

© 2015

Vivian Yuan Kao

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

HERITAGE IMPROVED:
POSTCOLONIAL CINEMA ADAPTS THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY
BRITISH NOVEL

By

VIVIAN YUAN KAO

A dissertation submitted to the
Graduate School-New Brunswick
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in English

Written under the direction of

Dianne F. Sadoff

And approved by

New Brunswick, New Jersey

May 2015

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Heritage Improved: Postcolonial Cinema Adapts the Nineteenth-Century British Novel

by VIVIAN YUAN KAO

Dissertation Director:

Dr. Dianne F. Sadoff

This dissertation brings cinematic adaptation to bear on the question of how nineteenth-century imperial ideologies of “improvement” continue to inform power inequalities in a global capitalist age. Not simply the promotion of general betterment for all, improvement in the British colonial context licensed a superior “master race” to “uplift” its colonized populations, morally, socially, and economically. The project argues that, on the one hand, adaptations reveal the coercion and arrogance that underpin contemporary notions of development, humanitarianism, and modernity—improvement’s post-Victorian guises. On the other hand, the films also use their colonial-era source texts to criticize these same legacies of imperialism. By bringing together cinematic adaptation and postcolonial studies—two fields that rarely converse—I demonstrate that adaptation, as both method and cultural product, provides a new direction for postcolonial criticism.

The adaptations I examine represent postcolonial, British, and American films that relocate and update the plotlines of classic novels to postcolonial societies in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. These films detect not only the persistence of the Enlightenment ideology of improvement and its imperial manifestations, but also the

critiques of improvement ideology in their source texts that can be used to challenge that ideology in its new forms. I trace the development of improvement discourse's main assumptions, specifically its conceptions of temporality and spatiality, as they merged with early English capitalism, and then how they influenced British imperial policy after the major indigenous revolutions of the 1850s and 1860s.

Each chapter demonstrates that British fiction provides useful strategies of resistance against the improvement ideology that continues to structure postcolonial realities. Pairing Jane Austen's novels with Bollywood adaptations and *Jane Eyre* with Jacques Tourneur's wartime thriller, *I Walked with a Zombie*, I claim that improvement ideology's alignment with capitalist values informs post-independence notions of economic development in India and the West Indies. Pairing Rudyard Kipling's and John Huston's versions of *The Man Who Would Be King* and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* with Michael Winterbottom's *Trishna*, I claim that Victorian self-improvement—and its inextricability from the forced development of colonized populations—underlies Anglo-American notions of conquest and modernity well into the twenty-first century.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have incurred many debts along the journey from the conceptualization to the completion of this dissertation. I am grateful, first of all, to Dianne Sadoff for her many contributions to my intellectual and personal development as a professor, advisor, and friend. John Kucich was always ready to offer both expertise and empathy during this project, and he has been a personal confidant as well as an academic mentor throughout my graduate school experience. Kate Flint, Jonah Siegel, Colin Jager, William Galperin, Brad Evans, Edyta Bojanowska, Rebecca Walkowitz, Martin Gliserman, Cheryl Wall, and Larry Scanlon played instrumental roles in my early success at Rutgers, and they have always been quick to offer their support whenever I have needed it. I must thank Mukti Lakhi Mangharam and Meheli Sen as well for graciously agreeing to join the dissertation committee and for offering me advice and encouragement. A special thank-you must also go to Ann Jurecic for her guidance and friendship in the home stretch.

Emily Kevlin Crossen deserves special acknowledgement as my closest comrade throughout the entire process of formulating, writing, and revising this project. The Nineteenth-Century Interest Group in the English department at Rutgers University improved this project immensely by their helpful suggestions and intelligent criticisms. Naomi Levine and Mark DiGiacomo generously offered their sharp editorial eyes and sound suggestions to early versions of these chapters. Fellow panelists at the American Comparative Literature Association conferences in 2014 and 2015 contributed valuable comments to Chapters One and Two, as did peer reviewers at *Genre* and *Victorian Studies* to Chapters Three and Four.

On a personal level, I am indebted to the many friends and family both near and far who have enriched my life during the last seven years at Rutgers. I cannot possibly hope to name all of them here, but I would like to mention especially Mimi Winick, Nami Shin, John MacNeill Miller, Lauren Kimball Papanicolopoulos, Amanda Kotch, April Graham, Caolan Madden, Christina Doonan, Lincoln Addison, Adrienne Mills, Benjie Peters, Mary Clare Imperato, and Dan Imperato. My family—Kaos, Leis, Paulis, Bastians, and Galligans—has been dedicated and patient. The arrival of my son Julian in the middle of this project was both an indescribable joy and a major source of motivation to finish. My most profound gratitude is owed, however, to Benjamin Pauli, my partner in every enterprise and constant source of intellectual companionship and loving support.

DEDICATION

To my parents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements	iv
Dedication.....	vi
Table of Contents	vii
Introduction.....	1
<i>Chapter 1</i>	
Improvement, Development, and Consumer Culture in Jane Austen and Popular Indian Cinema	26
<i>Chapter 2</i>	
Moral Management: Spaces of Domestication in <i>Jane Eyre</i> and <i>I Walked with a Zombie</i>	73
<i>Chapter 3</i>	
Conquest and Improvement in the “Graveyard of Empires”: The Men Who Would Be Kings in Afghanistan and Vietnam.....	126
<i>Chapter 4</i>	
Unaccounted Modernities in <i>Tess</i> and <i>Trishna</i>	181
Afterword	225
Notes	230
Works Cited	239

INTRODUCTION

The introduction to *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* tells the story of Srey Rath, a young Cambodian woman, who at age fifteen was tricked by a man who promised her a job as a dishwasher in Thailand but sold her instead to a brothel in Malaysia. After a daring escape across the tenth-floor balcony of the dormitory Rath occupied with other sex-trafficked girls, she threw herself on the mercies of a Malaysian policeman who shuttled her across the Thai border and sold her to another brothel (xi-xiii). Rath's story, however, ends happily. After escaping from the Thai brothel, Rath found her way back to Cambodia and was put in touch with an American humanitarian agency that helps victims of sex trafficking begin new lives. The agency set her up with a small street cart on the border between Thailand and Cambodia, and there, Rath sold "shirts and hats, costume jewelry, notebooks, pens, and small toys" (xvii). Her business venture turned her "good looks and outgoing personality"—"perilous bounties for a rural Cambodian girl" (xi)—into the useful resources of "an effective saleswoman" (xvii). She worked hard, saved her earnings, and grew her business from a cart to a stall, and then to a double stall by buying the store next door. She even

diversified by charging locals to use her cell phone while tourists combed through her souvenirs.

The authors of *Half the Sky*, *New York Times* journalists Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, offer the following interpretation of Rath's journey: "Rath's eventual triumph is a reminder that if girls get a chance, in the form of an education or a microloan, they can be more than baubles or slaves; many of them can run businesses.... Many of the stories in this book are wrenching, but keep in mind this central truth: *Women aren't the problem but the solution. The plight of girls is no more a tragedy than an opportunity*" (xviii; italics original). The authors' analysis illustrates how the entanglement between Third World "uplift" and global capitalism goes uncritically accepted in narratives about how to develop the developing world. The "problem" to which women are the solution actually collapses two problems into one: gender inequality and global poverty become a double-headed hydra that women solve with their participation in economic development. Giving women the ability to sell baubles instead of being sold as baubles gives women agency—thus solving the inequality problem—and increases the gross national product of the state that currently underutilizes them as resources. The double meaning of "opportunity," in the book's subtitle and the italicized passage, implies that Rath's success lies in capitalizing on her own talents (and western charity) to establish a new life inextricable from a capitalist economic system.

Although *Half the Sky*'s championing of women's rights and its desire to draw attention to grave human rights abuses are commendable, it collapses the difference between a broad, capacious definition of development as self-determined change that benefits an individual or community in holistic, meaningful ways, with Development, an

ideology in which all states and individuals must participate in the system of global capital in order to achieve “progress.” This collapse makes it impossible to question whether Development, as a capitalist economic discourse, actually fosters beneficial change. It reduces the capaciousness of the concept of development and the plenitude of possibilities for different understandings of what it might mean to improve. Non-capitalist and anti-capitalist understandings of modernization get pushed out of consideration. Questions of whether Development discourse, its beneficiaries, and its policies are responsible for any of the suffering that third world women and men experience find no room to be voiced. The issue of whether Rath’s souvenir stall and the brothels in which she was once held captive participate in the same global tourist industry goes unexplored not only in *Half the Sky*, but in much of the mainstream economic and popular literature on Development. Distinguishing beneficial and just social change from strategies of how to bring developing countries “in on the game” becomes imperative if we want to ensure the flexibility of development as a concept and as a wide range of real choices for women and men.

This dissertation approaches the study of international development from a “global development ethics” perspective, which puts at its center “moral reflection on the ends and means of ‘development,’ where ‘development’ most generically means beneficial social change” (Crocker 1). Working against mainstream economic theories of Development, Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen have defined development as “capability,” choice, and freedom—rather than an increase in GNP. Their work has pioneered a way of critiquing Development and offering alternatives to it. Following Nussbaum and Sen, this dissertation disentangles development and its possibilities from

the Development discourse that works in the interests of a capitalist global economy. I do not intend to argue that *all* development is bad, or that the wealthier countries of the world should not work toward beneficial social change, for themselves as well as for the developing world. On the contrary: the inequalities between rich and poor, the suffering that results from inadequate living conditions, and the west's responsibility in promoting dignified existences in the global south remain urgent issues that should press upon the consciences of all of us. But too much of the mainstream discourse used to think and speak about development do not support it, and indeed, work against it. Thinking development adequately, in other words, means unthinking Development discourse.

Two primary concerns animate this dissertation, both of which serve to distinguish development's discourse from its possibilities. First, I establish that Development does not spring from a post-World-War-Two era of benign western humanitarianism, but instead from late eighteenth-century English capitalism and nineteenth-century British imperialism. The consolidation of capitalism and imperialism in the long nineteenth century characterizes what I call Improvement—an ideology combining the Enlightenment's faith in progress with a Victorian obsession with self-help and coercive reform that provides the foundation for Development discourse in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Stretching the genealogy of Development back to the late eighteenth century runs counter to mainstream accounts, which begin the “development age” with President Truman's Point Four Program to contain the spread of communism by assisting developing countries willing to come into the American fold. Truman's Point Four represents a crucial stage in the creation of current Development assumptions, but the roots of those assumptions go much farther back. Understanding the

historical link between Improvement and Development reveals the capitalist and imperialist interests behind Development's appeals to humanitarian aid as its primary goal. Furthermore, providing this historical perspective helps us to see why Development closes down, rather than opening up, a variety of opportunities and choices for dignified living—for all possibilities for betterment must be yoked into the service of capital and empire.

My second concern follows from the historical imperative of the first: if Development's problems—its interested intentions and harmful effects—can be traced back to the long nineteenth century, so too can its correctives and solutions. In addition to identifying the ways Improvement informs current notions of Development, and thus, how a colonial ideology continues to exert influence on postcolonial societies, I argue that nineteenth-century British fiction provides critiques of Improvement that remain useful in critiquing Development today. To this end, I examine postcolonial cinematic adaptations of nineteenth-century British fiction to demonstrate how contemporary texts use the tropes of anti-Improvement they discover in old novels to challenge new antagonists: transnational capitalists, tourists of the global south, and humanitarians whose self-improvement depends on improving others. These protagonists of Development reveal most clearly Improvement's post-Victorian guises.

My claim that British fiction provides useful strategies of resistance against the Improvement ideology that continues to structure postcolonial realities relies on discovering how British fiction has been remediated and reappropriated in contemporary global culture. Adaptations provide a clear and direct depiction of which aspects of the novels get remediated, how, and for what purposes. Postcolonial adaptations—films that,

regardless of the director's country of origin, explore issues of imperialism from a critical perspective—address the question of how British fiction is reappropriated to speak to contemporary global power inequalities. The adaptations I examine represent postcolonial, British, and American filmmakers who relocate and update the plotlines, characters, and settings of classic novels to postcolonial societies in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Each of my chapters examines one or more film adaptations of nineteenth-century British novels that demonstrate how colonial-era improvement ideology appears in new guises in the postcolonial world. Instead of responding to this legacy by resisting all British colonial heritage, the films identify certain aspects of their source novels that critique improvement ideology and adapt those critiques to challenge new targets contemporary to their production and release. In doing so, the films also challenge current perspectives on heritage cinema by arguing that we must move beyond thinking of the relationship between source text and adaptation as one of either nostalgia or ironic distance, and in order to do so, we must open up the genre of heritage film to include adaptations that do not currently fit its aesthetic and period demarcations. The particular relationship that my films have with their source texts, that is, using them to critique imperial legacies, also challenges current perspectives on the nature of postcolonial criticism. I argue that adaptation can be just as powerful in providing postcolonial societies a method to deal with those legacies as aggressive resistance.

The most important contributions I hope to make are to revise the current confusion of beneficial social change with coercive capitalist Development, and to provide new possibilities for undoing Development discourse. To effect these

contributions, I provide a sense of the historical and conceptual connections between Improvement and Development, and between the voicings of discontent in the nineteenth and post-nineteenth centuries. Thus, I begin by establishing a history of Development that takes us back to the late eighteenth century, when the propertied interests of the English countryside implemented an order of capital improvements that would inform Kristof's and WuDunn's interpretation of women's economic "empowerment" two and a half centuries later.

*

In eighteenth-century England, the term "improvement" described the transformation of the English countryside from common land to private property. Raymond Williams defines improvement as "agrarian capitalism," the regulation of agricultural production in terms of an organized market (60). The landowning classes of the countryside turned their estates, regarded as inheritance in earlier centuries, into "a calculation of rents and returns on investments of capital," "an opportunity for investment" (60). This reconceptualization of the land and its inhabitants as profit margin not only reorganized the English countryside, it instituted an ideology that valued productive labor and regulation, and "became significant and directive" (60), "ruthlessly" modernizing all areas of social life (61).

Williams writes that the eighteenth-century novel reflected the ways in which this ideology affected individual lives. *Tom Jones*, *Clarissa*, and Defoe's novels "dramatised...the long process of choice between economic advantage and other ideas of value" (61). In Defoe's novels especially, Williams recognizes a "world of isolated individuals to whom other people are basically transitory and functional," a metaphor of

the way human relations changed under Improvement ideology. His argument implies that what counted as moral behavior also adapted to Improvement, becoming “the morality of a relatively consolidated, a more maturely calculating society,” in which “cold greed” and “open coarseness” were still bad, but “calculation” and considerations of “cost” became prudent and good (63). In the novels of the period, “personal satisfaction and material advantage are reconciled, compatible, and even identical” (63).

Improving the land, or in other words, reconceptualizing the use of space in agrarian capitalist terms, participated in a much larger Enlightenment impulse to rationalize and economize all aspects of ordinary life. In *Annals of Agriculture*, Arthur Young connected land improvement with “the other new social forces of the time”: mercantile capital, early industrial techniques, advancements in the physical sciences and the consolidation of political power (Williams 66). James Thomson’s *The Castle of Indolence* also illustrates the wider implications of Improvement:

Ye generous Britons, cultivate the Plow...
 So with superior Boon may your rich Soil,
 Exuberant, Nature’s better Blessings pour
 O’er every Land; the naked Nations cloath,
 And be th’ exhaustless Granary of the World.
 (qtd in Williams 69)

Young and Thomson illustrate how Improvement participated in what Asa Briggs calls the Enlightenment’s “cult of progress.” In Thomson’s praise of Improvement’s virtues, we detect all the main elements of Enlightenment progress: its optimism for endless development toward an always-better future along a single linear trajectory of time; its belief that despite the present uneven development of different nations, history’s progressive course was universal and the more developed nations should play a

leadership role that encompassed a sense of stewardship; and man's increasing power over nature.

Gilbert Rist has characterized the conceptualization of progress during the Continental Enlightenment as a secularization of Christian eschatology, whereby humans need not wait for divine salvation but could eventually create their own paradise on earth through the consolidation of reason and knowledge down the generations (36-38). The Scottish Enlightenment philosophers were more skeptical of the speed and universalism of progress, but nevertheless viewed human history as meaningful and teleological. By the end of the eighteenth century, Condorcet had managed to divide history into ten periods or stages, the last of which abolished all inequality. This interest in the particular stages of progress through which all societies must pass became prominent in the discourse on progress in the nineteenth century and brought progress and Improvement more closely together.

Briggs, who defines the period between 1783 and 1867 as "the age of improvement," uses "improvement" to indicate the step-by-step process by which progress occurs, a series of changes to an inherited past undertaken in the faith that history was meaningfully advancing. At times, he describes improvement as a "'march' of events" (1), at other times, to indicate the older sense of agricultural improvement, but also the Victorians' industrial improvements, the expansion of the franchise, and the rise of the middle class. He uses it as a synonym for "achievement" (2), to indicate an "increase in material wealth" and "the rise of British power in the world," and "the creation of an 'intellectual empire' as well as 'workshop of all the nations'" (2). Quoting the Victorian historian H. T. Buckle, he writes that nineteenth-century improvement was

“not [made] by any great external event nor by any sudden insurrection of the people, but by the unaided action of moral force” (309). For the Victorians, improvement described the microscopic view of progress and brought together the four main elements of “Victorianism”—the gospel of work, seriousness of character, respectability, and self-help (Briggs 391)—driving progress ahead, little by little. Those who remained in degraded stages of development, both the lumpenproletariat at home and the societies abroad that Victorians acquired increasing knowledge about due to British imperialism, were those who could not yet “subject themselves to the discipline of labor and delayed gratification,” who were “indulgent of their instinctive passions,” and therefore “at the mercy of the forces of nature” (Stocking 36).

In the second half of the nineteenth century, improvement as stadial progress also acquired a distinctly racialized aspect. George Stocking writes that Enlightenment understandings of improvement assumed a basic unity of all diverse groups of the world, a holdover from the Christian tradition: “what separated savage man from civilized man was not a difference in inherent mental makeup so much as the progress of refinement and of civilization itself” (Stocking 18). What stage a society happened to occupy in the present did not preclude it from advancing as far as the most developed European societies. Around mid-century, however, “the idea took firmer hold that skin color and other external physical characteristics determined race (rather than climate, religion, or forms of government), and that the different human races should remain separate from one another” (Steinbach 61). Polygenist views, arguing that different races represented different species of human beings, each with their own trajectory and limits as to their possibilities of progress, replaced the earlier monogenist view that all races shared a

common humanity and destiny. Laura Peters writes that “such a shift, from monogenist to polygenist views of race, marks a withdrawal of humanity from non-white races; this shift heralds a biological pessimism in which racial nature is viewed as fixed. Such a view will dominate racial thinking [in England] from the 1850s onwards” (55).

There were notable exceptions to the mid-century break between monogenicism and polygenicism, however, including Darwin’s monogenist theory of natural selection and John Stuart Mill’s writings on India. For Mill, the best form of government for India was a “benevolent despotism” (Moir xliii) led by a “superior people” who had reached “a more advanced state of society” (Mill, *Considerations* 418-419). In the case of India, he believed the East India Company was the best candidate for benevolent despot, for the Company had, Mill believed, the best interests of the Indian people at heart, was long established there, and had sufficient knowledge of the land and its cultures. Although he held in *On Liberty* that a representative government with universal suffrage was the best form of government, he felt that this system could only be implemented in western European societies that had reached an advanced stage of development. The view that Indians depended on English leadership and protection permeates nearly all of his writings on India, most of which are concerned with protecting Indians from other British and European imperialists who were liable to take advantage of them.

Although the monogenists’ optimistic view of the improvability of less developed races represented the more progressive and humane interpretation of nineteenth-century Improvement, it was also responsible for what was arguably the most culturally offensive aspect of nineteenth-century imperialism that remains the target of much postcolonial criticism. By comparing all societies using the same western developmental yardstick,

“non-Western societies were deprived both of their history (reduced to imitating the Western epic) and of their culture (left only in vestiges that ought to be made rapidly to disappear)” (Rist 43). Not only did non-western societies need to adjust themselves to a European teleology and developmental arc, their forward movement along Improvement’s many stages would have to be guided or coerced by a superior culture. Because they could not cultivate themselves properly, they must *be* cultivated, worked on, labored over. Victorianism’s consolidation of agricultural capitalism’s mastery over nature and the Enlightenment’s faith in the future with its own focus on stadial progress created an imperial ideology that built the basic tenets of Improvement into a relationship of power over the colonized.

Because Improvement’s transformation into imperial domination was so closely associated with the central trends in Victorian social thought, it would seem probable that as the Victorian period ended and the First World War crushed any remaining belief in Enlightenment progress, that Victorian Improvement would have become an anachronism, or at least increasingly peripheral after the first two decades of the twentieth century. But faith in the core elements of Improvement—progress as teleological, the human ability to control our own fate by mastering nature, stages of advancement, and the paternalistic burden of the more advanced nations—remained strong, perhaps even gaining ground after the War. Nowhere is this more clearly seen than in Article 22 of the *Covenant of the League of Nations*, the text that preceded the Treaty of Versailles which put an end to the War on June 28, 1919 (Rist 59). The importance of this text lies in the fact that it transformed Improvement from a by-product of Victorian culture into an internationally-sanctioned justification for imperial dominance of the Allied powers over the colonized

countries of the world. The Article redistributed the colonies of defeated Axis powers to the winners, for the purpose of continuing the colonies' development along the stages of progress.

The Article's language reveals its affinity with the Improvement ideology that had incubated in England over the last two centuries. The first point reads:

To those colonies and territories which, as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilization and that securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant. (qtd in Rist 60)

The colonies, inhabited by those “not yet able to stand by themselves,” are denied the responsibility for their own welfare on the basis of their being un-modern. Their “well-being” and “development” needs to be undertaken by “civilization,” in other words, the Allied powers, and such a task shall be sanctioned by the international community. The second and third articles go into further detail: the “tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility,” and the nature of that responsibility will “differ according to the stage of the development of the people” (60). These articles echo loudly the nineteenth century's beliefs in teleology, stadial advancement, and the role of already-improved nations.

Rist identifies Article 22 as the beginning of “the making of a world system” (47) that evolved into the current notion of economic Development. Article 22 is a key point in the narrative of Improvement that connects an eighteenth-century English agrarian capitalism to the Continental Enlightenment, and both of these to the Victorian national

and imperial ideal and the way we conceive of global north-south relations today.

Another important point along that narrative stretch is President Truman's 1949 inaugural address, the "Point Four Speech," the fourth point of which established "the 'development age'" (Rist 71). The fourth point emphasized the United States' dominance in a new world in which "the old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place." The US would make the "benefits" of their scientific and industrial progress "available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas," areas whose "economic life is primitive and stagnant." The US, being "pre-eminent among nations," possessed "the knowledge and skill to relieve the suffering of these people," and would do so by capital investment and increasing the industrial production of the underdeveloped nations (71-72). Truman's speech represents the first wide circulation of the word "underdeveloped" (73), a word that ties Development directly to Improvement. It presumes not just a linear trajectory of progress but that human labor is responsible for moving toward that target. The developed countries would develop the underdeveloped ones, cultivating and working on them to make them more productive and profitable, as the eighteenth-century agriculturalists produced and made profitable the English countryside. Because so many backward nations existed in the world, we could deduce that underdevelopment was the naturally-occurring stage (Rist 73), and that hard work and discipline was what moved a nation along its path. Furthermore, the concept recalls the monogenist theory of races: we are all capable of arriving at the same end point despite our current uneven statuses, provided that we all play the same game.

Robert J. C. Young has written that since the Second World War, the "keystone" of global economic theories has been the concept of "'development,' which is a way of

describing the assumed necessity of incorporating the rest of the world into the realm of modernity, that is, the western economic system, in which capitalism produces progressive economic growth” (49). Development theory added to Improvement’s stadial growth the belief that such growth needs to be “given an impetus by large-scale industrial or infrastructure projects undertaken by a centralized state, enabling a country to ‘take off’ from a traditional agricultural economy to a ‘modern’ industrial one” (49). Development provided a somewhat more democratic model of international relations than the old colonial system. No longer would the post-colonies be purposefully under-industrialized so that the ex-colonial powers could use their raw materials to industrialize their own nations; they could make themselves in the image of their former colonizers.

Nevertheless, it makes room for only one definition of what it means to be modern, and one path along which that modernity can be achieved. In the 1980s, the economies of India and the Four Asian Tigers (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan) grew rapidly when the state bureaucracies scaled back control of their national economies and opened them up to global free trade. These economic “miracles” encouraged economists to replace the primary mover in Development theory—the centralized state—with neoliberal market forces. Nevertheless, the central principle of global capitalist economic growth as equal to and interchangeable with beneficial social progress failed to undergo any radical rethinking.

The genealogy I have traced that runs from early agrarian capitalism and Enlightenment teleology to Victorian coercive progress and the current neoliberal global order—from Improvement ideology to Development discourse—underlies each chapter’s analysis of how a twentieth- or twenty-first-century film remediates nineteenth-century

British fiction. I have structured the chapters in two ways. On the one hand, they are organized in chronological order according to the source texts' date of publication. This allows me to track the development of Improvement and its critiques through the novels, from the late eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth: from Austen and Bronte to Kipling and Hardy. It allows me to introduce the main concepts that underlay Improvement in the long nineteenth century, specifically, assumptions about temporality and spatiality and the merging of these concepts with early English capitalism, and then to see how the ideology changed and was changed by imperial policy after the three great indigenous revolutions in the 1850s and 1860s (The Indian Mutiny/Rebellion of 1857, the Maori Wars in New Zealand from 1861-1865, and the Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica in 1865). Finally, the last chapter examines how the development of Improvement throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries helps to define what the twentieth and twenty-first understand as "modernity," and what it means to be "modern." On the other hand, the dissertation also falls into two halves according to the ways in which the adaptations focus their treatment of colonial literary heritage. The films discussed in the first two chapters focus on how postcolonial societies have confronted and understood the legacies of Improvement, from the importance of transforming colonial space and Improved geographies during the decolonization years to understanding how Improvement provides the historical and ideological background to third world Development and growth. The last two chapters discuss films that focus on the relationship between ex-colonizer and ex-colonized in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. As Robert J. C. Young has written, "the postcolonial condition" describes the present state in which both ex-colonizer and ex-colonized exist, the former needing to

understand how its colonial past shapes its present as much as the latter. The last two chapters focus on how ex-colonial and neo-imperial western subjects view encounters with postcolonial cultures through the lens of self-improvement, a desire for moral progress that depends as much on the failure as the success of Improving postcolonial others.

The first chapter reads Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Emma* (1815) alongside recent Indian-British and Indian cinema adaptations, *Bride and Prejudice* (2005) and *Aisha* (2010). I argue that the novels and adaptations take issue with one of the fundamental assumptions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Improvement: the connection between progress and teleology. I detect a strain of anti-improving sentiment in the novels located in their optimism about the power of non-progressive, non-teleological change that provides a temporary escape from the endless forward march of time. The adaptations illuminate Austen's anti-improving sentiment by deploying it against new objects of analysis: the American land developer with "improving eyes" and twenty-first-century Indian neoliberal development. The films and their source texts together reveal a cross-cultural, transnational, and trans-historical experience of the disjunction between discourses of Improvement (colonial and postcolonial) and their manifestation in everyday reality, a disjunction I characterize as a double temporality: a blind faith in forward progress that's lived and experienced as endless delay.

Whereas my first chapter challenges Improvement's assumptions about time, my second chapter takes issue with its capitalist transformation of space. The second chapter reads Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) alongside Jacques Tourneur's World-War-

Two-era Hollywood B-flick, *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943). I contextualize Jane's *bildungsroman* in relation to agrarian capitalism's enclosures, reorganization, restriction, and profitization of land and the implications of land Improvement on moral Improvement. I read Jane's narrative of "development" as a series of instances in which the individual is enclosed in spaces that seek to produce a docile, domestic subject. Jane's moral Improvement entails a psychological constriction and narrowing down of possibilities that correspond with the spaces she inhabits. Tourneur's film creates an analogy between Jane's situation and early twentieth-century workers on a Caribbean sugar plantation that bears the memory and the descendents of British West Indian slaves. The film argues that if, as *Jane Eyre* suggests, the making of subjectivity relies on an individual's relationship to her inhabited space, then a similar formula might also inform the making of an independent nation out of an enslaved and colonized population. For the plantation workers, Jane is a warning sign: one's acceptance of enclosure in an absolute space creates the docile subject. To make possible the conditions for revolution, then, the workers must reconceptualize the plantation space and use the very grounds of the master's power against him.

Chapter Three reads Rudyard Kipling's *The Man Who Would Be King* (1888) alongside John Huston's Vietnam-War-era adaptation of the story (1975). The chapter looks at one of the most important challenges that Improvement faced in the nineteenth century when it was exported out to British India: the need to reconcile it with, but also distance it from, conquest. I trace a history of how different figures and texts tried to turn the conflict between conquest and improvement into a productive dialectic for imperial policy, from the argument between eighteenth-century Orientalists and Anglicists about

India's present and future development along Improvement's stages of progress, to the use of Alexander the Great as a model of how conquest and improvement could work together, to Kipling's redirection of Improvement discourse back on to the imperialists themselves. Finally, I place Huston's film at the end of this conversation as a text that restages the story as an allegory for the fate of American imperialists in the Vietnam War. Contextualizing the film among other Vietnam-era films, I argue that Huston's film uses Kipling's redefinition of Improvement's purpose to justify the continuation of western imperial ventures.

Finally, the fourth chapter looks at the connection between Improvement and western modernity. It engages with the postcolonial discourse of multiple modernities and its revisionist ethic of retrieving the histories of modernity lost to Improvement's profitizing calculus. Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and its most recent adaptation, Michael Winterbottom's *Trishna* (2011), both question the injunction to "rescue" the voices western modernization silences by accounting for those voices and making them speak. The chapter argues that a more effective strategy of resistance to a universal western definition of modernity is not to try to make its alternatives "count" in the history of critical practice or cultural memory, but to hint at their potential while registering their disappearance, allowing their loss to Improvement's grand narrative to be felt all the more. *Tess* and *Trishna* gesture toward alternative conceptions of modernity that go against the Improvement ideologies that inform the actions of their male protagonists, characters who marry a capitalist desire to turn waste to profit and a New Historical/postcolonial impulse to uncover hidden narratives and make them count. Both film and novel, however, reveal these alternatives by describing them in terms of their

loss—their passage into the realm of the counterfactual before becoming possible realities. In drawing attention to disappeared or disappearing conceptions of non-capitalistic or non-western modernity, *Tess* and *Trishna* circumvent the complicity in capitalist Improvement ideology exhibited by revisionist criticism.

*

In the epilogue to *Victorians in the Rearview Mirror*, titled “Postcolonial Victorians,” Simon Joyce asks if we can “recognize different aspects of a residual Victorianism in (post)colonial states and subjectivities? And if so, can any positives be drawn from such an inheritance?” (167). What has “Victorianism” come to mean in postcolonial states and subjectivities, beyond its negative associations with an oppressive, authoritarian, racist, and violent imperial state apparatus? “It seems worth asking, in such a context,” Joyce writes, “whether it is possible to characterize the legacy of the Victorians for colonial populations as anything other than a simple and unmitigated negative” (170). Can we see the colonial British heritage as “in some constitutive sense divided or self-contradictory?” (170) Joyce’s challenge presents an opportunity for opening up the fields of heritage cinema, adaptation studies, and postcolonial studies to new projects that cross nineteenth- and twentieth-century period distinctions as well as the disciplines of literature, film, history, and cultural studies.

Joyce’s reaching toward identifying the potential positives of colonial inheritance on postcolonial societies forms a chief concern of this project. I hope to show that the nineteenth-century British novel, an undeniable example of colonial heritage for postcolonial cultures, has the potential to challenge other aspects of that heritage that have proven more nefarious. British literature and British Improvement both represent

important parts of the colonial inheritance of ex-British colonies, but the former offers strategies to critique the latter. To differentiate between the benefits and harms of imperialism opens up a dangerous path if we assume the differentiation implies that British colonialism did, in at least one way, “improve the natives” by sharing with them Britain’s superior literary culture. My argument makes no such claim: whether the literary culture that postcolonial societies inherited from Britain was superior to indigenous literary cultures depends on the very value judgments this project seeks to deconstruct. My aim, instead, is to illuminate the benefits of the portability of culture in an age of globalization. For the films I examine here, the nineteenth-century British novel functions as a language that can be used to think through and critique contemporary global problems.

All of the films I consider in the chapters that follow appropriate certain aspects of English national culture in the form of its classic novels, and either relocate their plots and settings to postcolonial societies or use the novels to comment on neo-imperial relations. English national cinema—and its niche in world cinema—has traditionally been closely tied to heritage adaptations, and the source novels upon which these adaptations are based have been equally important to the definition of English culture abroad. The films I consider perform a kind of cultural theft that capitalizes on the transportability of culture from one context to another and does not respect England’s national claims to its literary heritage over and above its transformation into international heritage.

Recently, Mette Hjort has discussed the pitfalls of cultural portability. Focusing on Sydney Pollack’s *Out of Africa* (1985), she argues that the film brings to the fore the

problem of international versus national heritage and the question of who gets to tell the story of an internationally recognized, but nationally beloved, writer and her works. *Out of Africa*, a period biopic about Danish author Karen Blixen and her time spent in Kenya as the owner of a coffee plantation, raises the question of whether Blixen belongs more to Danish or Kenyan heritage, as well as the larger problematic of whether we must think of heritage as belonging to someone at all, and therefore not to someone else (193). Hjort argues that because the film was made into a glossy blockbuster Hollywood movie by a famous American director, *Out of Africa* “hijacks” Blixen’s life from both Danish and Kenyan national heritages and reorients it toward an international audience. The film “no longer recognizes the primacy of national roots, attachments, or official meanings. The international heritage film, it could be argued, is a matter of transporting a life, understood both as intimate core and nationally available significations, into a quite different cultural register” (198-199).

Hjort’s criticism of an international appropriation of national heritage makes sense in context, since she is concerned with the appropriation of “small” by “large,” or “the transformation of a minor culture’s cultural capital into modes of expression and significance that resonate within a hegemonic culture with global reach” (200). For Hjort, cultural theft represents a significant problem “encountered by postcolonial states that continue, in various ways, to grapple with the legacies of colonialism, even in the wake of independence” (200). The appropriation of national heritage, and by extension, national cinemas, by the dominant cultural power in the industry represents a further marginalization of the “smaller” nations and a kind of heritage-based neo-colonialism.

Studies such as Hjort's provide interesting contrasts to my own: in the case of my films, hijacking benefits the cause of postcolonial critique rather than compromising it. The filmmakers in my study—postcolonial nationals as well as British and American directors who use their films to perform postcolonial critique—claim a degree of ownership over the English national literary canon, an ownership which allows them to transform an erstwhile hegemonic and imperial culture's cultural capital into new texts that express the experience of postcolonialism shared by many "small" cultures. The films I consider appropriate an internationalized culture to make it relevant to new nations. Whereas Hjort reflects on the dangers of appropriation of "small" by "big," my project suggests the possibilities of adaptation of "big" by "small."

By claiming that the films I consider in the following chapters are "heritage adaptations," despite the fact that none of them fits the aesthetic or period demarcations of the existing genre, I argue that we should broaden our interpretation of what counts as a heritage adaptation. All of the films consider English national literary heritage as international literary heritage, and therefore available for use as source texts that speak to new realities. By violating the national ownership of English canonical novels, the films I examine divorce "heritage" and "adaptation" from the charges of complicity in the conservative, Thatcherite agenda they are most often associated with, for the concepts need not forever be bound to the particular context under which they arose. Thinking of heritage as international broadens the selection of films that can be considered by heritage scholars, opening up the field in the direction of cross-cultural adaptation and refocusing the discussion of adaptation on how source texts are used in the present, rather

than stymieing the conversation at how they preserve the past (and whose past they preserve).

If the critical discussion surrounding heritage cinema has become more international in scope, adaptation theory has been slower to do so. The major currents of adaptation theory over the past sixty years have focused on English-language, British and American costume dramas and their formalist transcriptions of page to screen. From medium-specific to comparative to pluralist theories of adaptation, little attention has been given to cross-cultural adaptation, to questions of what one culture chooses to adapt from another culture and for what purposes, and the implications such adaptation might have for the generative possibilities of globalization, without ignoring its harmful effects.

The closest adaptation studies has come to thinking about adaptation as cross-cultural encounter has been Deborah Cartmell's and Imelda Whelehan's identification of a group of adaptations they call "genrified" adaptations, which shift historical and geographic locations of their source texts. In a recent volume, the authors discuss three films, *A Simple Twist of Fate* (1994), written by Steve Martin, Alfonso Cuarón's *Great Expectations* (1998), and Michael Winterbottom's *The Claim* (2000), adaptations of George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, Dickens's *Great Expectations*, and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, respectively. All three films relocate the original plots of the novels in time and space, and in doing so, combine canonical Victorian narratives with cinematic codes which allow the movies to be identified not only as literary adaptations, but also as genre films. All three of the films they examine limit the cross-cultural encounter they stage between Anglo-American cultures, rather than staging a north-south or postcolonial crossing of cultures. However, Cartmell's and Whelehan's isolation of adaptations that

lift the “cardinal functions” of the source novels (McFarlane, *Novel* 13) and use them for updated purposes—in their case, to challenge genre conventions—paves the way for studies such as mine.¹

Postcolonial adaptation is its own sort of beneficial development. It creates a different but recognizable text that engages with pressing social concerns using source texts whose connection to historical offenses do not preclude them from new usefulness. Whereas the adaptations I examine recognize the negative legacies of Improvement—its assumptions about time, space, and modernity—they also recognize the potential of nineteenth-century fiction to provide adaptable ideas, narratives, characters, and forms with which to critique the negative aspects of that colonial heritage. Colonial heritage is divided and self-contradictory, both negative and potentially positive. Improvement, in its form as colonial ideology that marries an Enlightenment capitalist preoccupation with progress and profit to a Victorian work ethic and obsession with hierarchy, denied colonized societies the right to define for themselves what progress might mean and how it should be achieved. But improvement as adaptation, as a turning of an old thing to new use for the benefit of contemporary social critique, can be a powerful way to assert the claims of the historically disenfranchised. Adaptation, as theory and cultural product, transforms colonial heritage into a heritage improved. In doing so, it expands the conceptual possibilities of improvement and development while critiquing the imperial-capitalist foundations upon which mainstream definitions of those concepts rest. Like the films whose transformative work lies at the center of this dissertation, I now turn to the work of adapting colonial heritage into a heritage improved.

CHAPTER ONE

Improvement, Development, and Consumer Culture in Jane Austen and Popular Indian Cinema

In *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), Edward Said offered both a definition and an injunction for what postcolonial studies could do to the nineteenth-century British canon: perform contrapuntal readings that would provide resistance to the imperial ideology that the novels helped to create and perpetuate. In this chapter, I argue that the “consolidated vision” of nineteenth-century imperialism and its cultural products, specifically the British novel’s complicity with imperial ideology, was far less consolidated than Said’s reading suggests. Austen’s novels, as well as the other novels I examine in the following chapters, contain within them their own contrapuntal readings—moments, subplots, characters, settings, and other narrative elements that try to undo, or at least provide some traction against, the imperial ideology with which the novels are partially imbricated. To emphasize the novels’ complicity in ideology without attending sufficiently to the more subtle ways in which they are not complicit with their contemporary historical forces denies the novels their complexity, and more importantly, limits our interpretation of how they have been and can be used in our current historical, political, and cultural moment. Although the nineteenth-century British novel is an undeniable example of colonial

heritage, it has the potential to challenge other aspects of that heritage that have proven more nefarious. Yoking together the British Romantic novel and the Romantic-era discourse of Improvement into a consolidated vision that privileges the ideology overlooks the ways in which the former might offer strategies to critique the latter.

This chapter contributes to a method of reading Austen postcolonially through the lens of *use*. Recent Austen critics have examined the question of what uses postcolonial societies make of Austen and her novels in the contemporary globalized world.² Such new work reflects the understanding that the nineteenth-century British novels with which Said took issue are not reducible to the ideology of imperialism and the history of colonialism in which they are implicated. More importantly, it also reflects a sense that neoliberal capitalism has changed the power relations among populations throughout the globe: the old imperialists and their novels have given way to new imperialists and their money. Neoliberal capital, although it had its beginnings in western imperial expansion, is no longer tethered to it, and the new imperialism affects social relations within indigenous populations as much as between first and third world societies. To talk about uses and reuses of colonial cultural products emphasizes the agency of postcolonial authors and artists in remaking what may once have been imposed upon them newly useful on their own terms. Reading for use instead of resistance does not de-politicize postcolonial studies, Austenian or otherwise, but takes into account that new social, economic, and cultural conditions require new approaches to the study of how texts function in the world.

