaria and as such this land's "great agricultural potential lay untapped for generations."[34]

The area caught the eye of the state's Colonization Department as a possible resettlement zone for refugees from West Pakistan after independence. Besides, the area also invited the attention of the state's first Chief Minister, Govind Ballabh Pant for agricultural development. Indeed, his interest in this direction had predated the independence. The central government made the services of Central Tractor organization available and under the able hands of Colonization Department secretary, Aditya Nath Jha, the initial clearing started a few days shy of Independence Day. Indeed, one of the refugees, a Sikh, Major Harpal Singh Sandhu was recruited by the Colonization Department to lead the effort to clear the lands. While Chief Minister Govind Ballabh Pant blessed the project for its obvious advantage to the state, the project was of national importance in light of the need for augmenting food production. It was also the focus of the nation's Grow More Food campaigns that were relaunched in 1947.[35] On parts of this new land, the state started its Tarai State Farm in 1950, spread over 16,000 acres. To the south of the farm lay more than a hundred village, all newly settled with "refugees from East and West Pakistan, ex-servicemen, political sufferers [or freedom fighters], landless laborers, agricultural graduates, and holders of agricultural diploma."[36]

In August 1957, G.B. Pant proposed to the central government that its Tarai State Farm be the site for the state's first agricultural university, with an eye to bringing agricultural development to the Tarai area.[37] Following center's approval, UPAU was formally established through the passage of a legislation in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly in 1958. The UP Act XLV of 1958 stated the purpose of the planned university as providing "education of the rural people of Uttar Pradesh in different branches of study, particularly agriculture, rural industry and business," furthering "research, particularly in agriculture and other allied sciences," and "undertaking field and extension programmes."[38]

After the university was established, the Tarai State Farm was transferred to the new university in 1961 and came to be called Pantnagar Farm. This was the new agricultural university's in-house farm for its research and extension activities. In 1962, the Tarai farm started its own seed program and engaged "associated growers" in the region in the project for growing good quality foundational and certified seeds. The university also helped farmers sell these seeds. The program grew exponentially from the kharif season of 1966 when the university embraced the national policy of expanding agriculture under new high yield variety (or HYV) seeds.[39]

Between 1964 and 1966 the Indian government imported new varieties of wheat seeds from Mexico and rice seeds from the Philippines and established a

national network for multiplication of these seeds. These were to form the core of the "new strategy" in agriculture that was implemented in Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh.[40] UPAU eagerly became a part of this national plan for the multiplication of new seeds. To the existing seed processing plant at Haldi, which had been in operation since 1962, UPAU added four additional ones starting in 1966 at Matkota and Nagla, another in the Kashipur area, and another one specifically dedicated to developing and isolating foundational seeds at the university's experiment station.[41] Tarai was physically and figuratively at the center of the new agriculture being launched in Uttar Pradesh, and UPAU formed the hub of the new operation, supplying seeds, providing extension support, and marshalling science needed to perfect new seeds for local environs.[42] The project started taking the shape of a functionalist scheme in which the university readily played the role assigned to it by the government.

The most complete shape of this instrumentalist role manifested in the project that started taking shape as the Integrated Agricultural Development Project, Tarai in which the university and the Uttar Pradesh government collaborated. Attending the university's fourth convocation in 1966, the central minister for agriculture, C. Subramaniam, beckoned the university to play its destined role in eradicating hunger in the country and in making the nation self-sufficient in food production. The country was blessed with fertile lands and favorable climate and yet faced very low productivity. The new promise of high-yielding varieties of maize, jowar and bajra and the dwarf varieties of wheat and rice which had been recently introduced into the country meant that food production in the nation could be raised "two to three-fold or more."[43] He pointed to the positive evidence returned by the national demonstrations across 1965–66 in the new rice and wheat hybrids. Referring to the wider practices of seed development, practical research and to extension through which better practices must be spread among the farmers, he cajoled the university into playing its part as it had "a unique opportunity of revitalizing agriculture."[44]

The university was evidently ready to meet this national demand relayed by the agriculture minister more than halfway. At the fourth convocation of the university next year in 1967, Vice-Chancellor Dhyan Pal Singh referred to the minister's address where he had asked agricultural universities to become "the focal points of agricultural change" and confidently stated that his university had "achieved substantial success in this direction."[45] What lay behind this statement was UPAU's initiative on an "integrated" project in Tarai for seed production which was conceived by UPAU and presented to the center. The central government accepted the Tarai proposal without delay and mobilized institutions like National Seeds Corporation and international funding. Opening the Board of Management meeting of the university the same year, Singh mentioned that he had met with the representative of the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Bank

along with government officials of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Community Development and Cooperation to look at the feasibility of financing the ambitious seed production initiative in Tarai.[46]

The UPAU-initiated project for integrated agricultural development of Tarai was in reality a project for the production of seeds under the national "new strategy" that was based on the conviction that Tarai lands and its "progressive" farmers were uniquely poised to participate in producing the seeds of new agricultural strategy. The gist of Vice-Chancellor Singh's address at the fifth convocation of the university was that an agricultural revolution was round the corner in the country and that UPAU was in lockstep with the ensuing revolution. The university was ready to do its best to contribute to the unfolding revolution. He was convinced that Tarai was "the best area for seed production in the country." And witnessing the expansion of HYV agriculture in the country, he could think of a role no other that UPAU could play more competently in the national project.[47]

The UPAU became a sentinel of the new agricultural strategy around hybrids, symbolically represented in the spearheading of Tarai Development Corporation (or TDC) by UPAU, a new corporatized body that marshalled efforts all over Tarai by the university and independent farmers to produce hybrids. It came into existence in 1969 with UPAU's Vice-Chancellor Dhyan Pal Singh serving as its chairman. The TDC hoped to meet 30 percent of the requirement for quality seeds for the new agricultural strategy during the Fourth Plan period.[48]

Conclusion

The shape and form of India's first agricultural university in 1970 was a far cry from the vision of a "rural university" for India that S. Radhakrishnan nursed in 1949. The most radical deviation from that ideal happened during the formative years of new agricultural strategy in the 1960s. It was a great coincidence that those years were also the creative and constructive years of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University.

The state which was at the forefront of a nationwide program for agricultural yield enhancement took control of the university's form and agenda. It did so critically through the appointment of its top executive, the Vice-Chancellor. More so, it decided to fill those spots with in-house minted, Indian Administrative Service officers, the bureaucrats par excellence. The latter were the legatees of the "steel frame" of colonial governance—the competent cadre that was primed to implement the state's will.[49] This was India's postcolonial destiny expressed in the form of overreach of the postcolonial state. The university's first and third vice-chancellors—K.A.P. Stevenson and Dhyan Pal Singh—turned out to be the most

influential in terms of long-term patterns they were able to imbue the university with. Both were originally Indian Civil Service cadres, known after independence by its new name of Indian Administrative Service. By appointing these two men as the university's head, the state compromised one of the basic characteristics of land grants as autonomous bodies. To the contrary, the presence of these two ICS men at the top of the university betrayed the state's desire to control the agenda of the university.

The UPAU's first Vice-Chancellor, K.A.P. Stevenson, called the UPAU's form of learning as marking "a revolution in higher learning." Paying homage to Radhakrishnan, the original proponent of the idea of such a university, he basked in the glory of the fact that Pantnagar represented a new step in the direction of university reforms in the country. To be sure, he did see the university as different from traditional universities in India in the sense that it was "action-oriented" in addressing the issues faced by the farmers of the country. Moving in that direction UPAU had embraced the idea of education, research, and extension. The latter could be done best if the university was allowed autonomy in its functioning. This was in 1963.[50] Stevenson relinquished office the next year and after an interregnum of sorts, the third Vice-Chancellor of the university, D.P. Singh was appointed to the office. Singh was the sine qua non of the new agricultural strategy measures in the country that came to be celebrated globally as constituting the "green revolution." He was proud of the instrumentalist role the UPAU had come to play.[51] "Uttar Pradesh and the Green Revolution"[52] was the title of an important pamphlet published by Dhyan Pal Singh which accurately epitomized owning up of the green revolution agenda by the university. The owning up of this agenda also meant the university was aligning itself unconditionally and completely with the goals of the state.

Notes

1 For a revisionist account of the land grant mission in the United States, especially with regard to its internal tensions and competing visions, see, Nathan M. Sorber, *Land-Grant Colleges and Popular Revolt: The Origins of the Morrill Act and the Reform of Higher Education* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018). For a descriptive and comprehensive coverage of the several milestones in creation of the land grant system, from its early inception by Morrill Act in 1852 in the Civil War era to the expansion in the 1890s and finally to the creation of the National Extension Service in 1914, see, Roy Vernon Scott, *The Reluctant Farmer: The Rise of Agricultural Extension to 1914* (Urbana Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1971).

2 Richard Garlitz, *A Mission for Development: Utah University and the Point Four Program in Iran* (Logan: Utah University Press, 2018).

3 Tim Livsey, *Nigeria's University Age: Reframing Decolonization and Development* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[4] Scholars have analyzed the "postcolonial moment" as an important palimpsest in the imagining of India's future in polity, society, and economy in the transition from anticolonial nationalism to national statehood. Gyan Prakash, Michael Laffann, and Nikhil Menon, *The Postcolonial Moment in South and Southeast Asia* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 1–10.

[5] The third was James F. Duff, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Durham, England.

[6] Karuna Mantena, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); for a related critique of political economy in colonial agrarian India, see, Upal Chakrabarti, "Agrarian Localities: Political economy as local power in early nineteenth-century British India," *Modern Asian Studies* 50, no. 3 (2016): 898–933.

[7] *The Report of the University Education Commission (December 1948–August 1949), Vol. 1,* first edition, 1949, first reprint edition, 1962, Publication No. 606 (New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1963), quotes on 494, 500. This line of thought was starkly different from the global imaginaries of villages as the site of foreseeable modernization. Nicole Sackley, "The village as Cold War site: experts, development, and the history of rural reconstruction," *Journal of Global History* 6 no. 3 (2011): 481–504.

[8] Elements like Morgan who were on the margins of dominant American thrust for statist modernization, have been characterized as representing the efforts towards "low modernization" by the historian, Jess Gilbert. Jess Gilbert, *Planning Democracy: Agrarian Intellectuals and the Intended New Deal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016); "Low Modernism and the Agrarian New Deal: A Different Kind of State," In Jane Adamas (ed.), *Fighting for the Farm: Rural America Transformed* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 129–46.

[9] *The Report of the University Education Commission,* 1949, 492, 493

[10] *The Report of the University Education Commission,* 1949, 495–96, quote on 496.

[11] *The Report of the University Education Commission,* 1949, Appendix P: The Danish People's College, 672–80.

[12] *The Report of the University Education Commission,* 1949, 485.

[13] *The Report of the University Education Commission,* 1949, 501–504.

[14] On religion specifically, see, Laurence Gautier, "A Laboratory for a Composite India? Jamia Millia Islamia around the time of partition," *Modern Asian Studies* 54, no. 1 (2020): 199–249; "Why Does the UGC Want to Drop the 'M' from AMU?," *Economic and Political Weekly* 53 no. 1, (6 Jan, 2018): 18–21; Gail Minault and David Lelyveld, "The Campaign for a Muslim University, 1898–1920," *Modern Asian Studies* 8 no. 2 (1974): 145–189.

[15] Ajantha Subramanian, "Making Merit: The Indian Institutes of Technology and the Social Life of Caste," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57 no. 2 (2015):291–322, quotes on 293. See, also Ross Bassett, *Technological Indian* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

[16] These institutions evolved a great deal, partly due to the presidential transition from Truman to Eisenhower. First there was the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) that administered the European Recovery Program, followed by TCA in 1950 as an arm of Department of State. The Mutual Security Act of 1951 changed the names of ECA to Mutual Security Agency. After January 1953, with the arrival of Eisenhower, all foreign assistance programs were consolidated under the Foreign Operations Administration (FOA) which replaced MSA. The latter was renamed International Cooperation Administration in 1955 and in 1961 reorganized as United States Agency for International Development. Hadley Read, *Partnership with India: Building Agricultural Universities* (Urbana Champaign: University of Illinois, 1974), 22–23.

[17] Hadley Read, *Partnership with India: Building Agricultural Universities* (Urbana Champaign: University of Illinois, 1974), 24–31.

[18] *Report of the Joint Indo-American Team on Agricultural Research and Education,* New Delhi: Indian Council for Agricultural Research, 1954, 99.

[19] *Report of the Joint Indo-American Team on Agricultural Research and Education,* 52.

[20] Gandhian, Nehruvian, and Ambedkarite visions around India's village society are addressed in Surinder S. Jodhka, "Nation and village: Images of rural India in Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar," *Economic and Political Weekly,* Vol. 37, No. 32 (Aug. 10–16, 2002): 3343–3353; for a discussion of the resolution of Gandhian versus Nehruvian debates on the possible future course of India's modernity in favor of a Nehruvian design, see Partha Chatterjee, "The constitution of Indian nationalist discourse," in Partha Chatterjee, *Empire and Nation: Essential Writings, 1985–2005* (Bangalore: Orient Black Swan, 2012), 39–58.

[21] *Report of the Second Joint Indo-American team on Agricultural Education, Research and Extension* (New Delhi: Indian Council for Agricultural Research, 1960), 9, 66.

[22] *Report of the Joint Indo-American Team on Agricultural Research and Education,* 100.

[23] *Report of the Second Joint Indo-American Team on Agricultural Education, Research and Extension,* 70.

[24] *Report of the Second Joint Indo-American Team on Agricultural Education, Research and Extension*, 41–50; 68–70.

[25] "Appendix I: A Minute of Dissent" and "Appendix II: Supplementary Note by Indian Members," *Report of the Second Joint Indo-American team on Agricultural Education, Research and Extension,* 72–74.

[26] H.W. Hannah, *Blueprint for a Rural University in India* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Agricultural Research, 1956).

[27] Letter from Hannah to Prime Minister, dated, April 3, 1957, Folder, "Hannah Report, 1957," Box 7, Harold Hannah papers, 1955–1976, 8/4/34, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[28] Harold W. Hannah Papers, Box 7, Folder "Photos, Correspondence 1962-63," Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[29] "Planning for Agricultural Education and Research in India: A Note for the Prime Minister," April 1957, 2–3, Folder "Hannah Report, 1957," Box 7, Harold Hannah papers, 1955–1976, 8/4/34, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[30] "Planning for Agricultural Education and Research in India: A Note for the Prime Minister," 13–14.

[31] "Planning for Agricultural Education and Research in India: A Note for the Prime Minister," 14.