I hope to link this new line of postcolonial Austen criticism with cinematic adaptations of Austen, for adaptation criticism has long understood the value of focusing

on use and reuse as a lens through which to, on the one hand, revisit the source novels and illuminate them in new ways, and on the other hand, see how the source texts take on new life in new contexts. The question of why Austen is still being adapted (the central question for Austen adaptation scholars) is linked inextricably to the question of what ends Austen is being adapted to serve, or in other words, to what use Austen is now being put in our contemporary cultural landscape. Tackling these questions from a postcolonial perspective encourages us to ask why postcolonial texts, specifically, adapt Austen, to what uses they put her, and what Austen provides for postcolonial authors and artists who use her work to speak to their own concerns.

In this chapter, I explore Austen's critique of Regency-era Improvement discourse and the ways in which two post-millennium Bollywood adaptations reappropriate her critique to confront the discourse of neoliberal Development in post-independence India. Gurinder Chadha's *Bride and Prejudice* (2004) and Rajshree Ojha's *Aisha* (2010), adaptations of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*, respectively, necessitate our revisiting of the often-discussed but under-nuanced understanding of Improvement in Jane Austen's novels. The adaptations illuminate a strain of anti-Improving sentiment in the novels located in the novels' optimism about the power of non-teleological development that provides a temporary escape from the unrelenting future orientation of progress in early nineteenth-century Improvement ideology. The postcolonial adaptations illuminate Austen's anti-Improving sentiment by deploying it against new objects of analysis: the American land developer with "Improving eyes" and twenty-first-century Indian neoliberal Development. The first film translates Austen's non-teleological development into an uncritical acceptance of twenty-first-century Indian consumer

culture. The second film, however, is deeply unsatisfied with consumer capitalism as a replacement of the old colonial Improvement narrative: *Aisha* refuses to accept non-teleological change as all the change we need.

In Austen's novels and their Bollywood adaptations, I discover a cross-cultural, transnational, and trans-historical expression of the disjunction between discourses of progress (colonial and postcolonial) and their manifestation in everyday reality, a disjunction I characterize as a double temporality: forward march manifested as endless delay. To make my argument, I first review the ways in which Improvement has been understood in the critical history on Austen. I show how an anti-Improving sentiment in her novels that I locate in her deployment of non-teleological development has been overlooked. I then perform a reading of *Emma* that illustrates Austen's use of non-teleological development that ends by examining the translation of this escape from futurity into late-capitalist consumer culture in Amy Heckerling's *Clueless* (1995), a film that functions as an important point of reference for both *Bride and Prejudice* and *Aisha*. I then examine the history of colonial Improvement and postcolonial Development in India, and the responses posed to this history by neoliberal capitalism, the Bollywood industry, and finally, the two Austen adaptations.

Doubling back to Said, my focus on use instead of resistance in postcolonial texts reveals how texts produced by an old colonial power can be transformed through new readings into new responses to new power inequalities produced by global capitalism. The postcolonial adaptations I examine no longer limit their understanding of nineteenth-century British novels to sources of oppression that must be rewritten, for sources of oppression and resistance can no longer be mapped strictly onto the formerly colonial

(and their cultural productions) and the formerly colonized. Instead, the Bollywood films uncover in Austen's novels a "universal" demand for socially-just betterment that resonates deeply with the particular injustices that neoliberal Development has created in India. Attending to the "how," or the specific ways in which these films have adapted Austen leads to an understanding of the "why," the reasons for adapting Austen in postcolonial texts and the purposes that Austen's novels can now serve in the contemporary world.

Austen's Unprogressive Change

"Improvement" in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Britain was a term used to describe opposing political positions. "Innovative" or progressive improvers encouraged the rapid and totalizing overhaul of governments, landscapes, and social relations that seemed to usher in and become emblematic of modernization. Conservative improvers criticized such innovative forms of improvement as destructive rather than progressive, arguing instead for a steady, slowly evolving adaptation of past to future. Improvement has long been a central concern to critics interested in Austen and the historical context of her novels. Alistair Duckworth's *The Improvement of the Estate* (1971), the foundational text concerning Austen's novels and late eighteenth-century improvement discourse, established *Mansfield Park* as the preeminent text to which to look for Austen's political position on improvement. Duckworth argues that Austen fundamentally agrees with the conservative understanding of improvement put forth by Edmund Burke as preservation of the past for slow and steady movement into the future. Duckworth's argument brings together morality and physical space: one's moral

grounding in an inherited culture of traditions and values rests on the material grounds upon which that tradition sits, the country estate. The estate symbolized “a whole social and moral inheritance” (30) and the notion of “enclosure” applied not only to the privatization of common land but to the individuals who owned it. The estate “enclosed” the individual into “a little world of harmony and peace,” the “very disposition of buildings and landscape” manifesting “an organization that has evolved over a long period of time,” an organization that one should preserve and amend, but never destroy (2).

To make this argument, Duckworth creates an opposition between Austen’s/Burke’s improvement and the methods of landscape improver Humphry Repton, whose name is mentioned several times in *Mansfield Park*. The novel’s sixth chapter opens with a discussion of Repton’s improvements to Compton, an estate belonging to a friend of Mr. Rushworth. “I never saw a place so altered in my life,” Rushworth says; “I told Smith I did not know where I was. The approach *now*, is one of the finest things in the country: you see the house in the most surprising manner” (51). Comparing the new and improved Compton to his own estate, Sotherton, he remarks that his grounds “looked like a prison—quite a dismal old prison,” a place that “wants improvement, ma’am, beyond anything. I never saw a place that wanted so much improvement in my life” (51). The conversation suggests that Repton’s aesthetic entails a totalizing and imprudent notion of landscape improvement that disregards heritage, moral and natural. The fact that the innovative, worldly characters in the novel—Maria Bertram, the Crawfords—as well as the stupid and insidious ones—Rushworth, Mrs. Norris—embrace such improvements suggests that Austen is critical of overhaul, in moral, political, and cultural,

as well as material, terms. Only Edmund and Fanny, the responsible, level-headed characters who eventually inherit Sir Thomas Bertram's moral and material patrimony, would, in Edmund's words, "rather have an inferior degree of beauty, of my own choice, and acquired progressively" (54).

Critics writing after Duckworth concerned with Austen and improvement have tended either to agree with his reading of Austen as a conservative improver, disagree and characterize her as much more progressive, or position her somewhere in between.³ Furthermore, almost all later critics follow Duckworth in placing *Mansfield Park* at the center of Austen's explorations on improvement. What's helpful about these readings is their alignment of Romantic-era notions of moral and social progress with the belief that such progress was lodged in an explicitly future-oriented process that assigned normative values to past, present, and future: the future will always be better than the past, and the present is but a pit-stop on the way to the future. Even conservative conceptions of improvement saw forward-moving change as necessary and good: although we should venerate the past, we can never go back, and thus we should seek to make the future a better version of it.⁴ Duckworth and the critics writing after him identify improvement ideology as teleological progress and locate that ideology in the inevitable forward movement of the plot, in which a heroine matures, becoming a more productive and suitable member of society, as she moves forward through clock- and calendrical time. Moral and social progress occur simultaneously, as the *bildung* of the heroine culminates in her taking up a leadership role in her society (by marrying into its top echelon).

These critics reveal that teleology in Austen functions as both narrative form and ideology: the plot plods forward in time, telling the story of the inevitable march onward

of moral and social progress. According to the plot, the Austenian heroine is “better” at the end of her story than at the beginning—happier, richer, and importantly, more in line with the moral constraints of her society. Emma Woodhouse’s arrogance, Elizabeth Bennett’s independence, and Marianne Dashwood’s impulsiveness are all tempered, mitigated to a degree that does not threaten the peace and stability of the community: thus, individual and social betterment are intertwined, and both depend on the plot’s getting to where it needs to go.

But the plot is not all there is to Austen’s novels, and focusing exclusively on the close relationship between plot and teleological development risks overlooking the many extra-plot elements of the narratives that work against the ideology the plots espouse. William Galperin has observed in Austen’s novels a tension between the plot and what he calls “differentials” that run counter to it. To appreciate Austen’s novels, Galperin argues, one must read the “totality” of the experience of everyday life that the novels represent. For Galperin, the plot is the real villain: the moral and social improvement plot pushes the heroine toward a future in which her possibilities and choices for being will be more limited, more constrained, and more “acceptable” than they are in the middle of the novel, or at its beginning. The teleological movement of the heroine toward marriage and her community toward bourgeois domesticity closes down, rather than opening up, the possibilities of “becoming” that improvement as a conceptual category entails. Improvement as it’s figured in the plot is not a form of expansion, but rather a form of limitation.

But Galperin also argues that the novels provide ways to resist the impending closure of the plot’s end even while feeling the force of its inevitability: “For continually

shadowing the change or improvement relegated to marriage in the novels, whose heroines marry either happily or up or both, is another horizon of change, registered primarily through accompanying details that I call ‘differentials,’ that the novels tend mostly to project or to embed in a story that can’t be told or resolved by the usual means” (“The Surprising Fidelity” 189). Differentials take the form of characters, scenes, or alternative plot lines that the ideological thrust of the novel’s main storyline seems unable to co-opt or manage. For example, Mary and Henry Crawford’s performative (rather than earnest) sensibilities, Miss Bates’s useless verbosity, and Mrs. Elton’s desire to remake Highbury society for her own benefit rather than for its own “good” exemplify significant but futile elements of resistance to improvement’s distillation of the plenitude of everyday experience into only what is good for the nation and its women (*Historical Austen* 154-213). Austen does not represent the future, as the plot would have us believe, as an open horizon of possibilities, but rather as a deterministic horizon of probabilities that limits what is considered possible—for society, for women’s lives, and for the form of the novel. In their resistance or escape from the forward momentum of the main marriage plot, differentials occupy a clandestine realm that operates within and underneath the dominant teleology and take the form of digressions, involutions, and backward glances that do not advance, but in fact *delay*, the protagonist’s movement toward her foregone conclusion.

In the section that follows, I provide an analysis of *Emma* that reads plot and anti-plot together and against one another: such a reading reveals a doubled temporality of forward motion and repeated delays that seek to stall that momentum. In choosing *Emma* as my main text, I also stake a claim that in order to understand Austen’s subtle and

complex treatment of improvement ideology, we should look to *Emma* and not to *Mansfield Park* (at least not primarily). My reading of *Emma* ends by examining the ways in which *Clueless*, *Bride and Prejudice* and *Aisha* translate the novel's twin narrative energies—forward movement and its delay—into the experience of everyday life under neoliberal modernization. The adaptations ruminate on the promises and disappointments of non-teleological development as a realm of open possibilities that keeps at bay a determined future, but perhaps also real progress.

Emma: Moving Forward and Looking Back

The future as figured in *Emma* is a place where Highbury is not; it is a time and a place in which what we are reading about has disappeared, and thus the future is characterized by what is missing rather than by what is available. The desire to delay the future marks the novel from beginning to end. In an early passage, we are introduced to the society that Emma and Mr. Woodhouse keep after the departure of Mrs. Weston. That society consists of Mrs. and Miss Bates and Mrs. Goddard, women whose “quiet prosings,” the narrator says, “made [Emma] feel that every evening so spent, was indeed one of the long evenings she had fearfully anticipated” (Austen, *Emma* 18). Emma's evenings never manage to make worthwhile the process of getting ready for those evenings, and her “looking forward to exactly such a close of the present day” (18) is really a hope against hope that the evening will not transpire, once again, the same way it did the day before. The future, here cast as the *closing* of each day, is not characterized by possibility but rather by probability: what Emma really looks forward to is a time when the thing she's looking forward to will be over. Emma makes lists of books to read

but never reads them (29); she begins plenty of drawings but never finishes them (35). Although making plans and envisioning beginnings evince a “looking forward to,” she never takes the necessary steps to concretize that projected future into a present reality. Completion closes down the possibility that resides in a thing not done, and for Emma, the future amounts to a predictable end as opposed to a happy fulfillment of a set of old values or a new beginning. But the future, in the form of the novel’s forward-moving plot, is inevitable and approaching quickly.

The multi-faceted present functions as a temporary escape hatch from such an oppressive and already determined future. Emma frequently imagines how other people live the present moment differently from herself, an imagining that recalls Benedict Anderson’s notion of modern simultaneity in *Imagined Communities* (xx). Although she looks down her nose at the Martins, she is not above being “amused by such a picture of another set of beings” (22). The Martins represent another way of being in the world, at the same time and place in which she also exists. She and Harriet also indulge in imagining “those among our absent friends who are more cheerfully employed”:

“At this moment, perhaps, Mr. Elton is shewing your picture to his mother and sisters, telling how much more beautiful is the original, and after being asked for it five or six times, allowing them to hear your name, your own dear name.”

“My picture!—But he has left my picture in Bond-street.”

“Has he so!—Then I know nothing of Mr. Elton. No, my dear little modest Harriet, depend upon it the picture will not be in Bond-street till just before he mounts his horse to-morrow. It is his companion all this evening, his solace, his delight. It opens his designs to his family, it introduces you among them, it diffuses through the party those pleasantest feelings of our nature, eager curiosity and warm prepossession. How cheerful, how animated, how suspicious, how busy their imaginations all are!” (45)

Harriet is cheered by Emma's creation of a simultaneous, alternative present that exists at the same time but in a happier elsewhere.

The past likewise functions as a repository for some relief from the future.

Harriet's fourteen-minute visit with the Martin women centers on a collective remembrance of good times spent together, ending with a readiness "to feel the same consciousness, the same regrets—to be ready to return to the same good understanding" they had felt for each other before Harriet's rejection of Martin in her quest for upward mobility (147). Emma's carriage, however, cuts short this respite by taking Harriet away. The promise of reviving the Crown Inn from its dilapidated state into a ball-room for one night allows Emma and Frank to "contemplate its capabilities" and imagine a time when "the neighborhood had been in a particularly populous, dancing state" (155). The ball, however, never transpires, and the plot cuts short the preparations made for it by calling Frank back to Enscombe. Although it seems that the main plot has won this battle by foreclosing on the possibility of the development of Emma's and Frank's romance (thus keeping open the way for Knightley), we find out later that Frank's departure actually forms a piece of the secondary, hidden plot involving Jane Fairfax.

As the main plot tries to contain the possibilities that musings on the present and past offer, it also tries to contain experiences of change that cannot be defined as linear progress. Micro-level change is constantly occurring at Highbury: letters come and go, apples are sent and returned, eyeglasses are broken and fixed, visitors arrive earlier or later than expected. Mr. Woodhouse cannot cope with this non-teleological change in everyday life; thus, he lives in perpetual anxiety of everything, down to his inability to regulate the temperature in places other than Hartfield. He never ventures out if he can

help it and is unable to head the household on account of his fears. His acute sensitivity, however, acts as a barometer to change that does not produce progress. But what Mr. Woodhouse intuits, Miss Bates verbalizes. While Mr. Woodhouse's sex and rank allow him to hide away from everyday life, Miss Bates's position prevents her from doing so, and the way she deals with continuous change is to talk about it, continuously.

Not introduced until Volume Two, Miss Bates's repetitive rambling must, but cannot entirely, be contained by the first and third volumes of the novel. We first meet her when Emma pays the Bateses a visit, and she immediately "overpowers" her visitor with "care and kindness" (122). After asking about Mr. Woodhouse, and talking about a recent visit from the Coles, and touching upon Mr. Elton, Miss Bates checks Emma's attempt at escape by plunging into an account of an unexpected letter from Jane Fairfax:

'Oh! here it is. I was sure it could not be far off; but I had put my huswife upon it, you see, without being aware, and so it was quite hid, but I had it in my hand so very lately that I was almost sure it must be on the table. I was reading it to Mrs. Cole, and since she went away, I was reading it again to my mother, for it is such a pleasure to her—a letter from Jane—that she can never hear it often enough; so I knew it could not be far off, and here it is, only just under my huswife—and since you are so kind as to wish to hear what she says;—but, first of all, I really must, in justice to Jane, apologise for her writing so short a letter—only two pages you see—hardly two—and in general she fills the whole paper and crosses half. My mother often wonders that I can make it out so well. She often says, when the letter is first opened, "Well, Hetty, now I think you will be put to it to make out all that chequer-work"—don't you, ma'am? (123)

"All this spoken extremely fast," the narrator says, and the only reply Emma can squeak out is "something very civil about the excellence of Miss Fairfax's handwriting," a reply then repeated twice by Miss Bates to accommodate her deaf mother. Miss Bates's expansive speech manifests time itself: she verbalizes each moment and its attendant thought or action as it passes, and is even able, as in the passage above, to record the

traces of certain moments and narrate them later to someone who was not there to witness them. She functions as both an archive of everyday life and a live transmission of events that fall under the radar, as they happen.

Perverse though it may seem to say so, Miss Bates's voluminous speech represents possibility and promise: the promise in the past and the present that characterize the other differentials that operate within and against the forward-moving main plot. Her monologues double back on themselves—three times in the passage above (she reads the letter once to Mrs. Cole, a second time to her mother, and a third to Emma). But each repetition is different, for each is tied to the specific time and place in which the recitation happened: the reading to Mrs. Cole is marked by the fact that she went away after hearing it; the reading to Mrs. Bates is marked by the old woman's pleasure in listening; and the re-discovery of the letter under the huswife reveals all the layers of tellings and retellings and the historical minutiae of each that would otherwise have been lost.

Miss Bates's speeches go nowhere: there seems never a point or a goal to them, and certainly not an end unless someone else interferes. She speaks not for the sake of communication or for the sake of producing an effect, but for the sake of recordation, and more importantly, for the sake of useless sociability. Her sociability threatens Emma and the forward-moving plot precisely because it cannot be turned to good use; or rather, it is useful only for making life more interesting in the present and for calling up the past, and not at all for the teleological development of the heroine or her society. Miss Bates marks time, and in doing so, marks change, but change figured as lateral movement as opposed to forward momentum. And Miss Bates herself, "a woman neither young, handsome, rich,

nor married,” cannot be turned to any use besides marking time—she is unimprovable—and yet, she “enjoyed a most uncommon degree of popularity” and “was a happy woman, and a woman whom no one named without good-will” (17).

But even Miss Bates has an awareness of calendrical time, the temporal dimension that acts as a double to her own. She repeats that Jane will come “Friday or Saturday... Oh, yes, Friday or Saturday next... next Friday or Saturday, and the Campbells leave town... the Monday following.” Jane will remain for “three months... at least. Three months... positively” (124). Homogeneous, empty time ticks by, carrying Miss Bates along its current: her anxious voicings suggest a consciousness of the fact that as time progresses, she “sink[s]” from “the comforts she was born into,” as well as further and further into the past, a relic of a different country (295). While her repeated refrain of naming days, weeks, and months manifests a deep anxiety toward calendrical time, it also shows that she deals with this anxiety by finding a way to read time as a perpetual present, even if that reading is constantly interrupted and can only be maintained for a short while. Miss Bates’s anxiety at feeling the passage of time is only one example of the general sense of unease that rises to the surface throughout the novel. The Box Hill excursion seems to be ill-fated even before it gets started, certainly well before Emma’s checking of Miss Bates. “Seven miles were travelled in expectation of enjoyment... but in the general amount of the day there was deficiency. There was a languor, a want of spirits, a want of union, which could not be got over” (288). Emma acts “gay and thoughtless” with Frank not “from any real felicity” but because “she felt less happy than she had expected” and “laughed because she was disappointed” (289). Miss Bates sums up the day best when she says that “even pleasure, you know, is fatiguing” (300). Pleasure in *Emma* serves to

cover up the nagging “want” and “deficiency,” the feeling that something is missing from present experiences, and that even the present, as it recedes into the past, is already a poor substitute for something else—a kind of real happiness—that should have been there but wasn’t. Like the avenue of limes at Donwell which “led to nothing; nothing but a view...which seemed intended, in their erection, to give the appearance of an approach to the house, which never had been there” (283), there remains a sense in the novel of an emptiness that functions as a placeholder for something that never emerged, but whose existence was terminated anyway.

This sense of something never transpired but already lost or presently being lost differs from Burke’s desire to preserve the past. It does not nostalgize what has been, but rather produces a sense that what counts as “what has been” or the idea of the past inherited by the present, is incomplete. And what has been left out of a Burkean ancient constitution is gone for good without even having had the recognition of existence. It is, as Galperin calls it, “a missed opportunity,” but an opportunity that was never available to begin with. Thus, neither Burkean nor radical improvement can save it or bring it into being, and the non-teleological change that ostensibly provides some respite from a foreclosed future only serves to make the absence of real happiness, or real betterment, more strongly felt.

This tension between faith and disappointment in non-teleological change as an antidote to coerced teleological development provides the central narrative interest in Amy Heckerling’s *Clueless*, the 1995 adaptation-turned-teen-sensation that updates and restages *Emma* among high school students in 1990s Beverly Hills, California. Galperin argues that *Clueless*, like *Emma*, is irreducible to its marriage or courtship plot; instead, it

creates a “‘widening’ separation of story and information” that leaves the development of the protagonist “intact, but as an object of interpretation from which the novel overall is increasingly disarticulated” (“The Surprising Fidelity” 190). Like Emma, whom Galperin rightly observes is “far more interesting and attractive as the troublemaker first encountered than she is as Mrs. Knightley at the close” (190), the film’s Emma equivalent Cher Horowitz is far more engaging as the conspicuous consumer we meet in the beginning of the film than she is as the “pathetic do-gooder” (190) she becomes to suit the preferences of Josh, the film’s Knightley. Galperin suggests that while the novel resists Emma’s domestic improvement, the film rejects Cher’s entirely, folding the romantic comedy storyline into its astute commentary on the myriad different but relatively equal lifestyle choices that Cher’s generation enjoys. Slang and fashion, he writes, are the principle sites that lodge the film’s argument that the “change and difference occurring daily” (190)—the sort of change found in the difference between what was new yesterday and what is new today—is the only “improvement” we have, but also the only improvement we need.

I suggest that rather than the general currents of language and fashion, it is the late-twentieth-century mall, and more specifically, the act of going shopping in it, that provides *Clueless*’s challenge to the developmental arc of the courtship plot and its protagonist’s improvement. From the first scene, which shows Cher getting dressed for school (an algorithmic challenge involving a computer that mixes and matches her clothes until it creates the perfect outfit), to the way Cher explains the class hierarchy at her high school to new student Tai as if she were explaining the differences between clothing brands, the world of *Clueless* is a world flattened into various but equally

insignificant choices. Cher does not like Josh's taste in music or television shows (he prefers the "maudlin college station" and CNN over her trendy pop and MTV), but there isn't anything inherently better about her own choices, and she knows it. The fact that she can prefer one thing over another, and then afford to obtain what she likes, is her most significant source of (buying) power.

The mall provides the center of gravity in Cher's life, and it centralizes while emanating the power of choice that Cher and her peers possess. After failed attempts at convincing her debate teacher Mr. Hall (the film's Mr. Weston) to raise her grade, Cher says in voiceover: "I felt impotent and out of control, which I really hate. I needed to find sanctuary in a place where I could gather my thoughts and regain my strength." The next shot shows the exterior of a mall. Although the editing here is clearly ironic and pokes fun (as Austen's narrator does) at the protagonist's superficiality, the mall is nevertheless where Cher finally manages to figure out how to improve her grade, as well as the grades of everyone in her class: make a love match between Mr. Hall and social studies teacher Ms. Geist (the film's Miss Taylor), an act that makes the two teachers genuinely happy and culminates in the wedding at the end of the film.

The film also uses the mall as a synecdoche for non-teleological change and immaturity. At dinner one night, Cher's father expresses disappointment at Cher's lack of ambition and wishes she would hurry up and "get some direction." To this, Josh quips, "she does have direction—to the mall." And near the end of the film Cher is temporarily diverted from her realization that she has loved Josh all along by a dress she sees in a storefront window, about which she wonders, "Ooh, I wonder if they have that in my size." Cher's final choice, a choice that launches her into adulthood, lies between

shopping and Josh—between enjoying the limited power she possesses of seeing the world as a bazaar, full of possibilities through which she might navigate according to her own preferences rather than prescriptions of right and wrong; and her future self as Josh’s more disciplined girlfriend.

Whereas Galperin sees the film as endorsing consumerism’s escape from the limitations of improvement, I read it as much more ambivalent about the real value a shopper’s world has to offer. *Clueless* remains on the fence about the kind of improvement it wants to endorse: improvements that entail only change and no betterment, or improvement that claims real progress that it ultimately fails to deliver. For although growing into Josh’s adult world and perspective limits the expansive reality of Cher’s immature world of non-teleological change, the latter is ultimately naïve and temporary and represents a sad state of disengagement for American youth. If her future represents no real improvement on her present, consumerism represents a kind of complacency that jettisons the possibility of real betterment altogether.

I have dilated on *Clueless* because it exemplifies the ways in which adaptations can make their source narratives speak to new historical realities while at the same time use such “updating” to reflect back on the intricacies of the source text itself. While Austen’s novels do not explicitly lodge their differentials in concrete depictions of shopping, reading her novels within the context of 1990s consumerism helps us to interpret the double temporalities of improvement in her work. *Clueless* and the popular Indian films I discuss below use shopping as a metaphor to express *Emma*’s twin narrative energies, as well as the novel’s ambivalence about the turn away from teleology *in toto* as the solution to escaping the determinism of teleological improvement ideology.

The films suggest that in a postmodern, postcolonial world, shopping may provide a temporary alternative to the demands of national and individual maturation—a reprieve from the responsibilities of having to do what’s morally good and socially useful. However, it remains a woefully unsatisfactory alternative that itself limits the possibilities of reimagining a modernity that is truly better than the past.⁵

The section that follows focuses on *Bride and Prejudice* and *Aisha*. I first provide an account of improvement discourse in India during the British colonial period and its postcolonial legatee, the discourse of third world development, through the lens of teleology. I argue that both colonial improvement discourse and postcolonial development discourse foreclose on a multiplicity of indigenous futures by defining progress as necessarily western and capitalist. I then read the films as responses to such improvement and development discourses. Like *Clueless*, both Indian films use the metaphor of shopping to reflect the resistance of middle-class youth against accepting a future that has already been decided for them, and the pleasures of possessing a newly acquired purchasing power. *Bride and Prejudice* embraces the shopper’s sensibility and uses it as a foundation for a multi-cultural, cosmopolitan attitude towards difference. *Aisha*, however, finds that foregoing progressive change altogether in favor of enjoying its delay ultimately capitulates to neocolonial capital and forecloses on an alternate understanding of development as socially-just betterment that has yet to transpire, but whose termination may be fast approaching.

Development and Discontent in Popular Indian Cinema

In late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British India, liberals like Thomas Macaulay and James and John Stuart Mill sought radical change to indigenous institutions, believing that the English were responsible for liberating India from centuries of oppression stemming from a backward religious hierarchy that inhibited the progress of the masses toward becoming modern subjects. Infusing Indian society with English liberal ideals founded on free trade and individual freedom would bring about the radical improvement of Indian people, while, conveniently, making India a rational, efficient, and immensely profitable part of the modern British economy.⁶ But the eventual good trading partnership that Britain was to enjoy with India under the liberal model was a long way off: first, Indians would have to undergo moral and educational reform by way of Christianization and an English curriculum; individual improvement would then, after decades, create the necessary conditions for social and economic development. Until then, an authoritarian British state was the best way of ensuring that India stayed on its developmental track.⁷

After the Company's rule was fully transferred to the Crown, however, imperial policy shifted toward Utilitarianism, which was pessimistic about the Whiggish grand narrative that the early liberals championed. For Utilitarians Jeremy Bentham and James Mill, the possibility of transferring power and the administration of the state to the Indians remained so far off in the distant future as to be moot; rather than educating the Indians to eventually run the machine themselves, the British would do better to concentrate on building a superior machine. It was in the Utilitarian spirit that administrators of the Victorian Raj set about building railways, erecting factories and training workers, and rapidly industrializing urban areas (Roy 33-55). Improvement of

the bureaucratic state was such a tremendous undertaking that it must begin immediately, but doing so closed off not only alternative possibilities for India's future, but also any possibility that a focus on the present moment without thought to "where we are going" might provide any relief against determinism.

Perhaps it was the liberals' and utilitarians' belief in India as "becoming," as a nation that would be radically different and better in the future than it had been in the past, that led Mohandas K. Gandhi to look uncompromisingly toward the past for the foundation of his nationalist movement and vision of a postcolonial future. Against the tide of liberalism that won the day in imperial policymaking throughout the Victorian period, Gandhi proposed a twentieth-century India more medieval than modern. In *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi's call to national independence consists of "restoring" India to its "pristine condition" by "returning" to the ancient religions, languages, texts, institutions, and customs of the pre-colonial past (94). Infused with cultural chauvinism throughout, the pamphlet is curiously reminiscent of the conservative British Orientalists in its argument that the imperialists criticized India's civilization for what actually made it the best in the world: its unchangeability (53). But the text also evinces an affinity with the early liberals, for the foundation of national *swaraj*, or national self-rule, was individual *swaraj*, or moral self-rule. Such moral improvement consisted of a fierce anti-capitalism that rejected machine-made and British-imported goods, as well as what Gandhi saw as the Indians' own greed for capital accumulation that allowed the British to maintain power. And for Gandhi, as for the British evangelists, moral *swaraj* was something "far off as yet" (3): the long trek back toward a pre-capitalist and precolonial India nevertheless adhered to the long timeline of (anti-) development.

After independence, Jawaharlal Nehru combined Gandhi's self-rule with the capital intensive, heavily industrial, hulking bureaucratic state of the Victorian Raj. Jettisoning Gandhi's vision of a precolonial utopia, Nehru modeled the new Indian state on the Soviet Union, "leavened by social democratic values" (Brass 275). Focusing solely on making India an industrial giant that would depend only on its own resources and labor and driven by a benevolent public sector, Nehru based his plan for India's future on another country's present—but this time, not on Britain's—and the Nehruvian road to progress was just as long as any other had been during the colonial and decolonization periods.⁸ Progress felt so much like stagnation that Nehru's administration was termed "the license Raj" (DeLong 184), suggesting not only that forward movement took the form of everyday delay, but that the post-independence state did not seem so very different to the poor millions than the colonial system.

It was onto this long history of long histories of Indian progress that the neoliberal policies of Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh exploded in the early 1990s. The deregulation, import liberalization, access to foreign technology, reduction of marginal tax rates and tariffs, and the process of eliminating license restrictions—in short, the clearing of red tape to make way for private enterprise—that began in the final years of Rajiv Gandhi's administration were fully pursued with speed and efficiency during Rao's (DeLong 197). Suddenly, India became an economic growth miracle, developing at an unprecedented pace that seemed to make up for lost time. In the early 2000s, economists predicted "growth at a pace that promise[d] to double average productivity levels and living standards in India every sixteen years" (DeLong 184), and in the *2010 Economic Survey*, India was predicted to see double-digit growth in the current decade (Ghate 1).

The rapidity with which the country seemed to free itself from the good intentions but massive inefficiency of the *license Raj* suggested that India had finally found the path to “modernity”—the path that was no linear path at all, but a belief in the “now-ness” of neoliberal money-making. Acquiring, spending, enjoying, and living for immediate gratification could all happen *now*, as soon as economic development was unyoked from the normative imperatives of moral and social improvement.

Colonial and post-independence adherence to teleological development had assumed that progress must take time because it was a fundamentally collective experience. Gandhi and the British conservatives saw the collective experience of Indian tradition as the touchstone for all Indians in the present; liberals saw India’s future as an Anglicized democracy as something to which the whole population would aspire to reach together; and utilitarians saw the perfect government as benefitting as many of the collective as possible. But for the neoliberal developmental model of the 1990s to the present, space and time shrink down to the individual, each one acting in his or her own interests, no single interest more valid than another, no single strategy by which to participate in modernity’s great bounty better than any other. This abandonment of a collective experience of progress that seeks to spread the wealth (and the poverty) as the nation advances toward a higher standard of living for all produced an economic miracle as uneven as it has been rapid.⁹ Decoupling economic development from social justice has resulted in capital growth that has not necessarily meant more employment but has encouraged inflation of food costs. “The growth experience across Indian states has been very disparate, with some of the largest states experiencing decelerations in growth in the 1990s....In effect, the low growth that characterized the pre-1980s has been replaced by a

pattern of high but unbalanced growth in the post-1980s period” (Ghate 1). Tirthankar Roy has argued that such unbalanced postcolonial growth resembles colonial improvement and its failures in many ways. Both evince an unevenness tied to natural resource constraints and labor concentration, as well as a tendency to benefit some parties over others (Roy 46).

We can conclude from this narrative of improvement and development that runs through the colonial period into the present that the colonial and decolonization periods were marked by long temporal narratives of social and moral improvement that coerced Indian subjects to accept particular understandings of what “progress” meant and how it should be achieved. This has been met in the postmodern period with a reactionary emphasis on material development without much attention to any narrative of “betterment.” But if being forced into a colonial model of Anglicized Indianness and a far-off future that offers little more than someone else’s present produced the feeling of constriction and foreclosure, achieving a fast and furious wealth on one’s own terms that offers nothing more than more of itself may be no better. *Bride and Prejudice* and *Aisha* express both the promises and pitfalls of the neoliberal shock of the now as an alternative to the long wait of improvement. The films not only provide cogent examples of Bollywood’s engagement with the historical narrative of moral and social improvement leading to economic development in India, they also find a cultural analogue to the contemporary Indian situation in Austen’s reflections on non-teleological change as an alternative to improvement’s forward charge. The films adapt Austen’s complex engagement with improvement ideology to express vernacular social realities. Read alongside one another, the novels and their adaptations suggest a cross-cultural,

transnational, and trans-historical concern with the disjunction between the discourse of progress and its enjoyable, but regrettable, delays.

The Shoppers Worlds of *Bride and Prejudice* and *Aisha*

In the 1990s, the Rao-Singh neoliberal policies and India's accelerated growth created the ideal cultural and social conditions for Bollywood to make its comeback as the most popular form of Indian cinema.¹⁰ With private enterprise expanding the middle class and its access to goods and information, more people could afford to watch movies at home rather than go to the theaters, thus rapidly spreading the consumption of movies in video form. But if people did want to go to the theaters, the late 1990s also saw multiplexes patronized by affluent and middle-class families spring up in urban areas. Big budget, star-studded Bollywood rose out of the changes in audience, forms of consumption, and free-market distribution of the new India. Unlike New Indian Cinema, Bollywood received funding from private enterprise as opposed to the state, and thus has been seen to reflect the ideology of free-market capitalism responsible for its existence. Indeed, the economic policies of the 1990s affected not only the industrial and reception side of Bollywood, but its content as well. Rini Bhattacharya Mehta and Rajeshwari Pandharipande write that the "transition" of the 1990s "coordinated and rearranged its [Bollywood's] various generic orientations to adapt to an increasingly neo-liberal attitude towards economics and culture" (4). Bollywood began to popularize globalized, capital-driven phenomena such as basketball and Valentine's Day; global brand names appeared in films, and product placement became frequent, then unabashed (5). In the 1990s, familiar Bollywood tropes such as traditional family values and young love miraculously

aligned with a capitalist work ethic. At the turn of the millennium, the individual Indian citizen's successful participation in globalization became "the diegetic signifier for national value or pride" (2). India's rise in a globalized world was rebranded as the new nationalism, and Bollywood positioned itself as "this new, global-oriented nationalism's unofficial ideological apparatus" (2).

In many ways, both *Bride and Prejudice* (*B and P*) and *Aisha* position themselves ideologically alongside the Rao-Singh development policies of the 1990s. Both marry traditional Bollywood film language and content with an MTV aesthetic and particular attention to the middle class, globalization, and the diasporic community. The performance by American pop star Ashanti lip-syncing a Punjabi song on the Goa beach in *B and P* and the interspersion of short scenes that look like television cosmetics commercials in *Aisha*, in addition to the many non-resident Indian characters from the UK and US that make up the films' supporting casts, all reflect Bollywood's realignment with global capitalism. I argue, however, that whereas *B and P* evinces optimism about neoliberal development—and accounts for its lure as a reaction to India's long marches ahead that tried to transform India into something it wasn't, rather than appreciating what it was—*Aisha* expresses through its differentials development's discontents.

B and P seeks to replace a sense of India as needing to be improved with an appreciation, and indeed, a kind of advertisement, of what India is, suggesting that the last thing millennial Indians need is to be marched through yet another narrative of moral and social progress. The film suggests that non-teleological development, development that does not seek to "better" morally or socially nor impose a single definition of what is "good" for the individual and the nation, is morally superior to teleological improvement

because the former refrains from imposing one culture's values over another's. Teleological improvement ideology implies normative categories of civilizational "forwardness" and "backwardness" determined by a dominant power. Although *B and P*'s championing of anti-normative pluralism provides a pointed and ethical response to the normative judgments imposed by colonial and post-independence improvement narratives, the film problematically couches this ethical position in an uncritical acceptance of late capitalist consumption—and the novelty that new products and trends provide—as all the improvement we need. A shopper's sensibility, satisfied with enjoying the variety of choices the market has to offer and choosing between them according to individual preference rather than moral or social good, is ultimately billed as an expression of enlightened multi-culturalism and tolerance of diversity.

In *Clueless*, shopping remained an explicit action performed by Cher and her friends. Shopping in *B and P*, however, is metaphorically enlarged into the film's central message of intercultural understanding between India and the west: Indians and westerners espouse different ways of being, but neither way is better than the other way. They are, like the many things on offer in a market or a shopping mall, simply different. The modern cosmopolitan subject, figured in *B and P* as both the protagonist, Lalita Bakshi (the film's Lizzie Bennett) and the viewer, may admire these different ways of being, appreciate them all, and then, in Lalita's case, choose which parts of each lifestyle she wants to adopt to build her own way of being modern in the modern world. The elevation of individual preference over communal responsibility allows Lalita to remain distinctively and traditionally Indian despite marrying a white American husband.

Whereas *Clueless* represents improvement ideology as Cher's maturation, *B and P* uses the character of Will Darcy as the representative of the ideology it seeks to tear down. Darcy, who is set to inherit his mother's global chain of luxury hotels, embodies the "improver's gaze." Arriving in Amritsar on a scouting mission to see what cheap land he can develop into pleasure palaces catering to rich Western patrons, Darcy only has eyes for what India could and should be—after he has finished improving it according to his own standards. With its emphasis on the improver's desire to make "useless" land profitable, *B and P* references the early nineteenth-century definition of improvement as the privatizing and capitalizing of common land that figured so prominently in Austen's novels. But the film's restaging of Romantic-era land improvement in postcolonial India ratchets up the political stakes of the early nineteenth-century idea: it's one thing to improve the land in one's own country, but quite another to harbor designs on land in the ex-colonial world. Darcy enacts Repton's improver's gaze through imperial eyes.

Mary Louise Pratt's theory of the imperial gaze argues that even the seemingly harmless act of looking can be an act of imperial conquest. In the mid-eighteenth century, the European botanist, armed (only) with specimen cases and the new Linnean system of classification, traversed the interior of Africa, surveying, collecting, and classifying fauna. Although a peaceful, intellectual creature as different from the swashbuckling conquerors of the past as could be, the botanist used the act of looking to transform and reappropriate, to colonize by way of reinscription. This rational reorganization of reality by the "landscanning" (34) eye could then lead to an imagination of the landscape in its more improved and enlightened form. Imperial eyes conquer by failing to see: they re-cognize

in order to imagine what the present could and should be in the future, under the imperialist's own benevolent management.

Such an imperialist view of a land and its people informs the way in which *B and P* depicts Darcy's view of India. The opening sequence of *B and P* sets up a contrast between how India "really is" versus how Darcy sees it. The camera takes us to the Bakshis' farm, panning quickly across an expanse of tall, waving green plants, allowing us to catch glimpses of happy laborers here and there, cutting and pruning with scythes. The scene depicts an agrarian idyll that recalls a Gandhian vision of agricultural national independence founded on manual labor, small-scale farms, and traditional, sustainable cultivation. But lest we think that the "ideal India" is an India of the past, we see that this traditional way of life is not without some modern improvements: Aishwarya Rai, playing perky, smart, and sassy Lalita sits atop a fuel-powered tractor, clipboard in hand, supervising the workers while tossing them a flirtatious smirk once in awhile. She is a modern Indian woman, a sexual, independent being whose indigenous knowledge combined with pluck and can-do attitude will modernize rural India on its own terms. These images are cross-cut with shots of a plane landing at Amritsar airport. Darcy and his two British Indian friends descend the steps of the small aircraft. A close-up of Darcy's face shows his disappointment at the place at which he has arrived. A smaller version of the tractor that Lalita rides atop appears, hauling the passengers' luggage in an orange cart behind it. Darcy asks, "Is this the conveyor belt?"—but his irony isn't so much funny as it is distasteful and embarrassing. Already miffed at having to retrieve his own luggage, he is then forced by the inconveniently un-modern conditions of the airport to haul his own bag on top of his head, which he does with great difficulty. The crane

shot that follows depicts the maelstrom of urban Amritsar life: pedestrians sharing a wide road with cars, jeeps, animal-drawn carts, bicycles, motorcycles, scooters, pedicabs, and rickshaws. Such a beautiful display encourages the viewer to appreciate Amritsar despite Darcy's clear distaste for it: the next scene shows him shoved uncomfortably into a tiny taxicab and driven into the middle of the chaos. When we find out the purpose of Darcy's visit, we feel even more justified in our contempt for him. Darcy's first appearance on screen depicts him as a land-scanning "seeing-man" in the act of viewing the Indian present in terms of what needs to be done to usher it into the future. His imperial eyes transform and reappropriate the Punjabi landscape into real estate. Like Pratt's Linnean botanist, Darcy interrupts existing networks of historical and material relations among people, architecture, and land, and reorganizes the province into a capitalist American pattern of value. For Darcy, the visible present is as good as past, as he focuses on the untapped potential of what he sees.

Darcy's imperial eyes judge what they see as either modern or backward, profitable or without value. For him, India's teleological development will achieve fulfillment when the whole country looks like Goa, an Indianized version of Beverly Hills, with glittering azure swimming pools, five-star hotels, and beach concerts that bring in western celebrities. This is made clear when the main characters jet off to Goa on an outing designed to bring about a match between Lalita's sister Jaya (the film's Jane Bennett) and Darcy's friend Balraj (the film's Bingley), and Darcy finally seems to relax back into his comfort zone. The film establishes an equivalency, however, between Goa and Bakshi Villa. If Goa offers American luxury, the provincial countryside offers something different but no less valuable: the traditional family network, a quiet,

contemplative life, and, as the opening sequence suggests, an indigenous, rural alternative to western modernity. As Lalita says to Darcy when they first meet at a friend's wedding: "It's perfectly fine to have standards, as long as you don't impose them on anybody else." *B and P* rejects the Romantic-Victorian monogenicist idea that America's today is India's tomorrow, that there is only one path leading to a single definition of modernity that all developing nations would do well to start down as soon as possible.

Despite its resistance to imperialist, teleological improvement ideology, however, much of the film centers, ironically, on Darcy's reform, a moral reeducation that entails his dissociation from and eventual rejection of his own progress discourse. Moral and material development run counter to each other in the film: in order to win the beautiful, modern Indian woman, Darcy must learn to appreciate the beautiful, modern India, without wishing for its development to look like the American sort. Darcy's moral reform depends on his capacity to replace an ideology of improvement with a delight in difference, variety, and multiculturalism. In fact, all of the characters, including the Indian ones, must learn this lesson. Lalita learns that succumbing to her mother's expectations that she marry for money and stability, rather than for love, may not be as bad as she thought. Her visit to the suburban Los Angeles tract home owned by her cousin Kholi and her best friend, Chandra Lamba (the film's Mr. Collins and Charlotte Lucas), converts her to the idea that different couples possess different expectations of matrimony, and that her desire for an equal partner will not necessarily make her happier than Chandra, who settles for a doting provider. On the same trip, Mrs. Bakshi learns that diasporic life may not be as good as she thought: she finally gets the chance to be the offended instead of the offender as she listens to Darcy's mother expound on why it is no

longer worthwhile to travel to India since “there are so many good eastern things here, like yoga and Deepak Chopra.” The last scene of the film depicts a double wedding procession for Jaya and Balraj and for the protagonists themselves. Both couples sit in covered chairs mounted on top of elephants, and the last shot shows “Just Married” signs attached to the animals’ hindquarters. Darcy has been successfully converted: wearing a Nehru tunic and floral wreath, and noticeably more tanned than when we first saw him walking off the plane, Darcy’s transformation suggests that he has finally understood that the Indian way of getting married is no worse than the American way, just different. Thus, the two narrative lines of the plot dovetail at the film’s conclusion: the two protagonists can get married when Darcy trades in the improving intentions of his imperial eyes for an appreciation of difference.

If the plot—Darcy’s eventual rejection of his imperialist understanding of how India should modernize—was all there was to the film, then *B and P* might be said to do a commendable job at decolonizing the eyes of the colonizer. But, like *Emma* and *Clueless*, the plot is not all there is to the story. Even while the main plot criticizes the American capitalist for his desire to see India proceed toward a predetermined future, other aspects of the film celebrate the pleasures of late capitalist consumption, which, one might argue, is just another form of western neo-imperialism. The metaphor of conspicuous consumption acts as a thread that connects several of the film’s subplots. Just as Kohli returns to India to shop for a wife, Mrs. Bakshi and the other Indian mothers of her village are shopping for husbands for their daughters, preferably rich, Indian husbands who live abroad. When Balraj (whose law firm represents corporate interests in the UK) enters the ballroom of a pre-wedding party at the beginning of the film, the

maternal gaze turns on him hungrily, provoking Darcy to remark, “Is it me, or is every woman over fifty giving you the eye?” Even quiet, well-behaved Jaya confides to Lalita as they dress for the party that although she’s afraid to admit it, she hopes that someone “loaded and shopping,” will choose her out of the crowd.

Consumption of material goods stands in for non-teleological development in *B* and *P* because the endless cycle of new products being offered for sale seeks only to gratify a consumer’s immediate desires, rather than seeking to impose a long, drawn-out wait for—or rigid and narrow definition of—what’s “good” for the nation. Thus, consumerism is figured as a sort of postcolonial freedom. But the film’s major musical sequence puts a twist on this idea: in this sequence, the viewer becomes the buyer and India itself is what’s for sale. The day after the party, Lalita, Chandra, and the bride go shopping in the marketplace. The women are accosted by friendly, well-wishing merchants looking to hawk their goods to middle-class consumers. The sari-maker measures bolts of cloth against the bride, the henna artist leads her to a stool and offers her services, the florist and snack sellers each sing the praises of their products and emphasize their importance in the wedding ceremony. The jeweler advertises “fancy pearls and precious stones, imported from far and wide” for the “24-karat bride.” In chorus, the vendors declare, “Your wish is our command; we’ll supply what you demand.” As the musical sequence ends, the camera pulls up to an impressive crane shot, revealing that the vendors themselves are wearing clothes that provide as much eye candy as their products: they are color-coordinated to create a rainbow mandala for the viewer’s consumption. They create a spectacle that is extra-diegetic: the people, now indistinguishable as individuals, no longer even look like human beings, but a design

made for the aesthetic enjoyment of the spectator. We look down at them from above their heads while they sing, “marriage has come to town.” The viewer has become the shopper, and India—including its human population—is offered up to be consumed.

Darcy’s imperial eyes have been transferred to the viewer. Instead of an imperial gaze that seeks to transform India’s backward present into a modern American future, however, the imperial gaze of the viewer is characterized by uncritical consumption. The viewer can enjoy all the aesthetic pleasures of India, and she can consume all its visual delights, without ever leaving the comfort of her armchair. Considering *B and P*’s thoroughly globalized production—with shooting locations in the UK, US, and India; seven production companies including the UK Film Council, and Pathé Pictures International; twelve international distributors spread across the US, UK, Netherlands, Italy, Singapore, Malaysia, and Argentina¹¹—it is no surprise that the film targets this foreign armchair viewer just as much, or perhaps more, than it courts the domestic Indian moviegoer.

From the anticipation of acquiring a partner to the wedding ceremony itself, to the ways in which the film positions the viewer as window-shopper of all that India has to offer, *B and P* unabashedly moralizes against an imperialist assignation of improvement and its western trajectory in the language of the free market. As in *Clueless*, shopping in *B and P* is an aspect of millennial life as important as marriage, dating, or falling in love. Even Lalita, the only character who at all pushes against the market mentality of marriage, casts her gaze around Darcy’s Beverly Hills hotel, calculating what she might be able to get with her own sexual purchasing power. Chadha’s film suggests that it is only one particular brand of capitalism that is objectionable—the kind that recalls nineteenth-

century British imperialism in its imposition of a foreign model of long-term improvement that devalues “things as they are” and favors things as they should be. The film accepts consumer capitalism, however, and its promotion of the immediate gratification of material goods, because it does not seek to impose a timeline or hierarchical standards on Indian progress. Each bride can decide for herself what prejudices suit her best, and the story of character development in the film is the story of fashioning a life out of a variety of different but equal possibilities. *B and P* depicts the seduction that economic deregulation offers to a society seeking to separate once and for all from its long history of waiting to be improved.

Ultimately, the film’s value-flattened, neoliberal, “multi-culti” position fails to provide a real alternative to the imperial agenda of Darcy’s improving gaze. The shopper’s sensibility, with its uncritical acceptance for all things just as they are, masks the qualitative unevenness of India’s “miraculous” development: difference is not always simply variegated sameness; it is also often the result of social injustice, unequal access to resources, and the failure of economic policies to benefit those with the greatest needs. The film’s alignment with the logic of consumption prevents it from doing anything more than using capitalist economic development to fight improvement ideology, or using neo-imperialism to fight the old imperialism. *B and P* is unable to offer a corrective to coercive improvement ideology that goes beyond the desire to enjoy life now instead of waiting for the moral and social “good” that colonial and post-independence governments promised were waiting up ahead, somewhere in the future.

Aisha, however, is significantly bothered by what it sees as neoliberal capital’s failure to be the engine of a just and collective betterment. Shot entirely in India (Delhi,

Mumbai, and Rishikesh) and produced and distributed by Indian companies, *Aisha* is targeted at domestic and diasporic Indian audiences rather than the international and western audiences that *B and P* aimed to please. With little capital investment in foreign viewers, its plot can afford to be less centered than *B and P*'s on espousing pluralism and equal intercultural exchange between east and west. More importantly, *Aisha* can also afford to be less ideologically invested, and therefore more critical, of the neoliberal practices of global free trade that *B and P*, as an international consumer product, clearly benefits from. Although the domestic orientation of *Aisha* cannot be said to produce directly the film's subtle critique of neoliberal development, it does suggest that the stakes of registering an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with global economic development are lower than they are in *B and P*. *Aisha*, faithful to its source novel, expresses a widespread anxiety about what market logic suppresses, namely, that consumer capital's promotion of non-teleological development as the only change we need covers up the nagging sense of want and deficiency that I identified in *Emma*. *Aisha* foregrounds the novel's disappointment in knowing that as change happens, time also passes, and that a certain unspoken *something* now missing will have soon been missed completely. The shopper's sensibility and its disinterested, non-judgmental attitude that refuses to take a position on what is better or worse for anyone other than oneself has a short shelf-life here.

A contemporary fusion of Hollywood and Bollywood, *Aisha* is on one level more an adaptation of *Clueless* than of *Emma*. It announces its indebtedness to Heckerling's film in the opening sequence which shows Aisha Kapoor recklessly zipping through Delhi in a yellow Volkswagen Beetle, an offspring of Cher's white Jeep. Like *Clueless*,

Aisha buzzes with brand names, cell phones, mansions, and manicured lawns. The father-daughter dynamic is much the same, and the friendship between Aisha and Pinky Bose mirrors that of Cher and Dionne. The first part of the film (up to the Intermission) shares *Clueless*'s exuberance in putting off one's improvement into a mature, adult self with a shopper's sensibility that attends only to immediate pleasures.

Despite the movies' similarities, however, there is more at stake in adopting a shopper's sensibility for Aisha and her wealthy friends than for Cher and hers. Perhaps even more so than *B and P*, the first half of *Aisha* advertises the triumph of neo-liberal development over normative improvement in India's post-Nehruvian era. In the parts of Delhi that Aisha frequents, India has certainly "caught up" with the most developed areas of the developed world. More wealthy, more urban, and more conspicuous in their spending than the Bakshis, the Kapoors exemplify the Rao-Singh version of Walter Scott's "sixty years since"—if you belong to Aisha's class, you've achieved in a few decades what it took England over two-hundred and fifty years to do. The 1990s interruption of the long histories of Indian improvement produced the possibility of using consumer capitalism to define one's philosophy toward life. Although the Indian middle class and the American middle class may have developed unevenly, the former seen as being "behind" the developmental world average and the latter "ahead," both have now embraced non-teleological development as the measure of being developed in the contemporary world.

But uneven development gets a critical look in *Aisha* that reveals it not as a thing of the past but as an ongoing problem that non-teleological change cannot hide and is in fact responsible for producing. At the end of the opening sequence, we watch as the

yellow Beetle pulls up to a posh hotel: Aisha has been racing through the city because she is late to her aunt's wedding, a match for which she proudly takes credit. Along the way to the hotel, however, for just a split second, the camera picks up an image that Aisha herself seems not to see as she whizzes by: a man on a bicycle leading a camel on the side of the busy highway. The comparison between these two types of transportation yields a clear visual depiction of present-day uneven development. Either the camel is an anachronism to the Beetle, or the Beetle is an "anatomism" to the camel, something in its right time but not in its right place.¹² But the camel and the Beetle in *Aisha* are not out of sync: the nonchalance with which the film registers old and new forms of transportation—and the old and new ways of living that correspond to them—suggest that uneven access to modern technology is characteristic of everyday life in millennial India.

Aisha's experience of economic progress is, like her driving style, fast and furious. But the camel-driver's experience of economic progress is much slower: for him, Aisha's "now" is still very far off in his future; he experiences her forward movement as delay. The scene uses this visual juxtaposition of Aisha's and the camel-driver's lack of synchronicity to register an uneasiness about the development it seems to extol. Like Cher, Aisha experiences non-teleological change as the ability to fashion and refashion her identity out of the endless choices the global consumer market has to offer. She need not choose her car, her clothes, or the way she drives according to a narrative of moral or social improvement, but simply out of individual preference. For Aisha, the Rao-Singh neoliberal trade policies have made possible the shopper's sensibility that provides the happy prolongation of her youth. But the camel driver experiences these same policies as

a literal and figurative relegation to the side of the road, an imperative to navigate development carefully in order not to get run over.

Aisha, however, does not simply deposit all of the discontent toward non-teleological development with the have-nots. The film does not burden those left behind by neoliberal development with the entire responsibility of being dissatisfied. The ones who benefit from such development, too, find its plenitudes unfulfilling. One such character is Shefali (the film's equivalent of *Emma*'s Harriet Smith and *Clueless*'s Tai), a young, middle-class woman from the countryside lucky enough to have connections in the city. Shefali's upwardly-mobile aunt and uncle have sent her to Delhi to find a husband, and hopefully, a ticket in to Delhi's fast-paced modern lifestyle. At Aisha's art show, Shefali, looking out of place and awkwardly provincial, proudly announces that she, too, is an artist, for she took an interior decorating class once at her local college, an announcement that is met with barely-hidden smirks from Pinky. Shefali's good-natured personality can only hide so much of her anxiety about getting married to a man from the city. She explains to Aisha, for instance, that of all the men who have come to scope her out, no one has returned for a second visit, nor has anyone even sent a "no-thank-you" note. Randhir, Aisha's guy-pal and heir to a successful confectionary company, mistakes Shefali's traditional sari and braid for evidence that she has just come from a wedding: everyone else at the art show is wearing western dress. Trying to divert attention from Shefali's embarrassment, Aisha says that there are no eligible bachelors left in Delhi, for "all the good ones are either gay or Arjun [Knightley/Josh]," to which Shefali replies with a quizzical look, "gay?" The punch-line comes at the expense of the fish-out-of-water, on the one hand making fun of her as a country bumpkin unaware of the

possibilities of modern relationships, but on the other hand, registering her discomfort with the benefits of modernity. These exchanges reveal that perhaps Shefali's preferences, habits, and values would not be compatible with the men she is forced to consider as partners for the sake of financial gain.

Shefali does have her eye on someone, though, a fellow from her own village also trying to make it in the big city. His name is Saurabh (Mr. Martin), and he works in the BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) Sector, or as Aisha glosses it, "those people who call us in the afternoon and ask if we want a credit card." Saurabh runs into Shefali and Aisha at the animal shelter where Aisha has taken to volunteering, and after eavesdropping on Shefali's short conversation with him, Aisha gives her opinion: "How middle class." Once Aisha sees how Shefali's attachment to her traditional customs keep holding her back from the life her aunt and uncle want her to have, Aisha embarks on an improvement project to give her new clothes, new cosmetics, a new love interest (Randhir), and in short, helping Shefali to choose the right options for social advancement.

The central irony that the film reveals about postmodern consumer capitalism is that not all possibilities are in fact created equal: there are still normative values associated with what and how one chooses to navigate one's way through a world of equally insignificant choices. No moral or social betterment inheres in Aisha's choice of clothes, cosmetics, and partners, but her choices in these areas do make her more fit to exist in Delhi than Shefali's choices. The neoliberal, consumerist enjoyment of the "now" that *B and P* held up as a corrective to the long narratives of moral and social improvement that suspended happiness for some future moment has created its own set of

inequalities based on the very choices for immediate gratification it extends. Shefali's life choices are not as good as Aisha's, not because they are socially unjust or morally bad, but because they reflect a lack of understanding of which status symbols represent modernity at any given moment. Being modern in Aisha's world, in which modernity is always "here" but what defines it is constantly changing, remains as elusive as it was during the colonial period when modernity was always somewhere other than here in India.

Aisha transfers Darcy's imperial eyes, which saw nothing in the Indian countryside to appreciate but only what was available for improvement, to its heroine, who sees in Shefali only a modernization project in need of her own humanitarian intervention. This transfer suggests that the roles of improver and improved no longer map neatly onto western and Indian subjects, respectively, but that such roles define unequal power relationships within postcolonial Indian society as well. Aisha, the urban upper-crust improver, has in mind for her middle-class provincial subject a progress narrative that won't take as long to yield results as progress narratives of the past, but bears the imprint of imperial ideology nonetheless. In the film's "makeover" sequence—a montage that shows Shefali's transformation from traditional girl to modern woman—Aisha and Pinky take Shefali shopping at all the most expensive stores in Delhi. Part fashion advertisement and part showcase for creative editing and cinematography, the mall montage updates the traditional Bollywood lyrical interlude, a digressive sequence that takes the characters away from the main narrative for a moment into a fantasy space in which emotions or thoughts that cannot be revealed in the "real" world find expression. Such interludes usually involve an elaborate musical and dance sequence, but here,

although non-diegetic upbeat music plays in the background, the dancing is transformed into stylized shopping. The sequence begins with a shot of Aisha and Pinky walking confidently into the mall, ready to discern what's hot and what's not, and the handheld point-of-view shots that follow manifest their "shopper's gaze," roving quickly across rows of accessories in close-up, looking for the right items. Sandwiched in between the shot of the women and the point-of-view shots, however, is a quick 360 of Shefali, looking disoriented and frazzled in this foreign land. The 360 performs something like free indirect discourse: Shefali's inner feelings are projected onto the way she is depicted by the camera, which functions as the cinematic equivalent of Austen's narrator. Thus, we could also read the point-of-view shots that follow the 360 as another form of Shefali's disorientation and lack of confidence about which products in this flattened world of choice are the "right" products to access an upward mobility she does not even really want. The sequence provides its own contrapuntal reading in which Aisha's improving eyes that seek to transform Shefali into something she is not are met with Shefali's own perspective that emphasizes her discomfort with the transformation that she feels she cannot but accept for the sake of "bettering" herself. But the film's ability to convey both perspectives at once allows for the discourse of neoliberal development and its discontents to be communicated simultaneously.

Shefali is not the only one who feels trapped and disempowered in Delhi's world of variety and choice. Pinky's disposition throughout the film ranges from mildly annoyed to downright angry. She cannot quite put her finger on the cause of her dissatisfaction, but her inability to decide what she wants to do with her life evinces a sense that although she has infinite options, she possesses no real choices that will make

her happy. At first she wants to be a “weather girl,” a wish then replaced by wanting to be the editor of *Elle* magazine, both of which, despite being career opportunities, are never really employment possibilities. Aisha’s plan to improve Shefali annoys Pinky terribly, but not because she cares for Shefali in any detectable way. Pinky is nasty to Shefali in almost every scene in which they appear together: laughing at her use of the word “hi-fi” to mean “modern” at the art show, jumping out from behind a rack of clothes to scare her at the mall, cutting off her braid ruthlessly and then waving it in her face, mocking Shefali’s real sadness at losing her traditional hairstyle in the name of modernity. Whereas Aisha is earnest, though misguided and unselfconscious about trying to “help” Shefali, Pinky uses her only as a person to put down and make herself shine by comparison. Something is missing from Pinky’s life, and her agitation, indecisiveness, and mean-girl bullying registers an amorphous but significant discontent with the non-teleological development that she nevertheless enjoys and works to her advantage.

Pinky’s bad attitude expresses her discontent at how empty life is, now that its immediate pleasures have replaced an expectation of betterment in the far-off future. But her discontent can also be seen as a form of a more widespread sense of unease in the film. When Aisha tries to play matchmaker between Shefali and Randhir (who does double-duty as the Mr. Elton character) by abandoning them at a guest house in Defence Colony, she gets a flat tire as she makes her getaway and is forced to call her Knightley for a lift. Right before she high-tails it out of the hotel driveway, Randhir tells her to stay in the car and lock the doors while he goes to ask about the restaurant Aisha invented as an excuse to get them to the hotel. On the phone, Arjun tells her again that “the area isn’t safe; just lock the doors and stay in the car” until he arrives. When the scene crosscuts to

Shefali and Randhir, walking nervously in the dark, trying to find their way home, Randhir gets impatient with Shefali's slow pace on very high heels, and reminds us once again that "this place isn't safe," that they must get out fast, even though there doesn't seem to be another soul around. The only person outside of the cast of characters we're familiar with that shows up in this scene is Aisha's childhood friend Dhruv, whom she meets at the door of her aunt's house (to which she has walked alone, against Arjun's advice). The film's Delhi looks as unpopulated as Austen's Highbury—and just as safe. Nevertheless, the dialogue suggests that the characters intuit something dangerous and unsettling lurking just beyond their sheltered lives. Later, the friends decide they need a break from Delhi and take a short vacation to scenic Rishikesh. When Aisha gets out of the car to ask directions from a local pedestrian, Randhir admonishes her yet again: "Talking to strangers in such a place? It's dangerous!" and gives her a can of pepper spray. Again, no real danger ever manifests, but the characters seem to feel it always close at hand.

The Rishikesh expedition functions as the film's Box Hill excursion, the point at which things really start to fall apart. Aisha's jealousy over Arjun's gorgeous Indian-American colleague rises to a pitch, resulting in tension between the two main characters. Shefali decides to reject Saurabh's marriage proposal against her own wishes in order to impress Aisha. And Randhir's own marriage proposal to Aisha meets with ridicule. Aisha's mantra that appears in the opening sequence, "I love my life," is put to the test in the second half of the film. And like Box Hill, the Rishikesh trip also initiates the turn in the heroine's moral development, in which she finally realizes that she is the one who needs to be reeducated. Like Emma, Aisha ends up either apologizing to, or being

forgiven in advance, by everyone. She even says “I’m sorry” to Saurabh, who at first cannot make out why he is owed an apology; to his confused look Aisha replies, “That’s it. Just ‘sorry.’” Her explanation that isn’t one seems to communicate something to him anyway, for he smiles and thanks her. The viewer knows she is sorry for looking down on him for being “middle class,” a comment he never heard her make. But the apology does not change their uneven relationship; it will take much more than Aisha’s superficial moral improvement to create any real progress for class relations in modern India. And although Shefali gets her guy and the traditional red wedding sari of her dreams, she still has to figure out a way to get by in the everyday world of a rapidly changing India without the advantages that Aisha possesses. Aisha ultimately learns to subscribe to Arjun’s reading of Shefali, that she’s just fine the way she is and should not be the object of Aisha’s improvement project—a reading that bears a strong resemblance to the injunction to appreciate India, just as it is, in *B and P*. Aisha’s imperial eyes, the film’s ending suggests, have been opened; but the Aisha of the film’s first half was at least sensitive to the fact that neoliberal development renders too many people “unfit” for modernity, and that there is indeed something wrong with that. Sure, everyone has the right to be just as they are, but those who fail to keep up with the endless cycles of non-teleological change that define, but also obscure, what it means to be modern in modern India, will certainly fall behind.

The hopeful non-teleological change represented in *Emma*’s narrative stalls and digressions that resist the heroine’s domestication take on new life as a cosmopolitan sensibility of anti-colonial pluralism and tolerance in *B and P*. But *Aisha* explores the social injustice of the flattening out and covering up of real inequalities that such

acceptance of the status quo renders. In *Aisha*, the promises of non-teleological development are met with discontent. Emma's daydreams and Miss Bates's circumlocutions possess an anti-colonial quality in their arrest of improvement's teleology to make space for a plenitude of ways of being female without being domestic. The Bollywood afterlives of *Emma*'s resistance to improvement recalibrate her hope in non-teleological change as both anti-colonial and neocolonial.

Although the economic history I outlined above reveals neoliberal development as continuous with colonial improvement, the seduction of the former as immediate fulfillment and "free" of judgment can make it seem like resistance to the latter. As the new millennium wears on, however, change that happily does not claim betterment seems too little equipped to combat a history of change that claimed improvement but delivered only domination, or that claimed betterment but delivered only more of the same. *Aisha* finally makes a faithful return to Emma's nagging sense of want, her sense of missing something and something missed, like the absence to which Donwell's avenue of limes leads. The dissatisfaction of *Aisha*'s characters with "things as they are" makes *Emma*'s Romantic-era unease relevant to today's middle-class Indian young adults, and registers the need for socially-just betterment and collective progress—a universal and always timely demand.

CHAPTER TWO

Moral Management:

Spaces of Domestication in *Jane Eyre* and *I Walked with a Zombie*

Despite their political differences, *Emma*, *Bride and Prejudice*, and *Aisha* all register the centrality of time to the conceptualization of improvement in the nineteenth century, and to its twenty-first-century afterlives. Space, like time, provided an equally important conceptual component to Romantic and Victorian improvement ideology. As much as improvement ideology in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries relied on a belief in the future as necessarily brighter than the present and the past, it also relied on an understanding of space as limited and bounded. Improvement conceived in temporal terms evinced optimism about what the most “forward” societies of the world could achieve in all areas of human experience. But improvement conceived in spatial terms was decidedly more measured in scope and expectation: if improvement’s temporality defined a process by which the limitations of the present would be exploded in the future, the spatial conception of improvement relied on a process of contraction, confinement, and the establishment of boundaries that marked off an “inside” of improved space from an “outside” of savagery, waste, and threat.

The process of land improvements described by Austen at the turn of the nineteenth century sought to increase the value of private property by landscape design and agricultural modernization that turned waste land into productive land yielding valuable commodities. Such improvements would not have been possible without the land marked out for improvements having first been enclosed, or turned from common fields into private property. This enclosure movement began informally in the medieval and early modern periods throughout the English countryside and culminated in the formal Parliamentary Acts of Enclosure in the eighteenth century. The Parliamentary Acts made what had been a social trend into a fact of law, dispossessing the poor and unlanded of their communal rights to use common and waste lands and open field farms by “enclosing” such land for the sole use of a single property owner and his descendants. During the Napoleonic Wars, the enclosures of the English countryside represented one manifestation of a national preoccupation—and indeed, a national policy—of contraction and inward withdrawal in the face of international pressures. Colin Winborn’s study of Austen and George Crabbe argues that the authors’ formal concerns with “spatial economy” reflect the ways in which the Napoleonic trade embargo (1806-1812) invoked a national consciousness about the need to turn England’s limited resources “to the best possible account” (1).¹³ Winborn argues that Austen and Crabbe saw the process of national contraction as necessary and beneficial to the wartime English economy and to literary form: Crabbe’s couplet and Austen’s economic prose reflect the ways in which a lack of freedom, movement, and space can generate a better product than unchecked expansion.¹⁴ Austen and Crabbe conceived of confinement as “virtuous restriction,

independence and inner means” (106), a way to produce the agency and responsibility of doing for oneself instead of relying on others.

Winborn’s argument suggests a connection between land improvements, or the management of physical space, and the discourse of the individual’s moral improvement, or the management of psychological space. The spatial restrictions that forced England to capitalize on the resources within its own national boundaries produced an ethic of individual resourcefulness, hard work, and a definition of morality that relied on using one’s own labor to turn the self into its best possible version. The same words are often used in describing the improvement of land and of human subject: “virtuous restriction,” “independence,” and “inner means,” as well as “cultivation,” “careful management,” and “active conversion.” Furthermore, “freedom,” “movement,” and other words of spatial release signify danger to a self whose development relies on confinement.

The connection between spatial enclosure and moral improvement allows us to understand how Jacques Tourneur’s wartime Hollywood horror film *I Walked with a Zombie* (1943) uses its source novel *Jane Eyre* to explore the possibilities and challenges of its own historical moment. My reading of the film argues that if, as *Jane Eyre* suggests, the making of subjectivity relies on an individual’s relationship to her inhabited space, then a similar formula might also inform the making of an independent nation out of an enslaved and colonized population. The film reads Jane’s narrative of “development” as a series of instances in which the individual is enclosed in spaces that seek to produce a docile, domestic subject. Jane’s moral improvement entails a psychological constriction and narrowing down of possibilities that correspond to the spaces she inhabits. The film analogizes Jane’s situation with that of early twentieth-century workers on a Caribbean

sugar plantation that bears the memory and descendents of British West Indian slaves. For the plantation workers, Jane acts as a warning sign: one's acceptance of enclosure in an absolute space creates the docile subject. To create the conditions for revolution, then, the workers must reconceptualize the plantation space and use the very grounds of the master's power against him. Anticipating the challenges that newly-independent nations would face, however, the film ends with ambivalence as to whether a reconceptualization of space can alone bring about a more just society.

The chapter's first section reads Jane's occupation of three architectural spaces in the novel—Lowood, Thornfield, and Ferndean—as the development of an increasingly disciplined and domesticated subject that results from her enclosure in the spaces around her. I draw upon the work of Neil Smith, David Harvey, Michel Foucault, and Yi-Fu Tuan to illustrate the ways in which the organization and experience of space produce psychological effects. I then examine how the film translates Jane's spatial disciplining into cinematic form, and the implications for such translations within the historical context of British West Indian slavery. The last section uses the work of Michel de Certeau, Henri Lefebvre, and Edward Said to show how the film suggests the possibility of transforming plantation space into postcolonial space, a suggestion that anticipates the wave of post-World War Two decolonization contemporary with the film's release.

Jane Eyre's Enclosed Spaces

Neil Smith writes that “in the transition to capitalism, the Enclosures represented a remarkable historical creation of absolute space. As capital extends its sway, the entire globe is partitioned into legally distinct parcels, divided by great white fences, real or

imaginary” (85). For Smith, the twentieth- and twenty-first-century organization of space under global capitalism known as “uneven development” had its beginnings in the creation of the Enclosures’ absolute and partitioned spaces, and furthermore, “at a different scale, today’s world is divided into 160 or more discrete nation states, and this is as much a necessity for capital as the geographical partitioning of private property” (85). Thus, the enclosure and partitioning of common space into individuated parcels of private property represents a proto-capitalist and eminently modern understanding of land distribution and use. David Harvey has argued that the absolute spaces created by Enclosures entailed not only a conceptual shift in notions of physical space and its ownership, but also a shift in the kind of knowledge and social relations that were possible within the boundaries of such a space. “Absolute space is fixed and we record or plan events within its frame,” Harvey writes, and it also provides “the primary space of individuation...and this applies to all discrete and bounded phenomena including you and me as individual persons” (121). Enclosures created not only the bounded space of private property but helped to delineate further the “space” of the individual. Harvey writes that by making spaces absolute, bounded, and differentiated, the individual acquires “a sense of mastery” over such spaces “from which all uncertainties and ambiguities could in principle be banished and in which human calculation could uninhibitedly flourish” (121). The goal of enclosing and partitioning geographic spaces, then, is mastery. It involves the marking out of a territory that can be managed, disciplined, and enhanced by human labor. The enhancement, or improvement, of a parcel of land depends on its ability to be controlled and cordoned off from the untamed nature surrounding it. Harvey’s connection between physical space and individual or

psychological space suggests that human improvement depends likewise on control, management, discipline, and a separation between the improved individual and others who bear the “natural” defects that improvement has presumably banished.

The problem with such a process of enclosing and disciplining property and individuals is the specter of reversion, for if such a process is artificial to begin with and requires great human effort to sustain, then what has been improved always has the capacity to return to its chaotic natural state. Like Smith and Harvey, Foucault writes that the purpose of such spatial discipline is to produce “docile bodies” in whom the power and energy to work is increased while the possibility of those bodily forces being used for revolutionary ends is diminished (138). In other words, “utility” and “obedience” increase simultaneously. Discipline “dissociates power from the body; on the one hand, it turns it into an ‘aptitude’, a ‘capacity’, which it seeks to increase; on the other hand, it reverses the course of the energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection” (138). In order to head off the possibility of reversion at its source, spatial discipline transforms all of the subject’s powers to good use, even those inimical to the system that governs the subject. Like Winborn’s argument for Regency-era economization of all resources for the good of the nation, even those once considered unfit, Foucault writes that spatial discipline capitalizes on all sources of vitality and brings them into subjection. It neutralizes the political potency of all the subject’s powers and turns them into an “aptitude” and “capacity” for self-discipline and the maintenance of order. For Foucault, moral improvement relies on the containment, rather than eradication, of subversive and dangerous energies, in order to direct them to uphold the status quo. Allowing the forces that threaten to tear down the established order to fly out

unchecked makes them destructive, but to enclose and manage them makes them constructive in maintaining that order.

Jane's moral improvement can be helpfully understood through Foucault's terms: her juvenile anger at injustice undergoes containment and transformation into a controllable erotic vitality that accounts for Rochester's attraction to her. The English spaces in *Jane Eyre* are configured to enclose anger and sexual deviance, to keep these volatile passions lodged safely within both physical space and emotional psyche. The spaces of Lowood, Thornfield, and Ferndean manage and control the forces that threaten to undermine an established patriarchal and class structure rather than purifying them out of the domestic space, for they provide an energy that recharges the established structure itself. Jane's anger at injustice is what threatens to make her unmanageable, but it is also what makes her special, different from Blanche Ingram, Céline Varens, and Rochester's other failed possible wives. Her protest against what oppresses her gives Jane her special quality and unique attraction, but Bertha Mason's presence in the novel acts as a warning of what Jane's energy might come to if insufficiently domesticated. What makes her the right mate, in other words, also makes her a liability, and confining her within Ferndean's densely enclosed space is the only way to ensure the precarious moral management upon which domestic happiness depends.

Foucault's examples of the disciplinary spaces that produce improved subjects consist mainly of architectural interiors—asylums, boarding schools, army barracks, island factories—and as such provide relevant insight into Jane's experience with indoor spaces. The first architectural element that Jane sees after she steps off the coach that brings her to Lowood from Gateshead is a “wall before me with a door open in it” (42).

The wall serves as an impassable boundary separating the managed spaces inside Lowood from the borderless country outside. It keeps at bay the “great grey hills [that] heaved up round the horizon,” and the “wild wind rushing amongst trees” (42). Inside the wall, the students keep their feelings in tight check, while the very landscape outside heaves and rushes, as if taking the place of emotions the girls must repress. The door, however, acts as a point of ingress, a weak point in the fortress where the uncontrollable emotions symbolized by the wild landscape can enter and wreak havoc on the discipline exacted indoors. Like the chimney in the red-room at Gateshead, about which Miss Abbott warns Jane that “something bad might be permitted to come down” and “fetch you away,” the door is a point of intrusion into the known space by the elements of the unknown (13).

Once through the door in the wall, Jane traverses a series of regulated spaces that illustrate Foucault’s definition of an enclosure as a “protected place of disciplinary monotony” (141). First, she enters a foyer in which she sees a building “spread far” with “many windows,” an image that emphasizes, as Leggatt and Parkes have observed, Lowood’s uniformity in design and purpose in producing uniform employees to fit into a wage labor economy (169). She then goes through another door leading into a passage which takes her to a fire-lit room in which she meets Miss Miller, who takes her further into the labyrinth “from compartment to compartment, from passage to passage,” until they emerge “from the total and somewhat dreary silence” into a “wide, long room, with great deal tables” around which sit “a congregation of girls” (43). In this wide room where one would expect discussion and community living, the girls are in fact

compartmentalized, each bound to concentrate on her own studies. Jane hears not conversations, but only “the combined result of their whispered repetitions” (44).

The next day, she explores the school’s grounds, observing that “the garden was a wide enclosure, surrounded with walls so high as to exclude every glimpse of prospect.” The windows, she now notices in the daylight, are all “mullioned and latticed” (49), impeding vision of the open space outside. A veranda exists, but it too is covered; and “the broad walks [are] divided into scores of little beds for the pupils to cultivate, and each bed had an owner” (49). The images comprising the school’s grounds recall the enclosure and partitioning of physical spaces in Smith and Harvey, as well as Foucault’s account of individual improvement on a mass scale that seeks to repress unique traits in favor of standardized personalities while partitioning the girls to encourage individual responsibility and discourage collective action.

As Jane becomes accustomed to Lowood, however, she realizes that the school’s management of space which seeks to enclose and discipline the girls can only influence their external actions. Jane discovers that improvement is cosmetic: whatever Brocklehurst “might do with the outside of the cup and platter, the inside was further beyond his interference than he imagined” (64). Jane’s metaphor is a spatial one: the outside of the cup and platter are thin and breakable, but the inside can be filled and refilled. Even a temporary emptying of what is inside leaves the space ready to be filled again: passions can be replenished and thus never truly drained.

Miss Temple and Helen Burns exemplify the ever-replenishing emotion that Jane’s cup and saucer metaphor describes. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar have argued that in their deepest psychological recesses, both characters strive against the Lowood

ideal of the humble, quiescent, lower-middle-class Christian woman, despite not showing any outward signs of resentment (346). I argue, however, that the ways in which Miss Temple and Helen repress their true feelings rather than eliminate them is precisely what the Lowood model of improvement intends to teach. Mr. Brocklehurst says as much in his remonstrance of Miss Temple's spoiling the girls by ordering more food. The way to render the pupils "hardy, patient, and self-denying" is not to "neutralize" their "disappointment of the appetite" by replacing bad food with good; instead, their disappointment "ought to be improved to the spiritual edification of the pupils, by encouraging them to evince fortitude under the temporary privation" (63). Brocklehurst intends to recast or reinterpret the girls' anger, not to neutralize it; he aims to manage it by redirection into "fortitude." Helen and Miss Temple shine as exactly the kind of energetic but docile bodies he wants to produce.

By the time the adult narrator Jane looks back on her experience at Lowood, she has internalized Brocklehurst's philosophy of moral improvement as spatial discipline. From explosive little girl, to angry student, to one who learns, through Helen's and Miss Temple's examples, how to control that anger, she is trained by the school's enclosures and partitions to place her own limitations on life's possibilities: "I had had no communication by letter or message with the outer world: school-rules, school-duties, school-habits and notions, and voices, and faces, and phrases, and costumes, and preferences, and antipathies: such was what I knew of existence" (84-85). Hemmed in for ten years by Lowood's building with its two wings, the sectional garden, and the hilly horizon, Jane has learned to translate the enclosed spaces of the school's architecture and grounds into a moral management of her wild inner landscape: "what seemed better

regulated feelings had become the inmates of my mind. I had given in allegiance to duty and order”; “I appeared a disciplined and subdued character” (84). Self-control and self-discipline are possible when one’s world is small and isolated, when the space one inhabits is harshly regulated and permeated by Miss Temple’s “serene atmosphere,” which Jane discovers she had been “breathing in her vicinity” (84).

Although Lowood manages to discipline Jane’s emotions, the final scenes of her school experience illustrate improvement’s instability. A subtle change in the environment has the potential to inflame the emotions that disciplinary space seeks to capitalize and manage. When Miss Temple leaves Lowood to get married, Jane’s spatial awareness shifts, and open space takes on new significance: “My eye passed all other objects to rest on those most remote, the blue peaks: it was those I longed to surmount; all within their boundary of rock and heath seemed prison-ground, exile limits. I traced the white road winding round the base of one mountain, and vanishing in a gorge between two: how I longed to follow it further!” (85). The open space surrounding Lowood that Jane once described as a “wild” and “heaving” chaos suddenly reveals its own sort of order, one that leads her along a clear path marked out by a stark white road, around a mountain, into a gorge, and away from Lowood. Jane’s eye discerns a map that will lead her out of her prison-ground. Within her rock-and-heath boundary, Jane learned to manage her anger because few outside influences could penetrate Lowood’s borders. But Miss Temple’s removal opens up a psychic space that allows the thought of a “beyond” to enter. The door inside the wall through which she arrived ten years ago now stands ajar. How much liberation her departure from Lowood represents, however, proves questionable, since the path leads her to Thornfield, a space that rivals Lowood in its

demand for moral management. Gilbert's and Gubar's analysis of the novel as Jane's "escape-into-wholeness" (336) reads the departure scene as a crucial turning point in her struggle to leave behind social, economic, and familial structures that devalue the poor and single woman. But Thornfield's spaces provide no such potential for the development of Jane's freedom; in fact, understanding what Thornfield means for Rochester reveals much about his expectations for Jane's domestication. The English manor's confining architectural interiors differ significantly from the "open spaces" of the great house in Spanish Town, Jamaica. Rochester uses Thornfield as a corrective to the moral regression produced, he believes, from the unregulated spaces of the Caribbean sugar plantation. Thornfield's enclosures continue the disciplining work figured as moral improvement that Lowood began, making Jane's flight from the school a movement toward greater constriction rather than toward its release.