[32] *Illinois in India,* "The role of the University of Illinois in India," 2, dated Dec 22, 1955, Folder: "Hannah: Agricultural letters, Illinois in India, 1955–59," Box 7, Harold Hannah papers, 1955–1976, 8/4/34, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[33] *Illinois in India,* Agricultural Letter No. 2, 1–3, quote on 2, Folder: "Hannah: Agricultural letters, Illinois in India, 1955–59," Box 7, Harold Hannah papers, 1955–1976, 8/4/34, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives.

[34] H.W. Hannah, *The State Farm Tarai: Its Progress and Possibilities As a Rural University* (Urbana Champaign: University of Illinois, 1957), 1.

[35] Eric A Strahorn, *An Environmental History of Postcolonial North India: The Himalayan Tarai in Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 16, 43–58.

[36] Harpal Singh Sandhu, quoted in H.W. Hannah, *The State Farm Tarai*, 2.

[37] Eric A Strahorn, *An Environmental History of Postcolonial North India: The Himalayan Tarai in Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

[38] *Illinois in India*, Agriculture Letter No. 42, Folder "Illinois in India, 1956–62," Earl H Regnier papers, 8/3/27, Box no. 7, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[39] "Seed Production Programme & Seed Processing Plants of U.P. Agricultural University, Pantnagar (Nainital)," 1, Folder: Contribution of UPAU in the Field of Research and Seed Production, Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 3, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[40] Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[41] "Seed Production Programme & Seed Processing Plants of U.P. Agricultural University, Pantnagar (Nainital)," 1–3, Folder: Contribution of UPAU in the Field of Research and Seed Production, Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 3, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[42] "Salient Features about the Contributions of U.P. Agricultural University Pantnagar, District Nainital in the Field of Research and Seed Production," 1–6, Folder: Contribution of UPAU in the Field of Research and Seed Production, Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 3, Series 8/1/845; "A Comprehensive and Coordinated Seed Production Programme in the Tarai," Folder: 186, Robert W. Jugenheimer's papers, Publications and Reports, 1953–70, Box no. 2, Series 8/6/23, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[43] Annual Convocation of the U.P. Agricultural University, Pant Nagar, 7th April, 1966, Address by C. Subramaniam, 4, Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 2, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[44] Annual Convocation of the U.P. Agricultural University, Pant Nagar, 7th April, 1966, Address by C. Subramaniam, 2, Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 2, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[45] Address of Sri D.P. Singh, Vice-Chancellor U.P. Agricultural University, Pantnagar at the Fourth Convocation held on April 16, 1967, 1, Folder: "D.P. Singh Addresses, 1963–69," Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 2, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[46] The Board of Management meeting started with remarks by the vice-chancellor on these "significant developments" of October 1967. "Minutes of the 5th Meeting of the Reconstituted Board of Management of the U.P. Agricultural University, held at Pantnagar on November 11, 1967 at 10 AM," Folder: Minutes – faculty, 19064–68, Academic Council 1968, Board of Management 1967–68, Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 4, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[47] Address of Sri D.P. Singh, Vice-Chancellor, U.P. Agricultural University Pantnagar at the Fifth Convocation held on March 10, 1968, 1–4, Folder: "D.P. Singh Addresses, 1963–69," Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 2, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[48] Speech of Sri D.P. Singh, Chairman, Tarai Development Corporation Ltd., at the first general annual meeting, on August b19, 1970, 1–2, Folder: "Tarai U.P. State Farm, 1957–70," Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 3, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[49] Clive Dewey, *Anglo-Indian Attitudes: The Mind of the Indian Civil Service* (London: Hambledon Press, 1993); for the transition from ICS to IAS regime, see, David C. Potter, *India's Political Administrators, 1919–83* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986).

[50] "Welcome address by Mr. K.A.P. Stevenson," 1–3, quote on 1, Workshop on Agricultural Universities of India, Proceedings, Folder: "Workshop on Indian Agricultural University, UPAU, Feb 18–21, 1963," Dean's Office, Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University Publications, 1958–72, Box 2, Series 8/1/845, Special Collections, University of Illinois Archives, Urbana Champaign.

[51] Ethan Schrum, *The Instrumental University: Education Service of the National Agenda After World WW II* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019). See, also, Richard Garlitz, *A Mission for Development: Utah University and the Point Four Program in Iran* (Logan: Utah University Press, 2018); Rebecca S. Lowen, *Creating the Cold War University: The Transformation of Stanford* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[52] Dr. D.P. Singh, Vice-Chancellor, *Uttar Pradesh and the Green Revolution* (Pantnagar: U.P. Agricultural University, 1970).

CHAPTER 10

The Bankura Horse as Development Object: Women's Work, Indo-American Exchanges, and the Global Handicraft Trade

Nicole Sackley

Abstract

Scholarship on development in Nehru's India, and US participation in these projects, has focused largely on agriculture and the emergence of the Green Revolution, population control, or on various schemes for village uplift. Nehruvian-era interest in "traditional" handicrafts has been largely ignored, positioned as, either a concession to Gandhian cottage industry, or as an effort to delineate the ancient roots of the new nation. Yet, handicrafts were also an important realm of employment and were seen as valuable export for India in the 1950s and early 1960s. Unlike agriculture, handicraft development offered a realm where women actors could carve out significant roles. This essay focuses on the Indo-American alliances that built the Central Cottage Industries Emporium in New Delhi, in a centre of a global handicraft trade.

Keywords: development, handicraft, India, Kamaladevi, Rockefeller, women

In the first decade after independence, the Government of India issued two postage stamps depicting subjects, which, though separated geographically by merely 75 miles in West Bengal, seemed at first look to embody alternative visions of post-colonial India. The first stamp, featuring the first fertilizer factory built by the Indian government at Sindri, stood clearly as a tribute to industrialization and the Nehruvian state's commitment to rapid economic development. The second celebrated the "Bankura horse," a terracotta sculpture produced by potters of Panchmura village of West Bengal's, Bankura district for over 300 hundred years (see Figure 10.1). In the early 1950s, renowned independence activist, feminist, social reformer, and handicrafts advocate Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay "discovered" the Bankura horses while researching crafts and publicized it as an embodiment of India's ancient and enduring tradition of artistry and craftsmanship. Yet, even though the horse entered the new National Craft Museum in New Delhi, versions of it—sometimes recreated in brass instead of clay—appeared for sale at the Central Cottage Industries Emporium in the heart of New Delhi's premier shopping district.

Fig. 10.1 Bankura Horse Stamp, 1957, Government of India. Source: Collection of Nicole Sackley.

In the early 1950s, Kamaladevi's organization, the Indian Cooperative Union (ICU), reinvented the government-owned handicrafts and textiles emporium on Connaught Place as India's largest department store, a central site for Indo-American cultural exchanges, and a critical depot for the export of Indian handicrafts to foreign markets, especially the United States. Wildly popular with customers, the Bankura horse became the store's official logo, instantly recognizable and legible to thousands of elite Indians and international tourists. From this vantage point, the Bankura horse, as much at the Sindri plant, symbolizes the complex constellation of projects, transnational alliances, and institutions that constituted development schemes in the 1950s.

The promotion of handicrafts as commodities, and the founding of ICU, began in the crisis of Partition but drew on older visions connecting craft, nation, and appropriate women's work that had circulated transnationally through North America and the British Empire since the late-nineteenth century. By the early 1950s, these older visions joined with new visions of craft as national export, valued for rural employment and their impact on national trade balances and GDP per capita.[1] The Government of India made crafts a development target, both in its creation of the All India Handicraft Board (an advisory group helmed by Kamaladevi) and in the positioning of the Cottage Emporium under the Ministry of Commerce. In the case of India, women, were integral to this development work from the outset. Though led by Kamaladevi and ICU's male general secretary Lakshmi Jain, Cottage relied on the leadership of elite "honorary" workers, such as Fori Nehru, Kitty Shiva Rao, and Pupul Jayakar, as well as the volunteer labor and expertise of US women in Delhi's diplomatic community. It also involved the labor of thousands of female

artisans and hundreds of paid saleswomen and young female buyers, tasked with traveling around India to select which handicrafts would appear for sale in Delhi. Finally, middle-class women, both in India and the United States, were the primary consumers of the crafts and textiles that became home furnishings and fashion.

Kamaladevi, an ardent socialist, and other elite Indian women framed their own efforts as national service, designed to advance the aesthetic appreciation of India's arts and the social welfare of poor artisans and farmers the ICU sought to assist.[2] This positioning, however, obscured the reality that they ran a highly complex, international commercial enterprise—oriented toward consumer markets both within India and abroad, especially midtown Manhattan, the global center of fashion and interior design at midcentury. They built new Indo-American networks of craft promotion and remade Indian handicrafts into a new hybrid modernist-traditional aesthetic known as "the Cottage Look." Yet, their work was, by the early 1960s, deemed insufficient by government officials anxious to expand India's export markets in the wake of a fragile Second Five Year plan and foreign exchange crisis. In 1963, the government asked ICU to vacate Cottage and India's handicraft export efforts continued with increasing intensity under the leadership of rival Pupul Jayakar. Kamaladevi devoted the remainder of her career to craft preservation, likening Cottage in her memoirs, to a young woman "deflowered… under the title of 'Development.'"[3]

This chapter traces the history of the Cottage Emporium and the women who shaped it as a way of reframing the history of Indian development in the late 1940s and 1950s. It does so by inserting new objects, actors, temporalities, and geographies into development history. Historians of development, global history and South Asian history have produced an impressive, burgeoning scholarly literature on post-1947 Indian economic planning, science, and agriculture in transnational contexts, and scholars, such as Taylor Sherman and Benjamin Siegel, have recently illuminated the persistent place of Gandhian voices in post-Independence development debates.[4] Yet, handicrafts, a core symbol of pre-Independence Indian nationalism, are virtually absent from these histories of Indian developmentalism and the transnational institutions, projects, and actors which surrounded it.[5] This absence has consequences for the ways in which women in particular, and gender more broadly, figure in the history of development.[6] If we center the male-dominated fields of economic planning and the Green Revolution, women rarely appear as experts or policymakers in histories populated by agronomists, engineers, economists, diplomats, and politicians.[7] By focusing on handicraft marketing, this chapter places Indian and American women at the center Nehruvian-era international development politics. It explores how elite and middle-class women built a highly-profitable commercial enterprise and negotiated male-dominated institutions and social structures that figured them as wives, mothers, and social

reformers. In doing so, it makes the case that women like Fori Nehru, as much as her husband diplomat B.K. Nehru, operated as significant figures in Indo-American negotiations about India's development in the 1950s.[8]

By spanning the imperial-postcolonial divide and exploring the "multi-layered, multi-spatial nature of interactions between the United States and South Asia,"[9] this volume challenges temporal and geographic conventions in US history, South Asian history, and global history. "The Bankura Horse as Development Object" takes up these challenges in four ways. First, it explores how colonial-era efforts to alter, extract political meaning, and circulate Indian craft globally continued, in new forms, in the decades after 1947. Second, it joins with recent work by Abigail McGowan to challenge the conventional periodization of Kamaladevi's career, one that divides neatly into pre-Independence decades of transnational political activity and a seemingly less political, post-independence focus on domestic handicrafts. McGowan has pointed out that Kamaladevi and Pupul Jayakar have been remembered as "nurturing mothers or benevolent godmothers, but not economic advisors, policymakers, institution builders or national planners."[10] While McGowan and other scholars have explored the roles that elite middle-class Indian women played within the nation-state, this essay focuses on transnational connections that remained a core feature of Kamaladevi's post-1947 career. Indeed, this chapter argues that nationalist craft promotion required international travel, US connections, and encounters with Cold War-era politics.[11] Finally, this case study identifies new geographic sites and institutions of Indo-American exchange. By focusing on the metropolitan institutions of New Delhi and Manhattan, it illuminates how department stores, museums, and trade exhibitions operated alongside villages, laboratories, seminar rooms, and embassies as critical sites of Indo-American encounters.

From Rehabilitation to Development

On 11 September 1947, Fori Nehru joined the Government of India's Town Hall Emergency Committee, formed to grapple with the violence and chaos engulfing Delhi and assist in the population transfer across new national borders. Years later, Nehru remembered the horror she felt after learning that Muslim families she had assisted onto trains had been pulled off and murdered while crossing into the Punjab. By this time, nearly 70,000 refugees occupied temporary camps around the city, their numbers swelling to 450,000 by January 1948. Like Fori Nehru, other affluent, politically connected women in Delhi quickly mobilized and were assigned specifically to care for female refugees, particularly widows and other "unattached" women. Fori's mother-in-law Rameshwari Nehru led the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation's Women's Section, while Sucheta Kripalani,

Fig, 10.2 Women Refugees at Kingsway Camp, Sewing and Knitting, New Delhi, September 1947. Source: Photo Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India

a trained social worker, helmed the Congress Party's own relief committee.[12] These older women enlisted University students, both men and women, in refugee work. Lakshmi Jain remembered how "a jeep pulled up" to the United Coffee House on Connaught Place with a summons from Kripalani, to "take charge of the Kingsway refugee camp." Swaran Datta, who later joined ICU, described how Kamaladevi "started taking me to the refugee camps where the women were."[13]

The first refugee handicraft project to take shape focused on Punjabi women in the Kingsway camp (see Figure 10.2). By mid-October, Fori later remembered, an idea emerged to "tap [the] inborn knowledge" of Punjabi refugee women who could "stitch and embroider." Over the next several months, Nehru and a group that included Kitty Shiva Rao, wife of journalist B. Shiva Rao, and Achamma Mathai, wife of Railway minister John Matthai, pulled on their political and social connections to build a sewing-and-embroidery business. They secured donated cotton fabric from Gujarati mill owners, sewing supplies from Kripalani, and free counter space from Pandit Brothers, a small shop on Connaught Place. Friends from Delhi's middle class then placed orders for saris, bed covers, and other household items to be embroidered. In April 1948, Refugee Handicrafts opened for business on Connaught Place. Nehru and Kitty Shiva Rao ran the shop as "honorary" workers while Teji Vir Singh, a war widow, served as the shop's sole employee. A wider network of volunteers, mostly women, shuttled cloth and completed piecework back and forth between Connaught Place and the camps.[14]