The story of the Rochester family in the West Indies teases out the imperial implications of Jane's move from Lowood to Thornfield. As Rochester relates in his autobiographical narrative to Jane (Brontë 304-306), his father and older brother saw the British West Indian colonies as a space of possibility and a source of regeneration for their wealth. For the Rochesters, England provided too little opportunity for a second son to make his own way. Constrained by a system of patrimony that would threaten the value of the family estate, the older Rochesters send Edward out into the colonial space that offers him the chance to make a wealthy match with Bertha Mason. Edward, trapped by a limited income at home, is persuaded to see the colonial heiress as the ticket to freedom, possibility, a new existence, and the liberty of living as a rich man.

For the Rochesters, Jamaica waits as an “open space” for superfluous siblings to make their mark. Yet, openness in colonial discourse has been associated not only with vastness, but with a lack of correct cultivation and wasted potential—a lack of spatial and moral improvement. Eve Stoddard Walsh writes that underlying the discourse of planting in the Americas “is the idea that land occupied only by savages is not really inhabited; as John Locke puts it, such land is waste land, barren. To be made civilized, useful to humanity, it must be made into private property, and to be made into private property, it must be worked in a rational and industrious way” (5). Mary Louise Pratt has written that “imperial eyes” see what the present environment has to offer in terms of its potential conversion into future profit. Thus, the imperial gaze is an eminently improving one that characterizes the colonial space as a *tabula rasa* on which to create something out of nothing by the colonizer’s labor. The Rochesters understand the “openness” of Jamaica in terms of the opportunity it offers for commercial profit and a social place for Edward, from which he would have been closed off in England.

Yet, along with the potentiality of the colony’s open spaces comes the fear of inhabiting an uncivilized and perhaps uncontrollable landscape. Yi-Fu Tuan has characterized all architecture as attempts to protect the human subject from the “landscape of fear” surrounding him, a landscape that is frightening precisely because of its openness. He writes: “every human construction—whether mental or material—is a component in a landscape of fear because it exists to contain chaos....The material landscapes of houses, fields, and cities contain chaos. Every dwelling is a fortress built to defend its human occupants against the elements; it is a constant reminder of human vulnerability” (6). Openness makes the improver vulnerable at the same time as it

presents him with opportunity. For Tuan, fear of the land is inextricably bound up with improvement of the land, for “Every cultivated field is wrested out of nature, which will encroach upon the field and destroy it but for ceaseless human effort” (6). Fear of reversion, or the inability to tame in the first place, shadows colonial expansion. When surrounded by a landscape of fear in the colonies, boundaries take on great importance. Tuan goes on to say that “every human-made boundary on the earth's surface—garden hedge, city wall, or radar “fence”—is an attempt to keep inimical forces at bay. Boundaries are everywhere because threats are ubiquitous” (6). But trying to contain the forces of chaos that emerge “all round” the defined absolute space also works against its own purpose: once a space is enclosed, all other space around it becomes Other and a possible threat. Creating an “inside” always also creates an “outside.”

For Edward, the boundaries established by his house in Jamaica fail to keep out the surrounding chaos of the tropical environment. The lack of clear distinctions between “inside” and “outside” created by the porousness of the architectural space in which he lives with Bertha contributes most profoundly to his sense of fear in the landscape. The ever-open casement of his window exposes the interior of the house to the “sulphur-steams” and the “mosquitoes” that “came buzzing in and hummed sullenly round the room.” The sound of the sea “rumb[ing] dull like an earthquake,” the black clouds and the moon, and the feeling of an oncoming hurricane hang in the air, making him feel “physically influenced by the outside atmosphere and scene” (307). As Bertha’s madness progresses, Edward feels the need to enclose himself even further inside the house to keep out not only the dense atmosphere but also the reminder of Bertha’s presence in his life. The “thin partitions” of the West Indian house allow sound to travel through easily:

“though two rooms off,” he hears Bertha’s foul language, and the walls “oppos[e] but slight obstruction to [Bertha’s] wolfish cries” (308). Edward, wanting ever more enclosure, finds himself increasingly trapped but also increasingly exposed.

The lack of enclosure of the West Indian house allows Edward’s volatile nature too much freedom and puts him in danger of “contracting” the insanity that, by his account, seems to waft freely through the tropical air.¹⁵ His narration to Jane of his West Indian life suggests that he interprets his resolution to commit suicide as an example of how easily one can catch the island’s “disease.” Although he resolves to shoot himself, the impulse leaves him after only a moment, “for, not being insane, the crisis of exquisite and unalloyed despair which had originated the wish and design of self-destruction, was past in a second” (308). In fact, Edward’s recounting of his momentary lapse into insanity reflects Victorian ideas regarding the nature of madness. Early in the nineteenth century, those who were diagnosed with mental illness were thought to be ill by nature, madness being considered an affliction that either did or did not affect one. The ill were kept in asylums, often unsanitary and prison-like, similar to the way that Bertha is kept in Thornfield.¹⁶ Later, Victorian psychologists believed such treatment to be inhumane and suggested instead that madness was not a disease but a lack of discipline or inability to manage the passions and feelings experienced by everyone. The psychologist John Barlow wrote that those who believe mental illness to be a disease should “note for a short time the thoughts that pass through his mind, and the feelings that agitate him: and he will find that, were they all expressed and indulged, they would be as wild, and perhaps as frightful in their consequences as those of any madman. But the man of strong mind represses them, and seeks fresh impressions from without if he finds that aid

needful: the man of weak mind yields to them, and then he is insane” (qtd in Bourne Taylor and Shuttleworth 245). The difference between sane and insane, then, was only a matter of management.

Edward’s narrative suggests that his spatial proximity to Bertha and his inability to create spatial distance between himself and the island’s unimprovable elements produced the lax discipline responsible for his moral contamination. Thus, he resolves to remove Bertha to Thornfield, where enclosure and separation behind thick walls will contain her “degradation” (309) and keep it from spreading. Thornfield’s spaces can produce the moral management that his Jamaican house could not. Thus, we should read Thornfield as a space intended to produce the docile domestic subject, not one that offers her freedom.

For Rochester and for Jane, Thornfield represents a spatial production of moral discipline. The first thing Jane sees as she approaches the house is a gate: “the driver got down and opened a pair of gates: we passed through, and they clashed to behind us” (95). The scene recalls the opening and immediate closing of the door upon her arrival at Lowood. Inside, she encounters a space like a Chinese box with rooms nested inside and leading into one another. The dining room opens into the drawing room, and the drawing room encloses the boudoir. The dining room, acting as the boundary between the two inner rooms and the house’s exterior, displays furniture that is beautiful but “imposing” (104). The drawing room, decorated as a “fairy place,” contrasts with the authority of the dining room, suggesting the spatial containment of the irrational (104). The Chinese box ultimately contracts into a hall of mirrors: the boudoir houses several that create the illusion of additional interiors (104).

Jane's heritage tour of Thornfield's third story, led by Mrs. Fairfax, emphasizes the house's enclosure of English history and culture. While the lower floors comprise "the light and cheerful region below" (108), the third story rooms are "dark and low," with an "air of antiquity" (105). Hundred-year-old bedsteads populate the space, along with antiquated chairs and stools, on whose "cushioned tops were yet apparent traces of half-effaced embroideries, wrought by fingers that for two generations had been coffin-dust....All these relics gave the third story of Thornfield Hall the aspect of a home of the past: a shrine of memory" (105-106). Rochester wanders the Continent and brings home exotic decorations and a French ward, but these reside on the lower levels and in the rooms that are used in everyday living. Meanwhile, Englishness gets pushed back into "the hush" and "the gloom" of the house's unused floor (106). The description of the antique beds "shut in, some of them, with doors of oak; shaded, others, with wrought old English hangings" emphasizes the closing in and shutting up of English heritage. For Rochester, the heir of all past generations of Thornfield patriarchs, the past manifests as a burdensome clutter of responsibilities. After the death of his father and brother, the estate devolved onto Edward, forcing him to assume the duty of improving the family's assets so their value might increase for the next generation. The past imprisons those charged with its safekeeping. By relegating it to its own space and allowing that space to become neglected, Rochester thumbs his nose at his family's history and his obligation to it—a sentiment which culminates in his marriage to Jane and the destruction of Thornfield itself.

Bertha plays an integral part in the burden of Englishness that Rochester wants to shove away. Chosen as a partner for Edward because of her wealth, she would allow the

family's assets to be kept whole and passed down whole. Grafting new wealth onto an old family and its "good race" (305), Bertha plays as vital a part in sustaining the "purity" of that good race as her own racial and geographical origins keep her always Other to it. Thus, although Bertha may seem out of place on the third floor amidst the objects of English heritage, she is exactly where she should be. Her spatial location in the house represents the notion that hereditary improvement—which seeks the preservation of English character by defining what is and what is not English—necessitates its own contamination.

It comes as no surprise, then, that contamination happens in and around Thornfield, despite its efforts to divide and section off its different spaces. Contamination most often figures in the novel through sound. The first time she meets Rochester riding by on his horse, Jane thinks to herself as she walks alone on the lane toward Hay that the town "was yet a mile distant, but in the absolute hush I could hear plainly its thin murmurs of life," and "the sough of the most remote" streams (111). Sound brings near what is far; it brings the foreign home. Inside the hall, Jane hears Bertha's laugh in the corridor on the third floor as a "clamorous peal that seemed to wake an echo in every lonely chamber; though it originated but in one" (107). The sound of Bertha's laughter cannot be managed no matter how secluded she is or restricted her movements. Her voice travels as effectively across the boundaries of Thornfield as it did in the Jamaican house. At Rochester's party (intended to goad Jane into jealousy over Blanche Ingram) the voice of his first wife—"a savage, a sharp, a shrilly sound that ran from end to end of Thornfield Hall"—mingles with the voices of Blanche and Jane, contenders for her replacement (205). Jane's reference to Bluebeard's castle signifies Thornfield's

arrangement of space so as to keep the “dead” wife separate from the living wives; but the presence of sounds in the hall thwart such a separation.

Perhaps Thornfield remains after all too “open,” despite its enclosures and partitions, to contain effectively the subversive forces that Bertha (and Jane) represents. It fails to keep past, present, foreign, and domestic in their separate and rightful places. The only thing left to do is eradicate the space entirely, to erase Edward’s colonial past and Jane’s class inequality, allowing their new relationship to begin on democratic terms. However, as Stephen Clingman suggests, the move falls short of the revolution it promises: “Brontë has brought the house down only to reconstitute it on more acceptable foundations...The novel has embodied a form of, if not renovation, then at least a project of home improvement” (145). The exchange of Thornfield for Ferndean provides a space “more modest, more moral, more equitable in gender terms. Yet it is adjacent, contiguous, near to Thornfield, ‘almost the same, but not quite’, a version not of menace but renewal” (Clingman 145). Ferndean might be a morally-improved Thornfield, but it is not a starting-over. In fact, Ferndean adapts Bertha’s sequestration to a new wife and a new location, this time to a place where even sound “falls dull, and dies unreverberating” (447).

Ferndean impresses Jane at first glance as a place so secluded as to be uninhabitable. Ringed by a dense barrier of trees, Jane’s world shrinks to its smallest size yet. She will live in a tighter enclosure here than at Lowood, or Thornfield, or even Marsh End despite St. John Rivers’s constant surveillance. Rochester succeeds in taking “mademoiselle to the moon,” as he says to Adèle earlier in the novel (Brontë 266). Isolation functions as a new sequestration, and while Rochester frees himself from the

burden of inheritance that Thornfield represented, Jane's passions are allowed no outlet. She must redirect her vitality and energy, the unstable elements of her character that attracted but also threatened Rochester, to the maintenance of his domestic bliss. The re-confinement of the woman to the new home recharges a social order that is stabilized when it manages to incorporate all unstable elements within itself. Transformed from orphan outsider to good bourgeois wife, Jane recharges the center from its margins. Attractive because she resembles Bertha just enough to remain different, Jane's journey of spatial discipline makes the safely exotic the cornerstone of domestic happiness.

From Plantation to Nation: The Transformation of Colonial Space in *I Walked with a Zombie*

In *Imperial Leather*, Anne McClintock argues that the discourses of domesticity and domestication, or gender and imperialism, aligned during the nineteenth century.¹⁷ "As European men crossed the dangerous thresholds of their known worlds," she writes, "they ritualistically feminized borders and boundaries" (24). Imperial discourse persistently gendered female the imperial unknown: the territory to be discovered, conquered, and eventually improved often bore the symbolic shape of the female body. Women served as the "boundary markers of imperialism, the ambiguous mediators of what appeared to be—at least superficially—the predominantly male agon of empire" (24). Male imperial discourse used women to establish the "inside" and "outside" of civilized space, what was properly domestic (English) versus what needed domesticating, and what must not be violated by the indigenous people and environment. Thus, male

imperial discourse was characterized by “a fear of boundary loss accompanied by an excess of boundary order” (26), and both required the presence and symbol of the female. Although McClintock focuses on narratives set in the Victorian British colonial territories, her analysis applies equally well to *Jane Eyre*. The crossing of domestic discourse with discourses of domestication characterizes the simultaneous imperial and female subjugation at work in the architectural spaces of the novel. Both the English and the West Indian female body require enclosure in an excess of boundary order. Furthermore, Bertha’s sexual body mediates Rochester’s colonial experience. He needs her to reproduce English heirs and maintain English wealth, and in order to do so must conquer the tropical environment that so threatens the loss of his own psychological boundaries against insanity. Rochester must domesticate colonial territory to achieve a successful domestic union with Bertha, and his failure to do so drives his second attempt at matrimony with Jane. Although Jane is an English woman, she repeatedly voices parallels between herself and colonized men and women. The novel suggests that similar injustices underlie the slave trade and the governess trade,¹⁸ indentured sexual servitude and marriage, and the making of the docile body in both the white English wife and the racially-marked colonial subject.

McClintock’s analysis also reveals that the imperial understanding of improvement as a process (civilizing colonial territory and making it profitable) and as a state of being that separates one category of humans from another both depend on spatial organization. Her emphasis on boundaries and borders suggests that the creation of absolute spaces that operated as their own totalities, separate from the chaotic, “open” spaces beyond, was crucial to land and human improvement in the colonies. Earlier in

this chapter, I framed my theoretical discussion of improvement in domestic terms, contextualizing the English Enclosure Acts as one manifestation of the larger national interest in self-sufficiency. I argued that the language of discipline and labor—“cultivation,” “restriction,” “management”—applies equally well to land and human subject. In the remainder of this chapter, I argue that the imperial version of land and human improvement evinces the same reliance on spatial enclosure and partitioning as its domestic counterpart. McClintock’s analysis adds to my general framework an important gender dimension, and it is through the constellation of spatial enclosure, moral improvement, and the imperial feminine that we should read not only *Jane Eyre*, but also its relationship to *I Walked with a Zombie*.

Jacques Tourner’s 1943 film tells the story of Jessica Holland, the beautiful wife of English sugar planter Paul Holland. Paul and Jessica live in the “great house,” or estate house, at the Holland family’s sugar plantation, Fort Holland, located on the fictional West Indian island of Saint Sebastian, just before the island’s independence from British colonialism. Paul, played by Tom Conway as a harsh and disciplined English colonist, inherits the plantation from his father. Paul’s younger half-brother, Wesley Rand (James Ellison), is an American and the son of Paul’s mother and her second husband, an American missionary who worked on the island. Wesley drinks, broods about Paul’s unfair share of power in the family estate, and chases after women, including Jessica herself. Jessica (Christine Gordon) sits at the center of the brothers’ power struggle over their imperial assets, and her sexual choice of Wesley over her husband creates a domestic scandal that becomes a public matter, considering the family’s prominence on the island. One night, Wesley and Jessica decide to run away together but are stopped by

Paul. The movie remains unclear as to how exactly Paul punished Jessica for her transgression, but the result was that she developed a fever that, in the words of the family's doctor, "burned up parts of the spinal cord" which produced a zombie-like state. Later, we find that the doctor's assessment is contested by Paul's and Wesley's mother, the missionary's widow who now runs a clinic serving the plantation's black workers. It turns out that Mrs. Rand (Edith Barrett) asked the voodoo priest at the hounfort, the voodoo temple located deep within the sugarcane fields, to turn Jessica into a zombie to keep her from breaking apart the family. Unable to speak or act on her own will, Jessica floats around the garden and verandas of Fort Holland like a sleepwalker. She can, however, obey simple commands, especially those of her husband. Paul keeps her confined to a tower in the great house's courtyard, where Alma (Teresa Harris), a black West Indian maid looks after her. But Paul's preference of keeping her at home rather than sending her to an asylum drives him to hire a Canadian nurse, Betsy (Frances Dee), for additional care.

Betsy's first-person point of view provides, for the most part, the film's narrative. The "I" in the title refers to Betsy, and hers is the voice we hear in the first voice-over of the film, which occurs immediately after the opening credits. She says, "I walked with a zombie. It does seem an odd thing to say. Had anyone said that to me a year ago, I'm not at all sure I'd have known what a zombie was. I might have had some notion that they were strange and frightening, even a little funny. It all began in such an ordinary way." The establishment of a present narrator relaying past events from her own point of view suggests the film's alignment of Betsy with Jane Eyre. But Betsy is not strictly the Jane character, nor is any of the other characters a faithful cinematic translation of Brontë's

characters to screen. Instead, the film combines aspects of different characters to explore how the power injustices of the novel play out in the colonial space. Paul Holland resembles most closely Edward Rochester, but his repression of his attraction to Jessica also recalls St. John Rivers. Rivers and Rochester also align through Wesley Rand: Rochester's brooding and dissipation following his marriage to Bertha is reflected in Wesley's demeanor, but so is Rivers' missionary lineage and his lifelong pining after a woman he cannot have.

Betsy and Jessica, at first glance, most readily lend themselves to cinematic equivalents of Jane and Bertha, respectively. But their first initials (Jane/Jessica; Betsy/Bertha) suggest that we read the film as the novel's *prequel*: Betsy, the second wife of the English imperialist, will share her patient's domestic abuse and psychological distress, and it will be Betsy who becomes Bertha the madwoman in Thornfield's upper rooms. The initials also suggest, however, that we might read the film as the novel's *sequel*, in which the Jane character, a docile and tamed version of Bertha, ends her life as her own limit case: a zombie-woman. For the interesting thing about Jessica is that although she functions as the madwoman of the great house, she is also the image of absolute docile femininity. She dresses in a flowing, pure white nightgown, has no will of her own, and indeed, has no choice but to obey her husband's commands. Unlike Bertha, who remains unimprovable, Jessica has undergone successful moral management by being robbed of her interiority. Although we may accuse the film of overstating its case, it nevertheless suggests a radical interpretation of domesticity: Jessica's zombification renders her the perfect domestic female subject, a bad woman tamed—through complete annihilation of the self—into a good wife.

There exists a final pairing of characters whose shared characteristics further reveals the film's political intentions. This pairing consists of the white female zombie and the black male zombie. The title of the film actually misleads, for in addition to Jessica, the Holland plantation bears yet another zombie. This is Carrefour (Darby Jones), a black male sugar cane worker, whose history remains a mystery throughout the film. Jessica and Carrefour create a striking visual parallel: both actors are extremely tall and thin, and their movements are unnaturally circumscribed (Jessica glides, Carrefour shuffles). Their visual similarity, despite their racial difference, points to a symbolic similarity: the wife and the worker must both be transformed, or improved, into docile subjects. The plantation disciplines individuals just as it disciplines the land. Jessica and Carrefour represent the crossing of discourses of domesticity and domestication: the colonizer's power depends on the moral management of both the white woman and the black colonial subject.

The cultural history of white and black zombies in the Americas further clarifies the film's pairing of Jessica and Carrefour. Prior to the release of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* in 1968, zombies were seen as creatures to be pitied rather than feared. Whether white or black, zombies represented kidnapping, subjugation, and being forced into labor (sexual or manual) against their will. White zombies almost always referred to women, and black zombies usually referred to black male enslavement on Caribbean plantations. Zombiedom also possessed a particular connection to voodoo, a religion that syncretizes African beliefs and Catholicism and is a direct product of the transatlantic slave trade. Although voodoo is often treated as "backward" or a "holdover" from the slaves' African origins, it is in fact integral to the making of the New World.¹⁹

The film *White Zombie*, directed by Victor Halperin and released in 1932, exemplifies the connections that early Hollywood made between white and black zombies, voodoo, and slavery in the Caribbean. *White Zombie*, set in Haiti, tells the story of wealthy plantation owner, Charles Beaumont, who meets a beautiful American woman on a boat going to Haiti and arranges for her impending marriage to occur on his plantation to steal her away from her fiancé. He elicits the services of Murder Legendre, played by Bela Lugosi, a decadent European émigré who owns a sugar mill operated entirely by black zombies, figured in the film as “perfect” slaves who work tirelessly for no pay and are, of course, maintenance-free. Legendre zombifies the woman and she becomes Beaumont’s love slave. Eventually, Beaumont and Legendre engage in a power struggle and plunge off a cliff to their mutual death, breaking the spell under which the woman was held by the zombie master and returning her to the arms of her American fiancé.

White Zombie expresses early twentieth-century fears about white female slavery. Ann Kordas writes that Americans who saw *White Zombie* upon its release would have been familiar with the notion of white slavery as the abduction of sexually-promiscuous white women by villainous men, who then held them captive as prostitutes (26). These women, it was suggested, received captivity as their just punishment. Kordas writes that the figure of the white zombie expressed fears about the New Woman, whose independence and sexual liberation threatened the patriarchal social order. A 1943 magazine article titled “Interesting Facts About Zombies—The Walking Dead” advised that “if you keep your skirts clean, you have nothing to worry about” (qtd in Kordas 27). As the white zombie of Fort Holland, Jessica functions as the colonial New Woman, a

woman to be somewhat pitied but mostly chastised. Jessica embodies the woman gone wrong and justly punished. Bertha's confinement, too, can in this context be seen as a punishment for extramarital sex as opposed to a benevolent act of safe-keeping.

White Zombie also expresses early twentieth-century fears about the zombie master. The zombie master often took the form of a mixed-race, Jewish, or southern European man schooled in the uses of black magic by his ancestors. Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert writes that the various versions of female zombie enslavement hint that "the urge to transcend or subvert race and class barriers" is "one of the repositories of the sorcerer's lust" (qtd in Bishop 67). White zombiedom indexes the fear of miscegenation, which itself represents a loss of the colonizer's social dominance: if the dark magician penetrates the body and mind of the lily-white wife, the twin colonial projects of domesticity and domestication fail together. White zombies represent the penetration of the enclosed space of the great house by the unimprovable spaces and people beyond its walls. They signify the containment, but also the irrepressibility, of women's sexuality and cross-racial desire. The colonial wife's purity makes her the moral center of the great house, but it also makes her a liability. Her contamination by what lies outside the house gates undermines the colonizer's moral and economic supremacy.

If the figure of the white zombie indicates the paradox of imperial domesticity, the black zombie reveals how that same paradox lies at the center of imperial domestication. The black zombie exemplifies the "perfect" slave, the docile but ever-productive black male body that makes possible and profitable the Caribbean plantation system. Just as Jessica's zombification transforms a bad woman into a good wife, Carrefour's zombiedom represents the transformation of the black man from a threat to a

pillar of the established social order, recalling Foucault's notion that moral management contains, rather than eradicates, subversive energies, and redirects them to uphold the status quo. The connection between zombies and indentured servitude originates in Dahomean legend, in which the zombie is understood to be a human being without a soul. A sorcerer's malignant magic gives an individual the look of the dead; the person's family, thinking him dead, buries the body, upon which the sorcerer "raises" the body and sells it into servitude in a far-off place, where the family will never find him (Bishop 69).

With the slave trade, the legend took on new meaning and became a haunting allegory for the collective experience of African slaves forcefully relocated to the Americas to live out their days absent their "souls." Zora Neale Hurston's *Tell My Horse* (1938) gives a moving account of the zombie's metaphorical power when used to describe the "living death" of slavery:

It is not good for a person who has lived all his life surrounded by a degree of fastidious culture, loved to his last breath by family and friends, to contemplate the probability of his resurrected body being dragged from the vault—the best that love and means could provide, and set to toiling ceaselessly in the banana fields, working like a beast, unclothed like a beast, and like a brute crouching in some foul den in the few hours allowed for rest and food. From an educated, intelligent being to an unthinking, unknowing beast. Then there is the helplessness of the situation. Family and friends cannot rescue the victim because they do not know. They think the loved one is sleeping peacefully in his grave. They may motor past the plantation where the Zombie who was once dear to them is held captive often and again and its soulless eyes may have fallen upon them without thought or recognition. (181)

Forcefully removed from one's family and community, dehumanized, and made to live in a new place cut off from that former life, the slave's present and past lives are

irreconcilable. It is as if one has died, been buried in the ship's hold, and resurrected in the New World as a docile but vigorously laboring body.

However, the figure of the black zombie also alludes to the hidden and inexplicable power of voodoo, a force that eludes the master's management of his land and resentment of his workers. While voodoo is associated with enslavement, it is also connected to the first slave rebellion in the New World that successfully produced an independent postcolonial nation. In his account of the Haitian Revolution of the 1790s, C.L.R. James writes that the rebellion that instigated the Revolution as a whole began with a voodoo ceremony. "Voodoo was the medium of the conspiracy": slaves came from miles around to the voodoo temples, or houmforts, to sing, dance, and participate in the rituals. Meanwhile, they also exchanged political news and made plans. The houngan, or the voodoo priest, led the first revolt in 1791 in which the slaves of Saint Domingue (Haiti) set fire to the cane fields and massacred their white masters (86-88). The violence of the Revolution served as the haunting double of colonial cruelty. But the Revolution also mirrored the colonizer's own overthrow of social oppression back home: the French Revolution. Occurring simultaneously with the class-based revolution in France, the Haitian slave revolt tested how far the French were willing to extend their "universal" principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity. James's account reveals that although many members of the working class felt "the defence of the Rights of Man abroad was the defence of them at home," the bourgeois interests in the National Assembly had profited too much from the slave trade to allow the slaves their citizenship (77). After more than a decade of war, Haiti finally gained its independence in 1804, and under the leadership of Jean-Jacques Dessalines purged its entire white population.

Both white and black zombies suggest that the perfection of the colonizer's control brings with it the threat of the loss of that control. Lurking in the shadows of the ideal colonial space—the plantation populated with docile white female and black male bodies—lies the collapse of that economic and political system. In the rest of the chapter, I argue that the film uses voodoo to indicate revolutionary energies circulating on the plantation that cannot be confined or capitalized upon for labor productivity. To do this, I focus on the film's portrayal of the *houmfort*, the voodoo temple hidden in the cane fields, as the competing center of power on the plantation vis-à-vis the great house. Voodoo, the dark double of the imperial system, possesses an advantage over the dominant order by not relying on spatial enclosure to produce its desired effects. On the contrary, the power of voodoo lies in its omnipresence, its ability to circumvent the boundaries created by the plantation system and affect all those who inhabit the space, those who reside in the great house as well as those who work in the fields. I argue that voodoo explodes the plantation's discipline by infusing the colonial space with new use and new meaning. This reuse and reinscription of space by the black workers transforms the plantation into the symbol of a new independent nation. Subjected to similar spatial disciplining as Jessica and Jane, the workers refuse to submit, and instead chart their own course toward decolonization through the reinterpretation of space.

Archaeological evidence has revealed that British West Indian sugar plantations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were quite uniform in their spatial organization. This master plan reflects what Henri Lefebvre has called a capitalist production of space. The creation of a sugar island necessitated the obliteration of indigenous populations and natural ecosystems and the wholesale re-creation of an

artificial space on top of such a “tabula rasa” entirely devoted to the production of sugar as a cash crop for the maximum benefit of its owners (Armstrong and Kelly 375). The plantation represents an extreme case of how land improvement creates an absolute space, a totality closed in upon itself that operates according to standardized measurement and profit calculation. An aerial view of Jamaica, Barbados, Tobago, or other sugar islands during the British colonial period would have looked like enclosed and partitioned plots of land, each owned by a master planter and his family who lived in the great house situated at the top of a hill to catch the cool breeze (Ohm Clement 100). These houses were often designed with their main windows facing their “neighbors,” such that one could look from hilltop to hilltop and see where each planter’s land began and ended (Ohm Clement 100). With the geography of entire islands carved up to form improved parcels, there existed little remaining space to conceive of as being “outside” the system.²⁰

The plantation’s spatial layout confirmed the notion that there existed no outside to the system, for each element in the plantation’s design was strictly controlled and regulated in relation to all its other elements. By 1700, standard models for plantation layout had been generated, and by the early nineteenth century, planters designing new estates could consult manuals and guides such as Thomas Roughley’s *The Jamaica Planter’s Guide, or, a System for Planting and Managing a Sugar Estate or Other Plantations in that Island, and Throughout the British West Indies in General* (1823). Thus, the design of the plantation as a space was relatively uniform across the British West Indies. A case study of the Seville plantation in St. Ann’s Bay, Jamaica that operated between 1670 and the early nineteenth century reveals a specific example of the

general layout. The African slave population lived in villages located on land at the margins of the plantation considered unsuitable for cane cultivation. Any cultivable land was used for cane, especially the land closest to the water for efficient irrigation. The African villages stood in close proximity to both the cane fields and the processing works to minimize time lost to travel. The sugar works, or the manufacturing complex that converted the cane into refined granules for consumption, occupied a central location enabling everyone to come and go easily. The sensitivity of sugar cane to exposure after being cut necessitated the rapid transition of cut cane to the sugar works for processing, so easy access to the works was of the highest importance. The great house and managerial housing (for overseers) lay between the key economic variables—labor, fields, and works—to maximize surveillance of all operations, but especially the workers' activities (Armstrong and Kelly 375-377).

At Seville, the great house was completely exposed to the African village. This allowed the master to monitor his slaves personally, but such a design also allowed his slaves to monitor him. Maureen Harkin's reading of Matthew Lewis's *Journal of a West India Proprietor* (1834) emphasizes the mixed blessing of mutual surveillance in such plantation design. Matthew Lewis, author of the best-selling gothic novel *The Monk* (1796), owned two slave-owning plantations in Jamaica which devolved to him in 1812 from his father. His *Journal* compiles accounts of his visits there in 1816 and 1818; he died on the second return voyage, and the *Journal* was published posthumously. Lewis's *Journal* participated in a tradition of travel writing about the West Indies in which the differences between European and West Indian spatial arrangements were most frequently a topic (Harkin 145). Lewis's account focuses on himself as a recipient of a

public gaze and his lack of privacy as the master of the plantation who is highly visible to his slaves. In what can best be described as a reverse panopticon, Lewis finds that the location of his great house in a place that allows him to see all has failed to give him the sense of power that should accompany it, and in fact has exposed him to being seen by all around him. The architectural design of the house itself makes matters worse. He writes about “being obliged to live perpetually in public,” with everything one does being “seen and known” because “the houses are absolutely transparent; the walls are nothing but windows—and all the doors stand wide open” (Lewis 93-94; qtd in Harkin 143). Lewis’s account suggests that the “specular relations serve the slave population rather than their masters,” and the inspector becomes the inspected when the space designed to secure his power is used against him (Harkin 144).

Lewis’s *Journal* and the Seville plantation reveal that for the master as well there existed no “outside” of the plantation. The totalizing space of the plantation that enclosed the slaves also enclosed the master, and power figured as spatial centrality could just as easily make the master vulnerable as dominant. The psychological crisis that Rochester experiences while living in his great house with Bertha takes on greater significance when placed in this context. Rochester feels vulnerable to Bertha’s insanity because the walls of his house are too thin, and this exposure is made more unbearable by the tropical air that wafts through his window, bearing with it, he believes, any number of physical and psychological maladies endemic to the environment. Rochester’s account recalls Lewis’s description of his own house as “transparent.” Rochester’s fear of “catching” Bertha’s and Jamaica’s disease is one way of articulating a more general fear of increased

exposure despite, or indeed because of, increased confinement. Spatial enclosure encourages, but also subverts, moral management.

The depiction of the great house in *I Walked with a Zombie* presents another case of the master's spatial vulnerability due to his enclosure within the house. Betsy's first encounter with the great house at Fort Holland is with its closed wrought-iron gate. The point-of-view shot that follows (from Betsy's perspective) shows the Fort's garden and steps leading to a covered veranda. Both of these architectural elements—the gate and the covered veranda—recall Jane's description of Lowood, and the gate resonates as well with her first encounter with Thornfield. The camera pans to show the windows of the house, which, in the heat of the day, have blinds drawn over them, preventing us from seeing inside and shutting the house in upon itself. A painted background suggests in outline the existence of another wing of the house that shares similar characteristics. The background creates the sense of a labyrinthine interior, a house that stretches on and on, enveloping its inhabitants. The cane fields, through which Betsy and Jessica walk to find the hounfort in the film's central scene, mirrors this labyrinthine structure: the visual parallel identifies the great house and the hounfort as competing locations of power on the plantation.

Whereas the exterior of the great house creates the sense of its inhabitants' confinement, the interior suggests their exposure and vulnerability. A sequence of three long shots of the interior rooms follows the exterior sequence above. In the first shot, the camera shows a wide and spacious veranda, with a peaked roof, the highest point of which is hidden to suggest more height. Rich furnishings and carpets populate the frame, but the palm fronds encroaching on the veranda, outgrowing the railing that is meant to

keep them out, suggests improved nature's reversion to its original, chaotic state. The veranda also functions as a dining room and so can neither be described as "outside" nor "inside," recalling Rochester's and Lewis's complaint that Caribbean architecture fails to establish safe boundaries. The first shot suggests that the Great House, in its isolation and privileged location, is being slowly engulfed by forces on the island that the Holland-Rands cannot control and cannot pull into their improving orbit.

Moving further into the interior of the house, we see a living space that comprises three different floors, perhaps a visual homage to the three floors at Thornfield. The space again suggests height and spaciousness but also the danger of openness and lack of safe enclosure. On the left side of the frame, a white curtain billows into an open casement window. The viewer's eye is drawn to the curtain because it is the only moving object in the shot. The inward-blown curtain visually expresses Rochester's fear of contamination from exposure to the air. The last of the three shots takes place in Betsy's room. The vertical lines created by bedposts and curtain folds paired with the dramatic horizontal shadows cast by the venetian blinds gives this space, unlike the two previous spaces, a feeling of restriction and confinement. Jane's reference to Lowood as a "prison" is given visual shape here. In the subsequent shot, a servant calls Betsy in to dine with Paul and Wesley for the first time, and her exit into the garden reveals that the blinds are in fact attached to flimsy French doors, liable to let all manner of things into the room even while trapping Betsy within it. The *film noir* aesthetic invoked here by the low-key lighting and heavy shadows creates the sense of impending doom and a pre-determined fate—the downfall of the Holland-Rands and the decolonization of the plantation—that the principal characters fail to detect.

One place at Fort Holland proves even more imprisoning than Betsy's room: the tower in the garden where Paul keeps Jessica. The entrance to the tower lies through a door in its outer wall, visually connecting the tower with Lowood and Jessica's spatial enclosure with Jane's. Able to escape the tower itself but unable to go far, Jessica wanders through the garden by moonlight, unseeing and unresponsive. Spotting her for the first time on the night of her arrival at Fort Holland (and without knowledge of her zombie state), Betsy calls out to her, then follows her into the tower when she does not answer. Extremely low-key lighting presents in dramatic chiaroscuro a staircase that takes Betsy up into the tower's bare second story. Betsy's shadow looms large behind her on the blank walls and yawning empty spaces. Jessica approaches Betsy, her back to the camera which reveals only Betsy's horror-stricken face as Betsy screams (the single loud noise in an otherwise quiet film) and runs to the other side of the room. The next shot shows a close-up of Jessica's face: haggard, eyes wide open and lined thickly with black makeup. When Paul and the servants rush in after hearing Betsy scream, however, the camera pans across Jessica's face a second time, showing the makeup removed, her cheeks full and absent the deep shadows. In fact, she looks like a normal, if sleepy, woman.

The scene in the tower and its visual homage to German expressionism's exteriorization of "mind spaces" suggests that the tower is a psychological as well as a physical space. The tower limits Jessica's physical movements, but it also indicates Betsy's exposure to the "supernatural" forces of the island—its voodoo—that the plantation's spatial and moral management cannot control. On one hand, the scene suggests that voodoo affects Betsy from the beginning, before she even realizes that the

workers possess their own form of power. But on the other hand, it suggests that perhaps Betsy falls victim to her own black magic: an imagination that creates a monster out of Jessica by failing to see her domestic oppression is liable to fall in love with the oppressor himself. We imagine that Betsy, like Jane, will eventually play a complicit role in her own domestication and share the fate of her trapped predecessor. This becomes especially clear in a dialogue that Paul and Betsy share in one of the final scenes of the film:

Paul: You remember the first night I saw you. You were looking at the sea. You were enchanted. I felt I had to destroy that enchantment, make you see ugliness and cruelty.

Betsy: You were trying to warn me.

Paul: No, I was trying to hurt you. It was the same way with Jessica; I had to hurt her. Everything she did or said made me lash out at her... Since you've been here, I've seen how fine and sweet things can be between a man and a woman, how love can be calm and good. I'd rather not have that sort of love than have it and destroy it... It's no good for you to stay so long as I have this fear of myself.

Paul's compulsion to harm seems as unmanageable as Jessica's sexual deviance. His resentment toward her never ceases to replenish itself. Paul's psychological disease suggests that imperialism infects itself with its own black magic and traps the colonizer in his own injustice, brutality, and madness.

The brothers' mutual hatred, Paul's damaged psyche, Jessica's suffering, and Betsy's inability to do anything but reproduce the status quo suggests that for the Holland-Rand family and the colonial plantation system it represents, there is nowhere to go but down. As Gwendolyn Audrey Foster observes, the film represents colonialism and the white family as "diseased" and in decay, while black Haitian culture and the black population are symbols of regeneration (Foster 153). In the final section of this chapter, I

argue that the workers' reinscription of the cane fields from an improved space of labor exploitation and cash crop production to a space for community creation through voodoo ceremony hastens the decline of the colonizer's power and re-produces the plantation space as the grounds upon which to forge a new postcolonial nation.

If the great house at Fort Holland represents the "inside" of European civilization, the voodoo temple, or hounfort, represents its "outside. The Holland-Rands' self-enclosure recalls Tuan's "landscape of fear," for the boundaries of their fortress redefine what lies beyond as a chaos of unmanageable natural and social forces that threaten the masters' dominance. The film uses voodoo to represent these natural and psychological elements of the land and its workers that remain unconfined, unregulated, and unimprovable, and invokes the historical connection between voodoo, slave rebellion, and national independence in Haiti by placing the hounfort at the spiritual and political center of the black workers' lives. Whether or not the hounfort actually emanates the "magic" or "spells" that harm the Holland-Rand family remains unclear; however, the hounfort nevertheless provides a source of vitality that escapes the imperial-capitalist improvement ideology that tries to harness and capitalize on it. Although the hounfort sits at the center of the sugar cane fields, it has no place in the sugar economy and cannot be made to fit its rationalized structure. Paul and Wesley alternately fear voodoo and dismiss it, and although they have lived alongside it since they were boys, as Paul says, they think of it only as something that lies outside the gates of the great house, in which the workers indulge on their downtime.

What the brothers do not realize, however, is that voodoo—and the failure of spatial improvement and moral management that it represents—has already penetrated

their wrought-iron gate, and furthermore, it has been brought in by one of their own in an attempt to recharge and stabilize the family's power. This secret intrusion is revealed at the end of the film's central scene, the night walk that Betsy and Jessica take through the cane fields to find the houngan, the voodoo priest, at the hounfort. Betsy, disheartened by the failure of the family doctor's treatments of Jessica, takes her to the hounfort to see what Alma calls the "better doctors." Their walk through the cane fields reveals the difference between how the colonizer and the colonized understand the connection between space and power. Fort Holland maintains its power through centralization and contraction, represented by the iron gates that keep out all intruders that may contaminate its pure residents. But the hounfort acts as a point out of which subversive elements emanate. The night walk comprises a sequence of medium to medium-long shots that reveal little more than the women framed by stalks of cane. The absence of aerial shots in this sequence refuses to give the viewer what we feel we need most: a visual map of where the women are going. Thus, as the camera tracks along with them, the viewer seems to lose her orientation. The *mise-en-scene* offers only cane and more cane, and thus the women seem as if they traverse the same spaces again and again.

In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Michel de Certeau describes two figures, the voyeur and the walker, that correspond to different ways of viewing the city. The voyeur's is an imperialist's point of view: it transforms the lived experience of the city below into a readable text seen from above. The voyeur's aerial map represents "an oblivion and a misunderstanding of practices" (93). The walker's point of view, however, resists the voyeur's mapping of the city into a readable form: "The ordinary practitioners of the city live 'down below,' below the thresholds at which visibility begins" (93).

Although de Certeau's text addresses the city in particular, his formulation applies equally well to the plantation space, especially its portrayal in the film's night walk scene. The decision to exclude crane shots and bury the viewer in undifferentiated and confusing space forces the viewer to recognize the existence of two very different ways of looking at the cane fields: the master's way and the workers' way. For the master, the cane represents simply the raw material that must be processed in order to yield a product that can be sold for a profit. The workers are simply there to perform the labor of transforming the cane into sugar. The master's "aerial" view of the fields sees them as one aggregate mass that plays one specific role in the larger plantation economy; in other words, cane is nothing more than a commodity.²¹ But the "walkers," or the cane workers, experience the fields below the threshold of the colonizer's gaze, and for them the space bears much more detail, variety, and meaning.

The walker's point of view "escap[es] the imaginary totalizations produced by the eye" and reveals the "strangeness" of everyday spaces (Certeau 93). The workers, intimately familiar with the fields and who experience it as lived, rather than simply seen, imagined, or calculated space, also invest it with meaning (what de Certeau calls "strangeness") that escapes the colonizer's detection. For de Certeau, the walker's "point of view" is actually a practice, or a *use* of space that can transform it into something that resists, rather than produces, capital. He writes: "These practices of space refer to a specific form of operations ('ways of operating'), to 'another spatiality,' (an 'anthropological,' poetic and mythic experience of space), and to an *opaque and blind* mobility characteristic of the bustling city. A *migrational*, or metaphorical, city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city" (93, italics original). The film

represents voodoo as one such form of operations, a practice of the workers' everyday lives that infuses the fields with a poetic, mythic, and human-centered experience.

Voodoo creates a "metaphorical" space that slips into the clear text of the planned and readable plantation, and thus creates social and political volatility within an absolute space meant to discipline individual behavior.

This re-inscription of the fields becomes clear when Betsy and Jessica encounter a series of mysterious objects hung or placed in different parts of the fields. First, they see an animal skull held up by a pole, followed by a dead animal hanging from a tree branch, then a hanging gourd punctured with holes.²² Next, they see a human skull with a broken jaw, ringed by rocks. At this point, the music of conch and drums fills the soundtrack, suggesting the women's proximity to the houmfort. Although we never find out what these objects denote, it is clear that they do mean something, and furthermore, that they structure and give meaning to the spaces in which they are located. Perhaps they mark boundaries, the crossing of thresholds, or an especially sacred space for ritual. The objects' presence suggests that this aggregate mass of cane is actually a highly differentiated space marked out according to voodoo beliefs, a systematic understanding of reality equally as powerful as the capitalist system of sugar production. The objects sacralize a space improved by imperialism as simply economic and imply that voodoo "secretly structure[s] the determining conditions of social life" for the workers and functions as a "reappropriation" of the "mode of administration" that organizes plantation space (Certeau 96). More importantly, again to use de Certeau's framework, voodoo "elude[s] discipline without being outside the field in which it is exercised" (96), turning

the colonizer's space against its intended use. Voodoo "insert[s] into the 'imposed' order things *extra* and *other*" while operating underneath that order all the while.

What looks like a sea of sugarcane to the colonizer and simply a means of making money is reinscribed by the colonized into a "habitable" space (Certeau 106) infused with meaning that cannot be improved to profitable account. With their spatial practice, the workers turn a space that dehumanizes them into a space for community-building. What the women see next on their walk crystallizes the workers' reinscription of the fields: the silhouetted image of Carrefour, extraordinarily tall and upright, his statuesque build looking like a monolith against the light. The camera, mimicking the movement of Betsy's flashlight, zooms in on his foot, then tilts up to his face, showing eyes bulging and unblinking. The black zombie, the metaphor for the perfect slave, also serves as the hounfort's guard. The scene transforms the docile worker, who recalls the legacy of slavery, into the protector of the forces of opposition to the very system that created him.

Carrefour's appearance at the temple's entrance suggests that despite the efforts of moral management, there will always exist in the slave, the colonized, and the exploited worker a reserve of power fueled by grievance at injustice that, like Miss Temple's and Helen's cup of resentment, is endlessly refilled. The film represents that reserve as voodoo, a way of existing on the colonial space that remains in excess of what the plantation system can improve to its advantage. Carrefour allows the women into the hounfort because of the voodoo patch that Alma has pinned to Jessica's cloak, anticipating their confrontation with the black zombie. As the pair emerges through an opening in the cane, the vegetation becomes thicker and begins to look less like stalks of

sugarcane and more like the natural landscape of the island: as we get closer to the hounfort, the cash crop loses its dominance.

Finally, we see the hounfort, an open pavilion rather than an enclosed space. The sabreur, the master-of-ceremonies in voodoo ritual, dances with a possessed woman while other dancers form a circle around seated drummers. From a small hole made in a door at the far end of the pavilion, a female voice intones, "My people. Let them bring the rice cakes. Let them dance and be happy." The voudoisants, including Betsy and Jessica, form a line to speak to the god through the hole in the door. When Betsy takes her turn, the door opens and she is pulled through. Someone lights a match in the dark, and standing before her is Mrs. Rand, Paul's and Wesley's mother. Mrs. Rand explains that when her second husband died, she was "helpless." The people among whom she was living "disobeyed" her. "Then accidentally," she continues, "I discovered the secret of how to deal with them. There was a woman with a baby. Again and again I begged her to boil the drinking water, but she wouldn't. Then I told her that the god Shango would kill the evil spirits in the water if she boiled it. From then on she boiled the water...It seemed so simple to let the gods speak through me." A scuffle outside cuts her explanation short: curious about Jessica's demeanor, the sabreur stabs her in the arm with his sword, and the crowd discovers that she does not bleed, a sure sign of a zombie. The houngan orders the agitated crowd to allow Betsy and Jessica to hurry back to the great house.

One reading of the hounfort sequence might argue that Mrs. Rand's presence in the temple represents imperialism's penetration into the very forces that oppose it: there is no escape from improvement, for as Harvey suggests, capitalist land management is

absolute. Thus, power is present everywhere, even in its own subversion.²³ I suggest instead that the opposite occurs: power relies on what it tries to differentiate itself from, on what will eventually destroy it. The conclusion of the film's central sequence bears out my reading. The morning after Betsy and Jessica return to Fort Holland, the police commissioner and the family doctor (representatives of imperial law and western science) come to discuss Jessica's fate. The island has become charged with tension, as the voodooists have been drumming constantly since the women's departure and scheming, according to the commissioner, to bring Jessica back to the hounmort. The unrest has caused the island to erupt in rumors and gossip about the scandalous behavior going on at the master's house. Under pressure of Paul's being transported to the police station for questioning, Mrs. Rand confesses that not only did she ask the houngan to turn Jessica into a zombie, she did so in a state of possession:

I entered into their ceremonies. I pretended I was possessed by their gods. But what I did to Jessica, when she wanted to go away with Wesley...that night I went to the hounmort. I kept seeing her face smiling because she was beautiful enough to take my family in her hands and tear it apart. The drums, the chanting, the lights. I heard a voice speaking in the sudden silence: my voice. I was speaking to the houngan. I *was* possessed. I told him the woman at Fort Holland was evil and asked him to make her a zombie.

Mrs. Rand, who uses voodoo as a guise for her rational knowledge, and in doing so, hopes to discipline the black workers' religious beliefs and superstitions, is herself contaminated by the very ideas she deems atavistic and wishes to eliminate. Mrs. Rand's pretended, then real, trafficking with what she believes to be black magic results in the Holland-Rands being forced to confront voodoo as a real and formidable power. They must contend with voodoo as a rising force on the island at the same time as they sense the deterioration of their own control.²⁴

For Mrs. Rand, the hounfort represents the return of the things she and her late husband worked to repress in themselves and on the island, and as such bears the attraction of the self let go, unmanaged and uncontrolled. For the other white characters, the hounfort functions as the great house's antagonist and successor. Its power lies precisely in Fort Holland's shortcomings: the hounfort does not shore up its sense of superiority and lock it behind gates; instead, it seeps insurrection into the lives of all the characters, black and white. The film shows the transition between an imperial model of centralized power and boundary policing and a postcolonial social organization that decentralizes power and puts community over hierarchy.

Although the doctor does not believe Mrs. Rand, calling her "an imaginative woman" and claiming that Jessica's fever has "a long Latin name," and is not the result of "poison or hocus-pocus," the film's last sequence bears out Mrs. Rand's story. The sequence comprises a series of cross-cuts showing simultaneous actions taking place at the great house and the hounfort. The voodoo drums rumble throughout the sequence no matter which space appears before us visually, using sound to suggest voodoo's penetration into the great house. Paul, confronting Betsy in the garden about her night walk, accuses her of instigating antagonism between the voudoisants and the great house, but he also confesses his inexplicable rage and abusive inclinations. The next shot crosscuts to the hounfort, where the sabreur, surrounded by the voudoisants, makes a wax Jessica doll. Another crosscut takes us back to Jessica's room, where Betsy tucks her into bed. Back at the hounfort, the sabreur teaches Carrefour to recognize and retrieve Jessica by showing him the doll and gesturing to him to grab it.

The montage sequence reinforces the great house and the hounfort as two equally powerful and antagonistic centers of power on the plantation. Spatial and moral improvement confronts the natural and psychological chaos that threatens it—chaos that improvement's ideology of management has itself created. The sequence culminates in Carrefour's breaking through the gate at the great house and asserting the black community as the winner of the contest. Before we even see Carrefour, the billowing curtain in Jessica's room signals his presence and recalls the interior shot from early in the film. The soundtrack indicates shuffling feet, and then finally, Carrefour's enormous shadow appears against the wall over the sleeping Betsy. When Betsy awakens and sees Carrefour's shadow, and then his body, she calls to Paul, who prepares to confront the black zombie. In a point-of-view shot from Paul's perspective, the camera shows Carrefour reach out and grab, although it is unclear toward whom these actions are intended. The point-of-view shot suggests that Carrefour tries to grab the master instead of the master's wife, even though the sabreur clearly instructed him to take Jessica. This ambiguity implies that to possess Jessica is to possess the master himself, or at least his power and authority. Recalling McClintock's reading of women as boundaries of colonial power, once Jessica has been "contaminated," so has the entire project of colonial domination.

In a surprising twist, however, Carrefour harms neither the master nor his wife. Mrs. Rand, proving her deep involvement with voodoo, commands Carrefour to stop and go back to the hounfort, which he dutifully does. Although it infiltrates the great house, voodoo may not be what deals the Holland-Rands their final blow. The next evening, Wesley sits alone on the veranda. He says to himself that Jessica "should be free": it is

not the first time it has occurred to him that a second death would kill her for good. When Jessica walks across the garden to the gate, drums pounding on the soundtrack, he gets up and opens the gate for her. Then he turns and pulls an arrow out of Ti Misery's chest and follows her out. Crosscut to the sabreur, who pushes the wax doll onto the ground and drives a pin into the doll's heart. We then see Wesley on the beach, arrow in hand, Jessica lying dead at his feet. The editing leaves unanswered the question of who is ultimately responsible for Jessica's death. Did voodoo influence Jessica and control Wesley's actions? Or did Wesley's own despair make him do it? The film leaves ambiguous its answer to the question of whether improvement ideology undoes itself or whether the colonized population's desire for independence brings about its demise.

In the film's final scene, Carrefour pursues Wesley and Jessica to the beach, and Wesley, afraid that he has come to take her to the houmfort, carries her into the ocean waves, drowning them both (making this Jessica's third death). Although it seems the film capitulates at last to the Hollywood convention of the black male pursuant and the white female victim (and the white male savior), Carrefour's passivity and sightless eyes lack the menace to make him a believable perpetrator. And in the final shot, when Carrefour carries Jessica in his arms back to the great house—not the houmfort—our suspicions of him are further assuaged. But our confusion about the film's position on the fate of the colonial improvement project deepens. Who controls Carrefour at the end of the film? It is unlikely that the sabreur has allowed him to return Jessica to the great house, but it is just as unlikely that Mrs. Rand controls him at this point. I suggest that the film's final portrayal of the black zombie, subservient to no one but not in possession of his own will, represents the transitional state of decolonization.

In his reading of Carrefour as a figure that represents the transformation of the black male figure in postwar America, Alexander Nemerov argues that while Carrefour reminds us of slavery, he also provides a potent visual symbol of the emergent power of African Americans during the Second World War. The war years marked Hollywood's transition to a more conscientious portrayal of African Americans, as well as the historical period when black power movements, which rose to their height in the 1960s, began to take shape (Nemerov 103-117). Describing the shot of Carrefour silhouetted by moonlight in the cane fields, Nemerov writes: "Strong and imposing, blocking the path, [Carrefour] confronts the audience with a strength that anticipates images of heroically defiant black men in the 1960s and 1970s even as he also harks back to the imagery of lynching. No other figure in the history of American visual culture stands so perfectly at the crossroads between the Scottsboro Boys and the Black Panthers" (118). Nemerov's insightful reading of the black zombie as representative of the wartime emergence of power from below applies equally well to the stirrings of the decolonization movement. The film's depiction of the rising strength of the black man and his community and the declining authority of the European colonizer and the plantation system expresses the spirit of the historical moment of its production and release—a moment when a subjugated population sensed the deterioration of the old social order and the beginning of their promising, but still blurry, independent future.

That that future remains uncertain, despite the optimism of the times, is, I argue, the film's final commentary on Caribbean decolonization, as well as its sage prediction of Third World decolonization at large. Edward Said has written that "if there is anything that radically distinguishes the imagination of anti-imperialism it is the primacy of the

geographical in it. Imperialism after all is an act of geographical violence through which virtually every space in the world is explored, charted, and finally brought under control” (Said 77). The film’s depiction of the black workers’ ability to “explode” colonial-capitalist space (Lefebvre, *State* 189) by reinscribing it as a space in which to build community and assert their collective reserve of resentment at historical injustice bears out Said’s connection between anti-imperialism and spatial reconstruction. Lefebvre’s injunction to transform a space through reuse, or new use, applies as well to the film’s portrayal of the workers’ infusing the cane fields with new meaning for voodoo rituals and beliefs. Adaptation—in this case, spatial—can be a powerful political tool.

But it is the ongoing practice of social justice within such adapted spaces that assures their liberatory potential. The film’s focus on the radically redefined use of the cane fields and the implications of this new use for the entire plantation reflects Lefebvre’s emphasis on “practice” and de Certeau’s emphasis on “walking” in not only creating, but maintaining, the connection between space and freedom. In an interview with Paul Rabinow, Foucault makes a cautionary pronouncement on the stability of such a connection. He says that spatial organization does not guarantee freedom and liberation, nor does it guarantee domination and oppression. If voodoo has the power to transform the space of the sugar plantation, the power inequalities of the great house can likewise be reproduced in the hounfort. “It can never be inherent in the structure of things to guarantee the exercise of freedom,” Foucault says. “The guarantee of freedom is freedom” (135). Thus, even the “explosion” of the plantation space by voodoo’s reinscription does not guarantee the transformation of colonial social relations, even though it makes such a transformation possible.

Albert Memmi has warned against the repetition of colonial injustices in the postcolonial world. In *Decolonization and the Decolonized* (2006), he begins the first chapter, titled “The Great Disillusion,” with a grim assessment of the outcome of Third World decolonization:

The end of colonization should have brought with it freedom and prosperity. The colonized would give birth to the citizen, master of his political, economic, and cultural destiny....Unfortunately, in most cases, the long anticipated period of freedom, won at the cost of terrible suffering, brought with it poverty and corruption, violence, and sometimes chaos....The slogans of national unity, heard at a time when everyone felt as if they were members of the same family, have been extinguished, and the faces we see are the pale faces of egotism....There has been a change of masters, but, like new leeches, the new ruling classes are often greedier than the old.” (3-4)

The film’s portrayal of the power of the workers’ community for revolution and self-determination is tempered by a premonition of the situation Memmi describes. The workers’ community as depicted in the voodoo ceremony, while autonomous and communal-oriented, is also hierarchical: the houngan and sabreur occupy high positions that carry the power to “possess” those socially beneath them. The sabreur’s use of the black zombie to do his bidding might intend different ends than the plantation master’s use of the slave, but the means seem all too similar. In both cases, the individual serves a higher authority in whose hands his own fate lies. The analogy that the film draws between the great house and the hounfort bodes well for the workers’ takeover of the master’s position, but ill for what may happen once that takeover is achieved.

The literal takeover of plantation great houses by state-run heritage foundations represents one of the most common emblems of transition from colonialism to independence in the Caribbean. Walsh Stoddard writes that in nearly all of the former British West Indian colonies, tourism replaced sugar production as the primary industry

after independence, and that the neo-imperialist implications of the latter bear deep connections to the architecture and space of the plantation: “It is a commonplace throughout the Caribbean that tourism has taken the place of sugar, but the race and power relations of the plantation have transmuted themselves to suit the new economy. In many cases, former plantation houses have become charming inns for tourists. In others, new hotels are designed to echo the architecture of the sugar mill” (35). On one hand, the replacement of sugar with tourism and the master with the state signifies real change. But on the other hand, it suggests that the spatial organization of the former sugar islands continues to exert a determining force as to what kinds of industry are possible for these new nations. Even after independence, these nations remain dependent on colonial space for the growth of their new “cash crop.”

Tourism represents just one facet of the geopolitical situation in which the Caribbean found itself after the Second World War. As Jason Parker has written, independence for the British West Indies took a complex route that had to navigate American expansionism, Anglo-American “‘collaboration’ in empire,” and Britain’s continuation of its influence and access to markets and resources. In addition, the West Indies’ postwar independence coincided with the Cold War, and Caribbean leaders went to great lengths to convince Washington that “none of them would become a West Indian Castro” (10-11). The nationalities of the Holland-Rand brothers allude to these contemporary global affairs. Just as national struggle can be aided by international support, it can also be hindered by superpower competition.

I Walked with a Zombie occupies a historical moment, however, when none of these fates was yet written, and the road to independence looked straight and narrow. The

film's contribution to American cinema lies in its poetic depiction of the historic moment before the historic moment—the hope and promise contained in the anticipation of independence before the realities of decolonization began to play out. *I Walked with a Zombie* testifies to the persistence of nineteenth-century improvement ideology well into the twentieth century, and how that ideology brought about the plantation system—and its demise—in the British West Indies. The relevance of Brontë's *Jane Eyre* as a source text for a film about decolonization lies in its expression of how colonial and domestic subjects are made: through the discipline brought about by spatial arrangements that seek to manage, but also to capitalize upon, the discontent of the domesticated. The film recognizes elements of Jane and Bertha in Jessica and the black workers: the white female and black colonial subject share a resistance to injustice that can never be improved away. Through the figures of the white and the black zombie, the film understands white female and black male domestication as extensions of the land improvement discourse that created the plantation and its economic and social system. For *I Walked with a Zombie*, Jane's moral management stands as a cautionary tale against which to write a more hopeful prediction of a postcolonial future.

Emma and *Jane Eyre* reveal that teleology and the link between moral and spatial management formed the foundations of improvement discourse in the domestic English context. Although their adaptations speak to their translatability to postcolonial situations, Austen's and Brontë's novels concern themselves with how improvement affected subject formation, land use, and the idea of progress for English subjects and English geographies. In the next chapter, I connect domestic and imperial ideologies of improvement to show that English ideas about progress's dependence on teleology and

the spatial constrictions of morality also underlay nineteenth-century British imperial policy, as it affected both the colonized subject who “needed” to be improved as well as the colonizer doing the improving.

Chapter Three

Conquest and Improvement in the “Graveyard of Empires”: The Men Who Would Be Kings in Afghanistan and Vietnam

Kipling’s “The Man Who Would Be King” links British India’s cultural and individual underdevelopment explicitly to geography. The story portrays India’s potential arrival in the modern era as inextricably bound to, and dependent on, the success of British improvement. Thus, improver and improved operate on different but intersecting trajectories of time: Britain’s destiny as an empire hinges on pulling its crown colony into modernity, and Britain’s present acts as an indication of India’s future. This chapter explores improvement ideology’s implication of colonizer and colonized in a shared destiny. I look specifically at how the improver’s dependence on his own improving labors for his moral progress formed the basis for how the British conceived of their role in nineteenth-century British India, and how self-improvement continued to inform American humanitarianism in the twentieth century.

The major challenge Improvement faced when it was exported out to British India was the need to reconcile it with, but also distance it from, conquest. Standard accounts of British India suggest that a definitive shift in imperial policy took place at the turn of the nineteenth century: the conquest-centered ideology that dominated the eighteenth century gave way to a more enlightened, improvement-centered attitude of imperial

paternalism at the start of the nineteenth century.²⁵ Eighteenth-century imperial leaders such as Robert Clive and Warren Hastings had established the East India Company's dominance in Bengal through the sheer military might of the Company's armed forces. These early imperialists concerned themselves mainly with their own interests and were willing to do what was necessary—through force, bribery, or other coercive means—to maintain it. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, the Clive-Hastings model of bad imperial behavior came under close scrutiny by Parliament and the British public. Edmund Burke's vilification of Hastings during the Governor-General's impeachment trial (1788-1795) stimulated public outcry against the Company's mismanagement. Nicholas Dirks writes that Burke's energetic prosecution of Hastings, and the eighteenth-century model of colonial corruption he exemplified, was largely responsible for setting the Empire's nineteenth-century agenda as one of reform—of the British themselves, no less than their colonized populations. Imperialism as self-improvement and improving others had won the day over conquest and violent subjugation.

Other scholars have argued, however, that improvement as an imperial policy amounted to little more than putting a benign face on what continued to be a conquest-oriented empire. Gauri Viswanathan, for instance, sees improvement as a new form of conquest in the case of native education. By the time Parliament passed the East India Company's charter in 1813, public sentiment was ripe to chart a new course for the British Empire in India by absolving its own sins through cleansing the sins of others. The charter of 1813 concretized this sentiment by enjoining the Company to assume a new responsibility for Indian education and relaxing the restrictions against missionary activity. Viswanathan argues that although the charter was meant as a sort of secular

atonement for the Company's history of depredations, a way to "remedy the wrongs committed against the Indians by attending to their welfare and improvement" (24), underneath the rhetoric of reparations was the understanding that the civilizing mission would bind Indians to British rule more effectively, more permanently, and at less cost than violent conquest. By the end of the second decade of the nineteenth century, the Liberals had convinced government and the public that a policy of assimilating the natives to English institutions, laws, manners, and the English language was indeed the best way to serve the people of India and to create a long-lasting economic dependency on the home country (Stokes xiii-xiv). Improvement was the new-and-improved version of conquest, and although less violent, enacted a cultural imperialism all the more insidious for its low profile.

In fact, the relationship between conquest and improvement in British India was more complicated than either the standard or critical narrative proposes. As Viswanathan suggests, the Empire's turn to improvement in the nineteenth century did not make a clean break with its eighteenth-century roots of conquest. However, I argue that this was due more to the debate over the nature and implications of improvement's historical and moral relationship to conquest than a design of veiled coercion. Nineteenth-century British imperialists understood improvement not only as a new kind of conquest; some also understood conquest as the most effective form of improvement. Others understood the two as different but related aspects of a single project, each necessitating the other. And most importantly, many defined that single project as a world-historical fiat linking Britain with the imperial ambitions of the ancient west: in nineteenth-century India and Afghanistan, Britons found their opportunity—and obligation—to resurrect Alexander's

Greece from the “graveyard of empires.”²⁶ In what follows, I trace a history of how different figures and texts tried to turn the conflict between conquest and improvement into a productive dialectic for imperial policy. Kipling’s story highlights the unsettled relationship between these approaches to imperial rule and overturns the major assumption held in common by nearly all positions in the debate.

New Britons and Old Greeks: Conquest and Improvement in India and Afghanistan

The figure of Alexander the Great and the many ways in which British imperial discourse invoked him illustrates the unsettled relationship between conquest and improvement in the nineteenth century. Alternately read as a violent, selfish brute and a great man with a master plan, Alexander was used at times to justify Britain’s own conquest-oriented ideology, and at times to exemplify how conquest and improvement could work together as two parts of the same project, each necessitating the other. The lore surrounding Alexander and his imperial activity in India and Afghanistan was crucial to the way British imperialists understood their role in subjugating and civilizing South and Central Asian populations. Nineteenth-century Indian Civil Servants and Company operatives were encouraged to interpret Alexander’s empire as the first stage of their own, and to see the lands and peoples of Asia as having lain dormant since Alexander’s departure from the area over two thousand years earlier. For these imperialists, the latter civilizing phases of the west’s long and arduous task of improving Asia justified its early, violent stage. This grand narrative of improvement, which encompassed conquest as a necessary first step, coincided with Britain’s own transition from eighteenth- to nineteenth-century imperial leadership style.

A central question surrounding Alexander was whether he merely lusted after conquest or wanted to spark the development of the east. The conflict between these two styles of rule, as illustrated in competing interpretations of the ancient leader, manifested itself in a variety of ways, but few more telling than the curriculum developed to train aspiring young imperialists. As part of its turn from eighteenth-century plunder and profit to nineteenth-century civilization and management, the East India Company established professional training colleges for the young men who would be dispatched to India to handle its affairs. The East India College settled at Haileybury in 1809, with a curriculum including “Classics, Arithmetic and Mathematics, Elements of General Law, &c, and Oriental learning” (Danvers, et. al 15). Haileybury “produced a breed of officials very different from the old, most of whom had come to India in early adolescence and grown up amidst the violence of the Company’s conquests” (Washbrook 400). These new officials spent their formative years at home “receiving instruction on the scientific principles of political economy from the likes of Thomas Malthus, and imbibing the atmosphere of British evangelical revival” (Washbrook 400).

The Haileybury curriculum included examination questions that revealed the difficulty in defining Alexander as either conqueror or improver.²⁷ The questions encouraged students to respect Alexander’s unparalleled courage in battle and his consideration of valor as sufficient glory for victory. Conquest, by this reading, attends Alexander almost as his moral due: being conquered by such a paragon would itself constitute a kind of improvement for the Asians he defeated. His noble performances during and after war exemplified the moral dignity to which his opponents should aspire. Yet, the same questions also suggest that Alexander enjoyed the excitement of violent

conquest more than the colonial administration required to create a stable empire. It takes hard work and constructive effort not to leave Asia a desert after one has made a desert of it. This reading implies that conquest interested Alexander much more than the larger project of improvement to which conquest was supposed to lead.

Whether by design or accident, the Company's use of Alexander in its curriculum ultimately served two important functions. The first was to use the descriptions of indigenous lands and peoples of Central and South Asia that appeared in the classical sources on Alexander to promote the idea that Indians represented a stagnant or retrograde race. Using ancient sources to interpret modern India, many servants of the Empire concluded that the civilizations of India had made no progress, or had actually declined since Alexander had encountered them. This interpretation led to the second function of the Company's classical curriculum, the establishment of the belief that Alexander was a leader uniquely endowed with the requisite military genius, courage, and personal charisma to conquer and then improve this stagnant race and its lands. However, his world-historical mission of uniting east with west was cut short due to the inability of his men to bear the burden of such a vast undertaking. Thus, it was the British Empire's task to carry on his mission, and doing so would require both an eighteenth-century imperial style of individual despotism and a nineteenth-century reorientation of empire towards benevolence and improvement.

Throughout the nineteenth century, ancient texts were seen as scientific and anthropological sources of information on India, both for those who never saw it and the civil and military personnel who spent much of their careers there. Hagerman writes that the belief that ancient accounts of India written by Quintus Curtius, Arrian, Plutarch, and

Diodorus Siculus provided accurate and important *modern* information on the subcontinent stems from the writings of the first Orientalist scholars, who lamented the dearth of “reliable” Indian sources on the history and anthropology of the region. In his “Third Anniversary Discourse,” William Jones writes that the indigenous histories of India he had come across were “involved in a cloud of fables” (*Works* 25), that is, too fictional, mythical, and based on narrative, rather than factual, rigorous, or scientific. For Jones, the Indians’ self-representation of their history was flawed because it did not provide the kind of facts that fit the European definition of what was scientific and useful. Thus, he turned to Greek sources to reconstruct his own version of the history of India. Indigenous histories, it seems, suffered from the same problems from which many Europeans believed contemporary Indians suffered from: the inability to break from their ancient superstitions and atavistic reliance on myth and reorient themselves according to modern rationality and science.

Jones believed that Indian and Central Asian peoples had actually declined from the time of their encounter with Alexander. He interpreted the ancient sources as giving descriptions of lands and peoples that superseded his own eyewitness observations of the level of civilization the Asians occupied at present (Hagerman 358). For Jones, Asian civilizations were retrograde, but because of the possibility of former grandeur that such an unraveling of development suggested, Asian civilization was not hopeless and could regain its former illustriousness if improved by the right guides. Thus, for the Orientalists, an improvement-centered British Empire should reconstruct Asian history and re-teach it to the Asians of the present who were unable to understand it correctly for themselves. In

doing so, the British shepherds would restore Asian civilizations to what they once were, improving the present by resurrecting its past.

There were others, however, who argued that South and Central Asia had never achieved a great civilization, that the developmental paradigm of the region was not retrogression but stagnation. In his *History of British India*, James Mill argued that the level of civilization in India had never changed, that “the manners, institutions, and attainments of the Hindus, have been stationary for many ages; in beholding the Hindus of the present day, we are beholding the Hindus of many ages past; and are carried back, as it were, into the deepest recesses of antiquity” (248). This wholly negative view of Indians, however, did not prevent Mill from believing in the possibility of their improvement. But unlike Jones, Mill believed that the only way Indians could be valuable participants in the modern world was to adopt English laws, language, and culture under an English colonial administration. The Indians’ improvement must be guided entirely by European ideals because there was nothing in their past worth restoring: “Only in such circumstances could India be viewed and presented as a *tabula rasa* on which British administrators... could write a tale of real progress and improvement: that is to say improvement unadulterated by elements of what Mill considered a primitive and stagnant civilisation unable to advance on its own” (Hagerman 362).

Jones’s Orientalism saw conquest as only the first part of a larger project of improvement, in which the restoration of India’s history to its degraded modern descendents justified initial military conquest of those descendents. But Mill’s Anglicism understood conquest itself as a form of improvement, perhaps the only form of

improvement available to a population that had never, and would never, manage to develop on its own. Mill's understanding of conquest as improvement suggests that any form of western contact amounted to an advancement of Indian civilization, and any advancement amounted to conquest over the stagnancy characteristic of that civilization in its original form. Mill's Anglicism eventually won out over Jones's Orientalism and was adopted by Lord Cornwallis, Hastings's successor, as official policy in the decades leading up to the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

The Anglicist view, even more so than the Orientalist, justified the assumption that ancient sources provided accurate physical and anthropological information about the land and its inhabitants for use by nineteenth-century Company functionaries. In the first half of the century, it became popular for those dispatched on military and civilian expeditions to carry along with them a copy of Curtius or Arrian, as one might carry one's Baedeker on the Continent, and go exploring the ancient sites mentioned in these texts. This activity was especially popular among those dispatched to Afghanistan, for it was widely known that Afghanistan was the site of many of Alexander's battles. Mountstuart Elphinstone and Alexander Burnes both adopted the Anglicist view of Asian stagnation and led diplomatic missions on behalf of the Company to the Amir of Afghanistan, Shah Shuja, to secure British interests against the two largest imperial threats in the nineteenth century, Napoleon for Elphinstone and Russia for Burnes. Both were also interested in Alexander's history in the area and took with them copies of the ancient sources to use as guides to the territory. Both produced written accounts of their travels that brought knowledge of Afghanistan to a popular and scholarly readership at home and created stereotypes of the land and people of the region that would outlast the

British Empire itself.²⁸ These texts blend Alexander's past with scholarly and journalistic accounts of Afghanistan's present, validating for their readers at home the argument for the stagnation of Asian civilizations.

Elphinstone's *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul and its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India* (1815) comprises detailed geographical information on all of the regions then considered to be part of Afghanistan, as well as information on its history, tribes, and customs. The work's intricate organization of subjects reflects an Enlightenment rationality and systematization in its attempt to produce an accurate picture of the country as it stood in the first decade of the nineteenth century. Despite these efforts at being current, however, Elphinstone begins the book with a narrative of his journey westward from India that reveals the influence of the ancient past on his modern expedition. Pausing on the banks of the river Jhelum on the way back from their mission to the Shah, Elphinstone and his team stop to look around them and consult a copy of Curtius's *History of Alexander the Great*. Elphinstone writes that their surroundings matched "precisely" (80) the description given by Curtius of the point at which Alexander crossed the river Hydaspes—Elphinstone and Burnes both used the Greek names for Afghan and Indian geography. While he and his men searched for the ruins of the city of Taxila, founded by Alexander after winning over his first Afghan king as an ally, he had tried to imagine "the fleet of Alexander" being borne along the current of the river Hyphasis (Hagerman 345-346).²⁹

Almost twenty years later, Burnes arrived at the Hyphasis in search of the twelve colossal altars that Alexander built "to indicate the limit and glory of his expedition" (Burnes I. 7). Burnes believed the altars marked the exact spot where Alexander's armies

mutinied and forced him to retreat. After discussing the contradictions in his ancient sources as to the exact place the altars should lie, he and his companions search the area for remains and clues, finally concluding that “if any traces of them be hereafter found, they probably lie lower down” (7). In his three-volume bestseller, *Travels to Bokhara* (which Elphinstone helped him to prepare for publication), Burnes records that he marked a passage of the copy of Curtius he was carrying with him when he happened upon a place in “Ancient Bactriana,” on the way from Balkh to Bokhara, that looked to him to be exactly the same as Curtius’s description. He notes only a single difference between the ancient source and the present landscape: “Though it has no springs, and a river does not now pass its walls, yet the country is intersected by the canals of one that flows from the neighboring mountains, the water of which is artificially divided before reaching the town” (I. 245). Both explorers used Curtius as a modern guidebook with up-to-date information on the region, and in Burnes’s case, even an acknowledgment of change between past and present is couched as a slight modification that still validates the notion that the region had been stagnant for ages.

Elphinstone and Burnes took with them to Afghanistan the view of a stagnant land and its people that James Mill espoused about India. Their reliance on the ancient sources about Alexander, and their interpretations of these sources as correct and accurate modern descriptions, served to validate the Anglicist view and disseminated it to a popular readership. Instead of arguing for the resurrection of ancient Asian traditions, history, customs, and culture, as the Orientalists did, the accounts of their adventures argued instead for the resurrection of ancient western imperialism as the way to usher the Indians and Afghans into the modern age. Resurrecting Greek civilization, instead of

Indian or Pushtun, as the source of improvement for indigenous populations denied those populations any role in their own modernization, placing it solely into the hands of a paternalist British Empire that desired to improve itself by improving those in its charge.

If the curriculum at Haileybury blurred the line between conquest and improvement, and Anglicist views of Asia argued for conquest as a form of improvement, nineteenth-century historians tried to create a productive synthesis of the two imperial styles. The nineteenth century inherited from the Enlightenment two main interpretations of Alexander. Montesquieu, Arnold Heeren, William Robertson, and John Gillies argued for Alexander's "grand vision of a unified, Eurasian empire suffused with Hellenic civilization" (Hagerman 367). From this perspective, Alexander was a great and heroic improver of the territories he conquered, bringing enlightenment and spreading civilization and commerce to the dark and barbaric regions of the world. This reading of Alexander expresses the larger Whiggish historiographical view of modernity that Robertson, Gillies, and other historians of the Scottish Enlightenment propounded: the future would necessarily be an improvement on the past, and the inexorable march of progress was teleological and geographically disseminated from Europe outward. This view trusted in Alexander's rational and humanitarian plan, despite how individual acts of cruelty might look. On the contrary, Baron de Saint-Croix saw him as a tyrant who conquered only for the sake of conquest with no thought to improvement or a civilizing mission (Hagerman 367). George Grote revived this view in the mid-nineteenth-century, arguing that Alexander was too oriental (as a Macedonian) to be a proper Greek in the first place, and was further contaminated by his conquests in the Orient to the point where he lost the guiding light of Hellenism himself. Thus, Alexander represented the

destruction and degradation of civilization, rather than its spread and further development (367).

Some historians, however, attempted to chart a middle course between the opposing views inherited from the Enlightenment. Alexander Woodhouselee's *Elements of General History, Ancient and Modern* (1801) and William Mitford's *History of Greece* (1784-1810) accepted and lamented Grote's suggestions of Alexander's contamination by oriental despotism and debauchery through conquest. However, they argued that such behavior was nevertheless "an acceptable trade-off" for one such as Alexander, whose ultimate goal of unification and improvement excused his individual acts (Hagerman 367). Woodhouselee also argued that Alexander rectified the offenses against land and people caused by his violent conquests by establishing cities that served as centers of learning, art, and commerce—outposts of progress in the wasteland that he himself created. Thus, nineteenth-century readers absorbed the notion that conquest by force and benevolent, paternalistic improvement of the conquered were two parts of the same project; furthermore, the former was justified by the intentions and grand scope of the latter. Empire could be a force for good, despite scandalous beginnings; perhaps it even needed its ugly early phase to clear a path for its ultimately charitable and moral future.

The understanding of empire as a dynamic enterprise consisting of different phases that comprised a single mission resonated with contemporary events concerning the British Empire. The trials of Clive and Hastings had brought the scandals of imperial corruption to the forefront of Britons' minds. The trials caused significant concern about the contact between upright British gentlemen and despotic Orientals, as well as the blow that bad imperial behavior dealt to global public relations. But there was also the sense

that Clive and Hastings were, despite their corruption, ideal heroic imperialists for their sheer ingenuity, resourcefulness, and brash derring-do—qualities that leaders of empires such as Alexander’s, and now Britain’s, needed, to subdue defensive indigenous populations too ignorant to recognize the arrival of the torch of enlightenment. Clive and Hastings operated during a time when the Company needed to secure its footing in Bengal and establish itself as the dominant economic power in India. Such a time, and such activities, needed such men: a stringent rule of law would have prevented them from securing the Company its authority. Thus, their actions could be justified when seen in the context of a long historical trajectory in which they played merely the first part. Their eighteenth-century imperial style could be seen as necessary, but also repudiated as something which was done in the past but no more, now that the Empire had entered a new phase.

Scholars have suggested that we read Kipling’s “The Man Who Would Be King” in similar narrative terms. Nigel Joseph, for instance, argues that we should see the protagonists, Daniel Dravot and Peachey Carnehan, as throwbacks to an eighteenth-century imperial style out of sync with an organized and centralized modern nineteenth-century state. Danny and Peachey, lower-middle-class Clives and Hastingses, aspire to the latter’s power and conquest in Kafiristan, a region of modern-day Afghanistan and ancient Bactria. Although they represent a necessary and romantic imperial era, the two are ultimately unable to be brought under the discipline of the state. Their inability to be drawn into the long historical narrative of the Empire’s civilizing mission makes them anachronistic: as unimprovable elements, they linger on the periphery of an improvement-oriented state, and they must be eliminated.

Joseph's reading limits the story's temporal axis to an opposition between eighteenth-century conquest and nineteenth-century administration, and is indicative of a larger body of criticism that bounces back and forth between these two periods, trying to answer the question of whether the story celebrates or critiques British imperialism in Asia, most critics concluding that it remains ambivalent.³⁰ My own reading of the story introduces a longer temporal axis by excavating the ways the story aligns Greek imperial antiquity to British imperial modernity. This temporality is crucial because what prior critics have missed is that the conquest/improvement ambivalence at the heart of the story is itself tied to an ambivalence inherent in the nineteenth-century conceptualization of its new role in Asia, a conceptualization rooted in British imperialism's reliance on Alexander and his ancient western imperialism as models for their own modern imperial leadership and purpose. The fact that Alexander was invoked both to glorify and mitigate conquest, as well as to define improvement in all sorts of ways, explains why a conquest/improvement problematic sits at the center of nineteenth-century improvement discourse. My expansion of the story's temporal axis into antiquity does not change its fundamental ambivalence about empire; rather, it enriches our understanding of the reasons for that ambivalence. In the section that follows, I recontextualize Kipling's dilemma as one that reflects the unresolved tensions between conquest and improvement that an antiquity/modernity axis surfaces.

*

The protagonists of Kipling's story strike the reader as exactly the type of imperialists who should not be in charge of leading an improvement-oriented empire. Daniel Dravot and Peachey Carnehan, two ex-members of General Frederick Roberts's

army that fought in the Second Afghan War (1878-1880), have turned to wandering and vagabondage after being released from their term of service. Rather than return to England, where their lower-middle-class status promises them little in the way of employment, they loaf around India doing odd jobs and blackmailing local princes. Their class status, irresponsibility, bad work ethic, and moral emptiness makes them seem truly unimprovable, and their temporary success at making Kafiristan a “damned fine Nation” (Kipling 267) seems more a combination of blind courage and blinder luck than an outcome of good strategy and proper conduct.

But although it seems that these would-be kings represent the antithesis to nineteenth-century improvement discourse, they do in fact adopt an improving attitude towards many aspects of their adventure. First, they actually make an effort to improve themselves. The “Contract” that Peachey shows the narrator and which the two sign in front of him, binds them to keep “away from the two things that make life worth having,” women and liquor (255). On the back of the “greasy half-sheet of notepaper” on which the Contract is written, the two jot down information about the country they plan to conquer after consulting the sources provided for them by the story’s narrator (254-55). The scene parodies improvement discourse’s emphasis on self-discipline while seeming to support it: surely this is not what the missionaries had in mind when they advised reform through temperance and education; still, it is as good an attempt as we can expect from these two. For Danny and Peachey, whose livelihoods depend on lying, stealing, and blackmailing, signing the Contract actually does amount to a great sacrifice. At the same time, the narrator treats this sacrifice ironically, suggesting that their attempt at moral uplift only further reveals their moral degradation. In addition, their decision to

improve themselves is merely instrumental: they do not change their opinion on the value of liquor and women, but only give them up so that they may conquer more effectively. Thus, the story shows the characters as fairly adequate self-improvers, but only in the context of its larger critique of the project of self-improvement as a whole.