Focusing humanitarian work on stitching embroidery reflected powerful cultural assumptions that women's labor should take place within the boundaries of the home, as well as embroidery's reputation as a uniquely feminine craft, one that crossed lines of caste and class.[15] Yet, it can also be understood as a response to trauma. Handicrafts production, including embroidery, had been popularized during the First and Second World Wars as therapy for wounded and shell-shocked soldiers. In their memories of 1947, former volunteers recalled "witness[ing] the trauma that the 'women were undergoing" and depicted embroidery as a means of creating "solidarity which would enable the women to cope with their grief and loss." "We had to do something," Teji Ver Singh explained, "to help all those women who had lost everything."[16] The experience of trauma extended to the volunteers themselves. During Partition, violence engulfed the area around Hindu College and reached Queensway (now Janpath), where Delhi's middle-class consumers shopped and its intellectuals, students, and politicians gathered.[17] Nehru himself, brandishing a *lathi*, dispersed a mob intent on looting Muslim stores near the Odeon Cinema on Connaught Place. Volunteers and future Cottage saleswomen Gulshan and Nandini Nanda "stumbled" on corpses and felt "shaken to the core."[18] Jain and friends "smeared camphor under [...their] noses" before removing hundreds of maggot-filled bodies around the University. Honorary worker Prem Bery had fled with her family from Lahore, while Teji Ver Singh began refugee work to cope with the grief of her husband's death in World War II. For Fori Nehru, a Hungarian Jew who had married Jawaharlal's cousin B.K. Nehru, the crisis must have certainly have recalled her own family's flight from Nazi occupation and the recent news of friends and neighbors who had perished in the Holocaust.[19]

Visiting the Kingsway camp in February 1948, Kamaladevi praised the efforts but pressed the volunteers: "What is the future of the women? How will their efforts be sustained beyond the camp?"[20] While the group clustered around Refugee Handicrafts focused on immediate relief, Kamaladevi began to devise longer-term solutions. Her response drew from what was already, at age forty-five, an extraordinary personal and political life. Born in 1903 to a well-off, intellectual Brahmin family, Kamaladevi studied sociology in London, defied parental authority to marry (and then divorce) playwright Harindranath Chattopadhyay, joined the Gandhian constructive movement, and helped found the All India Women's Conference and the Congress Socialist Party. During the 1930s and early 1940s, she fought the struggles for both women's and national liberation through confinement—four imprisonments in colonial jails—and extensive international travel. She later credited tours of cooperatives in Scandinavia and China, in particular, with "open[ing] up for me new vistas for cooperative work in India."[21] By 1947, increasingly disillusioned with the Congress Party, which she saw as recreating aspects of the Raj, Kamaladevi drew up a "blueprint" to organize and federate

former refugees into farmer and cottage industry cooperatives. She took her plans to Gandhi, who "commended" them to Nehru shortly before his assassination. Devastated, Kamaladevi persevered, enlisting several younger volunteers, including Laskmi Jain, in the founding of the Indian Cooperative Union (ICU).[22]

Led by Kamaladevi and Jain, ICU grew quickly between 1948 and 1952. Serving impoverished refugees without capital, it operated as a support agency rather than an administrative federation, helping farmers to procure government-owned land and supplying urban refugees with cloth, steel, and other material for cottage industries. Handicrafts were *not* a specific early focus, but ICU did open two sales counters for embroidered and sewn items, and by 1951, ICU had absorbed the operations of Refugee Handicrafts.[23] The new prime minister had initially dismissed ICU as "[u]topian, one of the impractical new-fangled plans the socialists would think up." But, observing its record of 100 functioning cooperatives in and around Delhi, he recommended that ICU start up cooperatives in the high-profile refugee town of Faridabad.[24] Nehru's endorsement mattered. Indeed, Kamaladevi, recognizing political and financial support as essential for ICU's ability to operate, carefully stocked ICU's advisory board with powerful figures from industry and politics, including Bharat Ram of Delhi Cloth, K.A.D Naorji of the Tata Group, G.D. Mehra of Burma Shell, and the prime minister's daughter Indira Gandhi.[25] Such support did not, however, insulate ICU from controversy. Adding Faridabad to its portfolio stretched ICU's small staff of male and female honorary workers beyond their capacities. As complaints poured in, the government opened an enquiry, which reprimanded ICU. Rejecting the report, Kamaladevi defiantly withdrew ICU from Faridabad. Privately, Jain described ICU's leadership as "heartbroken and troubled and misunderstood."[26]

At this moment of disappointment, Nehru's patronage again proved critical to ICU's future. In 1948, the Ministry had established its own handicrafts store, housed in abandoned army barracks built on Queensway to contain thousands of US troops posted to wartime New Delhi.[27] But in its first four years of operations, the Central Cottage Industries Emporium had lost Rs 600,000. Unfavorably comparing his own shopping experience at the Ministry-run emporium with the ICU-run Refugee Handicrafts shop, Nehru directed the Ministry to request that ICU manage the enterprise on the government's behalf. Kamaladevi accepted, and at the same time, the Ministry created an All India Handicrafts Board (AIHB with Kamaladevi as its chairperson. By November, both ICU and AIHB) had established offices in the Emporium building.[28]

Assuming management of the Cottage Emporium marked a significant juncture in both Kamaladevi's career and that of ICU. First and foremost, it pushed handicrafts to the forefront of ICU's work. Kamaladevi had a lifelong passion for the arts and had learned to spin and weave as a Gandhian constructive worker.

Her two decades in the independence struggle familiarized her, as well, with Gandhian ideologies, which heralded handicrafts as village-made resistance to imported machine society and visible symbols of a coherent Indian national culture stretching across time, region, caste, and class.[29] Kamaladevi's new AIHB and Cottage responsibilities launched her on continuous travel and investigation of Indian handicrafts and forged a commitment to craft recovery and preservation that would occupy the remainder of her life. Yet, at the same time, it emphasized the commercial, commodity value of crafts. Several years later, Kamaladevi and Jain would identify 1952 as the year that ICU "shifted from refugee resettlement to long-term development." To mark this shift, they rewrote ICU's constitution to make "general economic and social development" its primary objective.[30] Handicrafts had become a development activity, one that offered livelihoods to individual artisans but also promised national economic advancement. Indeed, running the Cottage Emporium and the AIHB linked Kamaladevi and ICU inextricably with the Indian state's economic ambitions. These connections would have consequences over the next decade.

Indo-American Networks of Craft

From the outset, ICU's female leadership cast a wide net for the economic patronage and support that ICU required for its survival and growth. Kamaladevi drew on international connections to secure early donations from Lady Edwina Mountbatten, the Indian Relief Committee of London, and the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada.[31] In March 1952, ICU established an Exports section under honorary worker Prem Bery, and the following year, sent Bery to manage an exhibition of Indian handicrafts during the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. With the aid of fifty British volunteers, ICU was able to open a London depot shortly after the exhibition's close.[32] Familiarity with London and British political networks likely cemented these early accomplishments. So too did a longstanding imperial circulation of Indian handicrafts, from the Crystal Palace exhibition of 1851 to colonial cataloguing of village "traditions" to the intellectual cross-pollination of Indian nationalists and the leaders of the British Arts and Crafts movement.[33]

The United States, on the other hand, offered less known terrain. Kamaladevi had visited for eighteen months between 1939 and 1941, where she traveled extensively, advocated on behalf of the Indian freedom struggle, and forged solidarities with African Americans and US feminists.[34] Though aspects of the New Deal, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, won her approval, she came away with a largely negative vision of US society and US capitalism. In a 1946 essay titled "The Rulers of America," she singled out for special scorn the American practice of philanthropy

in which Carnegie, Rockefeller, and other wealthy industrialists used tax-sheltered largesse to "influence the attitude of professional and technical people [who then] rarely challenge the present social order."[35]

Nonetheless, for handicrafts, the United States offered promising commercial vistas and a basis for shared understandings about the nature of craft. Like Indian nationalists, a wide range of progressive-era US social reformers had begun in the twentieth century to look to crafts as a means of recovering an authentic national "folk" culture and countering the perceived ills of industrial society. By the 1920s, the folk movement stretched from New England to rural Appalachia and had begun to selectively embrace indigenous Native American crafts and immigrant arts. As in India, crafts like embroidery and stitching held feminine associations and came to be seen as a means to manage immigrants' Americanization, inculcate "proper" domestic arts, and keep young women away from sweatshop labor and the perceived vices of modern urban leisure.[36] These reformist impulses were also projected abroad, including to India. In 1928, for example, New York heiress and lace collector Gertrude Whiting visited several Christian missions, where she found British and US missionaries debating how to secure homework for "destitute" women. When Whiting proposed rural women be put to work making lace, the Indian imperial government invited her to become a formal advisor. The project led to the Whiting India Guilds, a program designed to aid India's "destitute" women by selling their crafts at US church bazaars and women's clubs.[37] The Whiting Guild was soon joined by other women-led craft organizations, from the American Craft Council to the Penland School of Handicrafts. Craft had become embedded in elite women's social reform practices and in their consumption, part of a "consumer's imperium," from which bourgeois US women learned to decorate their homes' interiors with crafts from around the globe.[38]

ICU initial ventures into the United States followed these feminine reform channels. While ICU contracted with the Whiting India Guilds, Fori Nehru attempted to make inroads in Washington, DC, after her husband's budding diplomatic career took her to America. Appointed by Kamaladevi to serve as "Chairman of the Export Section of the Government of India in America," a grand title with no formal power, Nehru worked within available networks of female sociability. In 1950, she enlisted Indian women within Washington's diplomatic community to create fashion shows of saris at the capital's United Nations Club and grand Shoreham Hotel.[39] In 1953, after encountering a *Newsweek* editor at a cocktail party and learning of his recent visit to India and interest in a textile export business, Nehru sent him samples of Cottage's wares.[40]

The editor did not pursue an export business, but his 1953 visit reflected a rising US interest in India's economic development, one that helped reconfigure ICU in US eyes from a feminine humanitarian venture into a development organization

with geostrategic importance. A chorus of US diplomats, journalists, and philanthropists framed Nehru's India as a critical "non-communist" counterweight to China in the Cold War battle for Asia. Among them was Nelson Rockefeller, a scion of the Rockefeller family. Before 1952, the foundation established by Nelson's grandfather invested minimal funds in India. Nelson's own South Asian experience was limited to a brief stop on a 1931 world tour. However, Rockefeller was an early progenitor of development programs, particularly in Latin America, where he had pursued business ventures and a passion for art collecting. In spring 1952, Rockefeller directed the American International Association for Economic and Social Development (AIA), the nonprofit he established in 1946, to investigate "people-to-people relationships" between Indian and US private organizations. After a four-month "exploratory mission," AIA staffer Thomas Keehn returned to New York with glowing reports about ICU's leadership and record.[41] Concluding that ICU sought to "attack…the basic economic and social problems which are the concern of the Indian five-year plan" through "business principles" and "the philosophy and function of a voluntary agency," Rockefeller offered Keehn as a full-time consultant to ICU.[42] Kamaladevi accepted but insisted AIA include the Cooperative League of the USA as an equal US sponsor. Whatever reservations she harbored about collaborating with a Rockefeller were likely outweighed by practical benefits. Bringing in the Cooperative League created a transnational cooperative alliance and marked ICU as a major organizational player within India. Moreover, Keehn had personally impressed Kamaladevi and Jain,. He "has certainly won our hearts," Kamaladevi pronounced. "We shall welcome him in our midst and hope for a long period of close collaboration and comradeship."[43]

Though handicrafts had not been an initial attraction of ICU for AIA, the new area of focus did not faze Rockefeller. Indeed, handicrafts were a passion of both Nelson and his art-collector mother Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, co-founder of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). Nelson's biographer describes how, during his travels through Mexico and Peru, "the young collector swooped down on the local markets, acquiring a cornucopia of native handicrafts of all varieties."[44] Fascinated by the supposed aesthetic homologies between "primitive" craft and modernist painting, Nelson as MoMA president mounted exhibitions that treated Mexican, Andean, and Oceanic crafts as fine art rather than ethnographic curiosities. Moreover, Rockefeller saw commercial as well as aesthetic value in handicrafts. Though an early personal project to create a model village of Mexican artisans fizzled, Rockefeller took note of New Deal efforts to use handicraft production as a means to address "the crying need for cash," especially among male breadwinners. In 1945, Rockefeller signed on as a principal financial backer for Handicraft Development, Inc., a project to build a US market for Italian handicrafts as part of Italy's economical reconstruction.[45] The project celebrated "traditional" craft

skill but emphasized craft's economic value to regions and national economies. Handicraft production had become development work.

Keehn arrived in New Delhi in April 1953 and set up office alongside ICU and AIHB on the Cottage Emporium's second floor. While Keehn learned about Indian handicrafts by joining Jain on an exhaustive six-month national survey covering 35,000 miles, Jain encouraged Keehn to bolster ICU's efforts to build export markets.[46] By 1954, ICU had sent Indian handicrafts to international exhibitions in Paris, Seattle, Cairo and Sao Paulo.[47] But the most important market remained New York. In the 1950s, midtown Manhattan was the epicenter of the fashion and home decorations industries. Department stores placed their flagship stores and buying offices in midtown, and exporters clustered around the port of New York. (Handicraft Development had pointedly opened a "House of Italian Handicrafts" on East 49th Street).[48] Keehn's efforts to replicate the Italian venture included proposals for an ICU depot in New York, a New York exhibition, and an AIA-funded "Indian Handicrafts Association" to "promote public interest in these products in every conceivable way."[49] AIA leadership passed on these proposals, favoring a focus on ICU's work within India. Rockefeller, however, likely shared Keehn's suggestions for an Indian textile show with the Museum of Modern Art. In spring 1954, MoMA director Monroe Wheeler landed in New Delhi to begin conceptualizing an exhibition and identifying objects for display.

"Textile and Ornamental Arts of India," the resulting exhibition which opened on 13 April 1955 on 53rd Street, occupied MoMA's entire first floor and attracted more than 300,000 visitors over six months.[50] The exhibition has rightly been characterized as a prime example of Cold War-era cultural diplomacy and India's continued exoticization in US culture. Farhan Karim has noted how the exhibition "was effectively contrived to convey…a magical setting for equally exotic and mysterious objects amid the concrete 'jungle' of Manhattan's modernity."[51] What previous scholars have missed is the extent to which the exhibition's realization relied upon Indian female leadership and expertise. The museum's press release acknowledged the "All India Handicraft Board, under the chairmanship of Mrs. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, without whose assistance this New York exhibition could never have been realized."[52] It was Keehn who connected first Wheeler, and later curator Edgar Kauffman, Jr., to Kamaladevi, Kitty Shiva Rao, and Pupul Jayakar. When Wheeler requested a textiles expert to travel to New York, Keehn identified Jayakar, an AIHB member and honorary worker in the Cottage's Bombay branch. Jayakar effectively began her career as a textile expert and promoter with the MoMA show.[53]

The exhibition's design and MoMA's proximity to Manhattan's premier shopping district encouraged audiences to see the textiles on display as commodities for feminine consumption. Its designer Alexander Girard deployed the conceit of a central

"bazaar or market-place" where viewers took in a feast of "rich" and "feather-soft" saris "in all the colors of the rainbow."[54] The US press took the cue. The *New York Times* dispatched its home interior reporter, a woman, rather than its male art critics to review the show. Predicting the exhibition's influence on "both fashion and home furnishings in this country," she helpfully informed readers how they could purchase their own Indian textiles at Whiting Guild sales or nearby fabric stores. *Women's Wear Daily*, a trade magazine for the retail industry, simply commanded: "Go west, young display man, go west to 53rd Street to see the town's most exciting display."[55]

AIHB members and Indian government officials also understood the commercial implications of a New York show. Like Nehru in Washington, DC, Kitty Shiva Rao had spent two years in the United States, when her husband B. Shiva Rao was posted to the United Nations. Jayakar, for her part, "began to dream of opening an Indian shop" in Manhattan during the MoMA show.[56] The Indian Ministry of Commerce opened an Indian Trade Center merely six blocks away, in Rockefeller Center, during the exhibition's run and then worked with ICU members to bedeck the new center with fabrics, jewelry, and handicrafts that could serve as home accessories.[57] The MoMA show held out the promise of greater US markets. At the same time, it raised ICU leadership's awareness of the possibilities for handicraft and textile marketing and display in India. Indeed, as Jayakar helped stage the MoMA show in New York, other Indian and US women in Delhi had begun to transform the Cottage Emporium into a commercial and cultural center of Delhi.