The story gives a similarly measured, but significant, critique of Danny's and Peachey's transition from conquerors to improvers, and in doing so, references Alexander and several strains of the conquest/improvement debate surrounding him. After making their way through Afghanistan disguised as a priest and his disciple, the two see a small group of men running down a valley chasing a larger group of men. The small group of men are fair, "fairer than you or me—with yellow hair and remarkable well built," Peachey says to the narrator, alluding to the popular legend expounded by Burnes and other explorers of a "lost white race" consisting of the descendents of Alexander and his soldiers living in the mountains of Central Asia (McBratney 27). The two decide to help the fair men win against their enemies and fire their rifles at the larger group, winning over the allegiance of the fair ones. In similar fashion, the two set off on a campaign helping certain tribes defeat their enemies and bringing all the victorious tribes under their power by drilling everyone in the maneuvers of their own former regiment. Soon, they conquer "the whole country as far as it's worth having," as Danny says, through violence and military force.

One day, Danny comes marching down a hill with a train of hundreds of men and a gold crown on his head, exclaiming to Peachey that he is "the son of Alexander by Queen Semiramis," and Peachey is his younger brother (265). The reference to Alexander alludes to the notion of the British Empire as the modern successors of Alexander's failed

but valiant effort to bring the whole of Asia under civilized western rule. But it also refers to the nineteenth century's use of Alexander as a model for the ways in which conquering and improving can work together as two parts of the same project, the first paving the way for the second. In his next words to Peachey, Danny exclaims "'we don't want to fight no more. The Craft's the trick, so help me!'" upon which he shows his partner that the Chiefs and priests in his retinue are, miraculously, fellow Freemasons, or at least practice a form of religion that resembles freemasonry enough to believe the two Englishmen can initiate them into a more advanced degree of the Craft (265). Although Peachey worries about the institutional consequences of impersonating Grand-Masters and setting up lodges without authorization, Danny wins him over by explaining that "It's a master-stroke o' policy," that "it means running the country as easy as a four-wheeled bogie on a down grade" (265-66). The next night, after perhaps the greatest stroke of luck the two could hope to get, in which the Master's Mark sewn onto Danny's apron matches the image cut into the stone underneath the statue of the Kafirs' most important idol, the two strategically raise their most helpful allies to the degree of Master Mason, "not in any way according to Ritual," Peachey says, "but it served our turn" (267).³¹

With the help of Freemasonry, Danny and Peachey transition from militant conquerors to peaceful religious leaders, ostensibly promoting and developing the culture of Kafiristan by educating their leaders in religious ritual instead of destroying culture by violent conquest. History seems to have doubled back on itself: the British sons of Alexander find, conquer, and improve the ancient Greek sons of Alexander, who have halted in their development for the last two thousand years, marking time until their next great European leader emerges. Danny expresses this notion when he says, "These men

aren't niggers; they're English! Look at their eyes—look at their mouths. Look at the way they stand up. They sit on chairs in their own houses. They're the Lost Tribes, or something like it, and they've grown to be English....They only want the rifles and a little drilling" (269). The Kafirs become, in Danny's vision, not only Greek descendents but budding Englishmen, their Greek ancestry providing the proof and foundation of their improbability. Kin to the English, they remain stuck in a primitive stage of civilization. The Englishmen's meeting with the Kafirs amounts to the future meeting up with its own past. Danny takes it upon himself to bring his kin up to speed, and in a spasm of modernization that would put Walter Scott's highlanders to shame, he makes the Kafirs accomplish two thousand years of development in a few months.

The scheme of the past meeting up with the present, and the present imperialists taking over where the ancient ones left off, recalls nineteenth-century imperial discourse's narrative of the British as Alexander's successors in civilizing Asia. The scheme also sustains the Anglicists' belief in the stagnancy of Asia and its civilizations. Danny and Peachey seem to have made contact with specimens of living history who have waited for their next king in an unchanging world that could have come right out of the ancient written sources. The story sets up the possibility of improving the Kafirs to reach their full potential of becoming English, so that they can be conscripted into helping Danny build the northwestern arm of the British Empire: the remnants of the old join up with and aid the new western power. The scene also alludes, however, to the Orientalists' version of Indian history as retrograde instead of stagnant. If these are indeed the descendents of Alexander, they remain unaware of their glorious past and stand in need of the British Empire to help them remember it. The fact that they have

retained some of the qualities of their western heritage, as Danny suggests, such as their habit of sitting on chairs, suggests that they have slipped from the level of civilization attained by their ancestors but can be restored to it by the right leaders.

Danny's and Peachey's takeover and administration of Kafiristan subverts two important assumptions underlying the conquest/improvement debate, namely, that the project of improvement is morally capacious enough to justify its early conquest phase, and furthermore, that Britain is the best and truest successor to Alexander's imperial ambitions. "The Man Who Would Be King" suggests that rather than a vast, complete, and awesome undertaking done by the most developed civilization in the world, improvement as colonists experience it on the ground is instrumental, incomplete, boring, and temporary. Furthermore, by turning the arguments for the stagnation or decline of Asian civilization back onto the British themselves, the story suggests that Britain may itself be too backward to inherit Alexander's mission.

First, the story reveals that improvement is not all-encompassing, but instead, very incomplete. India is described as comprising two different regions: on the one hand, the region controlled by the British authorities, and on the other hand, the Central India States or "Native States," left predominantly to handle their own affairs and only cursorily overseen by British authorities. The narrator first meets Peachey in an Intermediate train car on his way to the "wilderness" (245)—the area surrounding Jodhpore in the state of Rajasthan. He and Peachey converse about the "pickings to be got out of these Central India States" (245), which the narrator glosses for the reader a few paragraphs later:

I had heard, more than once, of men personating correspondents of newspapers and bleeding small Native States with threats of exposure, but

I had never met any of the caste before. They lead a hard life, and generally die with great suddenness. The Native States have a wholesome horror of English newspapers which may throw light on their peculiar methods of government, and do their best to choke correspondents with champagne, or drive them out of their mind with four-in-hand barouches. They do not understand that nobody cares a straw for the internal administration of Native States so long as oppression and crime are kept within decent limits, and the ruler is not drugged, drunk, or diseased from one end of the year to the other. They are the dark places of the earth, full of unimaginable cruelty, touching the Railway and the Telegraph on one side, and, on the other, the days of Harun-al-Raschid. (247)

The narrator's racist description of the States emphasizes their lack of improvement. The States do business according to bribes, corruption, and suppression of information. They remain "backward" and "pre-modern": although they have loose connections with "the Railway and the Telegraph"—technological improvements introduced by the British—the internal happenings of the State are unchanged from the times of the *Thousand and One Nights*. The description of the Native States suggests that Britain's improvement-centered empire benefits only part of the Indian population and leaves certain areas out of its jurisdiction. Rather than an all-encompassing project sweeping across Asia from the west, British improvement proves a much more piecemeal assemblage of outposts that fails to coerce a great number of inhabitants in the territory it occupies. The lack of British control over large swathes of its Empire, by conquest or by improvement, recalls Alexander's own failure in rallying his men to bear the burden of such a vast undertaking. Such a realistic curtailing of the Empire's supposed influence questions Britain's fitness for completing Alexander's mission.

A similar sense of British ineptitude pervades the narrator's descriptions of British-controlled territories. Since the Native States have such a reputation for backwardness, it would seem that the region tightly controlled by the British would

provide an educative contrast to them, that the “civilized” region would be industrially and economically developed, its inhabitants enjoying a fast-paced, modern urban lifestyle. The narrator’s description of his everyday routine as an editor in Lahore, however, proves that the situation is otherwise. He works in an office where there are “no incidents outside the daily manufacture of a newspaper” (248). His only visitors are those he can barely tolerate: missionaries preoccupied by petty quarrels and a sense of self-importance, impoverished theatrical companies, crack inventors, secretaries of ball-committees, and ladies who demand visiting cards printed “*at once*, please” (249). Tedious as they are, these tasks form “the amusing part of the year.” The dull part consists of “six other months when none ever comes to call, and the thermometer walks inch by inch up to the top of the glass, and the office is darkened to just above reading-light, and the press-machines are red-hot of touch, and nobody writes anything but accounts of amusements in the Hill-stations or obituary notices” (249). The heat suggests a suffocating and stagnant condition in which nothing but unimportant things enervate the narrator. Even during the lively part of the year, “most of the paper is as blank as Modred’s shield.” The reference to King Arthur’s traitorous nephew suggests that there is nothing courageous, valiant, or even important to report on the “improved” side of the country’s divide.

Living in this part of the Empire feels just as stagnant, or even as retrograde, as the part that has seen little British influence. The most up-to-date “news” is as old as a medieval weapon, and although many of those who come to visit the narrator are, conspicuously, improvers—Zenana-mission ladies, brother missionaries, and women whose presence in India is supposed to provide the place with a domesticating influence—their actions prove either ineffective or insincere. The obituary notices that

fill the paper suggest that Britons do not stride ahead, energetically implementing technological, moral, and educational progress, but are instead falling ill and dying. The narrator contrasts this image of a stagnant British Empire with Europe, where he suggests the world's action now takes place. While he spends his time dealing with the insignificant and the tedious, "all the time, the telephone-bell is ringing madly, and Kings are being killed on the Continent, and Empires are saying, 'You're another,' and Mister Gladstone is calling down brimstone upon the British Dominions." When the outbreaks of disease in India become so bad that "the less recording and reporting the better," the Continental "Empires and the Kings continue to divert themselves as selfishly as before" (249). Not only is the British Empire stagnating, it is falling behind the Continental empires whose kings are involved in interesting intrigue and conquering new territories at a time when expansion has become unpopular in London. Others in the world are the movers and the shakers, and Britain is becoming not only stagnant but retrograde.

Kipling turns Anglicist and Orientalist assessments of Indian civilization back onto Britons themselves. The narrator describes his job as a news reporter as one that involves mostly waiting for news to come to him from other places instead of actively going in search of news himself. His existence in a holding pattern acts as an analogy for the British Empire as a whole, which has ceased to be the Empire of progress and now waits for news of how other countries are engaging in action. The narrator writes: "One Saturday night it was my pleasant duty to put the paper to bed alone. A King or a courtier or courtesan or a Community was going to die or get a new Constitution, or do something that was important on the other side of the world, and the paper was to be held open till the latest possible minute in order to catch the telegram" (250). The narrator waits for

news regarding a king, or if one is actually dying, news of the man who would be the next king of that nation. But the “thing that was keeping us back, whatever it was, would not come off...and the whole round earth stood still in the choking heat, with its finger on its lip, to wait the event” (250). Just as the waiting game nears its fever pitch, Danny and Peachey turn up at the narrator’s office and tell him of their plans to become kings of Kafiristan. Thus, the British Empire, implied through the figure of the narrator, waits for its next kings—the next agents of world history—just as the Kafirs await their next kings to bring them into the modern era. The British resemble Alexander’s descendents more than his imperial successors: marking time, they wait for history to move them, rather than the other way round. These scenes suggest the temporariness of world leadership, that existence at the top of improvement’s developmental hierarchy is short-lived and rife with competition. Even the ones in front can be left behind, and perhaps, the story suggests, Britain’s turn at the helm is up.

Kipling’s story inserts itself into the debate over the roles that conquest and improvement should play in a modern, nineteenth-century Empire by challenging several of the debate’s central positions and assumptions. The temporal axis of this debate cannot be reduced to the opposition between eighteenth-century conquest and nineteenth-century administration, but instead stretches back toward the imperial ambitions of the ancient west. Kipling’s weaving together of old Greeks and new Britons, Alexander and his self-appointed sons—fictive and historical—reveals a complex ambivalence about the relationship between conquest and improvement. This ambivalence is rooted in nineteenth-century interpretations of ancient texts that lauded and criticized Alexander’s imperial style as well as his empire’s mixture of violence and benevolence. That

ambivalence toward Alexander and his empire provided the problematic foundation for how nineteenth-century Britons understood their roles in Asia—as conquerors *and* improvers, inheritors of the past and belated vanguards of the future.

The West, Conquered but Improved: Huston's *The Man Who Would Be King*

If Britain inherited the dual mission of Alexander's imperial project in Asia, it also echoed the ancient empire's downfall, losing much of its nineteenth-century empire after the twentieth-century's two World Wars. John Huston's adaptation suggests that the United States made it part of its "manifest destiny" to step into Britain's place and become Alexander's descendants' descendants, the third iteration of western imperialism's dual vision of conquering and improving Asia. "Manifest destiny," a phrase coined to describe America's westward expansion across its own continent, also signified "belief in their [Americans'] obligation to export their benefits to less privileged civilizations abroad" (Karnow12). In the late nineteenth century, Americans saw manifest destiny as something very different from earlier European colonialism. The US did not need foreign raw materials or markets because it could rely on its own vast natural and human resources. Furthermore, America was founded on the principle of opposing colonialism, and its own history as a former British colony led to the belief that America would never inflict a yoke on others that it had struggled so hard to throw off. But this unique "sacred responsibility" to bring modernity to the world in the form of democracy and freedom became ever more blurred with the need to become the most dominant geopolitical power in the world—in other words, improvement began to necessitate conquest.

The rhetoric of US leaders reflected this belief that conquest and improvement could, and must, work together, and that the lofty goal of improvement itself would justify its earlier violent phase. Woodrow Wilson, for instance, did not imagine that anyone besides the US could “make the world safe for democracy,” and Franklin D. Roosevelt maintained that “international postwar peace and stability would depend on America’s global leadership” (Karnow 12). The postwar twentieth century was to be a new world that looked quite similar to the old one: although the European colonies would achieve independence, they would, American leaders hoped, be shepherded by the US politically and economically, as well as spiritually and morally—by force, if necessary. The tune is more than a little reminiscent of the improvement discourse of the British Empire.

Twentieth-century American manifest destiny and American exceptionalism are the afterlives of nineteenth-century British imperial improvement. The continuation and broadening of the British improvement project by the Americans was enjoined by Kipling himself in his infamous poem “The White Man’s Burden,” intended to inspire Anglo-American imperialism in yet another Asian country, the Philippines.³² If Alexander and the British Empire had both failed to break Asia from its barbaric and backward traditions and usher it into the modern world, then surely, western imperialism’s third try to improve the east would succeed. Indeed, America seemed best positioned to do so as the most geographically west of western powers, the most temporally “new,” and the most industrially progressive. As the US emerged from the Second World War, it seemed poised to take up the torch of two former imperial powers in Asia and renew the notion of improvement as the justification for a new American—and old western—dominance.

The Vietnam War, however, questioned America's ability to conquer all those to whom it was destined to bring progress and enlightenment.³³ For the first time since its birth as a nation, the US lost a war to a foreign power—and not just any foreign power, but a band of guerilla peasants employing methods that looked primitive at best compared with American military technology. But with defeat came a public reconsideration of what it meant to “win” or “lose” a war that claimed so much from both sides. Winning did not differ much from losing, if, either way, young men died terrible deaths, went missing forever, and returned home traumatized and disabled, unable to reintegrate into society. Furthermore, advances in photographic and televisual technology made more possible than ever before Americans' consumption of images of war violence as documented by war journalists. Through media, Americans were confronted with a sense of national guilt for its role in creating such images as “the napalm girl,” “the immolated monk,” and the bullet-to-the-head execution of the North Vietnamese soldier—images that became iconic emblems of what an American empire cost.³⁴

Despite the criticism of American imperialism that such images effected, however, they also confirmed and perpetuated stereotypes of Asians as either abject and helpless, and thus in need of improvement, or naturally prone to extreme violence, and thus a barbaric threat to western civilization in need of conquering.³⁵ An enemy that used civilians as shields, and women, children, and monks as terrorists surely stood to benefit from an imperial strategy that combined violent suppression with civilizing improvement—indeed, violent suppression in the name of civilizing improvement. Thus, the question of American imperialism in Vietnam became difficult to parse: on the one hand, the communists needed putting down and the Vietnamese people needed

modernizing; on the other hand, it had become clear years before the fall of Saigon that the US had failed to do either, but in the process of trying had turned our soldiers and ourselves into monsters. In the wake of such utter defeat, both moral and military, it became imperative to find a way to save the narrative of American imperialism and its improvement project.

Although Huston's *The Man Who Would Be King* does not directly reference the war in Vietnam, it should be read as a Vietnam-era film that tries to rescue America's image of itself as powerful and beneficent empire. Its 25-year production history and final release in 1975, the year of Saigon's fall, tracks its evolution from a classic Hollywood adventure flick to a film that criticizes, but also validates, western imperialism in Asia. More importantly, the film's fidelity to Kipling's redirection of the recipient of improvement's beneficence from the colonized to the colonizers answers the question of how to save the narrative of American imperialism. The film portrays Asians as certainly in need of civilizing, and if western intervention failed to bring civilization to them, the Asians themselves were at fault for being too ignorant to accept it. Thus, the imperialists need not worry about the result of their improving intentions; the experience of trying to implement their good will would be enough to improve themselves. And if an experience that should produce moral improvement produced instead moral degradation, then the fault lay with the western individual himself, with some kernel of unimprovability inherent in him, much like the stubborn barbarism of the Asians. Through the film's portrayal of "primitive" South and Central Asians and the way it contrasts its two male leads to signify the improvement of one and the backwardness of the other, *The Man Who Would Be King* validates American conquest and improvement

of Vietnam despite its ironic treatment of improvement ideology. Although it lionizes its imperial warriors much more than does Kipling's original story, the film shares the story's belief that Improvement, despite not living up to all its ideals, does enough to justify the western imperial project.

The film opens with an extra-diegetic sequence that, while not directly relevant to the plot, sets the tone for the portrayal of South and Central Asians as uncivilized natives throughout the narrative parts of the film. The sequence depicts an Indian bazaar, and the use of a roving camera constantly tracking, panning, and tilting to get "up-close-and-personal" with its subjects gives the sequence a documentary-like feel that contrasts sharply with the stationary, wide-angle, and extreme long shots that dominate the film's narrative portion. The camera weaves its way through the crowd as if the point of view belongs to the eyes of a tourist. Immediately, one notices the lack of industry or modern technology: manual labor creates all of the commodities sold in this market. A shot of a group of metalworkers firing metal in a wood-burning oven and hammering it out by hand, cuts to a vendor measuring grain using a traditional scale. Two men carrying water jugs attached to a pole pass in front of a man shaving another's head with a straight razor; then cut to two quick shots of men hand-sharpening tools and hand-sewing cloth. A tracking shot follows that shows two men hand-dying indigo textiles in a barrel of water, but as the camera moves, the tone of the scene begins to change, and we feel we are being led into the inner recesses of the market, where more exotic things happen. The camera tracks in quickly on a group of blind men chanting indistinguishably, then cuts to a snake-charmer, a scorpion-tamer, and a man who pours boiling water into his mouth and onto his face. The camera finally stops and lingers on what is perhaps, of all these shots,

the most disturbing to western viewers: a child holding two deadly snakes, one in each hand, and gazing at them fondly, as if they were his favorite toys.

Although the camera remains in motion throughout the opening sequence, the first part of the sequence shoots the vendors at eye level, suggesting an outsider's curiosity and interest in the workers and their work. The second part of the sequence, however, shoots the performers at a low angle, looking up at them to signify the camera's position as part of the spectating audience sitting at ground level. The low angle on the performers also makes them look larger than they are and dominant in the space of the frame, suggesting the power they hold over their audience. The first part of the sequence suggests that the Indians need development: they need industry, technology, and machines, or else they will forever be prevented from advancing their civilization. The sense of curiosity that the camera's movement suggests also encourages us to see the Indians as quaint, a living time capsule of the ancient past that stirs our historical interest as much as it invokes our pity. The second part of the sequence, however, suggests not only a society that lacks development but a culture steeped in superstition and scandalous practices, especially in their treatment of children. The sequence's coming to rest on the child holding his snakes indicates that moral degradation underlies the scenes of exotic entertainment that may at first have seemed harmless. The sequence as a whole evinces the Anglicist attitude that Indians need a civilized foreign power to pull it out of the dark ages: they need improvement in the form of modern industry, but they must first accept the yoke of western guidance, by coercion if necessary. Recalling Haileybury's exam questions about Alexander's valor, the film suggests that conquest itself may be a form of improvement for such a backward people.³⁶

The last shot of the sequence changes tone abruptly, showing a horse-drawn carriage in a long shot, going by at dusk. The stationary camera and the change in color palette—from the bright blues of the bazaar scenes to romantic reds and sepias—suggest a feeling of nostalgia. We realize that the previous scenes depict an India that is gone, a time and place lost to what it needed most: the improvement agenda of the Victorian Raj. The change in tone recalls the Orientalist attraction to India's strange but unique traditions and customs and prefigures one of the repeated lines that occurs throughout the narrative portion of the film, "different countries, different customs, mustn't be prejudiced"—a line spoken by both Danny and Peachey at various times and with varying degrees of irony. The line distills the Orientalist philosophy on preserving cultural heritage without seeking to improve it through western prejudices; interestingly, this nineteenth-century conservative position finds an afterlife in the left-progressive social movements of the era contemporary with the film's release. In the context of this shot, the suggestion is that the strange and wondrous (but no longer scandalous) images that we have just seen indicate not only a wild and "natural" India of the past, but the sorts of adventures an adventure-seeking imperialist—a Clive, Hastings, Danny, or Peachey—might find in such a lawless place. Thus, the last shot suggests that the sun has set on the conquest-oriented empire that encouraged the spirit of adventure celebrated throughout the rest of the film, but also that the sun has finally set on the retrograde Indian civilization that can now begin a new dawn under the benevolent guidance of British improvement.

The transition from the opening sequence to the opening credits further suggests that conquest and improvement are both necessary for a modern empire, but it also blurs

the distinction between the two styles of imperial rule. The rosy last shot of India at sunset fades to a black screen, and in the darkness, we hear a lone trumpet begin the melody of Reginald Heber's "The Son of God Goes Forth to War," as the opening credits roll. The hymn, composed in 1812 by Heber (who served as the Bishop of Calcutta from 1823-1826)³⁷ replaces the Indian music we hear throughout the opening sequence. The original lyrics depict the crucifixion of Jesus and ask the listener if he is brave enough to "follow in his train" and be likewise martyred.³⁸ Kipling's story changes the opening lyric from "the son of God" to "the son of Man," suggesting Peachey's and Danny's fallibility and profane intentions in conquering Kafiristan, although some critics have also read it as a not entirely ironic allusion to the two as crucified Christian martyrs.³⁹ Despite the religious theme, however, imperial allusions fill the original lyrics: the "blood-red banner" streaming afar, the "glorious band, the chosen few," "a noble army, men and boys" that follow the "Savior" and go to war for God *and* country.⁴⁰ In the context of the transition from opening sequence to credits, the heroic trumpet solo is entirely sincere and functions as a metaphor for the lone clarion call of British civilization that brings "enlightenment to the darker regions of the earth," as Danny says later in the film. The Empire acts as the white letters on the black background of India, as the credits illustrate, and it will bring literacy to the illiterate masses we just saw in the bazaar. Heber's hymn, as the film deploys it, synthesizes the conquest-oriented allusions to martyrdom and heroic militarism with the "awakening" tone of Improvement discourse. The opening sequence and credits, and the transition from one to the other, suggests that conquest and improvement are both necessary to, and compatible within, a modern empire. Furthermore, the spirit of adventure that attends conquest is itself an improving influence

on the conqueror and can help him transition to becoming a more peaceful arbiter of an improvement-oriented empire.

That spirit of adventure is also what makes the film's versions of Danny and Peachey so much more palatable than their counterparts in Kipling's original story. Whereas the story treats them as rogues from beginning to end, the film portrays them as resourceful and fearless individuals whose ingenuity and loyalty to one another mitigates their violent tendencies and cultural insensitivity. The extreme long and wide-angle shots that portray their journey from Lahore up the Khyber Pass through Afghanistan and into Kafiristan depict them as two tiny figures, alone against the inhospitable (but incredibly beautiful) terrain, with only their wits and each other to rely on.⁴¹ Thus, when the two get robbed by a group of tribesmen at the base of the Hindu Kush and manage to turn the situation to their advantage by violently assaulting the tribesmen and stealing their mules, we excuse the objectionable nature of the vignette and cheer them on. As they make their way across the snowy mountains, in another series of spectacular wide-angle shots that emphasize the arduous nature of their trek, the refrain of Heber's hymn returns to the soundtrack. Danny sings it as an inspirational tune to power them through the most difficult part of the journey, turning it into a personal rallying cry un-tethered from its imperial associations. Indeed, the film's use of wide-angle and extreme long shots to diminish the bodies but enlarge the spirits of the protagonists makes it easy to forget that their journey is associated with the Empire at all. Individual heroism becomes a proxy for state conquest so subtly, and indeed, through such spectacular cinema, that the pair's conquering intentions nearly drop off the map.

Even when the British Empire is directly referenced, the film focuses on the ways in which serving in the Empire improves young men—by increasing their courage and allowing them to form bonds of brotherhood they would not otherwise have—rather than the conquering that these men do while serving. When the adventurers find that “their bridges have been burnt, so to speak,” as Peachey says (referring to the crumbling of the ice bridge they walked over to enter Kafiristan), they take shelter in a cave and wait to freeze to death. The scene, shot as a two-shot of the men sitting next to each other, focuses on the bond between them and redefines the project of imperial conquest as the cultivation of fraternity⁴², a sentiment expressed by Peachey when he tells Danny that he will “do the necessary” when the fire goes out. In the shot-reverse-shot sequence that follows, they muse on what a shame it is, “our getting so close and not making it.” The dialogue transforms their childish irresponsibility into manly confidence:

D: Peachey, in your opinion, have our lives been misspent?

P: Well, that depends on how you look at it. I wouldn't say the world is a better place for our having been in it.

D: Oh, hardly that.

P: Nobody's going to weep their eyes out at our demise.

D: (indignantly) and who'd want them to, anyway?

P: And we haven't many good deeds to our credit.

D: (after a pause) None. None to brag about.

P: But how many men have been where we've been? And seen what we've seen?

D: Bloody few! And that's a fact!

P: Why, even now, I wouldn't change places with the Viceroy himself, if it meant givin' up my memories.

D: Me neither!

They continue to reminisce about the memorable events of their service, and their laughter mounts until it causes an avalanche that fills in the crevasse their ice bridge created, allowing them to cross into Kafiristan after all. A heroic march fills the soundtrack as Peachy says (the two framed in another two-shot): “Danny! We can get on!” Their loyalty to one another and positive attitude literally creates a path that leads them out of a hopeless situation. The scene exemplifies the film’s argument that conquest’s adventuring spirit improves those with gumption enough to have it in the first place. This spirit performs a magic trick on the plot, but also on the viewer’s opinions about imperial conquest.⁴³ Rather than a greedy desire to acquire land, labor, and spoils, conquest becomes the crucible in which men of character are identified and formed.

In the first half of the film, conquest trumps the improving capabilities of the more peaceful activities usually associated with imperial improvement, such as building infrastructure, religious conversion, and education. Although Peachey builds a rope bridge for the Kafirs after the two conquer all of Kafiristan and, as he says, “there was no more fighting left to do,” he intends the bridge to serve himself and Danny as an escape route after they “loot the place four ways from Sunday” rather than as an emblem of modernization for the Kafirs. In fact, the discourse of improvement acts as somewhat of a running joke in the film’s first half. Ostensibly, the ironic treatment of improvement argues that the whole scheme functioned as a blind all along, and the real purpose of attending to the welfare of the natives was to bind them to their conquerors all the more effectively. After their first victory in Kafiristan, for instance, Peachey orders their interpreter, Billy Fish, to lead them to Ootah, the leader of the Er-Heb people, so that the Englishmen can “begin his education.” In the three-shot that follows—and that prefigures

their three-way conspiracy to make the Kafirs believe Danny is the son of Alexander— Billy says to Danny and Peachey that he often tells Ootah about “Englishmens”: how they “give names to dogs, take off hats to womans, and march into battle, left-right-left-right!” Billy delivers the line goofily, in the manner of the classic Babu figure, and Danny responds ironically, “Bringing enlightenment to the darker regions of the earth.” The response suggests that British “enlightenment” amounts to no more than a handful of idiosyncratic habits and recalls the moment in Kipling’s story when Danny implies that any population can be made into Englishmen with “rifles and a little drilling.”

Unlike conquest, which truly improves the character of the conquerors themselves, Improvement is at best a set of glorified good manners, and at worst, a dishonest trick. A scene depicting the Kafirs’ first drilling lesson uses a tracking camera to follow Danny, as he paces between the lines into which the men have been assembled and delivers the following monologue:

Now listen to me, you benighted muckers! We’re gonna teach you soldiering—the world’s noblest profession. When we’ve done with you, you’ll be able to stand up and slaughter your enemies like civilized men! But first, you shall have to learn to march in step and do the Manual of Arms without even having to think. Good soldiers don’t think. They just obey. Do you suppose if a man thought twice, he’d give his life for Queen and country? Not bloody likely! He wouldn’t go near the battlefield! One look at your foolish faces tells me you’re going to be crack troops! Him there, with the five-and-a-half hat size, has the makings of a bloody hero!

Like the scenes involving Billy, this scene also treats the notion of “civilization” ironically. Danny’s comment about teaching them to slaughter each other like civilized men suggests that there is nothing more “civilized” about the English than the populations they wish to conquer; in fact, the hypocrisy of the English makes them worse.

But while Danny's lines criticize the civilizing project, they uplift the figure of the conqueror. On the one hand, Danny's crack about soldiering being the world's noblest profession is intended as a joke, for, as the rest of the monologue bears out, there is nothing "noble" about slaughter, obedience, and stupidity—the very qualities that make a good soldier. But on the other hand, soldiering is precisely what has made Danny and Peachey fit for their current conquest, and the film argues that it has actually made them "nobler" men. Their stupidity, especially, suggests a kind of innocence or purity of heart that the smarter strategists of the Empire take advantage of (like the magistrate to whom Kipling turns the two in for impersonating journalists early in the film). It is precisely their lack of intellectual development—the fact that they do not "think twice"—that makes their courage, bravery, and loyalty to one another possible and encourages us to cheer them on despite our knowledge of what their victory will mean for the Kafirs.

Danny, especially, exemplifies the stupid man of character. In the second half of the film, the two friends begin to go their separate ways: Danny becomes a true leader of the Kafirs with a sincere interest in improving their quality of life, while Peachey remains the conquest-oriented plunderer he always was. The film's position on the two imperial styles also makes a dramatic shift in the second half of the film: improvement is no longer treated as a nefarious plot or ridiculous joke but a real and good thing for the Kafirs (who, throughout the film, are portrayed as desperately in need of it, just like the Indians in the opening sequence). Because of its change in attitude toward improvement, the film also makes an about-face regarding conquest: rather than an improving influence on the conquerors, it becomes its opposite—the measure of an imperialist's underdeveloped moral sense and inability to mature.

For Peachey, anything goes, as far as satiating one's lust for power and greed are concerned. He becomes the bad imperial strategist who uses Danny's stupid good nature to his advantage. Soon after the two win their first battle, Peachey reveals that he has been the brains of their operation all along, an operation whose objectionable qualities are now, for the first time, being taken seriously. After seeing that Danny did not bleed after being shot with an arrow during battle, the Kafirs begin to believe that Danny is the immortal son of their god and ancient conqueror, Alexander the Great, whose departure from Kafiristan all but arrested time itself in the country. The people, Billy explains, have been waiting ever since for the return of "Sikander," or Alexander, the Second: here, the film alludes directly to nineteenth-century interpretations of Alexander's empire as the first stage of Britain's own, and the notion of Asia as needing shepherding by old and new western powers. The friends, joined by Billy in a three-shot, discuss what to do about Danny's mistaken identity. Danny, with innocent goodwill, says that the arrow stuck in his bandolier, hidden from the Kafirs because it was worn underneath his shirt, and that Billy better tell them the truth immediately. But Peachey thinks differently: "Say you was an ignorant Kafiri. Who would you rather follow, a man or a god? Now, we're here to conquer this country, ain't we? With you as a god, it'll take half the time and half the trouble!" Cutting Billy out of the planning as the scene cuts to a two-shot, Danny tells Peachey that "the idea, it's a bit blasphemous-like," and he fears what will happen if the Kafirs find out the truth. Then, cutting Danny out of the strategizing as well, the scene shifts to a tracking shot that follows Peachey alone as he paces back and forth across the room, concocting his ill-intended plot.

The next sequence of impressive aerial shots shows that Peachey's scheme has worked, for each successive shot shows an increasing number of followers literally marching behind the protagonists. In voiceover, Peachey explains, "our troops were well-trained and disciplined, but with Danny at their head, Sikander the Second, they were also inspired." After "half-a-dozen victories," the voiceover says, "there was no more fighting," Danny's reputation having reached all corners of Kafiristan. The last test they must pass to secure their domination of the country is the high priest Kafu Selim's, who asks them to come to the holy city of Sikandergul, built by Alexander himself, for evaluation. In the scene in which the two are given the summons by a band of roving monks, the two-shots show Danny sitting on a throne in the frame's center, body language open and generous, enjoying his power with child-like joy. Peachey lurks behind him, body turned at an angle as if hiding something, watching all the proceedings with a conniving eye. The actors' blocking shows the growing moral distance between the two. Peachey eventually convinces Danny that they must go and "bluff it out," which they do, but only thanks to miraculous good fortune: the sign carved into the underside of the holiest rock in Sikandergul happens to match the Freemason's pendant that Kipling (Christopher Plummer) gifted to Danny back in Lahore as a lucky charm; the coincidence is enough to convince Kafu Selim that Danny is the real deal.

Fortune certainly favors Danny, but as the film continues, we begin to believe that this is because Danny deserves it. Danny increasingly becomes the peaceful, beneficent improver; Peachey, by contrast, appears savage and unscrupulous. The sequence showing Danny presiding over a court exemplifies the difference between Danny's and Peachey's imperial styles, a difference that illustrates the two nineteenth-century interpretations of

Alexander himself—as virtuous leader and violent brute. The composition of the two-shot has by now completely changed: instead of Peachey strategizing while both actors face the camera, Danny now sits in the central foreground while Peachey has moved far into the background framed by a doorway. After punishing a man for capitalizing on his wife’s infidelities and creating a primitive welfare state, Danny issues a court recess to tell Peachey that to keep up appearances, he should bow before Danny when Kafirs are around. Peachey, with his back turned to the camera, reluctantly agrees, his body language suggesting that he feels edged out of the action as their scheme becomes less a scheme and more a genuine thing for Danny. Even Peachey, in voiceover, has to “hand it to Daniel Dravot, who dealt out justice as though he wrote the book,” and ever since his first act of generosity in which he stops Ootah from beheading one of his enemies, Danny has developed a moral conscience that has transformed the film’s belief in improvement’s possibilities.

In the climactic scene, the friends finally fall out for good. By now, the two-shot has all but disappeared along with the relationship it depicted. Beginning with a medium-long shot, the scene shows Peachey running into Danny’s private room, excitedly telling him that the mountain pass has cleared, and they can retrieve their spoils and leave Kafiristan. The conversation that follows is shot using a series of shot-reverse-shots instead of two-shots, suggesting the emotional chasm that now separates the two friends. Danny refuses to leave, saying “destiny,” not luck, has brought about his succession of Alexander’s rule, and that he really is Alexander’s son, “in spirit, anyway.” He reveals his grand plans for more infrastructure development in Kafiristan and his goal of making it not just a nation but an empire to match the one belonging to Queen Victoria, who will

eventually give him the Order of the Garter. The few two-shots that do occur in this sequence block the men very far apart, with Peachey far back in deep space and out of focus. Danny fully believes in his role as leader of “his people,” but instead of looking ridiculous, his physical dominance in all of these shots validates his sincerity and argues that he was always the better man to begin with. Conquest and improvement have worked together to bring out his inherent nobility; he truly wants and can shoulder the “hugeous responsibility” of governing, above and beyond subduing.

The film’s final sequence reiterates that Peachey remains morally undeveloped, and perhaps was unimprovable to begin with, whereas Danny has grown by leaps and bounds. In the final series of two-shots, the actors are again blocked very far apart as Peachey takes leave of Danny on the eve of his wedding to Roxane, whom he has chosen, partly out of lust and partly out of duty to his people, as the queen to produce his heirs. Hearing the women wailing in protest of Roxane’s fate—the Kafirs believe that mortal women will die if they wed gods—Peachey gives his final evaluation of the natives: “They’re savages here, one and all. Leave them to go back to slaughtering babes and playing sticker ball with one another’s heads, and pissing on their neighbors. Please, Danny, for the last time of asking. Come back with me.” When Peachey turns to see if his words have connected with Danny at all, the camera racks Danny into focus in deep space but shows him obscured by a wall of decorations hanging from the ceiling. In a last-ditch effort to revive something of the friendship they once had, the two agree that Peachey will stay to see the ceremony the next morning.

The film’s denouement proceeds much like the original story’s: Roxane, afraid of being married to a god, bites Danny on the cheek during the ceremony, making him bleed

and proving that he is not divine, but mortal. A battle ensues between the Kafirs and their conquerors (including Billy Fish), which the Kafirs win. They march Danny out to the rope-bridge that Peachey built and cut it loose, sending Danny tumbling into the crevasse; they crucify Peachey but let him go when they consider it a miracle he lived through it. But the small differences between film and story are significant and suggest that despite the switch in the film's second half to believing the discourse it criticized in its first half, the film ends where it began, lionizing the experience of conquest as morally improving for the conquerors. The last battle sequence of the film comprises a series of long shots and high-angle shots showing the protagonists escaping from a stone-throwing mob of monks. They and their twenty riflemen that Peachey has trained are surrounded when they run out of ammunition, and Danny apologizes to Peachey for the megalomania that has sealed their fate. In the original story, it takes Danny quite a long time to realize that the jig is up, and that his belligerent fantasies about returning to slaughter the people who so disrespected a god are useless. But the film speeds up Danny's turnaround significantly, and it does not take him long to ask for Peachey's forgiveness, which Peachey gives immediately, "free and full," with a smile that signifies the return of their old friendship. Instead of ending with a sense of the imperialists' failure, the sequence emphasizes the fact that their adventure has humbled them both, strengthened their loyalty to one another, and made them even less afraid to face imminent death.

A high-angle shot shows the mob move Peachey and Danny toward the rope bridge. When they arrive, we cut to a point-of-view shot of the bridge from Danny's point of view; then we see him, in medium profile, walk to the bridge's center, singing the original lyrics to Heber's hymn, undoing Kipling's revision. The film portrays Danny

as a true son of the great Alexander, in spirit anyway, with greater capacity for epic heroism than any mere son of man. The hymn's function as a personal fight song again trumps its imperial associations, just as it did in the film's beginning. The original lyrics, Danny's yelling at the Kafirs to "cut, you buggars!" exemplifying his fearlessness, and Peachey's finishing the lyrics to the hymn on his own—"who followed in his train!"—when Danny tumbles before concluding the song, suggest that these two really were the right imperialists for conquering and improving the Kafirs. Even Peachey is somewhat rehabilitated in this last sequence into a sympathetic survivor who has seen his best friend killed in action. This "rebranding" of Peachey as a physically and psychologically damaged victim is made even more explicit in the last scene when he tells Kipling about his crucifixion. The last sequence leaves the viewer feeling that Danny's and Peachey's failure should not be attributed to them, but instead to the savage Kafirs' own ignorance. Like Christ and Alexander, Peachey and Danny fail because of the moral failings of those around them, and although they fail to conquer or improve the Kafirs, they become better men in the attempt. The film successfully transforms violent subjugation into adventure-seeking ennobled by self-improvement, and "a celebration of the human spirit."⁴⁴

*

The production history of *TMWBK* reveals a film formed throughout a twenty-five-year period that coincides with America's transition from undefeated superpower to humbled giant. Huston began thinking about the project in the early 1950s, although the film did not see its release until 1975. In 1954, he began working on a screenplay with Peter Viertel, with whom he had worked on *The African Queen* (1951). This first draft turned Kipling's British working-class soldiers into Americans, a decision that alludes to

one of Kipling's presumed inspirations for his characters, the explorer Josiah Harlan (1799-1871), the first American in Afghanistan. Harlan travelled across the northern part of the country in the first half of the nineteenth century and was proclaimed king by members of the indigenous tribes (Rabel 111-112).⁴⁵ At this stage, Huston planned to cast Humphrey Bogart as Danny and Clark Gable as Peachey. Neither was willing to commit to the project, however, and Huston turned his attention instead to making *Moby Dick* (1955). By the end of this project, he had signed on the Scottish writer Aeneas MacKenzie to continue writing *TMWBK*, and MacKenzie contributed much of the witty dialogue that remained in the final draft of the screenplay. With MacKenzie, the film acquired a subtle warning against US imperialism, using the fate of the British Empire as an allegory for the fall of all world powers. Huston also saw his adaptation of *Moby Dick* as an allegory of American aggrandizement and obsessive pursuit of an enemy, intending at one point to film the final confrontation between Ahab and the whale at Bikini Atoll, America's postwar nuclear testing area (Chapman and Cull 157).

Bogart's death in 1957 dampened Huston's desire to continue the project. His interest was revived, however, when he thought to cast Clark Gable and Cary Grant, resurrecting the pairing of the two in *Gunga Din* (1939) and giving *TMWBK* the feel of a tribute to the earlier film, a feeling that still exists in the final version in the character of Billy Fish (Beckerman 184). In 1960, Gable died, as did MacKenzie two years later. Huston replaced MacKenzie with Anthony Veiller who worked on several of the US government's wartime films, and the lead actors with Richard Burton and Marlon Brando. By this point, the script called for Peachey and Danny to kill one another after turning against each other. Film historians James Chapman and Nicholas J. Cull read this change

as reflecting the sense that “the imperial adventure of Vietnam was opening bitter divisions within American society,” and that “there was obvious contemporary parallel for a plot in which an imperial dream was destroyed by the fact that it divided the imperialists” (159).

In 1970, producer John Foreman saw the potential of the film to participate in the Vietnam-era “buddy film” genre. Foreman, who produced *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, encouraged Huston to revive what seemed like the ultimate dead-end project. Huston again thought of the film as a tribute, this time to *Butch Cassidy* rather than *Gunga Din*, emphasizing the director’s turn in the film’s late stages toward using the movie as an allegory for American rather than British imperialism. Huston asked Paul Newman and Robert Redford to reprise their roles in his movie, but Newman declined, saying, “For Christ’s sake John, get Connery and Caine” (161). The film’s production history suggests that although the project began as a classic 1950s Hollywood action film set in an exotic location, it subsequently became a tribute to British imperial adventure films, and then a critique of imperialism itself; finally, by the mid-1960s, it became increasingly critical of American imperialism in Vietnam but also increasingly interested in how imperial adventure shapes the character of imperialists themselves.⁴⁶

The film’s evolution alongside the evolution of America’s status in Vietnam provides the context in which we should view the film’s argument that the experience of conquest is improving for the imperialists themselves because it brings out the dormant moral goodness necessary to turn the conqueror into a genuine improver. In the chronology of Vietnam War films and their attitudes toward American involvement, *TMWBK* falls in between the pro-war propaganda of John Wayne’s *The Green Berets*

(1968) and the anti-war dramas of the late 1970s such as Hal Ashby's *Coming Home* (1978) and Michael Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* (1978).⁴⁷

The film's celebration of how the adventure of western imperialism conducted in Asia could turn men into "kings," in spirit anyway, recalls the portrayal of the Green Berets as supermen in Wayne's film. Made as an attempt to recharge flagging public support for the War, *The Green Berets* presents an image of the kind of dignified masculinity that is supposed to come from being a soldier. In an early scene, Colonel Mike Kirby's (John Wayne) Green Berets hold a press conference at which each soldier introduces himself in German and English to a group of journalists, showing off his mental as well as physical capabilities. Two commanding officers answer questions posed to them by left-leaning reporter George Beckworth (David Janssen), one of Peachey's "narrow-chested chaps with long noses." Beckworth represents the conglomeration of countercultural forces jeopardizing the war effort—an unsupportive government, pacifists, intellectuals—and he asks the sergeants if the US is truly needed in Vietnam. In reply, one of the commanders dumps a Chinese-made gun, a Russian-made rifle, and a box of Czechoslovakian ammunition on the table in front of Beckworth, proving through action, not words, that only the US can prevent the spread of communism throughout the world and implying that the Green Berets, whom we've just seen shirtless and jogging, are the best weapon in the US arsenal. After the conference, Kirby asks Beckworth if he has ever been to Southeast Asia, to which the journalist answers "no." Kirby and one of his soldiers walk away with a knowing look, implying that liberals who have never been in combat should not presume to draw conclusions about war.

In the early half of *TMWBK*, Danny and Peachey fit right in with Kirby and his “men on the spot,” men of action who effect change in Asia rather than endlessly deliberating its moral consequences. Peachey’s early lines that sound off on the loss to the national interest by bureaucrats that have “ruined” India by stopping men like him “from getting anywhere” align with the central argument in *The Green Berets*: that if more soldiers had “manned up” like Kirby and his troops, the US would have won the war years ago. But whereas Wayne seems not to notice anything wrong with the conquest mentality his picture sells, Huston’s portrayal of Peachey is both laudatory and charged with irony. Kipling’s half-hidden smiles during Peachey’s tirade suggest that the audience should see him as immature and reckless despite his courage; in fact, it is his immaturity that compromises his transformation into a good governor of the Kafirs like Danny. However, the failure of his mission—symbolized through his injured body and mind—and his ability to accept this failure and bear his injuries alone across the mountains and back into Kipling’s office, makes even Peachey seem at least a little morally improved at the film’s end. No longer dangerously confident, Peachey realizes that there are just some battles one cannot win—battles that involve unimprovable populations—and the most responsible thing one can do in the aftermath of failure is to come back and tell one’s story.

If we place Peachey in the context of late-1970s Vietnam War films, he resembles the figure of the returned veteran. When we see him in close-up shots at the beginning and end of the film, his blackened face and hands allude to napalm burns or immolation (although in terms of the plot are probably the result of frostbite). He has just returned from a conflict with a population of unruly and barbaric Asians, resistant to the

civilization he and Danny bring to them in the form of an organized military, civil infrastructure, and peace among the warring tribes. He returns badly injured and emotionally traumatized, the latter resulting from his witnessing the brutal death of his friend at the hands of the savages. The physical horror of the war is embodied in a single image: Danny's severed head, shot in close-up as the film's final shot.

The shriveled purple head also links the film to Vietnam-inflected horror films that also became popular in the seventies. The inexplicable brutality and otherworldly terror of the war was routed through the horror genre in the late 1960s and early 1970s. George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (1969), for instance, broke the figure of the zombie from its traditional Haitian use as an allegory of slavery and turned it into an allegory for the killing machine that the Vietnam combatant becomes. Romero's zombies are mindless cannibals, people who have lost their souls by killing other humans. Bob Clark's *Dead of Night* (1972) involves a young man who is killed on the battlefield in Vietnam and mysteriously returns home to America as a zombie, a motif that prefigures "returning vet" films such as Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver* (1976). The first mainstream American films to address Vietnam, the returning vet subgenre focused on the consequences of the war rather than Americans' direct involvement in it. Travis Bickle, *Taxi Driver*'s protagonist played by Robert De Niro, depicts the veteran as a violent and deranged killer, a symbol of American courage in war gone wrong. Bickle registered the fear that these men could never be reintegrated into normal American life.

There exists another subgenre of Vietnam films, however, that also uses the returned veteran as a central figure, the anti-war drama of the late 1970s. The returned veteran of early seventies' horror and thriller films was a menace to society, an individual

broken beyond repair. The horror and thriller films espoused a mild anti-war sentiment, and only indirectly, scaring viewers into the realization of what was happening to our young men as a result of their participation in the war. By contrast, anti-war dramas such as *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter* depicted two possibilities of what the returned veteran might be like: a crazy and/or violent pariah dangerous to himself or others, or a humbled patriot who turns his grievances into civil disobedience and peaceful protest. Although the first half of *TMWBK* shares much in common with the content and tone of *The Green Berets*, the second half prefigures the late seventies anti-war drama in its ability to “save” American imperialism by lionizing the self-improvement of its warriors, even while tempering its support of imperialism itself.

Brave as they are in their strong opposition to the war and moving portrayal of the often insurmountable challenges facing returned vets, anti-war dramas of the late seventies nevertheless focus nearly all of their narrative attention on Americans themselves. They focus on the cost of the war to American servicemen, their wives and families, and American society. Some, like *The Deer Hunter*, also emphasize the cost to friendships between American men and the fraternal bonds that characterize “salt of the earth” American life. But an interesting aspect of these anti-war dramas is that they do not portray the outcome of the war as entirely bad, especially for those who mature and learn valuable moral lessons from their experience. In fact, for some of the characters, the war brings out their dormant good qualities and refines them.

A common trope by which anti-war dramas address this theme is the contrast between two male protagonists. One man is represented as “growing up” in response to the war and gaining from his experience, while the other cannot. The fate of the latter

often ends in suicide. In *Coming Home*, for instance, Luke Martin (Jon Voigt) channels his anger at his paralysis and his exploitation into helping others in his situation. The early tracking shots that follow him around the hospital as he uses canes to pull his own gurney around, knocking things over and injuring others, screaming at the nurses, and having to be sedated, show a man stuck in the throes of victimhood. His developing relationship with VA hospital volunteer, Sally Hyde (Jane Fonda), however, represents the beginning of his healing. Soon, he discovers his own innate capacity for empathy and aid, represented most poignantly in a two-shot that places him behind Billy Munson (Robert Carradine) as Billy tries to sing and play his guitar as he used to do before the war. Luke's placement behind Billy shows him as a physical and emotional beacon of support for Billy, who suffers from deep psychological trauma and ends up taking his own life, unable to find the reservoir of strength to improve his condition that Luke was able to tap. His desire to benefit others continues to grow, and the closing sequence of the film shows him giving a counter-recruitment speech in a high school auditorium. A lengthy tracking shot shoots Luke in his wheelchair from the back of the auditorium, then slowly tracks through the aisle, panning, to show the rapt faces of the students, and finally tracks in for a close-up on Luke's face. With great emotion, he enjoins the students not to believe the rhetoric of war heroism promulgated by movies and recruiters. He reveals that he must live with what he did in Vietnam for the rest of his life. His remorse gives way to a vital inner strength, however, and Luke ends his speech by invoking his own moral development as a result of his experience: "When you get over there, it's a totally different situation. I mean, you grow up real quick, because all you're

seeing is a lot of death...I don't feel sorry for myself. I'm a lot fuckin' smarter now than when I went. And I'm just tellin' you, there's a choice to be made here."

The "choice" refers not only to military enlistment, but to the choice of whether to use one's tragedy as a source of inspiration for moral improvement or to be destroyed by it. This choice is made demonstrably clear in the intercutting between Luke's speech and the suicide of the other male protagonist of the film, Bob Hyde. Bob is Sally's husband and a captain in the Marines, who, like Billy, is unable to pass the test of self-improvement represented by American imperialism in Vietnam. From the beginning of the film, we sense that there is something wrong with Bob, or at least, as the song that plays behind the opening credits suggests, he is a man "out of touch" and "out of time." Bob wants desperately to be a war hero and wishes that the war truly were the way Wayne portrayed it in *The Green Berets*. Bob lives in the American imperial rhetoric of the past, not in the reality of the Vietnam War in the present, and his inability to channel his disillusionment into positive action drives him to suicide. The fact that Bob and Luke compete for the same woman emphasizes the difference between the two men: between the moral development of one and the moral degradation of the other, the strength of one and the weakness of the other. Ironically, American imperialism has been good for the one who opposes it and bad for the one who supports it. *Coming Home* rescues a shred of dignity for American imperialism by turning the narrative of improvement on the imperialists themselves, even while criticizing the larger project of geopolitical domination.

The Deer Hunter advances a similar argument through the contrast it makes between its male protagonists. Michael (Robert De Niro) and Nick (Christopher Walken)

are young working-class men from small-town Pennsylvania who enlist in the army and get sent to Vietnam. They end up in a North Vietnamese prisoner-of-war camp, where they are forced to play Russian roulette against each other, an experience that traumatizes Nick and keeps him circulating through the roulette games in Saigon's red light district. Michael, who heroically rescues them from the POW camp, returns to Saigon after his discharge to rescue Nick a second time, but arrives just in time to see Nick take the "one shot" (the film's central refrain) that kills him. Even before Vietnam, Michael was always the alpha male of the group of friends to which he and Nick belonged. His loyalty to Nick always surpassed the fun-and-games hi-jinks the others valued, and Michael's moral and physical dominance is expressed in the many wide-angle aerial shots of him hunting alone in the woods. Early in the film, Michael says that he always hunts alone—"I don't want any surprises"—to which Nick responds that the thing he likes best about hunting "is the trees": just as there has always been something superior about Michael, there has always been something a little "off" about Nick. The scenes in Act I that depict the innocence of pre-War America are peppered with shots that foreground Nick shaking his hips to an ensemble performance of "I Love You, Baby," and allusions to his being an unfit partner for his girlfriend, Linda (Meryl Streep), whom Michael also loves. Nick's "unimprovability" gets expressed through the film's portrayal of his questionable heterosexuality. By contrast, Michael improves significantly. He returns from Vietnam chastened by what he considers his failure to save Nick and schools his friends back home about the seriousness of death, chastising their immature attitude and behavior toward it. Vietnam brings out Michael's inherent leadership capacity, and his humbling

by the inability to be the hero he wanted to be turns him into a different kind of hero, a grown-up who can get past his guilt and heal his community.

Although *TMWBK* differs from *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter* in not directly depicting events associated with Vietnam, it shares the later films' redirection of the improvement narrative back on to the imperialists themselves, and the notion that self-improvement represents at least one good thing to come out of imperialism. The later films push their arguments against imperialism much further than *TMWBK*, and their direct references to Vietnam and its consequences present a much more socially-conscious portrayal of American imperialism. Because it spent much of its twenty-five-year evolution as a classic adventure film, and a tribute to British imperial adventure films specifically, the criticism of imperialism in *TMWBK* is much more tempered, poking fun at improvement ideology rather than confronting the violence of conquest head-on. However, *TMWBK* shares with the anti-war films the use of contrast between its male leads to illustrate the possibility of self-improvement for those who deserve it. In the film's second half, Danny emerges as the better man who grows out of the immature obsession with conquest that nevertheless formed the moral foundation for his improvement in the first place. Danny dies, but through minimal fault of his own. If fault can be found with Danny, it lies in his lack of humility at fortune's favor. Humility is precisely what Peachey develops on his way "home" to India, at which he arrives a returned veteran. Even Peachey, who could not grow up and govern Kafiristan, undergoes some realization of his own limitations as a conqueror as a result of seeing his friend die.

TMWBK looks forward to the anti-war dramas released a few years after it and back to the patriotic pro-war film that preceded it. By accomplishing this as an adaptation, however, it also connects twentieth-century American imperialism with nineteenth-century British imperialism and its ancient Greek model. From Alexander's empire, the British and American empires inherited the notion that conquest and improvement can and must work together to build an ultimately benevolent empire. Huston's film highlights Kipling's intervention into the Alexander debates, namely his distinction between improvement ideology, which fails to justify the harm done to the indigenous by conquest, and the reality of improvement as an incomplete, tedious, and unstable compromise that nevertheless represents real betterment in the moral and material lives of the imperialists themselves. The film argues that the Vietnam War, fought ostensibly in the name of improvement ideology, fails to deliver it to Asians while sacrificing young American lives. However, the war nevertheless brought about its own improvements in the development of strong American men. Ironically, the trope of the war's creation of men of character that figures centrally in *TMWBK* and the anti-war films I examine set the stage for the *Rambo* cycle and other Vietnam revisionist action films that followed on the heels of *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter*.⁴⁸ In many ways, *TMWBK* registers the swinging of Hollywood's pendulum between support and criticism of American imperialism. To riff on the opening song of *Coming Home*, Huston's film is of its time and in touch with the social and historical events that developed alongside its own evolution into a completed text. But it is also a film out of its time, reaching back to remain in touch with the debates about proper imperial style that so occupied its source narrative. From Clive and Hastings to Haileybury and the Anglicists, the various

positions in the debate that crystallized around the figure of Alexander and the uneasy blend of conqueror and improver that he represented find new resonance in the American empire and its efforts to make its next kings through high-spirited adventure in Asia.

Kipling's story illustrates the connection between an English domestic ideology of improvement and the imperial policies of British India in the nineteenth century. For Huston, Kipling's redirection of the improvement narrative back on the improvers themselves connected nineteenth-century improvement ideology with twentieth-century development discourse and provided the rationale for America's involvement in the Vietnam War. In the next chapter, I continue to explore the question of self-improvement, but rather than focusing on examples of British colonizers and American soldiers who self-improve by way of improving others, I turn to investigate the humanitarian impulse to allow a postcolonial subject to "speak" her own account of her story—an impulse present in postcolonial scholarship as well as the way western viewers consume postcolonial cinema. I suggest that this critical position defines the critic-viewer's act of making possible a postcolonial subject's account of her story as an act of beneficence that grants that subject agency she would not otherwise possess. In making a space for the speaking subject and her voice, the critic and western viewer link their own moral self-improvement to the work of making a modern postcolonial subject. In doing so, they reveal the affinity between nineteenth-century improvement discourse and twenty-first century western humanitarianism.

CHAPTER FOUR

Unaccounted Modernities in *Tess* and *Trishna*

Since the late 1990s, the critical discourse on “multiple modernities” has become a vital subfield within postcolonial studies. Like New Historicism and other revisionist discourses, multiple modernities seeks to reveal—or to make “speak”—forgotten or ignored understandings of modernity that provide alternatives to the capitalistic, western modernity made prevalent throughout the world by European colonialism. Although I praise the ethical intent behind such discursive practices, I argue that the desire to “save” these versions of modernity relies on many of the same assumptions inherent in capitalist improvement discourse. Both measure value by utility, and both assume the teleological development of the agential subject and the connection between agency and speech. In an effort to propose an alternative both to improvement ideology and the revisionist discourses that criticize it but follow its logic nonetheless, I read Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* and its most recent film adaptation, Michael Winterbottom’s *Trishna*, as examples of texts which register the disappearance of alternative modernities without trying to rescue them. In doing so, I put pressure on the humanitarian assumption that the western improver improves men and women of the global south by giving them a voice

and suggest that humanitarianism that lacks reflection about its connection to improvement ideology risks reenacting imperial power relations in the contemporary developing world.

The notion of multiple modernities challenges classical theories of modernization prevalent in the 1950s that assumed that “the cultural program of modernity as it developed in modern Europe... would ultimately take over in all modernizing and modern societies,” and that a single version of modernity would “prevail throughout the world” (Eisenstadt 1). The many different versions of modernity that emerged after the two World Wars failed to bear out this assumption of convergence: the newly independent nations of the global south did not exhibit the developmental trajectory that nineteenth-century improvement ideology had foretold. Bourgeois western modernity—the doctrine of capitalist economic growth as progress, secularization, individualism, industrialization, the rule of law, and representative government—did not take hold everywhere, or took hold in various ways incompletely, or was transformed by encounters with non-western cultures. Just as “the modern” and “the west” were revealed as non-identical, so too was Improvement found to be something other than the universal betterment in life quality that it ostensibly espoused.

Scholars of multiple modernities agree that bourgeois western modernity was exported to the non-western world through imperialism and colonialism. Eisenstadt proposes that it first affected East and Southeast Asian societies, and then spread into West Asia and Africa (14). “By the end of the twentieth century, it encompassed nearly the entire world, the first true wave of globalization,” and the “appropriation” by non-western societies of certain aspects of western modernity “entailed the continuous

selection, reinterpretation, and reformulation of these imported ideas” (Eisenstadt 15). Beyond the consensus of how modernity became multiple, however, there exists much debate over what the critical field of multiple modernities should concern itself with.

One side of the debate proposes accepting the fact that western modernity has already won the day as the hegemonic discourse of what it means to be modern, and that it functions as the primary reference point for non-western societies’ understandings of their own modernity. Regardless of whether non-western societies appropriated or rejected certain aspects of western modernity, they cannot but engage with it on some level. Dilip Gaonkar, for instance, writes that it is “virtually impossible” to “blithely abando[n]” (14) western modernity and its discourse; thus, the critical force of multiple modernities lies in particularizing—and thus, de-universalizing—western modernity by studying its “creative adaptations” (18) from specific postcolonial “national/cultural sites” (15). The agency resides in the details: examining what is rejected and what adapted reveals “where a people ‘make’ themselves modern, as opposed to being ‘made’ modern by alien and impersonal forces, and where they give themselves an identity and a destiny” (18). Dipesh Chakrabarty’s *Provincializing Europe* performs a similar act of decentering the western categories of historicism and capital, but does not deny the centrality of these categories: “the understanding that ‘we’ all do ‘European’ history with our different and often non-European archive opens up the possibility of a politics and project of alliance between the dominant metropolitan histories and the subaltern peripheral pasts” (42). Chakrabarty’s interest is in recovering those subaltern pasts that “enact other ways of being in the world” not “automatically aligned with the logic of capital” that nevertheless exist proximately to, and are sublated within, that logic (66). Paul Gilroy has likewise

argued that the way to decenter classical western modernity is to expose its underbelly, its inextricability from modern slavery and the barbarity it seeks to purge.

The other side of the debate, however, says that trying to decenter western modernity while buttressing its dominance lacks the radical rethinking necessary to effect the decentering that such work claims to do. Walter Mignolo has argued that “epistemic delinking” from the western discourse of modernity is the only “decolonial option” (315), that “it is not enough to change the content; the terms of the conversation must be changed” (122). For Mignolo, the task facing postcolonial studies is to rediscover and reveal pre-modern and pre-colonial conceptualizations of time and space and revive them as true alternatives to western modernity. Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam have answered Mignolo’s call for delinking by tracing a pre-colonial tradition of historiography in South India that refutes the notion that British colonialism brought the concept of linear time to Indians.

The main point of contention between these positions lies in whether the western conception of modernity that forms the end point of nineteenth-century improvement ideology should occupy the central node of discussion about postcolonial modernity. Should multiple modernities be considered variations on a single option or discrete alternatives to that option? Different as these positions are, they both call for the retrieval of histories lost to, interrupted by, or confronted and amalgamated with modern European colonialism and the western discourse of modernity. Mignolo and Rao, Shulman, and Subrahmanyam seek to retrieve pre-modern categories that, once rediscovered and understood, can contribute to new postcolonial epistemologies. But even critics on the other side such as Gaonkar, Chakrabarty, and Gilroy seek to recover pieces of the story of

western modernity itself—its violence, its constitutive hybridity—that have been written out of History.

In this shared attribute, multiple modernities criticism shows its affinity with other late-twentieth-century critical practices such as New Historicism and cultural studies that have worked to reclaim the people, events, and narratives consigned to the trash heap of history by drawing attention to them and giving them voice. This critical attempt to recover the “undesirable” parts of history that destabilize western modernity’s “idealized self-understanding of bourgeois modernity” (Gaonkar 2) is a reaction to the capitalist notion that profit, or use, equals value, a notion that underlies western modernity itself and the improvement ethos that supports it. As Anne-Lise François has put it, improvement ideology combines the “capitalist investment in value and work” and “the Enlightenment allegiance to rationalism and unbounded progress” (xvi). Improvement reduces life’s complexity down to the difference between what has the potential to be made more profitable by the feats of labor and technology, and what shows no promise for such an enterprise, and thus has no place in modernity. Useful things belong to the march of progress and are worth attention and investment; useless things are labeled unimprovable and unmodern.

Parceling life into such reductive terms creates conditions for the loss of experiences that fall outside of improvement’s calculus: those things that cannot be made to *do* remain unaccounted for. Against this train of thought, the postcolonial discourse of multiple modernities, New Historicism, and cultural studies proclaim that even those things deemed unprofitable or unsuitable to a capitalist narrative of progress nevertheless have value and should be recorded for their own sake. François writes that such critical

practices “share an ethos of attending to unobserved, not-for-profit experience rather than results entered on the public record” (21): they make the uncounted count.

This chapter proposes that these efforts essentially enact the same logic of capitalist improvement they criticize. Although they seem to offer an alternative to improvement ideology, these critical practices fail to extricate themselves from the logic of making things “count.” Francois writes that the “crass, calculating... ‘worrying’ of time for material gain” can be “recast” as “the willingness to pay patient attention, whether in the hopes of opening the eyes of others to their ideological mystification, or of fostering recognition of previously neglected literary traditions, or even of correcting the misperception, indeed nonapprehension,” of “unaccountable practices” (25). The “heroic, articulating energies” of the improvement project “never burn more intensely” than when driving critical practices that desire to rescue the “minor, nugatory, unworthy, [and] insignificant” by articulating them ever more forcefully (25). François suggests instead that we find ways of maintaining the ethical spirit behind revisionist critical practices while not taking for granted that more exposure and more articulation are the best means of resisting capitalist improvement ideology.

In this chapter, I challenge the assumption that to retrieve uncounted histories of modernity represents the most ethical treatment of those histories. The chapter explores the tension between the desire to account for past and present experiences that fall outside improvement’s profitizing calculus, and the choice to allow such experiences to erode away, detected but unsaved. Although the latter, like the former, attends to uncounted experiences of modernity, it more effectively resists improvement’s desire for progress because it does not try to make such experience “matter” in the history of critical practice

or cultural memory, allowing its loss to improvement's grand narrative to be felt all the more.

Both the desire to count and the choice to leave uncounted inform Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) and Michael Winterbottom's *Trishna* (2011), the most recent adaptation of the novel set in twenty-first century India. In both texts, improvement ideology wants to turn history to profit, to make it count and to make it pay, while the silences, gaps, elisions, and moments of withholding in the texts resist this demand for accountability. The female protagonists in novel and film, Tess and Trishna, represent alternative conceptions of modernity that go against the improvement ideologies that inform the actions of the texts' male protagonists, characters who marry a capitalist desire to turn waste to profit and a New Historical/postcolonial impulse to uncover hidden narratives and make them count. The two female characters embody the possibility of organizing modern life according to collectivity and mutual aid instead of competition and profit. Both novel and film use their female protagonists and minor characters to foreground moments of withholding, silence, and non-narrativity that refuse to be incorporated into a profitable project of articulation in order to resist the capitalistic improvement energies of its men. But the alternative modernities that these texts "offer" are in fact described only in terms of their loss—their passage into the realm of the counterfactual before becoming possible realities. In drawing attention to disappeared or disappearing conceptions of non-capitalistic or non-western modernity, *Tess* and *Trishna* circumvent the complicity in capitalist improvement ideology exhibited by revisionist criticism. In doing so, both novel and film reevaluate the ethics of "rescuing" the voices western modernization silences.

Hardy's Improving Men

Hardy criticism often describes him as a “transitional” figure, a writer historically positioned to occupy the dual roles of last Victorian novelist and first modern poet, and whose works are deeply concerned with the transition from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century (Flynn 87). The Wessex novels evoke the disappearance of centuries-old traditions and customs to the inevitable modernization of English society, and an accompanying desire to record historical continuity and geographic particularity before the future destroys both.⁴⁹ His preoccupation with the loss that accompanies change might seem to suggest his affinity with, or anticipation of, multiple modernities discourse and its desire to retrieve lost alternatives to the present. But instead of trying to recover and reclaim, Hardy registers the possibilistic by drawing attention to its obsolescence, to its absence after having passed into the realm of the counterfactual.

The early century conflict between opposing definitions of improvement frames Hardy's depiction of the continuity that abides in a place and the revolutionary change created by modern technologies. This conflict is best illustrated by the difference between Humphry Repton's and Edmund Burke's understandings of improvement. Repton (1752-1818) inherited landscape designer Capability Brown's business and aesthetic, and was a figure of controversy whose sudden and vast estate reorganizations met with support and disapproval. Alistair Duckworth shows how Jane Austen in *Mansfield Park* makes Repton representative of “the improver” generally, whose “drastic alterations to landscape” and “radical” change of an estate's design often involved “not only the indiscriminate cutting down of trees and the magical creation of rivers and lakes but, on

occasion, the relocation of whole villages which blocked the prospect and the redirection of roads by special acts of Parliament” (44-45). Such a figure and his projects struck Austen as “emblems of inordinate change,” and suggested that the “adoption of Reptonian methods” entailed “dangerous consequences for the continuity of a culture” (45).

The continuity of a culture, and that continuity’s dependence on the responsible stewardship of property, is precisely what Burke feared would be lost to revolutionary political activity. Duckworth writes that Austen held a Burkean vision of proper improvement to an estate and the community it supports. For Burke, “to ‘improve’ was to treat the deficient or corrupt parts of an established order with the character of the whole in mind; to ‘innovate’ or ‘alter,’ on the other hand, was to destroy all that had been built up by the ‘collected reason of the ages’” (Duckworth 46-47). In *The Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Burke argues that the English Revolution improved the deficient parts of an orderly and traditional culture, whereas the French Revolution destroyed a culture’s inheritance through radical innovation and alteration. Duckworth concludes that for Austen, Reptonian improvements were as destructive to an inherited, harmonious social order as was the French Revolution, for the grounds of an estate represented in small an entire society and its geographic particularity.

This early-century debate on the proper improvement of land and human culture provides a helpful frame of reference for Hardy’s late-century depiction of the opposition between preservation and modernization. In *Tess*, Alec D’Urberville and Angel Clare represent the continuation into the modern era of the struggle between Reptonian and Burkean notions of improvement. The Stoke-D’Urbervilles’ approach to property

improvement can be seen as a late-century adaptation of Reptonian aesthetics of estate innovation. Angel represents the countervailing approach to improvement that takes its cue from Burke's conservative reliance on precedence as a way of tailoring the future to what has already been established in the past. Considering Hardy's interest in the continuity, legacy, and the geologic evolution of a particular location and its human culture, one might assume that Hardy adopts Burke's and Austen's prescriptive of slow and steady change over sudden and drastic innovation. I want to suggest, however, that Hardy is critical of both early-century approaches to improvement, for, different as they are, both of these approaches evince an Enlightenment utilitarianism that makes the past actively *do* so as not to let it go to waste, not to let it *be*.

Alec, the Stoke-D'Urbervilles, and their property The Slopes use the past to improve the present, disregarding the past as an end in itself and seeing it only as raw material for the profit it might bear in the present. The description of The Slopes emphasizes its "recent erection, indeed almost new," and its garish "rich red" "that formed such a contrast with the evergreens of the lodge" and the "soft azure" of the woods (Hardy 43). The Slopes sits just outside The Chase, "a truly venerable tract of forest land; one of the few remaining woodlands in England of undoubted primaeval date, wherein Druidical mistletoe was still found on aged oaks, and where enormous yew-trees, not planted by the hand of man, grew as they had grown when they were pollarded for bows" (44). The juxtaposition of these neighboring pieces of land suggests that whatever used to exist where The Slopes now sits has been improved beyond recognition and without care to maintaining a good fit with its surroundings. The particularity of the land has been lost, for "everything looked like money—like the last coin issued from the Mint"

(44). If everything can be reduced to its exchange value, to coins issued from the Mint, then any unique aspect of the land loses its special character and becomes interchangeable with everything else.

The problem with improvements of the kind that characterize The Slopes is not simply that the new has changed the old: Hardy does not advocate a return to the pre-human world.⁵⁰ Instead, the problem with improvements at The Slopes is that they reflect a way of seeing the past with an opportunistic and exploitative eye. The land improvements to The Chase are analogous to Simon Stoke's turning the historical D'Urberville name to present profit by connecting it with his own. The narrator describes Stoke's choice of the D'Urberville name as an act of picking out the choice bits of history without regard to anything but their use value: "Conning for an hour in the British Museum the pages of works devoted to extinct, half-extinct, obscured, and ruined families appertaining to the quarter of England in which he proposed to settle he considered that d'Urberville looked and sounded as well as any of them; and d'Urberville accordingly was annexed to his own name for himself and his heirs eternally" (45). "Not an extravagant-minded man," Stoke seems even comically sheepish in his excessively "reasonable" method of annexation, "never inserting a single title above a rank of strict moderation" (45). But his offense is not moderate. Stoke does not perform a purposeful "grafting" of his own name onto the d'Urberville lineage. He chooses the d'Urberville line randomly, for it "looked and sounded as well as any" of the other names that happened to be in the book he haphazardly found. Stoke knows nothing of the character of the D'Urbervilles nor of the woods on top of which he built his home. Ancient names

and ancient land, once unique and embedded into the fabric of history, are reduced to interchangeable units by the single calculus of what new value they might bring.

Like the Stoke-D'Urbervilles, Angel Clare also values the past for what it might yield to benefit himself in the present. Angel believes Tess to be an extension of the natural environment he associates with his ideal of rural life. Tess's simple and innocent disposition restored to her ancestors' refined sensibilities and education would articulate perfectly his desire to live a refined and sophisticated agrarian life—the marriage of intellect and manual labor to which he directs his life's aim. While Alec's attempts to improve Tess rely on disciplining her and making her dependent on his beneficence, Angel's improvement of Tess is based on his idealization of her "purity" as virgin and nature goddess: "It was then, as has been said, that she impressed him most deeply. She was no longer the milkmaid, but a visionary essence of woman—a whole sex condensed into one typical form. He called her Artemis, Demeter, and other fanciful names, half-teasingly—which she did not like because she did not understand them" (146). Angel's idealizing of Tess is linked to his keen interest in her D'Urberville heritage. Although Mr. Crick tells Tess that Angel has no use for old families, Angel himself admits to his father that he is "tenderly attached to them," "lyrically, dramatically, and even historically" (184). His sentimental attachment to the past seems to be just what Simon Stoke was missing when he attached D'Urberville to his own name.

But Angel's attachment manifests itself as the desire to restore the past to its former glory for his present benefit. Tess restored to her "original" refined manners, education, and polish would be the crowning achievement of Angel's unorthodox decision to become a farmer instead of entering the Church like his brothers:

To produce Tess fresh from the dairy as a d'Urberville and a lady he had felt to be temerarious and risky: hence he had concealed her lineage till such time as, familiarized with worldly ways by a few months' travel and reading with him, he could take her on a visit to his parents and impart the knowledge while triumphantly producing her as worthy of such an ancient line. It was a pretty lover's dream, if no more. Perhaps Tess's lineage had more value for himself than for anybody in the world besides. (229)

Thus altered, Tess would prove that his choice had been the correct one, and that the agrarian life was indeed as idyllic as he imagined it to be, a place where the free-spirited pagan and the aristocratic lady could coexist. Angel wants Tess to coalesce the many ideals he holds, to be a piece of the past that validates his present life.

For Angel, Tess is the perfect raw material upon which to work because the material itself is of good quality to begin with. In free indirect discourse, the narrator expresses Angel's notion that "though untrained," Tess was "instinctively refined" as the result of her inheritance, and "her nature cried for his tutelary guidance...cried out to be restored to its former refinement" (199). Thus, Angel's style of improvement is based on restoration through reconstruction: with his progressive ideas and modern education, he would transform a backward and pre-modern Tess into an updated but historical version of herself. What makes her so attractive to him is her potential to be retroactively improved to the status of her ancestors: she is an experiment in turning back the clock, in erasing the degradations of intervening generations and returning to a "purer" state of agrarian England populated by noble families in their pure state. Angel's valuation of Tess's lineage is a capitalist evaluation of what an old bloodline is worth: like renovating a fallen manor house, Angel wants to restore Tess's aristocratic value by giving her the cultural polish to match his perception of her good genetic stock. Such a renovation would make Tess much more "sale-able" to his parents as a suitable match, in the way a

good piece of property can attract a better buyer when restored to its original charm.⁵¹

Shed of her embarrassing provincialisms, Tess would also help Angel account for his chosen career path: she would exemplify the successful yoking of the aristocratic “head” to the farmer’s able “hand,” the very combination that Angel seeks to fulfill as both thinking and laboring man. Tess refined would represent a way to turn the past into a profit-bearing and fashionable emblem of a modern class of educated and sophisticated middle-class farmers.

The novel shows how its improving men and their single-minded desire to turn history to profit do not, in fact, “improve” lives at all, but instead wreak disastrous effects on the people with whom and environments with which they come in contact. For improvement is not simply a general concern with making the future better than the past, but an ideology by which the improver gets to decide which parts of the past matter and which do not, which have value and which do not—according to the reductive and single calculus of benefit to the improver himself. The novel’s ways of circumventing improvement logic, then, serve to question the ideology’s ethics. By including examples of withholding, silence, and non-narrativity, it provides an escape hatch by which certain moments can elude improvement’s quest for more investment opportunities, more objects for improvement. Moments in which the accounts of minor characters fail to make an impact, or the novel deliberately withholds its account of central plot points, are moments in which a lack of revelation, speech, or articulation becomes a means of dodging improvement’s desire to turn the past to account. In these moments, the novel meditates on the difference between those things that eventually become “history”—and therefore subject to improving energies—and those that remain in the realm of the counterfactual

and become improvement's missed opportunities.⁵² If history is the always-partial account of things that "count"—the events and figures considered "valuable" enough to designate as having happened or existed—then what lies outside of that articulated record comprises the wealth of possibilities that might have been. Such possibilities, although cast aside by the historian as "uncounted" or "uncountable," live in the realm of the counterfactual and contain potential that was not, cannot, and will not be used by those who seek to profit by the past. Within the novel's moments of withholding, its gestures toward characters unnamed, and its barest mentions of actions not pursued inhere a kind of potential that remains outside the grasp of improvement because it has already been consigned to the waste bin of history before it can become history revised.

The hidden sexual encounter between Alec and Tess exemplifies the novel's use of silence to bypass improvement ideologies. In the Preface to the fifth and later editions of *Tess*, Hardy writes that this novel begins where other novels end: "the great campaign of the heroine begins after an event in her experience which has usually been treated as fatal to her part of protagonist, or at least as the virtual ending of her enterprises and hopes" (Hardy 4). Tess's nocturnal encounter with Alec D'Urberville in The Chase that results in her bearing his child should be the last event in the novel, after which the heroine makes her graceful exit, and the reader is left to ponder the virtue of sexual purity and the vice of sexual indulgence. But what is arguably the central event of the novel happens not at the novel's end, but at the beginning, wedged into the gap between phases one and two. The event that determines the rest of Tess's life is hidden from the reader, and because the child dies, seems to leave no trace.

After Tess buries the child Sorrow, she “transplant[s]” herself into the “deeper soil” of a new place, determined to forget the past and begin a new life as a new person (Hardy 144). This re-beginning, a transition into what Gillian Beer calls “the afterlife” from “the life before” (Beer 18), requires a silencing of the already-silenced event in her past. In order to have any hope of an “afterlife” with Angel, Tess must make her prior life with Alec disappear. What Angel says to her on their wedding night is true, that Tess is her own reincarnation: “the woman I have been loving is not you,” but “another woman in your shape” (Hardy 248-49). Tess prior to her confession is a woman without history; afterward, she is a woman with a past. Tess’s speech act, however, her big revelation, is communicated to the reader through yet another moment of silence. The novel elides Tess’s speaking of the event: the fourth phase ends as Tess begins her confession and the fifth begins with Angel’s reaction to it. The account of the signal event of the novel goes twice unaccounted, despite being recounted. Furthermore, in the aftermath of Tess’s revelation, it seems that her act of accounting for herself is not enough. As the subtitle to the fifth phase (“The Woman Pays”) suggests, Tess must spend the rest of the novel paying a debt for not accounting earlier for what has been all along, and will remain, undiscoverable by the reader.

Although it hides the sexual encounter itself, the novel is punctuated by possibilities as to how that encounter might have turned out differently. Small, insignificant moments of the text point to conversations and happenings that might have changed Tess’s history had they been said or done—but they were not; these possibilities close down almost immediately after they are opened and before they can be realized. For example, the unnamed women working alongside Tess in the fields at Marlott let on

about the sexual encounter that ““A little more than persuading had to do wi’ the coming o’ t, I reckon”” (103), though none of them acts on this information or uses it to vindicate Tess’s reputation. The women also reveal the presence of unnamed villagers who might provide corroborating evidence: ““There were they that heard a sobbing one night last year in The Chase; and it mid ha’ gone hard wi’ a certain party if folks had come along”” (103). The comments indicate Hardy’s commitment to building into the novel different interpretations of Tess, some that become part of her “history” and some that are lost. But more importantly, the comments suggest the contingency of the sexual act: although it forms the central event in the novel, it might have gone differently if those who could have intervened had done so.

The novel also alludes to alternative accounts of Tess’s family history, only to record that they have been lost before the reader gets to hear them. At Talbothays, for example, Mr. Crick informs Tess about an old woman who once told him “that a family of some such name as yours in Blackmoor Vale came originally from these parts,” but Crick “took no notice of the old woman’s ramblings” (123). Her ramblings recall Parson Tringham’s rambling off to John Durbeyfield the history of his family. The novel’s recording of Tringham’s version contrasts with its recording of the loss of hers, suggesting that the antiquarian’s history survives while oral history wears away. Perhaps it is Crick’s mention of the old woman that leads Tess to wonder after Angel’s proposal of marriage, ““Why don’t somebody tell him all about me?” she said. ‘It was only forty miles off—why hasn’t it reached here? Somebody must know!’” (193) The narrator’s response, that “nobody seemed to know” (193), does not fit with what the novel has established. Indeed, other eyes and other ears witness and pass on the events about which

we read. The text's glances at the gossip of minor characters reveal the contingency of the major plot points and gesture toward alternate historical records that go unheard, and then erode away.