Women's Work and the Making of Cottage

The building up of Cottage relied upon the leadership and labor of women. A tight cluster of approximately half a dozen women from Delhi's social and political elite, managed Cottage through overlapping roles in ICU and AIHB. Unusual for development work in the mid-1950s, women accounted for eight of the eighteen members of the advisory AIHB, including the chair and vice-chair positions. While Kamaladevi served as its guiding light and Lakshmi Jain oversaw all ICU operations (including its agricultural projects), day-to-day management of Cottage fell to AIHB vice-chair Kitty Shiva Rao and paid store manager Teji Ver Singh. Prominent Delhi women such as Fori Nehru and Sheila Bharat Ram, daughter-in-law of industrialist Lala Shri Ram, volunteered behind the sales counters, and their social connections attracted the attention of other women, both as volunteers and as customers.[58] In April 1954, for example, the *Washington Post* society page reported that "Mrs. Josef Rucinski whose husband is with the World Bank is just back from India where she saw Fory [sic] Nehru almost every day. She visited the cottage industries building and found on sale beautiful saris, carved ivories, and woodwork, jewelry, embroideries."[59]

In the 1950s, hundreds of upper-middle-class American women moved to New Delhi as the spouses of diplomats, researchers, or consultants. Tight social circles formed between elite Indian and American expatriates in Delhi, helping to create a conduit for US women into Cottage work. When Jain overheard Jane Liu, wife of UN officer Maurice T. Liu, mention her merchandising experience at a party, he recruited her to volunteer work. Such work conformed to American middle-class gender norms of community service. Surveying its membership in 1960, the American Women's Club of Delhi estimated that over 90 percent participated in some form of honorary work.[60] It also fit expectations that married women work to advance their husband's careers. By hiring Thomas Keehn as a consultant, ICU and AIA also received the unpaid labor of his wife Martha. Within months of her arrival in Delhi, Martha both established a household in unfamiliar circumstances and began volunteering at ICU. Jain described Martha in early 1955 as "active on all fronts: consultation on all problems and projects…or giving a helping hand in whatever ICU was doing."[61]

Honorary workers, both Indian and American, played key roles in the physical transformation of Cottage Emporium. Fori Nehru recalled how, on a visit home in January 1952, she toured the then Ministry-run shop and discovered goods piled in "filthy, empty" cells of the former army barracks.[62] Kamaladevi, whose arts experience gave her an eye for theatricality, hired the architect Cyrus Jhabvala to rebuild display cases that would highlight goods and the "stories" behind them.[63] But much of the remodeling work fell to volunteers. In 1953, Kamaladevi placed Martha Keehn in charge of a Kashmiri Arts Festival. Working with Jhabvala and a fleet of carpenters, Keehn built out a section of the store as a theatrical stage set. She described her work in a letter home:

> I got the…Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to blow up some nice pictures of arts and crafts, and borrowed a *shikkara* (typical Kashmir) boat to sell Kashmir flowers and apples and walnuts and saffron…and got the sales girls dressed up in Kashmiri dress… And for the opening ceremonies we got Kamaladevi and some government officials to make speeches…and had all kinds of special lighting arrangements and microphones, and traffic cops and 500 invitations to the opening, and 2,000 for the rest of the week. I mean Real Big Doings.[64]

While Keehn had no previous retail experience, others volunteered specific expertise. Management expert Mary Cushing Niles reorganized Cottage's accounting system while her husband served with the US Embassy. Jane Liu created a system for tracking inventory and ticketing sale items and helped introduce features of mid-century US department stores, from thematic departments to extended hours, display windows, and special promotions and sales.[65] And in 1956, Teji Ver Singh

Fig. 10.3 Sales women attending to customers in the costume jewelry counter, Central Cottage Industries Emporium, New Delhi, ca. 1957, Indian Cooperative Union. Source: Nelson A. Rockefeller Papers, Rockefeller Archives Center, Tarrytown, NY.

and Sushil S. Bijur, a Cottage worker and wife of the head of the Finance Ministry's food and agriculture section, embarked on four-month internships at Lord & Taylor and Macy's in New York. They returned to Delhi with department store techniques like a gift wrapping counter, coupons, and overseas shipping.[66]

As Cottage grew, it could not operate solely on the labor of honorary workers. Dozens of paid saleswomen, many of them members of the Punjabi community who remade their lives in Delhi after partition, tended Cottage's sales counters. By the mid-1950s, honorary and paid staff swelled to over a hundred workers, most of whom were women (see Figure 10.3).[67] Kamaladevi insisted that saleswomen study India's craft history and craft production processes, and that they view each sale as an opportunity to educate consumers in India's craft traditions. Una Hiremath, who started as a saleswoman in 1958, recalled how ICU "instilled in us the concept that the meaning of the word 'success' was how much rehabilitation of crafts we could achieve."[68] After they gained experience in Delhi, saleswomen were sent on the road for weeks at a time as buyers responsible for stocking the emporium. Initially, Cottage relied on Kamaladevi and AIHB board members to identify new crafts for the market. Kamaladevi made dozens of craft tours of India, bringing

along young assistants like Jasleen Dhamija, Mohana Ayyangar, and D.N. Saraf. But regular selections fell to the buyers.[69] They worked in teams to place orders with over 700 private dealers, cooperatives, and individual producers throughout India and bring back samples of new products to sell in Cottage's showrooms. The samples were tested through promotions and special exhibitions; those that sold well-received additional orders.

Cottage's buyers thus maintained the primary connection to its most essential workers, the artisans who produced the crafts it sold. ICU saw itself as, first and foremost, a champion of rural artisans. Upon taking over Cottage, ICU changed the terms of trade so that rather than buying crafts on a consignment basis, the standard practice of most retailers and wholesalers, it purchased crafts outright. This shifted the risk of unsold goods from the producers to Cottage. More ambitiously, ICU aspired to reorganize the conditions of labor and returns for craft producers. In a stinging 1953 report, Jain excoriated middlemen who "intensif[ied] the exploitation of the workers" and privileged "quick, speculative profits by deliberately lowering quality standards." The private enterprise system had, Jain concluded, "damaged the reputation of Indian handicrafts abroad and impaired their long-term success." However, as only 3 percent of India's crafts were produced cooperatively, Jain, Kamaladevi and other ICU leaders determined that, for the foreseeable future, artisan welfare could best be improved by helping them to secure markets and higher prices for their goods. ICU efforts focused on improving individual craftsmanship and adjusting it to perceived customer desires.[70] For most of the 1950s, this task fell to saleswomen and buyers. As Cottage's longtime manager Tej Ver Singh explained, "We consciously selected girls…who had the ability to pick up skills for spotting the customers' tastes and then make suggestions to the craftspersons for altering designs."[71] Jain and other ICU leaders admonished buyers to "cultivate a sense of servitude and an attitude of respect for the artisans."[72] Power and class, nonetheless, inevitably structured exchanges where buyers determined which crafts made their way for display on Connaught Place.

As marketability drove craft selections, impoverished women, the initial foci of Refugee Handicrafts, were increasingly marginalized. In 1955, Whiting Guild leaders reported being "mildly trouble[d]…that few of the items now sold are made by women."· Women artisans contributed to craft production, but many toiled as subservient members of family units.[73] Compared to its public denunciations of capitalism, ICU tended to address familial exploitation quietly. Tej Ver Singh recalled her efforts to "urge the [Cottage] accountant to send their money order" so women and children in home production could purchase food.[74] Kamala Rana, a trained lawyer and ICU honorary worker, was assigned "to travel to villages…to integrate the needs of children and women artisans with the mainstream effort."[75] Increasingly, ICU approached poor women as subjects of social welfare. In a separate Social Welfare

Fig. 10.4 Nehru at Cottage Emporium, ca. late 1950s. Mahattas Studio, New Delhi.
Source: Nelson A. Rockefeller Papers, Rockefeller Archives Center, Tarrytown, NY.

Unit, Indian and American honorary workers "organized literacy programs, nursery schools, family planning campaigns, recreation and clean-up drives" in Delhi's slums.[76] The Social Welfare Unit established women's cooperatives, but these rarely produced goods sold within Cottage. Thus, ICU's humanitarian goals became functionally separated from the business of handicrafts.

By the mid-1950s, ICU had built Cottage Emporium into the commercial center and a preeminent destination for elite Dilliwallas, the city's international community, and, with the rise of commercial jet travel, thousands of American tourists.[77] Cottage's success could be credited, in part, to the quality of its shopping experience. The women who guided it had transformed its physical space, while a network of female buyers kept it stocked with a large inventory of curated handicrafts and textiles from every region of India. Patronage and publicity mattered, too. US and Indian honorary workers spread the word. Thomas Keehn conducted "public relations" on ICU's behalf, and as Nelson Rockefeller's *de facto* representative in India, attracted such high-profile US customers as John D. Rockefeller III, presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson, and US Foreign Operations Administration director Harold Stassen.[78] Prime Minister Nehru, meanwhile, continued to be ICU's most powerful

advocate. Hailing the ICU-managed emporium as a "modern monument of Delhi like the Kutub of the old era," he insisted it be placed on the itinerary of visiting foreign dignitaries and directed the Ministry of External Affairs to purchase all official state gifts there (see Figure 10.4).[79]

More than a retail hub, Cottage, under ICU's direction became an intellectual and cultural center, a place to talk about politics, art, and cooperative possibilities. "We were determined," Jain remembered, "that Cottage should not be just a shop." ICU added in quick succession, a flower counter, a book store, a record shop, a modern art gallery, and the Bankura café, named for its mascot. The bookstore sold tickets to local theater, dance, and music performances, while the cafe gained a reputation as a fashionable luncheon spot. Upstairs in ICU offices, Raj Krishna, then a Delhi University professor and head of ICU's Research and Education section, ran a Saturday afternoon "study circle" for staff and honorary workers. Martha Keehn described in a March 1954 letter how they "talk[ed] about Bases for Cooperation, cooperatives in the field, why handicrafts… We started off on chairs, and in English, with cheese sandwiches, but are now on the floor, in Hindi, with samosas."[80] Downstairs, special events, which had begun with the 1954 Kashmir exhibition, flourished. Mixing spectacle with education, they sought to both educate consumers and keep them returning for something new. "People came from all over India; foreigners visiting Delhi came to the 'Emporium,'" Fori Nehru recalled. "It became like the Taj Mahal—you had to see it!"[81]

Exports and Experts

As Nehru and other senior leaders celebrated Cottage's success, their attention nonetheless continued to be drawn back to New York. Sales had risen exponentially, from Rs 200,000 in 1953 to Rs 3 million by 1958. But exports, particular to the lucrative American market, represented a tiny fraction of the growing total. Expanding internationally furthered ICU's specific humanitarian and development aims by allowing ICU to funnel profits into artisan dividends and its expanding social welfare activities. At the same time, Cottage's bottom line had national economic implications. By late 1956, the Government of India, facing an alarming foreign exchange crisis, searched for ways to bolster exports and recover precious foreign exchange needed for India's ambitious Second Year Plan.[82] As the *India Trade Bulletin* explained:

> India needs to augment her foreign exchange earnings as much as possible in order that she may be able to buy from abroad the industrial equipment and machinery necessary for her continued economic progress….Imports on a huge scale are needed even just to maintain industrial production at current levels.[83]

Since ICU managed Cottage Emporium for, and AIHB reported to, the Ministry of Commerce, handicrafts soon became part of a wider effort by India to raise exports. Facing government pressure, Cottage's senior leadership responded by pursuing changes both at home and abroad. Within India, they professionalized the adaptation of handicrafts, creating what came to be known as the "Cottage Look." In the United States, they pursued market research and contracted visiting experts. Both efforts had implications for the centrality of women to the handicraft trade. By the decade's end, design and marketing direction had moved out of the hands of Cottage's female honorary workers and buyers and toward largely, though not exclusively, male designers and marketing experts.

Even before the foreign exchange crisis, the ICU had begun to develop a philosophy and strategy for adapting village crafts to the tastes of modern, urban consumers. A 1955 ICU report to the Government of India laid out perceived problems and proposed solutions. It opened by extolling Indian handicrafts for their "awe-inspiring beauty" and ability to capture "the culture of the Indian people in all its infinite moods," but quickly identified "[t]he sentiment of traditionalism" as an existential threat to the future of craft. Because the tastes of city dwellers with buying power had "undergone a complete revolution," few handicrafts had "a future absolutely in their present form." The modern consumer wanted "beauty with more simplicity, more plainness, more blank spaces and smooth surfaces" and "a simpler color composition than the earlier generation." Although the report sought to characterize middle-class consumers in Delhi, Bombay (Mumbai), and Calcutta (Kolkata), it may well have described dominant "good design" aesthetics in the United States. Indeed, the functionalist lines, curves, and palette of midcentury modernism crossed international lines. Establishing itself as an authority on modern consumer taste, ICU sought to carve a middle path between:

> the extreme traditionalist who would rather have handicrafts die for want of a market [and] the extreme modernist who would either have only the cheap, blank smoothness of machine-made, mass-produced article…or have handicraft designs revolutionized by foreign experts. Either of these attitudes would be ruinous for Indian handicrafts. For they would either cease to be handicrafts or cease to be Indian.[84]

The answer lay, ICU concluded, in the hiring of Indian artists and designers "who have taste as well as technical mastery, a reverence for tradition as well as a sensitiveness to the spirits of the times."[85]

It took a couple of years before ICU instituted its recommendations. In 1957, ICU created design centers in Bombay, Bangalore, Calcutta, and New Delhi. Rather than buyers on the road informally suggesting changes to craftspeople, they now invited craftspeople to bring selected crafts to the centers for reworking by

artists and designers. Kamaladevi recruited to the center more established figures like P.N. Mago and Subho Tagore and up-and-coming artists like the modernist painter Riten Mazumdar and interior designer Shona Ray.[86] Kamaladevi's protégé Jasdeen Dhamijia likened the centers to medical clinics where designers "listened to the problems faced by the craftsmen" and then posed questions to diagnose and prescribe changes to be made not only in design but in materials, tools, and labor-saving devices.[87] By 1960, the centers yielded what came to be recognized as the "Cottage Look." Jain described the look as "a traditional-contemporary aesthetic, fitting for a newly independent nation."[88]

As the design centers opened around India, Kitty Shiva Rao searched for retail outlets and marketing advice in New York. Visiting Manhattan to supervise the Government of India's handicrafts exhibition at the International Trade Fair, Rao called on Nelson Rockefeller to see if he would personally fund a study of the US market for Indian handicrafts. Rockefeller commissioned the consulting firm Amos & Parrish, which reported back in December 1957, with sobering news.[89] As total imports of Japanese and European retail goods soared by 43 percent since 1950, India's share of US imports had shrunk from 3 percent in 1950 to 1.6 percent in 1956. Amos & Parrish interviewed buyers at dozens of major department stores, chain, and mail order businesses in the United States. They confirmed what ICU had already understood: that they should eschew mass marketers such as Sears and J.C. Penny and target retailers who catered to upper-middle-class and wealthy patrons with "the type of style sense" to "appreciate" craftsmanship and "unusual" merchandise.

While the Delhi emporium endeavored to showcase the "infinite variety of Indian handicrafts," US buyers expressed interest in a much more limited subset of items.[90] "Real volume potential" could be found in handbags, cotton linens and beddings, floor coverings, and toys, and brass household wares. And, in these categories, US retailers had "basically negative opinions of the quality" of Indian handicrafts. US buyers surveyed complained of "an excessive amount of ornamentation or workmanship beyond that required to establish a design motive." The Amos & Parrish report "strongly" recommended working closely with US import firms and simplifying crafts to "enhance the true fitness of the handicraft work and not have it clouded with excessive detail." Finally, the report critiqued the quality of India's trade exhibition and urged India to adopt the "hard sell" in its US marketing:

> Goods in the United States just don't get sold buy chance. They get sold because some one individual is sufficiently aggressive to recognize the selling opportunity and then to follow through on it to take the necessary steps….If the All India Handicrafts Board is determined to sell in substantial volume in the United States market this can be achieved only by the type of intensive effort that has been described.[91]

The report quickly circulated through ICU, AIHB, and the upper echelons of the Indian Ministry of Commerce.

By the time K.B. Lall, Director General of India's Foreign Trade Board arrived in New York to review the Amos & Parrish report in February 1958, several other assessments had been launched.[92] The Ministry of Commerce sent S. Kurikoti, of the India Trade Center in New York, to study handicraft production and marketing in Scandinavia, West Germany, Italy, Japan, Thailand and the Philippines.[93] The Ford Foundation secured modernist designers Charles and Ray Eames to visit India for three months, observing its new design craft centers.[94] Meanwhile, Kamaladevi, Jain, and Keehn identified three other foreign consultants: handbag specialist Roger Model, Petter Kauffmann, a director of Zurich's Global Department Stores, and Madam Grès of Paris, whom Jain called "the designer of designers." The Ford Foundation agreed to fund their travel as part of a general handicrafts marketing survey, directed by Leo Martinuzzi, Macy's vice president in charge of foreign buying. Martinuzzi had served previously as a technical advisor to the US International Cooperation Agency (ICA), advising British, Italian, and Japanese firms on their US retail sales.[95] Simultaneously, ICA, with GOI approval, dispatched US industrial designer Peter Müller-Munk to India as part of a broader US government project to reform handicraft design, production, and marketing in 19 nations. In sum, an ICU that had cautioned against handicrafts "revolutionized by foreign experts" found itself inundated by foreign experts.[96] Their cumulative advice ranged from more changes to craft design, new displays, and closer attention to high-volume items to more US consultants.

Kamaladevi, Jain, and Kitty Shiva Rao processed the various recommendations and initiated an "all-embracing campaign of handicraft development." They established a packaging department to ship Cottage purchases anywhere in the world, a market research department to "analyze trends in buying and consumer preferences in relation to price," and a department of designers and promoters tasked with developing new designs.[97] Yet, disagreement opened up over how much relative weight to give domestic and foreign markets. The Martinuzzi team, favoring a domestic focus on retail stores and craft production, argued against new auxiliary shops at Bombay and Delhi Airports and export showrooms in Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta. "In my estimation they are premature, because there just isn't enough new and exciting to sell," argued John Bissell, a Macy's executive on the team.[98] But with GOI pressure to boost exports and Cottage exports lagging behind domestic sales (Rs 800,000 compared to Rs 4,500,000 in 1959), an all-out effort to crack the US market ensued.[99] ICU opened an export production division, joined the US Retail Merchants Association, and sent D.N. Sarnaf to Harvard Business School for a marketing and operations program.[100] They also pulled on the connections of Fori Nehru, who had returned to Washington, DC, with her husband,

Fig. 10.5 Jacqueline Kennedy seated next to Indira Gandhi, Cottage Emporium, New Delhi, 14 March 1962. Source: Cecil Stoughton. White House Photographs. John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, Boston, MA.

India's new Commissioner General for Economic Affairs. As B.K. Nehru negotiated with the World Bank and US State Department for expanded Western aid, Fori set up publicity tours with US department stores and cajoled Lord & Taylor, Neiman Marcus, and Macy's to send their buyers to New Delhi.[101] The India Trade Center, for its part, promised US importers and department stores "new and better goods streamlined to suit the American taste."[102]

Perhaps more than any other initiative, however, it was two high-profile visits to the Cottage Emporium that boosted its fame and drove its exports. The first occurred on 28 January 1961 when Queen Elizabeth II stopped at Cottage during her tour of India and was photographed admiring its textiles and speaking with sales staff. Fifteen months later, the star power of Jacqueline Kennedy drew even greater attention (See figure 10.5). After the US first lady toured Cottage alongside Indira Gandhi and Kitty Galbraith, wife of US ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith, haute couture designers in New York and Paris incorporated sari fabric into their collections, and the major department stores featured Indian "inspired" evening wear. "The magic of India," proclaimed the *Atlanta Constitution*'s fashion reporter had "cast its spell over fashions and hair styles alike. Blame it all on the exposure through photographs during the First Lady's recent good will trip." The *New York Times* added, "Reports of

Mrs. Kennedy's activities were hardly printed before importers began to sell more saris than ever before."[103] Kennedy accelerated a trend toward textile promotion already underway at Cottage. Visiting New Delhi in 1962, US craft expert Margaret Patch found "a big store always full of local patrons, wives of foreign diplomats, and tourists. Although there are cases of jewelry, ceramics, enamels, metalwork, ivory, and woodcarvings, the majority of the space is given to textiles."[104]

Kamaladevi's own work and words reveal ambivalence about the export push. On the one hand, she played an active role in the ICU's work to secure US markets. On a 1960 visit to the United States, for example, Fori Nehru and Kitty Shiva Rao arranged for Kamaladevi to attend the opening of an India show at Neiman Marcus's flagship store in Dallas, TX. According to D.N. Saraf, it was Kamaladevi who personally requested that a baby elephant be flown in for the event. Here, Kamaladevi demonstrated a savvy awareness of showmanship and US expectations of India.[105] Unlike Fori Nehru or Kitty Shiva Rao, however, her focus remained on the Indian market where she encouraged regional government emporia and nurtured a new generation of Indian craft experts.[106] By 1960, her energies for market promotion waned as she began to embrace an international movement for the preservation of folk arts. In the United States, connections to the American Craft Council and US craft preservationists become more salient for her than those to department stores.[107]

This period proved a critical turning point for Kamaladevi and other ICU leaders. The Ministry of Commerce, impatient with ICU and AIHB's efforts, had in 1959, taken textiles away from AIHB and reassigned them to a newly created All India Handloom Board led by Pupul Jayakar. Then, in 1962, Jayakar added to her portfolio when the government appointed her to a new Handloom and Handicrafts Export Corporation (HHEC). Meanwhile, within Cottage, Jain and Kamaladevi faced new resistance from salaried workers. The success of ICU's operations and ability to compensate craftspeople fairly depended on minimizing operating costs by relying on the honorary work of female volunteers and low, but equal, wages for its largely female paid staff. This formula came under strain, however, as new management advice and the export drive translated into a need to pay higher wages to select staff who brought specialized skills. At the same time, Cottage's success attracted a bevy of neighboring shops on Janpath that paid its salespeople higher wages. Cottage's paid staff began to question why, as employees of India's famous stores with sales of approaching Rs 10 million annually, they took home lower wages than others doing comparable work.[108]

The clash came to a head in 1963. Kamaladevi and Jain proposed that Delhi staff and handicraft artisans split rising profits equally. A number of paid staff objected, arguing that since they had procured the crafts, paid the artisans, and successfully sold the goods, additional profits should go to them. "We tried to explain to them

that the Cooperative Union had undertaken this project for the craftspeople," Jain recalled in his memoirs. "We could not compromise our core beliefs." ICU staff then turned to the Indian trade union movement and formed a staff union that connected their cause to wider national politics. The staff elected Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the Union Minister of Health, president of their union. At about the same time, Jain and Kamaladevi also clashed with the Ministry of Commerce, which questioned ICU's allocation of its profits. The Ministry ordered two audits and released a hostile final report without consulting Jain, Kamaladevi, or other ICU senior leadership. Kamaladevi, according to Jain, "decided that it was the last straw" and presented the government with notice in August that ICU would return management of the emporium to government hands. In October 1963, ICU exited Cottage, the export section, and auxiliary shops at Bombay and Delhi Airports.[109]

Inventing Dichotomies

After the ICU's departure, Cottage remained a destination for domestic shoppers and international tourists. By the mid-1960s, however, the Delhi emporium and the other government-run stores faced new private competition. After John Bissell, a Martinuzzi team member and former Macy's executive, married Bimla Nanda, a young Punjabi woman in Cottage's export promotion department, the two founded Fabindia fabrics and built it into a major Indian chain.[110] Meanwhile, handicraft tourism moved into new luxury hotels like the 600-room New Delhi Oberoi Intercontinental, built by Intercontinental Hotels Corporation, a subsidiary of Pan American Airways. The hotel shops catered to the tourist trade, ending the mix of Indians and Americans that ICU had fostered at Cottage. An *Atlanta Journal Constitution* travel writer, surveying India's craft scene in 1965, recommended the convenience of Oberoi and other hotel boutiques or the perceived authenticity of bargaining in small shops for regional crafts. India's thirty craft emporia were dismissed as "fine" for the "the direct, no-nonsense, cash-on-the-line shopper."[111]

After 1963, the place of Indian handicrafts abroad moved in two directions, symbolized by the later careers of Pupul Jayakar and Kamaladevi. Jayakar continued HHEC's push into US and European markets. In April 1964, she returned to New York to oversee handicrafts and handlooms on sale at India's international pavilion at the World's Fair.[112] The HHEC paid for a multi-page *New York Times* advertising supplement that promised wares to "delight both connoisseur and housewife."[113] The following June, Jayakar opened Sona, the first GOI handicrafts shop outside of India at 11 East 55th Street in midtown Manhattan.[114] At the opening, she spoke to the gathered US press about the preservation of India's ancient crafts and the work of its "17 million craftsmen." But Sona's accent fell on its high-end textiles.

Situated in New York City's wealthiest neighborhood, the boutique, L.K. Jha noted, "began to be patronized by ladies of taste and status, like Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy." Within three years, Jayakar had repeated the formula, opening Sona branches in tony enclaves of Paris, Hamburg, and Cambridge, Massachusetts, and collaborating with international designers Pierre Cardin, Roberto Capucci, and Hanae More.[115] Building on her lifelong friendship with Indira Gandhi, Jayakar became India's "czarina of culture." In the 1980s, the elaborate "Festivals of India" she staged in the United States, Japan, and France epitomized a vision of textiles and handicrafts as both luxury commodities and priceless works of national "heritage."[116]

Kamaladevi was also in New York in Spring 1964. Instead of selling exports on the Queens fairground, though, she presided over a World Craft Fair at Columbia University, sponsored by the World Craft Council. The event brought together 800 artisans from fifty-two nations for the first World Congress of Craftsmen. As a co-founder and first vice-chairperson of the World Congress, Kamaladevi delivered a passionate speech to the delegates. "The time for choice has come" between mass production, which alienated people from their surroundings, and craftsmanship, which taught "good taste and good opportunity to live in intimacy with beauty."[117] The speech echoed a pointed critique she had made a year earlier about the lure of luxury markets. India's crafts had always been, she argued, "essentially articles of utility…Nothing was created to be kept as a dead piece in a glass case or be merely looked at or to trumpet the affluence of the owner."[118] The sentiments positioned Kamaladevi, both on the international stage and in India, as a defender of craft traditions in the face of market forces. But, it won her few friends in government. After Nehru's death in 1964, she found herself largely sidelined from political influence. In 1966, Indira Gandhi removed her from AIHB.

The story of post-Independence craft in India has often been told as a tale of Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and Pupul Jayakar, two larger-than-life champions of craft and their competing visions of craft's place in the new Indian nation. In this dichotomy, Kamaladevi stood for craft preservation and domestic development, while Jayakar pursued commodification and foreign markets. In fact, as this essay has attempted to show, this dichotomy emerged only later, in the 1960s. During the 1950s, driven by hopes of artisan welfare and new cooperative structures, Kamaladevi participated actively in the transformation of Bankura horses and other crafts into objects of international development. Those transformations required complex negotiations and compromises with a range of US and Indian state and non-state actors. They also involved a much wider canvas of players. From New York and Washington, DC, to Dehli, and across India, hundreds of Indian and US women fashioned one of the largest and most famous retail enterprises in India's history. Their stories are part of the complex Indo-American exchanges over the long twentieth century.

Notes

[1] A global history of handicraft promotion and trade in the second half of the twentieth century has yet to be written. Fragments of this history, focused on particular nations or organizations, can be found in E. Boris, *Making the Women Worker: Precarious Labor and the Fight for Global Standards, 1919–2019* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); H. Alpay Er, F. Korkut, and Ö. Er, "U.S. Involvement in the Development of Design in the Periphery: The Case History of Industrial Design Education in Turkey, 1950s-1970s," *Design Issues*19, no. 2 (Spring, 2003), 17–34; J. Way, T*he Politics of Vietnamese Craft: American Diplomacy and Domestication* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

[2] Uditi Sen has argued that middle-class women "created new spaces of gendered public activity and articulated new claims of citizenship for themselves in the nation-state" through service to poor women. Sen, *Citizen Refugee: Forging the Indian Nation after Partition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018). See also E. Rook-Koepsel, "Social Work and Political Visibility: Activism, Education and the Disciplining of Social Service," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 44, no. 2 (April 2021), 329–43.

[3] K. Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses, Outer Spaces* (New Delhi: Navrang, 1986), 322.

[4] T. Sherman, "A Gandhian Answer to the Threat of Communism? Sarvodaya and Postcolonial Nationalism in India," *Indian Economic & Social History Review* 53, no. 2 (2016), 249–70; B. Siegel, "The Kibbutz and the Ashram: Sarvodaya Agriculture, Israeli Aid, and the Global Imaginaries of Indian Development," *American Historical Review* 125, no. 4 (October 2020), 1175–1204. On economic planning, see D. Engerman, *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018); C. Unger, *Entwicklungspfade in Indien: Eine Internationale Geschichte, 1947–1980* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015); B. Zachariah, *Developing India: An Intellectual and Social History, c. 1930–50* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005). On food and agriculture, see N. Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010); P. Kumar, "'Modernization" and Agrarian Development in India, 1912–52," *Journal of Asian Studies,* 79, no. 3 (March 2020): 633–58; P. Kumar, "American Modernisers and the Cow Question in Colonial and Nationalist India," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 44, no. 1 (2021), 185–200; T. Sherman, "From 'Grow More Food' to 'Miss a Meal': Hunger, Development and the Limits of Post-Colonial Nationalism in India, 1947–1957," *South Asia 36*, no. 4 (2013), 571–88; B. Siegel, *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India.* New York Cambridge University Press, 2018. On community development, see P. Kumar, "A Big Machine Not Working Properly": Elite Narratives of India's Community Projects, 1952–58," *Technology and Culture,* 60, No. 4 (October 2019): 1027–58; N. Sackley, "Village Models: Etawah, India, and the Making and Remaking of Development in the Early Cold War," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 4 (September 2013): 749–78; D. Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018). On science, technology and engineering, see D. Arnold, "Nehruvian Science and Postcolonial India." *Isis* 104, no. 2 (2013): 360–70; R. Anderson, *Nucleus and Nation: Scientists, International Networks, and Power in India* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); R. Bassett, *The Technological Indian* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016); D. Klingonsmith, '*One Valley and a Thousand': Dams, Nationalism, and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); J. Sarkar, *Ploughshares and Swords: India's Nuclear Program in the Global Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022).

[5] Postwar Indian handicrafts and textiles are examined by art and design historians who are particularly interested in how indigenous crafts figured in Indian modernism and how US institutions, such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, funded US visions of "good design" in India. See

F.S. Karim, "Modernity Transfers: The MoMA and Postcolonial India" in D. Lu (ed), *Third World Modernism: Architecture, Development and Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 189–210; K. Singh, *India's Rockefeller Artists: An Indo-US Cultural Saga* (Delhi: DAG Modern, 2017); C. Wintle, "India on Display: Nationalism, Transnationalism, and Display, 1964–1986," *Third Text* 31 no. 2–3 (2017), 301–20: K. Zitzewitz, *The Art of Secularism: The Cultural Politics of Modernist Art in Contemporary India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

6 Historians Eileen Boris, Joanne Meyerowitz, and Priya Lal have begun to rewrite this history with women actors at the center. Boris, *Making the Women Worker;* J. Meyerowitz, *A War on Global Poverty: the Lost Promise of Redistribution and the Rise of Microcredit* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2021); P. Lal, *African Socialism in Tanzania: Between the Village and the World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

7 Noted exceptions include the transnational population control movement and careers of Congress leaders Amrit Kaur and Indira Gandhi, who served on the All India Handicraft Board in the decade before ascending to the prime minister's office.

8 David Engerman has argued that "B.K. Nehru did more than any other single individual to reorient Indian policy toward Western economic aid." *Price of Aid,* 206.

9 I am quoting the original conference program here.

10 An excellent collection, edited by historians Ellen Carol DuBois and Vinya Lal, has also contributed to this reconsideration. E.C. DuBois and V. Lal (eds), *A Passionate Life: Writings By and On Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay* (New Delhi: Zubaan, 2017), 23–24; A. McGowan, "Mothers and Godmothers of Crafts: Female Leadership and the Imagination of India as a Crafts Nation, 1947–67," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 44, no. 2 (April 2021): 296.

11 See, for example, the recent special edition of the journal *South Asia.* A.B. Data, U. Sen, and M. Sreenivas, "Introduction: A Country of Her Making," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 44, no. 2 (April 2021): 218–27.

12 Rameshwari Nehru led the last Hindu refugee camp in Lahore before departing for Delhi at the end of October. G. Salvi, *Development Retold: Voices from the Field* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1999), 97–98.

13 L.C. Jain, *Civil Disobedience: Two Freedom Struggles, One Life* (New Delhi: Book Review Literary Trust, 2010), 67; Salvi, *Development Retold,* 79.

14 Salvi, *Development Retold*, 98; B.K. Nehru, *Nice Guys Finish Second: Memoirs* (New Delhi: Viking, 1997), 188.

15 Refugee handicrafts was not alone in this approach. In 1948, the Women's Section also set up vocational centers focused on sewing, and, in 1949, the Refugee Women's Co-operative Society, which focused on sewing work for widowed refugees, took up nearby quarters on Connaught Place. Anjali Bhardwaj, "Partition of India and Women's Experiences: A Study of Women as Sustainers of Their Families in Post-Partition Delhi," *Social Scientist* 32, no. 5/6 (May-June 2004), 74–77; McGowan, "Mothers and Godmothers."

16 A. Carden-Cayne, "The Art of Resilience: Veteran Therapy from the Occupation to the Creative, 1914–45" in L. Van Bergen and E. Vermetten (eds), *The First World War and Health: Rethinking Resilience* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 39–70; G. Nanda, "A Life-long Tryst with Handicrafts," *The Wire*, 7 August 2020, https://thewire.in/culture/a-lifelong-tryst-with-handicrafts, accessed 14 December 2021; A.M. Winther, "Two Indian Women Study U.S. Market," *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 August 1956, 6.

17 G. Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 130; Y. Khan. *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 148.

18 Jain, *Civil Disobedience,* 67.

[19] Born Shobha Magdolna Friedman, but known by her nickname Fori, Fori Nehru met B.K. Nehru while studying at the London School of Economics. They married in 1934. E. Barry, "Shobha Nehru Dies at 108; Escaped Holocaust and Married Into Indian Politics," *New York Times*, 28 April 2017, B7; R. Nanda, *Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay: A Biography* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 108; "Photography Exhibition: Through Dad's Eyes: Lahore 1946–Delhi, 1966," *Delhi Events*, https://www.delhievents.com/2008/01/photography-exhibition-fotomedia.html, accessed 14 November 2021.

[20] L.C. Jain and Gulshan Nanda both recalled this visit and speech, with slight variation. While Jain quotes Chattopadhyay as asking, "What is their future? What will happen to these people?," Nanda remembered a particular concern for the camp's women: "What is the future of the women? How will their efforts be sustained beyond the camp?" In her own memoir, she wrote, "As I watched this unbelievable turmoil descend on us…a spark ignited in the darkness. Why not make something worthwhile emerge out of this agony? I decided to apply myself to the rehabilitation of some of these uprooted families." Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses*, 307; Nanda, "A Life Long Tryst."

[21] Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses*, 231; Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years in Economic and Social Development through Cooperation*, 1958, Box 4, Folder 32, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), Nelson A. Rockefeller Personal Papers, Rockefeller Archive Center, Tarrytown, NY [hereafter NAR].

[22] Gandhi himself had been considering a similar strategy. At a prayer meeting on 22 June 1947, Gandhi had exhorted camp refugees to form cooperative organizations as tools for self-reliance Jain, *Civil Disobedience*, 77–78.

[23] Salvi, *Development Retold,* 100; American International Association Community Projects Division, "Why India?" 3 November 1952, Box 5, Folder 50, Series 1–9 (FA789A), Rockefeller Family Public Relations Department Papers, Rockefeller Archive Center, Tarrytown, NY [hereafter RFPRD]

[24] Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses,* 307; Nanda, Kamaladevi, 36; Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years*.

[25] Kamaladevi had a long acquaintance with the Nehru family. Despite hers and Nehru's ideological and political split, they maintained a strong mutual admiration of one another's leadership and sacrifice during the long struggle for independence. Nehru's own commitment to ICU can be seen in his personal donations to the organization, which totaled Rs 85,500 by 1951.

[26] Nanda, *Kamaladevi*, 112–113; L.C. Jain to M. Keehn and T. Keehn, 14 January 1955 in M.M. Keehn, *India Ink: Letters from India, 1953–1961* (New Delhi: Vadehra Art Gallery, 2000), 73.

[27] R. Sengupta, *Delhi Metropolitan: The Making of an Unlikely City* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2007), 218–19.

[28] Indian Cooperative Union, "Report 1952," Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR; Jain, *Civil Disobedience*, 126–27; Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses,* 319.

[29] Handcraft exhibitions had been a regular feature of Congress Party meetings from the early twentieth century onward. M. Maskiell, "Embroidering the Past: Phulkari Textiles and Gendered Work as 'Tradition' and 'Heritage' in Colonial and Contemporary Punjab, J*ournal of Asian Studies* 58 no. 2 (May 1999), 361–88; P. Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India 1850–1922: Occidental Orientations* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[30] Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years*.

[31] American International Association Community Projects Division, "Why India?," 3 November 1952, Box 5, Folder 50, Series 1–9 (FA789A), RFPRD; T.B. Keehn to N.A. Rockefeller, 6 February 1953 Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR.

[32] Advertisement, *Daily Mail* (London), 10 May 1953; T.B. Keehn to J. Brade, W. Campbell, W. Crawford, H. Culbreth, P. Hudgens, and J. Voorhies, 8 May 1953, Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR.

[33] Mitter, *Art and Nationalism*; S.V. Turner, "Crafting Connections: The India Society and the Formation of an Imperial Artistic Network in Early Twentieth Century Britain" in S. Nasta (ed), *India in Britain South Asian Networks and Connections, 1858–1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 96–113. On displays of Indian crafts at world's fairs, see C. Breckenridge, "The Aesthetics and Politics of Colonial Collecting: India at World Fairs," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31 no. 2 (April 1989), 195–216; T. Gutha-Thakurta, "The Museumised Relic: Archaeology and the First Museum of Colonial India," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 34, no. 1 (March 1997), 21–52; P.H. Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display: English, Indian, and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); S. Mathur, *India by Design: Colonial History and Cultural Display* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

[34] N. Slate, "'I am a colored woman': Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay in the United States, 1939–1941," *Contemporary South Asia,* 17, no. 1 (March 2009), 7–19.

[35] K. Chattopadhyaya, *America, The Land of Superlatives* (Bombay: Phoenix Publications, 1946), 123.

[36] On the immigrant women, US social reformers, and handicrafts, see K.L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium : the Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 216–40; C.R. Ganz and M. Strobel (eds) *Pots of Promise: Mexicans and Pottery at Hull-House, 1920–40* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004); E. Boris, "Crafts Shop or Sweatshop? The Uses and Abuses of Craftsmanship in Twentieth Century America," *Journal of Design History* 2, no. 2/3 (1989), 176–78.

[37] E. La Hines, "Miss Gertrude Whiting Made Fellow of Royal Arts Society," *New York Times*, 28 January 1940, D6; "India Saris Seem Old Hat to Group Selling at Bazaars," *New York Times*, 7 July 1955, 20.

[38] Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium.*

[39] P. Preston, "Saris (the Real Thing) Invade World of Fashion," *Washington Post*, 22 June 1950, B4; R. Singh, *The Fabric of Our Lives: The Story of Fabindia* (New Delhi: Viking, 2010), 18.

[40] Indian Cooperative Union, "Report 1952," Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR.

[41] American International Association Community Projects Division, "Why India?" 3 November 1952, Box 5, Folder 50, Series 1—9 (FA789A), RFPRD.

[42] "The India Program of the American International Association for Economic and Social Development and the Cooperative League of the USA, 12 March 1953, Series 1, Box 5, Folder 50, RFPRD.

[43] Ibid.

[44] C. Reich, *The Life of Nelson A. Rockefeller: Worlds to Conquer, 1908–1958* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 167

[45] R.N. Smith, *On His Own Terms: A Life of Nelson Rockefeller* (New York: Random House, 2014), 747; Boris, "Crafts Shop or Sweatshop." On Rockefeller and handicrafts, see J.C. Lena, *Entitled: Discriminating Tastes and the Expansion of the Arts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 43–44; L. Hockemeyer, "Manufactured Identities: Ceramics and the Making of (Made in) Italy" in G. Lees-Maffei and K. Falla (eds) *Made in Italy: Rethinking a Century of Italian Design* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 127–44.

[46] T.B. Keehn to Mabel and Harper, 15 February 1954 in Keehn, *India Ink*, 34; L.C. Jain and K. Coehlo, *In Wake of Freedom: India's Tryst with Cooperatives* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing, 1996), 352.

[47] Research and Education Division, Indian Cooperative Union, *Report of the Handicrafts Marketing Survey*, 1955, Box 41, Folder 331, Series E (FA341), NAR

[48] Hockemeyer, "Manufactured Identities"

[49] T.B. Keehn, "Establishment of Indian Handicrafts Association in America," January 1954, Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR; T.B. Keehn, "Assistance to Indian Cooperative Union Handicrafts Projects," September 1953, Series 1, Box 5, Folder 50, RFPRD.

[50] It reached even larger US audiences when MoMa sent selected objects on a national US tour and distributed a technicolor film about the exhibition.

[51] F. Karim, *Of Greater Dignity than Riches: Austerity and Housing Design in India* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019), 226.

[52] "Textiles and Ornaments of India on View at Museum of Modern Art," Press Release, 13 April 1955, Museum of Modern Art Press Release Archives; Monroe Wheeler to Louise Boyer, 22 November 1954, Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR.

[53] On Jayakar see McGowan, "Mothers and Godmothers of Crafts"; M. Singh, "The Tapestry of her Life," *Seminar* 540 (August 2004). http://www.india-seminar.com/2004/540/540%20malvika%20singh.htm, accessed 14 November 2021.

[54] Farhan Karim has noted that the MoMa show "was the first large-scale international exhibition… that displayed products of Indian art and design…as profitable global commodities rather than exotic artifacts with limited marketability." Karim, *Of Greater Dignity*, 224. "Textiles and Ornaments of India on View at Museum of Modern Art," Press Release, 13 April 1955, Museum of Modern Art Press Release Archives, New York, NY

[55] B. Pepis, "India's Art Shown Here," *New York Times*, 13 April 1955, 26; B. Pepis, "Made in India," *New York Times*, 8 May 1955, SM51; Karim, *Of Greater Dignity,* 225–226.

[56] R. Reif, "Indian Shop to Offer Best of Native Wares," *New York Times*, 8 June 1965, 36.

[57] "India Saris Seem Old Hat to Group Selling at Bazaars," *New York Times*, 7 July 1955, 20.

[58] Strictly speaking, the custom of honorary work at the Cottage diverged from volunteering in that honorary workers were paid a small stipend, no more than 500 rupees a month. Jain, *Civil Disobedience,* 132.

[59] M. McNair, "Fory Nehru is No Idler in Welfare Work," *Washington Post*, 4 April 1954, S1; Jain, *Civil Disobedience,* 128; Singh, *Fabric of Our Lives*, 15.

[60] Keehn, *India Ink,* 212–13.

[61] Lakshmi Jain to Martha and Thomas Keehn, 14 January 1955 in Keehn, *India Ink,* 74.

[62] Salvi, *Development Retold,* 100.

[63] Jain, *Civil Disobedience,* 129.

[64] MMK to Family, ca. late November 1953 in Keehn, *India Ink*, 27.

[65] T.B. Keehn, "Assistance to Indian Cooperative Union Handicrafts Projects," September 1953, Series 1, Box 5, Folder 50, RFPRD; "Mary-Cushing Niles: Authority on Business," *Baltimore Sun,* 22 September 1993; T.B. Keehn, "Report and Recommendations," January 1954, Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR; "Handicrafts from India Are Aided," *New York Times*, 5 November 1962, 51.

[66] A.M. Winther, "Two Indian Women Study U.S. Market," *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 August 1956, 6; Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[67] Salvi, *Development Retold,* 107; Winther, "Two Indian Women."

[68] Salvi, *Development Retold,* 114.

[69] Saraf, whom Kamaladevi appointed AIHB's director of handicrafts in September 1956, remembered: " There is hardly a crafts centre worth the name, we did not visit…we went right to the huts and hamlets of the craftsmen…" Nanda, *Kamaladevi,* 130; D.N. Saraf, *D.N. Saraf in the Journey of Craft Development, 1941–1991* (Calcutta: Sampark, 1991), 24–25; McGowan, "Mothers and Godmothers," 283, 293; Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses,* 320; Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[70] Jain, *Civil Disobedience,* 123–126; Jain and Coehlo, *In Wake of Freedom*, 356–357.

[71] Salvi, *Development Retold,* 105.

[72] Indian Cooperative Union, *Handicrafts Marketing Survey*, 3–13.

[73] "India Saris Seem Old Hat to Group Selling at Bazaars," *New York Times*, 7 July 1955, 20. On women artisans, see C.M. Wilkinson-Weber, *Embroidering Lives: Women's Work and Skill in the Lucknow Embroidery Industry* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999).

[74] Salvi, *Development Retold*, 106.

[75] Ibid, 87.

[76] In 1952, ICU established social welfare centers at Chattarpur, Jaitpur, Jhangola, and Tigri. In 1956, it opened a formal social welfare department "to cater to the educational, medical and other need of the poorer communities in the slum areas of Delhi city." Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years*.

[77] In 1955, Keehn reported that approximately 5,000 U.S. tourists had visited India, beginning and ending their trips in New Delhi. Keehn circular letter, November 1956, Box 4, Folder 30, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR.

[78] T.B. Keehn, "Report and Recommendations," January 1954, Box 4, Folder 29, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339) NAR.

[79] Nehru quoted in Chattopadhyay, *Inner Recesses*, 320.

[80] Jain, *Civil Disobedience,* 129. Cf also Nanda, *Kamaladevi,* 137; M.M. Keehn to Family, 13 June 1954 in Keehn, *India Ink*, 45.

[81] Salvi, *Development Retold,* 100–101.

[82] On the foreign exchange crisis, see Engerman, *Price of Aid,* 163–170.

[83] "A Sound Basis for Mutual Trade," *India Trade Bulletin,* September 1958, Box 40, Folder 323, Series E (FA341), NAR.

[84] Indian Cooperative Union, *Handicrafts Marketing Survey*, 8–3.

[85] Ibid.

[86] This had influence in the other direction as modern painters became influenced by their craft design work. Karin Zitzewitz notes that the painter K.G. Subramanyan, who became Deputy director of Design, India Handlooms Board in 1959. Zitzewitz, *Art of Secularism*, 44; Jain and Coehlo, *In Wake of Freedom,* 362; J. Dhamija, *Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay: A Life* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 2006), 76–77.

[87] Dhamija, *Kamaladevi,* 77.

[88] Jain, *Civil Disobedience*, 128.

[89] K.S. Rao to N.A. Rockefeller, 12 April 1957, Box 40, Folder 323, Series E (FA341), NAR; S. May to N.A. Rockefeller, 7 January 1958, Box 40, Folder 323, Series E (FA341), NAR.

[90] Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[91] Amos Parrish & Company, "Survey of Market Potential for Indian Handicrafts in the United States," December 1957, Box 41, Folder 330, Series E (FA341), NAR.

[92] K.N. Sharma to S. May, 30 January 1958, Box 40, Folder 323, Series E (FA341), NAR.

[93] S. Kurikoti, "Vast Potential for Indian Handicrafts: Opportunities for American Business," *India Trade Bulletin,* September 1958, 4–5, Box 40, Folder 323, Series E (FA341), NAR.

[94] S. Mathur "Charles and Ray Eames in India," *Art Journal* 70, no. 1 (2011): 34–53.

[95] The Cottage Emporium's leadership worked particularly closely with the Martinuzzi team, which set up offices next door to ICU and AIHB on Cottage's second floor. Charles Eames and Ray Eames, "India Report," *Design Issues* 7, no. 2 (Spring 1991), 63–75; Singh, *Fabric of Our Lives,* 17–20; S. May, "Discussion with Carlton Wood, Ford Foundation," 27 November 1957, Box 40, Folder 323, Series E (FA341), NAR; K.N. Gilpin, "Leo Martinuzzi, 99, Executive for Macy's And U.S. Consultant," *New York Times,* 26 July 1996, A22

[96] Between 1954 and 1959, the ICA sent US industrial designers to Afghanistan, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Greece, El Salvador, Hong Kong India, Israel, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, Pakistan, South Korea, Surinam, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, and Vietnam. On the ICA campaign, see A.J. Pulos, *The American Design Adventure: 1940–1975* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988), 236–41; A. Fleishman, "Design as a Political Force, Part 2," *Industrial Design* 4 no. 4 (April 1957), 44–60; J. Way, T*he Politics of Vietnamese Craft: American Diplomacy and Domestication* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

[97] Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[98] Bissell quoted in Singh, *The Fabric of Our Lives*, 23.

[99] L.C. Jain to W.L. Crawford, 10 September 1960, Box 4, Folder 32, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR; Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[100] Saraf, *D.N. Saraf,* 27–28; Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[101] When the Nehrus moved returned to Washington, DC, in September 1958, Kamaladevi appointed her chairman of the Cottage Industries Export Committee of the Ministry of Commerce. "Because of my husband's position," she remembered. "I got entry everywhere easily." Salvi, *Development Retold,* 101–102. T.B. Keehn and A.C. Felder, Jr, "Joint India Programme Report," September 1958, Box 4, Folder 31, AIA-IBEC, Series B (FA339), NAR.

[102] S. Kurikoti, "Vast Potential for Indian Handicrafts," Box 40, Folder 323, Series E. (FA A341), NAR.

[103] R. Alexander, "India's Magic Has Cast a Spell Over Hairdos as Coiffure Hit a New High for Sari Fashions," *Atlanta Constitution,* 29 June 1962, 27; C. Curtis, "India Sari Fashioned into a Plethora of Styles," *New York Times*, 17 July 1962, 28.

[104] M. Patch, "Craftsman's Odyssey," *Craft Horizons* 22 no. 5 (September-October 1962), 53.

[105] Saraf, *D.N. Saraf in the Journey of Craft*, 29.

[106] Nanda, *Kamaladevi,* 129.

[107] In the same year as the Neiman Marcus promotion, Allen Eaton, a dean of the US craft preservation movement visited Kamaladevi in India. They met again in New York, when the American Craft Council hosted a reception for her and Eaton. "Visitors at New York Headquarters," *ACC Outlook*, 1 no. 7 (September 1960), 9.

[108] In 1958, ICU reported "it is the accepted practice of the Union to carry 80 percent of its net profits to [its Reserve and Development Fund], the balance of 20 percent is carried to the Common Good Fund used for welfare activities and relief." Indian Cooperative Union, *Ten Eventful Years.*

[109] Jain, *Civil Disobedience*, 131–33.

[110] Singh, *Fabric of Our Lives*, 28, 58–59.

[111] "India's Craft Temples Tempt Collectors, " *Atlanta Journal Constitution,* 11 April 1965, 16D.

[112] J.M. Lee, "Foreign Exhibits Stress Exports," *New York Times,* 27 April 1964, 20.

[113] India Pavilion Ad Supplement, *New York Times*, 19 April 1964, SMA111.

[114] R. Reif, "Indian Shop to Offer Best of Native Wares," *New York Times*, 8 June 1965, 36.

[115] L.K. Jha, "Pupul Jayakar: An Explorer" in Lokesh Chandra, ed. *Dimensions of Indian Art: Pupul Jayakar at Seventy* (New Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1986), xvii.

[116] Nanda, *Kamaladevi,* 143; J.F. Burns, "Pupul Jayakar, 81; Led Revival Of Arts and Handicrafts in India," *New York Times,* 2 April 1997, A19

[117] "Made-by-Hand Campaign is Opened," *New York Times*, 10 June 1964, 42.

[118] K. Chattopadhyay, *Indian Handicrafts* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1963), 6.

Afterword

Mark Reeves

As sites of British imperial state-making and resistance to colonial power, India and the United States have found themselves entangled since the late eighteenth century. To choose a paradigmatic moment, the dumping of East India Company tea into Boston Harbour in 1773 offers a view onto multiple levels of this entanglement. The cargo and the participants—white settlers who adopted a pretended Indigenous "costume" to claim a native identity as "Indians"—reflected the discursive entanglement of the Americas with South Asia in European thought going back to Columbus. Yet, to say that India and the United States have been entangled for centuries raises more interesting questions: what is this unit called "India"? Or "the United States"? What might it mean for such units to be "entangled"? And, crucially, who are the agents of this entanglement? What is being entangled, where does this entanglement happen, and who is doing the entangling?

The chapters in this volume address these questions concretely. Chapters track people-in-motion, things-in-motion, ideas-in-motion, and practices-in-motion, with each line of motion also a vector—vectors carrying magnitude, leaving residue, and creating memory, like so many shoelaces criss-crossed over time and space. This motion went to, from, and within Bombay, Boston, Calcutta, Delhi, Hartford, Hawaii, London, New York, Philadelphia, Rudragar (Pantagar), San Francisco, Tasmania, and countless other places. People, things, ideas, and practices moved representationally through newspapers, theatres, sheet music, colleges, and motion pictures, but all these were transported by train and steamship or communicated by telegraph—for example, the Kansas grain shipped to India in 1897 and 1900, using funds mobilized through the New York *Christian Herald*, as described by Joanna Simonow in Chapter 4. The specific dependence on these nineteenth-century technologies places the Indo-U.S. entanglement within a certain moment of global history, a moment which enabled the emergence of coherent units to correspond to the labels "India" and the "United States."

All the movement described in this volume took place in the aftermath of the dawning age of steam from the mid-nineteenth century, when railroads—and then steamships and the telegraph—would accelerate motion across vast space, prompting the consolidation of territories. These holdings were "battered, shaken, and undermined" by the "invincible force" of steam and its technological progeny.[1] Thus, as Susan Ryan points out in Chapter 2, in 1871 Walt Whitman could exult in "the great

achievements of the present, / Singing the strong light works of engineers" ("Passage to India," stanza 1) at Suez and across the North American West, delighting in "God's purpose from the first[,] / The earth to be spann'd, connected by network" (stanza 2).

By this point in the 1870s, along with the global technological innovations Whitman narrates, specific crises in South Asia and North America had produced the two spaces of this book's title: one, a federation of self-governing provinces shaped by the British settler projects of the seventeenth century; the other, an amalgamation of British protectorates and provinces formed out of the rubble of a company-state which had in turn built itself on the remains of the Mughal Empire and a multitude of other regional principalities. In short, as they emerged from the tumult of the American Civil War and the 1857 Mutiny, "the United States" and "India" became metonyms for complex and overlapping regimes of governance covering continental stretches of space. As a global age dawned, both "the United States" and "India" became emblems of unifying space—the U.S. stretching from sea to shining sea, and India labelled a "sub-continent"—even as they were unified by the profoundly divisive forces of racialization in white supremacy and settler colonialism.

In Part 1, Bradley Shope, Susan Ryan, and Philip Deslippe trace these processes of racialization operating within and between the nascent places "India" and the "United States." In Chapter 1, blackface minstrelsy in India operated within a complex racial hierarchy, reinforcing both localized East India Company-led white supremacy within India and a globalized hierarchy of whiteness over non-whiteness, with the performance of blackface shows allowing "audiences [to conflate] divergent categories of race into an essentialized classification…and [ascribe] to that classification a subordinate status." Performing the subordination of enslaved Blacks in the United States displaced the localized racial conflicts of Bombay and Calcutta onto a different hierarchy to which white and non-white audiences could see themselves as superior. As Shope shows, the *Bombay Gazette* made this explicit in 1852, asking if these degrading performances "are, unconsciously, extending a livelier sympathy for a cruelly depressed race?" Minstrel performances around the same time in South Africa did not have the same goal, with the Confederate warship *Alabama* docking in Cape Colony in 1862, where enslaved Black men "performed minstrel shows for white South Africans sympathetic to the Confederate cause and bitter about Britain's ending of slavery in the Cape Colony."[2] From Hawaii to Bombay, and from New Orleans to Cape Town, the entanglement of white supremacy in blackface performance circled the globe under steam in the 1850s and 1860s, albeit with different valences for each audience.

Susan Ryan's reading of *Jessie Brown*, staged in New York only seven years after the New York Serenaders visited India, reverses the flow of racialized displacement, transposing the complex conflicts of the 1857 Mutiny onto the hierarchies of the United States through the invocations of slavery and the potential for a slave revolt. Philip Deslippe's account of the discursive career of "fakir" in Chapter 3

also speaks to the confusion many Americans grappled with in representing India, much like *Jessie Brown*'s confusion of mosques and temples. Through its adoption in performances by magicians such as Isaiah Harris Hughes ("the Fakir of Ava"), and through its confusion with yogic practices, in the United States "fakir" transformed from its South Asian meaning of Islamic ascetic into a common huckster by the 1870s. As with *Jessie Brown*, the Mutiny seems to have been a turning point (Hughes debuted his "gift shows" in 1857), elevating India in the U.S. public mind without providing much clarity or understanding of the subcontinent.

The 1850s and 1860s were confusing times around the world, but especially in North America and South Asia, and these decades were the moment when the units of Indo-U.S. entanglement—"the United States" and "India" as places—took political shape as unified spaces. Yet the notion of either North America or South Asia cohering into unified spaces implies a trilateral beyond the "Indo-U.S." bilateral, adding to the dyad another space which is notoriously difficult to define: "Britain," or even more loosely, "the British Empire."[3] The logic of spatial and racial unification and division accompanying the creation of "the United States" and "India" as places originated from British imperial practices, though the entanglement of space, power, and race long pre-dated the rise of British sea power in the eighteenth century.[4] Likewise, the English language carried by British settlers and colonial agents facilitated the Indo-U.S. entanglements described in this volume, in some cases through specific words adapted, translated, and mistranslated from South Asian contexts such as *fakir*.

So far, I have described in part the "how," "when," and "where" of Indo-U.S. entanglement, but what was in motion, or who was entangled? The chapters in this volume demonstrate the great diversity of "what" and "who" Indo-U.S. entanglement entailed, especially in Part 2. In Chapters 4 and 5, Joanna Simonow and Harald Fischer-Tiné demonstrate the ways that Protestant missionary endeavour and the trans-Atlantic circulation of Progressive ideas further entrenched the overlapping of U.S. and British interests in India before 1947. Simonow reconstructs numerous Indo-Anglo-American links through figures such as Robert Allen Hume, the American missionary awarded the *Kaisar-i-Hind*, the editors of the *Christian Herald*, women such as Abbie Child, or returning missionaries like Henry Potter and Justin Abbott, who smoothed over fin-de-siècle Anglo-American tensions by focusing on the common effort of famine relief in India. In parallel with this explicitly Christian world, Fischer-Tiné focuses on the secularised language of "boyology," which the YMCA shared with the Boys Brigade, the Scouting movement, and broader turn-of-the-century Anglo-American anxieties about white masculinity. As with the missionaries profiled by Simonow, the Y's "boyologists" did not replicate or enact British imperial policy, but operated in a milieu associating progress, development, and growth with whiteness, such that Calcutta's Y secretary H.G. Banurji had to insist on Bengali boys sharing "the same boyish elasticity and impressionableness of character that

are so common in other lands and climes" in 1907. Room for manoeuvre within Anglo-American institutions could open, though. Unlike the strictly segregated Boy Scouts Association of India, the Y's Scout troops "knew no racial barriers," per Daniel Swamidoss speaking to an international YMCA gathering in Austria in 1923.

Up to this point, this discussion of people-in-motion has concentrated on Americans moving to India, or observing India, but the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also saw many Indians entangle themselves with the United States. Chapter 4 tells the story of Sumantrao and Gurubai Karmarkar, who travelled to North America in 1888, where they both took degrees from north-eastern universities before returning to India in 1893, where they joined the YMCA and YWCA movements, linking Simonow and Fischer-Tiné's chapters. Sumantrao Karmarkar brought a stereopticon back from the United States and integrated it into proselytization, at the exact moment Swami Vivekananda crossed to Chicago for his major introduction of Indian religious traditions to American audiences. Another entangling crossing emerged from the Karmarkar family through their adopted son Vishvasrao, who followed in his adopted parents' footsteps to seek education in the United States, where he lost his life serving Americans during the devastation of the influenza pandemic of 1918.

Another Indian journey across the Atlantic would cast a long shadow for Indo-U.S. entanglements: Lala Lajpat Rai's second visit to the United States, from 1914 to 1915.[5] Lajpat Rai took an intense interest in the struggles of Black Americans, as W.E.B. Du Bois noted in a 1935 article for *Aryan Path*.[6] As Nico Slate recounts in Chapter 8, this article prompted Rammanohar Lohia to write to Du Bois in 1936, to strengthen Indo-Black solidarity. In Chapter 7, Neilesh Bose also follows a notable individual whose movement entangled India and the United States, the activist and writer Taraknath Das.

The shift from Das and Lohia's outreach to the United States before India's independence, to the criss-crossing journeys Nicole Sackley narrates in Chapter 10, is striking. Between Das's Pacific crossing to Seattle via Japan in 1906, to Pupul Jayakar opening the Sona handicrafts boutique in New York in 1965, we can see how Walt Whitman's vision of progress narrated in 1871 had radically shifted one hundred years later. While Das passed from Bengal to North America via Asia rather than Europe, his early activism in Canada had to navigate the Eurocentric pan-Britannic racial segregation system making journeys like his difficult and discriminatory.[7] His work with the Ghadar movement had British rule as its target, a British rule sharing an outlook with U.S. expansion, exemplified in 1871 by Whitman paralleling "the procession of steamships" down the Suez Canal and the "continual trains of cars winding across the Platte," without a place for the people whose lands and labour were seized to create these wonders ("Passage to India," stanza 3). Das challenged this omission forty years after Whitman, and thirty years after Das's Ghadar work, Lohia

could tour the United States focused on the wider problem of imperialism and racism at local and global scales, rather than a specific malady afflicting "India" or "Indians."

For both India and the United States, the two World Wars truly changed everything, like Whitman's "great achievements of the present" (stanza 1). The chapters in Part 3 describe the aftermath of the collapse of British power during the Second World War, which enabled U.S. hegemony to fill the vacuum in India—and elsewhere—albeit in particular ways, accommodating and even seeing U.S. power supported in the assertion of an independent India.[8] In Chapter 8, Sujeet George shows how generational wealth amassed during the U.S. age of steam, now channelled into philanthropy in the form of the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, went toward studying India to project U.S. influence.[9] This new entanglement built on old ones, as seen in the careers of William and Charlotte V. Wiser, who passed from the explicitly Christian "ecumenical Protestantism" of missionary groups like the American Marathi Mission (and, in its religious functions, the YMCA) to the academically oriented and foundation-funded work of "village studies." As with the earlier missions, this was not a simple imposition of U.S. power—Indian sociologists such as M.N. Srinivas blended his training from Oxford and the work of his Chicago colleagues to forge his distinctive "Indian sociology" focused on the village.

Likewise, the development of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University, narrated by Prakash Kumar in Chapter 9, flowed (unevenly) out of the Radhakrishnan Commission of 1948, which invited two Americans to join its deliberations to build on New Deal-era reforms, as well as the enthusiasm for U.S.-style land grant universities in the 1950s.[10] As Tim Livsey has shown, the 1950s also saw a "university age" in Britain's (after 1947) largest colony, Nigeria, including the development of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, on the model of the land grant college with the support of the Carnegie Foundation.[11] The Rockefeller Foundation played an important role in the journeys traced by Nicole Sackley in Chapter 10, as Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Fori Nehru, Kitty Shiva Rao, and Pupul Jayakar went back and forth across the Atlantic and Indian Oceans to bring Indian handicrafts to U.S. consumers.

Indians like Kamaladevi and Jayakar could adopt such a posture in world affairs—India could take its place in world politics, as Taraknath Das had dreamed in 1925—because of the independence won in 1947. Likewise, Rammanohar Lohia could travel to the United States in 1951, not settle for correspondence with W.E.B. Du Bois, as in 1936. However, he travelled as a citizen not of the "India" of 1857, or even 1946, but a partitioned space known from 1950 as the "Republic of India," as against the "Dominion of Pakistan." One of the last, and most lasting, British bequests to India, Partition presents another question for Indo-U.S. entanglement. By its very name, "the United States" attests to its *non*-partition twice over—first in the eighteenth century, when the colonial union held, and second in the 1860s, when the American states briefly, and nearly permanently, partitioned themselves.

As the U.S. Revolutionary and Civil Wars (not to mention the numerous U.S. wars of expansion) show, unity can be bloody, just as Partition was and is bloody in India.

To return to the opening observation, then: two specific spatial-political configurations, the United States and India, became entangled over a specific chronology. This chronology, from 1850 forward, roughly corresponded to the unification of space around the world under political regimes shaped by European colonialism—and in these two cases, specifically British and Britannic settler colonialism. The technological changes accompanying and enabling the creation of these spaces as discrete units—which came to be naturalized as "nations" over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—also facilitated their inter-connection, with greater numbers of people, things, and ideas flowing from one to the other as the intermediary layer of British imperialism receded.

Imperial power, especially British power, created the spaces to entangle, but it was people themselves who moved within and across those spaces to actually do the entangling. As Michael Geyer and Charles Bright emphasize, in describing these processes, "the metaphors matter here: this was no longer quite a 'thrust' or 'projection' of force but an exercise in 'webbing' or 'enveloping.'"[12] The strength of these webs and envelopments is demonstrated in the acceleration of Indo-U.S. entanglement in the years after the rapid decline of British imperial power in the 1940s. Even though the trellis of Britain's "complex patchwork of interacting and dynamic agencies and locations" (to use Shope's phrase from Chapter 1) rotted and collapsed, vines of motion across the newly traversable spans of global space meant that Indo-U.S. entanglement survived and intensified despite the end of their original context.

As Britain's global power dimmed, Mohandas Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru turned to the United States to imagine a new world, at least terminologically: both used the failed U.S. presidential candidate Wendell Willkie's slogan, "One World," to describe their goal for a postcolonial world order.[13] In the 1960s, S. Radhakrishnan, then President of India, and Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, who represented India on the UN Human Rights Commission in the mid-1960s, both articulated their vision of India in the world as the pursuit of "One World."[14] As early as the 1940s, through to the 1960s, and certainly today, Indo-U.S. entanglements have been only one facet of a deeper global process of entanglements linking each part of the globe to the rest. But as this volume shows, there is something particular to be gleaned from examining Indo-U.S. links in focus. Forged in the fire of British imperial state-making, the United States and India have connected along lines dictated by that original connection, while also transcending the connection, albeit in ways that placed the United States in a new hegemonic role, with all that role's complexities and ambiguities.

Where this tangled story will proceed is a question hanging over Asian and international affairs, especially as India and the United States join Australia and Japan in an anti-China club, "the Quad," framed around a relatively new geopolitical concept,

the "Indo-Pacific." While the Quad appears new, as an alliance oriented against the People's Republic of China, it reflects the deeper Indo-U.S. connections described in this volume. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe popularized the Indo-Pacific as a geopolitical concept during his 2007 visit to India, quoting from Swami Vivekananda's 1893 address to the Chicago Parliament of Religions.[15] Hence, the Indo-Pacific returns via Chicago, and ten years after Abe's address it would circulate through Washington and back to the sea: in adopting this concept as a part of U.S. national security policy, President Trump's White House defined the Indo-Pacific as "the region, which stretches from the west coast of India to the western shores of the United States," explicitly entangling California and Kerala, Maharashtra and Alaska across and through oceanic expanses.[16] By bringing Australia into the Indo-Pacific club along with Japan, India and the United States are tied to a country shaped by British colonialism, even as the entanglements of Japan with India and the United States go back to the same moment of their own formation as singular units, in the 1850s.

In this sense, the "long twentieth century" starting in the 1850s continues into the present: Indo-U.S. entanglements are not only deepening, but they are also widening, "both in the Indo-Pacific and beyond."[17] As planetary crises compound regional crises in the coming decades, perhaps a new era of spatial reconfiguration will disrupt this entanglement as it exists today, but otherwise, the practices of people-in-motion, things-in-motion, and ideas-in-motion will doubtless continue to link South Asia and North America in webs woven by many hands.

Notes

1 Michel Chevalier, 1838, quoted in Charles S. Maier, *Once Within Borders: Territories of Power, Wealth, and Belonging since 1500* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016), 185; Maier's discussion on pages 185–195 provides a fuller account of how these technologies rendered territory a space to be filled rather than simply bordered.

2 Robert Trent Vinson, *The Americans Are Coming! Dreams of African American Liberation in Segregationist South Africa* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2012), 14.

3 For the complexity of defining a unit called "Britain" or "the British Empire," see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 4–9; Colin Kidd, *Union and Unionisms: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 5–9 on the Scottish dimension complicating "Britishness"; and John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2–12.

4 On the U.S. inheritance of specifically British military-fiscal imperatives in the late eighteenth century, see A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 45–94—and on the specific dynamic tying the American Revolution to East India Company policies, 105–107.

[5] Lala Lajpat Rai, *The United States of America: A Hindu's Impressions and a Study* (Calcutta: R. Chatterjee, 1916), iii-iv. (His first visit was a brief one in 1905.) Lajpat Rai quotes extensively from Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk* (157–161, 167–172).

[6] W.E.B. Du Bois, "Indians and American Negroes," published as "The Clash of Colour," circa March 1936, 2, W.E.B. Du Bois Papers (MS 312). Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries, http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/full/mums312-b209-i028.

[7] For the pan-Britannic background of the Vancouver Riots, see Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 178–189 (and 187–189 for Das). On the settler colonies as sites of "Britannic" solidarity, see Darwin, *Empire Project*, 144–148.

[8] For a different, but parallel, entanglement of rising U.S. power with decolonizing Asia, see Mark Philip Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam and America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919–1950* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), especially 146–192.

[9] Henry Ford's meteoric rise coincided exactly with the passage of global financial power from Britain to the United States during the Great War, as pointed out in Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of Global Order, 1916–1931* (London: Allen Lane, 2014), 200–201, beginning a process only accelerated during the Second World War.

[10] The inclusion of Arthur Morgan from the Tennessee Valley Authority points to the global resonance of this project as discussed in Kiran Klaus Patel, *The New Deal: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 294–295.

[11] Just as the Radhakrishnan Commission published its findings, in 1949, the *Southern Nigeria Defender* proclaimed "Nigeria has reached the University age": quoted in Tim Livsey, *Nigeria's University Age: Reframing Decolonisation and Development* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 2. Livsey's chapter 6 (119–144) describes the entanglements of U.S. land grant universities, foundations, and Nigerian anti-colonialists in seeking to establish new universities, parallel to Chapter 9's history of Uttar Pradesh Agricultural University.

[12] Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, "World History in a Global Age," *American Historical Review* 100, no. 4 (October 1995): 1047.

[13] Manu Bhagavan, *The Peacemakers: India and the Quest for One World* (Delhi: HarperCollins Publishers India, 2012), 4–5, 25–31, 66–67, 83, 109–111, and 115.

[14] Bhagavan, *Peacemakers*, 165–166.

[15] Hansong Li, "The 'Indo-Pacific': Intellectual Origins and International Visions in Global Contexts," *Modern Intellectual History* (2021), 2 note 1, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479244321000214. As Li notes, the German creator of the Indo-Pacific concept, Karl Haushofer, hoped it would create "an anti-American project," not one oriented around the United States (21, and 19–24 for the broader vision).

[16] *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, December 2017, 45–46, https://trump41whitehouse.archives.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf.

[17] Point 2 of the Leaders' Joint Statement, "The Spirit of the Quad," March 12, 2021, https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/12/quad-leaders-joint-statement-the-spirit-of-the-quad/.

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