History is buried, exhumed, and buried again in *Tess*. The historical event in question is always already hidden from us, as it is happening in the present, as well as when it is recounted as a thing of the past. Alec tries to improve himself with an aristocratic name, Angel with an aristocratic lineage: such names and lineages embody the kind of history considered to have positive value embedded within it, the kind of history worth recording because of its use in establishing links between past and present locations of power. However, the event that the novel refuses to disclose and the alternative narratives it refuses to realize, are, in some sense, the opposite—pieces of the past that fall away into the realm of the counterfactual and whose loss gives official history its value as such. The two kinds of history the novel presents are diametrically different, and the novel allows them to remain so, not attempting to turn unofficial history into official record. In doing so, the novel differentiates itself from the revisionist criticism mentioned earlier. It suggests that the way to resist the profitizing impulses of capitalist improvement that inform the value system of historical recordation may not be to enact what is essentially the same impulse in trying to account for those parts of history that that discourse leaves out. Instead, registering the loss of such histories might actually provide a way of resisting improvement's demand for accountability by evading its logic altogether.

Tess: Counterfactual Evolution as Alternative Modernity

The improvement ideologies represented by Alec and Angel promote a bourgeois western definition of modernity. Both ideologies participate in a capitalistic and Enlightenment utilitarianism that makes the past actively *do* rather than allowing it to *be*. The Stoke-D'Urbervilles' Reptonian desire for novelty and indiscriminate use of the past for present profit represent the kind of innovation and individualism responsible for England's rapid industrialization and worship of capitalist economic growth. Although Angel's version of improvement emphasizes restoration over innovation, he shares with the Stoke-D'Urbervilles their distinguishing between those pieces of the past that are "useful" and can be modernized, and those that are "backward" and should be improved away. Both male protagonists disregard the past as an end in itself and see it only as raw material for the profit it might bear in the present.

By the time Hardy wrote and published *Tess*, the protest he lodged against capitalist improvement ideology through his portrayal of Angel and Alec was already belated, since industrialism had long since triumphed in Britain by century's end. Industrial progress was the engine of the single version of modernity that would, recalling Eisenstadt, seek to "prevail throughout the world" as it reshaped the indigenous economies of the colonies. A self-conscious knowledge of this belated protest tempers the novel's gestures toward its counterfactual narratives, unrecorded histories, and moments of withholding. The allusions to narrative possibilities not included in the plot evince a sense of their own futility, but the novel does not try to compensate for its inability to "tell" and "record" effectively. Like the minor characters' digressions and the novel's handling of the hidden sexual encounter at its center, Tess Durbeyfield represents another way that things might have gone, but didn't. Tess's case, however, bears directly

on Hardy's vision of a kind of modernity that could act as a true alternative to the western capitalist version—she is the closest Hardy comes to rescuing a lost understanding of the modern in the revisionist sense. But that “rescue” is tempered by its own belatedness, by the knowledge that Tess's path toward a communitarian future had already been occluded before we encounter it as a possibility.

The critical literature remains divided over whether the novel represents Tess as the last of a degenerate race, or if it portrays her instead as the first of a new kind of organism (Niemeyer 101). Peter Morton claims that *Tess* follows a standard neo-Darwinian worldview that emphasizes the determinism of natural selection (Morton 42). Neo-Darwinism “reaffirmed the pessimistic side of Darwinism” and the individual's helplessness in the face of inheritance. For Morton, Tess “fails to perceive the non-material legacy bequeathed to her by the mindless forces of heredity which control her motivation” (44): Tess's grand mistake is that she “believes she chooses her destiny”—a “tragic self-deception” (48). J. R. Ebbatson has argued, however, that “Hardy's natural tendency” is “always to balance the remorseless laws of biological struggle” with “a far more romantic apprehension of the world” (248). Hardy believed in both the deterministic and possibilistic powers of nature; thus, *Tess* exhibits both a fatalistic pessimism as well as an “unfettered pantheism” where humans are linked directly to landscape, animals, and seasons (Ebbatson 250). Although subject to certain biological principles such as natural and sexual selection, humans share in that “great passionate pulse of existence” that cannot be restricted by social laws (250-51). “Against the life of organic process, with its potential for happiness or misery, stands the coercive power of law, opinion, and morality” (251): nature frees, while human society makes individuals

powerless and insignificant. Building on Ebbatson's reading, Bruce Johnson has proposed that Tess represents the first of a new human species whose worldview is shaped by the "awareness of the evolutionary oneness of all life"; she is "precisely the essence toward which evolution has driven man" (Johnson 276). Johnson argues that the aspect of Darwinian science that interested Hardy most was the sense of the "evolutionary connections among all life (the relatedness of man and 'lower' forms)" (272). *Tess* acts as an appeal for inclusiveness rather than a complaint against determinism and competition.

In Hardy's autobiography, he writes that "Altruism, or the Golden Rule, or whatever 'Love your Neighbor as Yourself' may be called, will ultimately be brought about I think by the pain we see in others reacting on ourselves, as if we and they were a part of one body. Mankind, in fact, may be and possibly will be viewed as members of one corporeal frame" (qtd in Johnson 272). Whereas Alec represents the total destruction of the old by the new, and Angel idealizes the old by trying to restore the present to its former state, Tess represents the evolution of humans toward a vision of ecology and an understanding of the individual's continuity with the community and nature, while not being subject to either. Tess's approach to the past is to use it as an opportunity to create a particular disposition, one that orients the self toward a sense of one's connectedness to all that is beyond the self, the lives of others in the past as well as in the present. The best use of the past, then, is to foster fellow-feeling with "nature's teeming family" (Hardy xx).

The reader first encounters Tess as a member of the community of Marlott. She exists as a member of the women's club before being singled out as an individual character and the novel's protagonist. The club, moreover, exists to promote charity and

mutual aid, formed in ancient times to solicit charitable donations in cases of sickness or death (Hardy 422n17). The club-walking, like the old oak copses and irregular belts of timber, reveals a “trace” of Marlott “in its earlier condition” (Hardy 19): “The forests have departed, but some old customs of their shades remain. Many however linger only in a metamorphosed or disguised form. The May-Day dance, for instance, was to be discerned, on the afternoon under notice, in the guise of the club-revel, or ‘club-walking’, as it was there called”; “It had walked for hundreds of years, if not as benefit-club, as votive sisterhood of some sort; and it walked still” (19). The narrator describes the club as a single, ever-evolving entity. Though its members change from generation to generation, the club itself acts as an organism that retains a conceptual and even physical coherence despite its variations; furthermore, it reworks and adapts an old pagan ritual. Gillian Beer claims that Hardy drew on Huxley and Darwin to imagine descent not only as a force of determinism that acts on the individual, but as “shared afterlives” (25).

Angel’s appearance at the dance reaffirms the notion of the club as organism. One of the young women presses Angel to choose a dancing partner, and the scene sets up the perfect opportunity for sexual selection: the individual most fit to reproduce the species will be chosen. But instead, Angel’s decision-making process and eventual choice emphasize mutual aid over competition:

The young man thus invited glanced them over, and attempted some discrimination; but as the group were all so new to him he could not very well exercise it. He took almost the first that came to hand, which was not the speaker, as she had expected; nor did it happen to be Tess Durbeyfield. Pedigree, ancestral skeletons, monumental record, the d’Urberville lineaments, did not help Tess in her life’s battle as yet, even to the extent of attracting to her a dancing-partner over the heads of the commonest peasantry. So much for Norman blood unaided by Victorian lucre. (23)

Read within a neo-Darwinian framework, the passage might indicate the overwhelming role of chance, of the randomness that rules the universe as opposed to the order that should be found in a world with a creator. But it can also be read as Hardy's choice to underscore the fitness of a group despite the presence of exceptional individuals. Angel cannot distinguish between individuals, but nevertheless judges the fitness of the group of women as a whole to be sufficient, whereas his brothers fear being seen amongst "a troop of country hoydens" (22). The narrator's commentary that "pedigree, ancestral skeletons, monumental record, the d'Urberville lineaments, did not help Tess in her life's battle as yet" is ironic, for neither do these ever help her with the many battles that take place in her life subsequent to this opening phase. Likewise, the notion that Tess's superior individual traits did not serve to elevate her "over the heads of the commonest peasantry" is undercut by Parson Tringham's aside to John Durbeyfield that "there are several families among the cottagers of this county of almost equal lustre" as the D'Urbervilles. The references to Tess's ancestry do not single her out as the fittest member of the group, but instead provide a different way of emphasizing the notion of continuity that the club's mutual aid and group cohesion also invoke. Although Tess may be an exceptional creature, she "move[s] on with the whole body" (21), connected to her ancestors in the past and her fellows in the present.

But it is precisely Tess's ability to think in terms of continuity and inclusiveness that makes her the fittest member of her family and community. Unlike her parents, whose self-centeredness makes them bad leaders of the family unit, Tess is able to be "humanely beneficent" (43) to her siblings and caretakers of her irresponsible parents. Furthermore, she can imagine the lives of others in her community: "It grew later, and

neither father nor mother reappeared. Tess looked out of the door, and took a mental journey through Marlott. The village was shutting its eyes. Candles and lamps were being put out everywhere: she could inwardly behold the extinguisher, and the extended hand” (30). Tess leaves her own body behind and pictures herself in the place of others, going through an action that she herself might do on an ordinary evening. The image fits Adam Smith’s definition of sympathy in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*: the dissociation or splitting of oneself into the self that does and the self that sees the other half doing. The combination of first-hand experience and the impersonal observation makes possible the ability to feel with others.

In addition to her sympathy for her human family, Tess also senses her connection to non-human species. Eight months after Angel abandons her, Tess wanders the area surrounding Marlott picking up temporary work. One night she stops in a plantation and hears in the trees overhead a “flutter,” a “gasp,” or a “gurgle,” followed by a fall of a body to the ground. In the morning she sees a group of pheasants lying in a bloody heap, some dead, some in the last twitches of death, “pulsating,” “contorted,” and “writhing in agony” (297). Tess guesses that the animals are the victims of a shooting party, and like herself, treated in a way “unmannerly and unchivalrous” by the upper classes (as represented through Alec and Angel). Tess sees her connectedness to the birds, while at the same time, she feels that their suffering outweighs her own: ““to suppose myself the most miserable being on earth in the sight o’ such misery as yours!”” (298). Recalling Smith’s sympathetic spectator, Tess is both fellow sufferer and impartial observer. The dual perspective leads her to snap the necks of as many birds as she can find, doing a cruel kindness to the animals while symbolically bringing her own life to an end.

At times, Tess's altruism is put to the test and is found lacking. At Talbothays, she finds herself in competition against the other dairymaids for Angel's attention. "She knew herself to have the preference. Being more finely formed, better educated, and, though the youngest except Retty, more woman than either, she perceived that only the slightest ordinary care was necessary for holding her own in Angel Clare's heart against these her candid friends. But the grave question was, ought she to do this?" (152). Tess gives selflessness her best try, recommending Izz and Retty to Angel, saying to him, "Don't they look pretty!" and deciding to "obscure her own wretched charms" (155). But the situation can also be read as a battle between mutual aid and competitiveness, rather than among the four dairymaids for a partner. When Angel finds the four of them trapped by a large puddle on their way to church, he offers to carry all four of them across the flooded area. John Glendening reads this scene as an example of sexual selection: Tess is directly compared to her three competitors and is found to be the fittest due to her beauty and education (71). Angel admits that he has carried the other three women only as an excuse to carry Tess. But the narrator also describes the four women as a single organism: "Four hearts gave a big throb simultaneously"; and "The whole four flushed, as if one heart beat through them" (158). The two ways of figuring the relationship between the individual and the group exist side by side: Tess as an individual who relies on her exceptional traits to be preferred over the rest of the group, and the four women as a single unit trying to ensure that one of them is chosen in order to reproduce the species. The narrator explores the coexistence of these readings by emphasizing Tess's contentiousness as well as her sympathy: "Tess's heart ached. There was no concealing from herself the fact that she loved Angel Clare, perhaps all the more passionately from

knowing that the others had also lost their hearts to him. There is contagion in this sentiment, especially among women. And yet that same hungry heart of hers compassionated her friends. Tess's honest nature had fought against this; but too feebly; and the natural result had followed" (161). Tess's "honest nature" refers to the sincerity with which she sympathizes with the other dairymaids, and the sincerity, too, with which she tries to discourage Angel's interest in her. But the "natural result" of the situation is that her self-interest trumps her altruism. Both are described as "natural," however, indicating that the novel wants to show two biological tendencies, both a part of human nature and competing for primacy in the evolutionary development of the species.

These two tendencies, the individualistic and the community-oriented, can be extrapolated into two different visions of modernity that the novel proposes. On one hand, Tess's self-interest is analogous to a competitive, antagonistic capitalism represented by the thresher—an improvement-oriented desire to turn everything to account, to make the past profitable for the present, as Alec and Angel would have it. On the other hand, her fellow-feeling and sense of connectedness to all those around her, human and non-human alike, represents an alternative way of being modern that contests the ideology of improvement propelling the nineteenth century into the twentieth. The question that the novel asks implicitly is "what will happen next?" What will the afterlife of the nineteenth century look like, a world of improving men or one guided by fellowship and inclusion? The possibility of a notion of modernity that favors the latter arises in the moment when Tess and Angel take the day's supply of milk to the train station to be distributed through England. The narrator ironically sets the scene as a meeting between the present and the past:

a fitful white streak of steam at intervals upon the dark green background denoted intermittent moments of contact between their secluded world and modern life. Modern life stretched out its steam feeler to this point three or four times a day, touched the native existences, and quickly withdrew its feeler again, as if what it touched had been uncongenial. [...] No object could have looked more foreign to the gleaming cranks and wheels than this unsophisticated girl with the round bare arms [and] the print gown of no date or fashion. (204-205)

But it is Tess who best understands what modernity means: the rail system, the mail-cart running on standard time, even the thresher that transforms wheat into a grain that can be used by others—they all signify increased contact between those who have never seen or imagined each other before:

Tess was so receptive that the few minutes of contact with the whirl of material progress lingered in her thought. [...] ‘Londoners will drink it at their breakfasts to-morrow, won’t they?’ she asked. ‘Strange people, that we have never seen.’ [...] ‘Noble men and noble women—ambassadors and centurions—ladies and tradeswomen—and babies who have never seen a cow.’ [...] ‘Who don’t know anything of us, and of where it comes from; or think how we two drove miles across the moor to-night in the rain that it might reach ‘em in time. (205)

Angel makes fun of her mention of centurions, taking it as evidence of her ignorance. But it is Tess’s sense of an imagined community connecting herself and those that are wholly other to her—people of different classes, ages, and historical periods—that is the truly modern mindset. Modern life is characterized by “moments of contact,” by “feelers” that stretch outward and connect people and places formerly separate.⁵³ Tess’s inclusivity is more modern than Angel understands. In fact, it is an alternative to his way of being modern: a sense of an ever-evolving species rather than his improving eye for new places and new people to shape according to his ideals. Tess’s sensibility is modern because it encompasses both a feeling of alienation while simultaneously understanding one’s

continuity with time and space; it is a broadening of the mind through understanding one's own insignificance.

In the figure of Tess, evolution may close down possibilities for the individual, but it also uses the past to create a thoroughly modern, even avant-garde being. Johnson proposes Tess as a novelistic experiment in which an individual that had evolved into an example of the perfection of species—whose deep sympathy for others charts a new evolutionary path—was put on a “blighted star” where human society's confused values do not allow for her survival. Johnson writes that although “some critics have seen Tess as eminently unsuited for survival if she is compared with a Spencerian evolutionary ideal... ‘adaptation,’ as Darwin ambiguously used the word, is a complex set of vibrations between environment and creature and not the ruthless triumph of strength and wiliness, or even of fortitude” (274). The well-adapted individual does not merely survive in a brutish way, but “depends on and furthers the peculiar essence of the species; this in man means survival with some sensitivity and awareness of our evolutionary kinship with all life” (275). Tess then “would be the ideal of survival, as understood in its subtlest Darwinian sense of a symbiosis with the environment that causes the unique qualities of this species not only to flourish but to flower, to the point, as Darwin sometimes said, of downright ‘happiness’” (275). She is both culmination and commencement: a new creature whose newness lies in her sense of connectedness with the life before, the present life, and the life ahead.

However, if Tess represents an alternative modern sensibility, that sensibility remains one that will never transpire, remaining only a novelistic experiment. The view of the nineteenth century presented in Tess is one that looks backward onto it: Tess's

world of horse-drawn reapers and Druidical woods represents a landscape that had largely disappeared by the time Hardy's contemporary readers encountered it. The railway, bourgeois upstarts, and fashionable new towns like Sandbourne represent the latter part of the century, a modernity that had already overtaken Tess's world by the time the novel was written. Even Talbothays, with its extensive personnel and complex division of labor, is more modern agri-business than idyllic rural farm. Thus, there is a sense of belatedness to the novel: the competition between two paths toward modernity that it poses has already been won, and fellowship has not come out the victor. Tess represents a possibility for the evolutionary apex of the species that is itself belated—it is a possibility that has already been closed down. The star onto which Tess has pitched is blighted because it is one on which Improvement has won the race to modernity by the time Tess presents an alternative to it. A possibility for a different way of organizing human relations on the brink of the twentieth century opens up for a moment but is just as quickly buried in the heap of possibilities and narratives that the novel accumulates in the category of the counterfactual. The fellowship and mutual aid that Tess represents has been lost, eroded away by Improvement's march onward.

Trishna's Unclaimed Voice and the Right to Silence

Although *Trishna* shifts *Tess*'s historical period from the late nineteenth century to the twenty-first, and its location from Dorset to Rajasthan, the film retains the novel's foregrounding of the tension between improvement's use of the past for present profit and Hardy's acceptance of its passing into the realm of possibilities unrealized. Furthermore, the film presents Trishna as both an object of improvement for the men

around her as well as a subject who, like Tess, embodies an alternative conception of modernity, one that prizes emotional ties between women and children, collectivity, and mutual benefit, rather than competition and profit. But the allusion to Tess's alternative modernity does not stop there; the film stays true to Hardy's attention to obsolescence: Trishna's anti-capitalist modernity has already been foreclosed by the world in which she lives.

After a traffic accident that debilitates Trishna's father and destroys the family's only source of income, their vegetable delivery truck, her father sends Trishna away from their village to find work. He encourages her to accept an offer of employment from Jay Singh, a non-resident Anglo-Indian and heir to his father's chain of refurbished palatial resorts in Rajasthan. For Jay, Trishna is the human equivalent of a great piece of property—a rare find that other developers have yet to discover or have perhaps passed over, failing to see its potential to be turned into a profitable enterprise. The Singhs' properties provide stunning settings, and just as the viewer can track the progress of the resorts in their states of disrepair and improvement, the story chronicles Jay's efforts to reinvent Trishna from a country girl into a worldly woman fit to be the mistress of a powerful global capitalist. Throughout the film, Jay operates as a wolf in sheep's clothing, or as Alec in Angel's clothing, playing the roles of benefactor and oppressor in Trishna's upward mobility. After becoming pregnant with Jay's child, Trishna leaves the hotel and returns home to her father, who takes her to a local clinic to abort the fetus. Jay finds her shortly afterward working in a relative's factory, whisks her away to Mumbai, and introduces her to a group of Bollywood dancers working on the set of a film he is producing. Like a Bollywood film, the Mumbai sequence acts as a fantasy interlude

during which Trishna tries to ignore the fundamental social and gender inequalities between herself and her lover.⁵⁴ But these inequalities resurface when the two return to Rajasthan, Jay having inherited the family business after his father's death. He becomes increasingly abusive, punishing her for keeping her abortion a secret, until Trishna finally ends the relationship by stabbing him to death with a knife purloined from the hotel kitchen.

Trishna remains unable to fit into the life that Jay improves her for, but this does not mean that she comes across as a representative of a pre-modern India. Rather, Trishna is a figure who is “unmodern” by the standards of the cosmopolitan and urban-dwelling Singhs who occupy positions of economic power. It is not that Trishna lives outside of the global capitalist economy prior to her relationship with Jay, but rather that her priorities and aims are not those of the economy in which she cannot help but participate. Rather than mobility and purchasing power, Trishna prizes family ties and sympathy between individuals: the moments that most reveal her inner emotional state are those in which she expresses unbridled joy at being reunited with the women and children of her family, especially her favorite sister, Devshri. She lives in a world controlled by the likes of the Singhs, but she is not of that world: she may move among capitalist improvers, but her interior life remains unregulated by them.

It is precisely this interior life that the film's moments of withholding, silence, and non-narrativity protects from being turned into an object of improvement. Although Trishna's body might be subject to the opportunism of the men in her life, the film's *mise-en-scene* and its clever use of the mock documentary effectively shield her inner world—her own account of her experience—from Jay and her father. But the film also

goes a step further by constructing a spectatorial position that aligns the viewer with her improvers: like them, the viewer combines the desire to modernize her with the pursuit of her “voice.” In fact, the film constructs a viewer who desires to modernize Trishna precisely by giving her a voice, allowing her to speak and thus granting her agency in a narrative plot that seems to deny her just that. While the film constructs the male characters as offenders of the rights of subaltern women, it constructs the viewer as her rescuer—but both pursue her with the same intentions: to make her “better” according to their own notions of betterment, to make her realize her potential as a modern subject. Thus, by constructing the viewer as yet another of Trishna’s improvers, the film criticizes the viewer’s desire to “hear” the voice of third world suffering speaking the west’s own script.

The film’s resistance to such an appropriation of Trishna’s experience is given the form of silence, pauses, and unanswered questions. As in the novel, these forms of negation when rendered cinematically can easily be misread as signs of passivity. In the talkback session of the United States premiere of *Trishna* at the Tribeca Film Festival, a member of the audience asked actress Freida Pinto how she felt portraying Trishna on the screen. Pinto responded that she did not like Trishna as a character because she found her frustratingly passive, but she took the role because she saw it as a challenge to try and play a character whose actions and motivations were so inexplicable. Pinto’s critique bears out the film’s effectiveness at constructing the desire to see Trishna improve her situation, the subsequent frustration at her unwillingness to do so, and finally the impulse to intervene on her behalf. But I want to suggest that what can be read as passivity is actually a strategy by which the film allows Trishna to hide in plain sight: it obscures her

interiority from the viewer while simultaneously drawing the viewer in with impressive feats of visual stimulation. While offering glimpses of India's landscapes that seem to belong in a travel brochure and providing lingering shots of Frieda Pinto's face and body, Trishna's subjectivity remains throughout the film tucked away from the viewer. This tension between inviting the gaze and obstructing it, pulling in and pushing back, seduction and resistance, is the film's translation of the novel's competing approaches to history, to make it do or to let it be. The film encourages our unwillingness to allow Trishna's account of her actions to be lost before being revealed. But the film ultimately obstructs the viewer's desire to hear her and "save" her; in doing so, it refuses to capitulate to the ideology of improvement inherent in both global capitalism and liberal humanism invested in making Trishna "count."

From the beginning, the film announces its consciousness of its viewer. The film's syntax positions its subject from the perspective of the first-world tourist of the global south. Like the opening of *Tess*'s second chapter, the opening sequence of *Trishna* is constructed through the visual language of tourism.⁵⁵ Hardy's description of the village of Marlott begins by characterizing it as "an engirdled and secluded region, for the most part untrodden as yet by tourist or landscape-painter, though within a four hours' journey from London" (18). The description privileges the reader (and the "traveler from the coast," the reader's stand-in) as a pioneer, one of the first to happen upon this "untrodden" area, a secret place that is nevertheless there for any adventurous traveler to stumble upon (18). *Trishna* begins with two establishing shots of India at dawn that resemble still photographs. The cinematic mimicry of scenic photography repeats throughout the film and alludes to the guidebook and the postcard.⁵⁶ The views of India presented by these

shots are of an India picturesque and depopulated, giving the viewer the impression of a place outside of time and space and awaiting the viewer's look. The scene transitions to Jay and his friends lounging on a hostel rooftop and talking in slurred syllables about their Indian vacation. The friends, seeking secluded places off the beaten track and hidden from the average western tourist, have chosen to stay in a rural hostel rather than a resort like Jay's own, a choice that suggests their affinity with Hardy's pioneering travelers.⁵⁷ The film's opening suggests to the viewer that he or she, too, is to be let in on the hidden treasures of India that the camera will find. The western tourist as figured through the young men is anything but polite.⁵⁸ When we next see them touring an ancient Jain temple, their behavior is irreverent and embarrassing: they joke and laugh loudly in what should be a quiet, sacred space. Instead of allowing the viewer to distance himself completely from this behavior, however, the camera draws us in visually to the tour itself. Fast cutting and handheld motion paired with high angles and rich displays of color provide an alluring *mise-en-scene* that gives the viewer the ideal temple tour without making him leave home. Tracking shots that take the viewer around temple columns are cut with over-the-shoulder shots from behind the English tourists. The camera mimics the way they explore the site but also the way we ourselves might.

In short, the camera shows us what we would like to see in the manner in which we would view it, and the camerawork and editing provide a view of the temple that looks and feels similar to what the on-screen tourist characters are seeing. The viewer's pleasure in looking conflicts with his identification with the on-screen tourists: whereas we enjoy looking at the scenery, we do not enjoy being identified with the rude and disrespectful behavior that the characters exhibit. Thus, the film asks us to be self-

conscious about the position or role of the western tourist as a general construction. It suggests that although the viewer's behavior may differ from that of the young Englishmen, the way in which we see India may not be so different. The western tourist is a structural position in a global capitalist paradigm that turns foreign travel into a consumable commodity (Urry and Larsen 2011, 49-74). The experience of the foreign is reified; thus, it entails a particular point of view—that which the camera and the characters assume. The film makes us aware that the western tourist's look is not associated with individual characters or viewers but is rather a function of the film's syntax. The *mise-en-scene* and editing turns the visual field of the non-west into a discourse, a way of looking that can be adopted and appreciated by the western viewer.

By merging Alec and Angel into Jay, the film picks up on the twin imperialist ambitions of the novel's improving men: Angel goes to Brazil to try out the advanced farming techniques he has learned, whereas Alec decides to become a missionary before being "tempted" back to his old ways by Tess. The film also focuses on what I've argued above as the two male protagonists' desire to turn the past to good account. Alec's upwardly mobile father grafts the D'Urberville name onto his own to elevate his class status; Angel uses Tess's lineage to validate his unorthodox life choices; and Jay and his father restore rundown palaces and villas in India into luxurious modern resorts that cater to European tourists. India's history is made new again for the global hospitality industry, and Jay and his father are uniquely positioned to turn their connections with east and west to good profit. The Singhs represent the seamy side of global power. From the moment Trishna arrives at his father's hotel in Jaipur, Jay pursues her with Alec's intensity and obsession. He steals glances at her during training sessions by hotel staff, stares her down

as they cross paths in the garden, and finally gives orders for her to bring him meals in his private suite. In the cinematic equivalent of the novel's whistling scene in which Alec teaches Tess to "put her lips together and blow," Jay teaches Trishna to whistle while she stands inside of a birdcage feeding his father's pet birds, her only protection from Jay a thin wire screen. The screen also obstructs the spectator's clear view of her—this combined with the constant appearance of European customers served by the Indian staff reminds us that the viewer is implicated in Jay's treatment of Trishna. When Jay's father arrives from London, he joins in the pursuit. Using his blindness as an excuse (he is the film's version of Alec's blind aunt), he manages to circumvent the wire screen to touch her face while he says he wants to "take a look at her." His "look" is a touch, and we see in one of the film's few close-ups a facial expression that registers a violation. Jay's, the tourists', and the camera's looks are substitutes for the father's touch, a touch that signifies the west's sense of entitlement to "discover" the third world and improve it into a profitable investment.

The film's discovery and improvement of Trishna, however, is ultimately more complex and ironic than the whistling scene suggests. Through a mock documentary style, the film invites but refuses to gratify the viewer's desire to "know" Trishna's inner life. In Trishna's home, Winterbottom uses a montage of brief shots that offer the viewer glimpses of Trishna's private life beyond that to which Jay and his father have access. The western viewer is even more privileged than the film's male characters: we have the ability to penetrate into the private lives of the global working class outside of work time. The camera shows us different members of the family engaged in household tasks, both indoors and out. In the evening, we see the family eating and then Trishna lying awake

next to her sleeping brothers and sisters in bed. The emphasis in all of these shots is on visual storytelling; there is minimal dialogue. Close-ups and medium shots create a sense of intimacy in which the visuality participates: it is as if the narrative film suddenly turned into a documentary of life in rural India. The “objectivity” implied in such a style of filmmaking is criticized by Trinh T. Minh-ha as a way in which cinema participates in orientalism: “See them as they see each other; so goes the (anthropological) creed. ‘Tell it the way they tell it instead of imposing our structure,’ they repeat with the best of intentions and a conscience so clear that they pride themselves on it... What we ‘look for’ is un/fortunately what we shall find.... recording, gathering, sorting, deciphering, analyzing and synthesizing, dissecting and articulating are already ‘imposing our [/a] structure,’ a structural activity, a structuring of the mind, a whole mentality” (*Woman, Native, Other* 141). The implied targets of Minh-ha’s passage include early twentieth century ethnographic films such as Robert Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North* and *Moana*, which claimed authenticity in representation by hiding the filmmaker behind the camera’s objective recording of everyday life in foreign places.

I want to suggest, however, that Winterbottom is conscious of the historical baggage that shooting a location sequence in documentary style brings, and he adopts it in an effort to expose its assumptions. In an interview with Homi Bhabha, Minh-ha says that despite her objections to the documentary, working within the form itself may be the best way to undo it.⁵⁹ Similarly, Winterbottom works within the form of the documentary to foreground its colonial impulses to know and record. What interests me about *Trishna*’s documentary-style vignettes is their length: their abruptness can be seen as examples of non-narrativity. A shot of Trishna lying awake amidst her sleeping siblings

lasts two seconds; her facial expression is blank. We do not know why she is lying awake, and her face gives no indication of what she might be thinking. A two-second shot of an elderly woman in the family shows her simply sitting, face turned away from the camera. The camera ostensibly shows a “real” rural Indian family at home, seeming to “see them as they see each other.” However, Winterbottom’s film lightens its own burden of representing what it shows through a patchwork of coexisting moments disguised as an “objective” documentation of the lives of non-western others.

This same technique of playing the documentary against itself is used in the movie’s central nocturnal encounter. After Trishna willingly kisses Jay in a dense wood, the scene fades to black then cuts to Trishna, back at the hotel workers’ dormitory. The camera follows her to the bathroom but is prevented from entering by a dark garment hanging on a laundry line. The garment on the left side of the screen and the dark wall on the right side frame Trishna’s shoulders and back as she faces away from the camera. Such framing creates the sense that the space around her is being cut out, that she is being decontextualized and readied for the process of “recording, gathering, sorting, deciphering, analyzing and synthesizing, dissecting and articulating” (Minh-Ha, *Woman, Native, Other* 141). The natural lighting, handheld camerawork, and the clothing that seems naturally and haphazardly placed add to the sense of documentation, but little information is given beyond what the kiss and fade to black communicated. Although the narrative invites sympathy, the visual storytelling distances Trishna from us, effectively communicating that her interior feelings are off-limits. We know that something has upset her, but we remain at a distance from exactly what that is: the dark portions of the screen surrounding her deflect our access to what should be an intimate moment. While

Trishna's blank expressions convey little about her feelings and agency in both the sexual act and the abortion, they do convey that her feelings and agency in fact matter little: when she returns to her family home, the patriarchal power structure dominated by the global capitalists at the hotel is reproduced in small by the family, her father replacing the Singhs. Familial, national, and global power structures are portrayed in the film as a set of nested boxes or concentric circles, congruent in the inequalities they uphold.

Trishna's silence is perhaps most poignant when she uses it to deflect Jay's direct questioning about her departure from the hotel. When he finds Trishna at her uncle's factory, he takes her to an alley and asks her why she left. An over-the-shoulder shot from Jay's perspective shows Trishna looking at him (and the viewer), then looking down, but not answering. "Tell me," he solicits again; still nothing but a quick shot of her looking away. A motorbike carrying two riders whizzes by them, drowning out the silence of Trishna's refusal to respond. The bike is noise and interference that mirrors the disconnect between Trishna and Jay. Again, he tries to get an answer from her: "I tried calling you, your phone was off. Carried on trying to call, it became disconnected. What happened? ... Do you think what we did was wrong?" Still, Trishna gives no answer, and here, the camera focuses on the back of her head, replacing the second shot in a classic shot-reverse-shot with an over-the-shoulder shot from Trishna's point of view. Although it is Trishna's turn to speak, the camera is still focused on Jay, suggesting that the conversation is not a dialogue but a monologue punctuated by interrogatives. Neither Jay nor the camera is interested in what Trishna has to say; there is no attempt at listening, only injunctions to speak.

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak warns that speech can only be heard when it fits the discourse by which it is interpreted. Between the subaltern individual's "consciousness" of her experience and its externalization—"knowledge"—lies the middle term of "ideological production" (307). There exists no way in which Trishna could translate her experiences to Jay in a way that he would understand without violating the truth of that experience to herself. Jay wants knowledge of her interiority, but the two systems of consciousness operate apart from one another. Thus, to give him what he wants—an answer, a conversation—communicates nothing; rather, it would only expose and offer up her consciousness to interpretation by capitalistic and patriarchal discourses. Jay wants her to account for why she left because he wants to make sense of it, not because such an account would benefit Trishna.

Like Jay, the viewer also wants to hear Trishna's account. Many questions have accrued by this point in the film, and her withholding during this crucial scene sends the movie screeching to a halt. This negative space at the center of the film, in which the viewer expects to hear an account but is given only silence, is a moment analogous to Trishna's blank facial expressions, the empty chairs in the hotel, the lack of information given by the mock-documentary style. But it supersedes those other strategies of negativity because it is a moment when the western viewer is directly refused the voice it claims it wants to hear. Spivak's critique in the "Subaltern" essay of the west's failure to listen is only indirectly aimed at neo-imperialists; directly, she admonishes the pseudo-transparent western intellectual who, unconsciously imbricated with networks of power, calls upon himself to represent and speak for the subaltern individual. In so doing, he renders the oppressed individual an oppressed Subject, a representation or portrait of the

oppressed, an artificial composite. Through the process of turning the subaltern's account of individual consciousness into interpretable knowledge, the western intellectual fashions an oppressed Subject that reflects his own desires. Such a process, I suggest, can be read as a contemporary reworking of Angel Clare's restoring Tess to an essentialized ideal that turns out to be an image of himself.

Following Spivak's critique, other postcolonial theorists have sought strategies by which the non-western individual can resist becoming translated. Minh-ha, for instance, writes that in light of the danger of having one's speech turned into a discourse that speaks for one, "assuming a tone and a position of indirection" may provide a strategy for impeding appropriation:

One can never go to the ruler in a direct way; in order to voice one's opinion, one has to take an indirect way. Indirection is likely to disturb viewers, including feminists, who expect a film to make a categorical statement, to deliver a positive political message, or to build around a clear story line. But for me, in a context of late capitalism where externalized directness (not to be confused with direct knowledge) is ultimately made to serve reductive and consumerist ends, it is important to work with indirection and understatement, if meaning is to grow with each viewer, and if the interstices of active re-inscription are to be kept alive.
(*Woman, Native, Other* 25)

Trishna's silence and the film's withholding of her interiority are methods of "understating" and "muting" that refuse to make a statement or deliver a political message that would satisfy the viewer. The film invites us to want to hear Trishna's account of her experience of living under the thumb of patriarchy, only to block the communication of that experience in an attempt to throw the viewer's consciousness back on himself. In doing so, the film asks us to consider that we may already have spoken for Trishna even while presuming to create a space for her to speak for herself.

In *The Aesthetics of Silence*, Susan Sontag argues that silence provides respite for that which bears the burden of giving meaning: “in its most hortatory and ambitious version, the advocacy of silence expresses a mythic project of total liberation. What’s envisaged is nothing less than the liberation of the artist from himself, of art from the particular art work, of art from history, of spirit from matter, of the mind from its perceptual and intellectual limitations” (17-18). I suggest that in *Trishna*, silence can also be seen as the liberation of the subaltern woman from the west’s listening ears and a release from our expectation of what she would say if she were given the chance to speak.

The last sequence of the movie supports this reading by allowing Trishna’s account to become lost before we find out what it might have been. Arriving home after Jay’s murder, she discovers that, although the family has benefited economically from her labor at the Singhs’ hotels, the patriarchal structure of home life remains intact. Insinuating that she brings shame to him and to the family, her father asks her where her husband is, to which Trishna responds in another instance of withholding, “who?” Answering a question with a question that throws the burden of explanation on the questioner, Trishna continues to refuse to account for herself. Her father then complains that all of the neighbors know he is living off of her. She responds again with indirection: she says that he should be happy—he has a new Jeep.

Perhaps the conversation is enough to solidify Trishna’s sense that things have not changed, and that were she to remain at home, her father would send her away to work again. Or perhaps she knows that Jay’s murder will not go uninvestigated, and that her freedom is temporary. Perhaps she wants to avoid facing what knowledge of the murder would do to her family. Whatever the reason, Trishna takes her own life the next day,

with the same knife that she used on Jay, after dropping her sister and brother off at school. The scene cross-cuts Trishna's walk to the place she has chosen for suicide with shots of her siblings saying a school pledge that invokes the students' allegiance to the family and the nation. The place Trishna has chosen is barren and deserted; there is no one in sight, no dwellings, sparse vegetation. Her siblings are surrounded by other children. The juxtaposition is one of doing and acting for others (the family, the nation) against negating the self, and becoming, like the landscape, nothing, absent. Trishna extricates herself from the patriarchal structures of family, nation, and global capitalism while her younger siblings are indoctrinated into them. In Hardy's novel, Tess hopes that Liza-Lu can be her next reincarnation and offer Angel a do-over for the mistakes he made the first time around. But the reader senses that it is equally possible that Angel will repeat the harm he committed against Tess toward her less spirited and drabber copy. The cross-cutting of Trishna with her siblings suggests that a similar repetition of social and economic injustice awaits her younger sister, Devshri. Furthermore, the scene suggests that institutions of knowledge often interpreted by the west as indicators of progress and modernity function as buttresses to patriarchal hierarchies.

The last shot of the film is a freeze frame of Trishna's face as she stabs herself. The frozen image fades to white, after which the credits roll on a black screen. The freeze frame attempts to make permanent, or at least durable, a moment in time; but the fade to white makes that moment—and Trishna along with it—vanish. The white screen signifies only the absence of significance, that something is missing or has disappeared, though it does not exactly signify the end of the movie as does the black screen that follows. The whiteness is another form of silence that acknowledges a possibility of speaking that goes

unclaimed, for Trishna's final act is a moment of pure loss, neither legibly resistant nor compliant to family or social expectations. Trishna's suicide allows her own account of her experience to disappear before it can be discovered and interpreted by her father, Jay, or the viewer.

Like Tess's missing account of her actions in *The Chase*, the novel's hiding of the event, and the auxiliary narratives that posit unrealized possibilities, Trishna's story is allowed to remain counterfactual history. Although cast as objects of the improving men around them, both Tess's and Trishna's interior lives—their motivations and explanations—slip out of the record of things that happened, that mattered, and that counted. Not included in the historical record of events that contribute to the main narratives of their texts, their inner lives cannot become subjects of improving energies, in the present or the future. Instead of rescuing—or allowing the viewer to rescue—Trishna's account from disappearance, Winterbottom's film makes its viewer feel, rather than simply know, its loss, while at the same time making us aware of our desire to improve Trishna into a readable subject. Registering loss by alluding to what could have been, instead of reclaiming what was, Hardy and Winterbottom revise the method but retain the ethical intent of critical discourses such as multiple modernities. *Tess* and *Trishna* allow uncounted experiences to circumvent capitalist and academic agendas of improvement, contributing to a record of disappearance that might nevertheless secure alternatives to a profit-driven modernity.

AFTERWORD

Trishna distinguishes between development, a capacious concept encompassing a plenitude of self-determined possibilities, and Development discourse, the assertion that participation in the system of global capital represents the only way of becoming modern. The kind of improvements Jay has in mind for Trishna—and for India—are rooted in the desire to identify, rework, and re-brand objects to fit a western capitalist definition of profitable modernity. On the contrary, Trishna's own sense of the modern emphasizes conceptions of collectivity that offer alternatives to both capitalist individualism and paternalistic family-hood. The difference between Jay's and Trishna's understandings of development update the discrepancy between the modern subject that Hardy's improving men envision for their refurbished versions of Tess, and Tess's own evolution into the first of a new kind of organism.

Each of the films in this dissertation highlights the contrast between development as western-capitalist discourse and as socially-just progress. *Bride and Prejudice* and *Aisha* grapple with the rapid changes that neoliberal consumerism has brought to Indian culture and whether such buying power falls prey to development as ideology or

harnesses its conceptual power to leave India's colonial history behind. *I Walked with a Zombie* reconfigures Jane Eyre's bildungsroman as a lesson to be learned about imperialism's masking of discipline as progress, and *The Man Who Would Be King* demonstrates humanitarianism's intention to yoke the developing world into western capitalism's orbit. The films testify to the importance of disentangling development's ideology from its regulatory potential.

At the same time, the films reveal Development discourse as the afterlife of nineteenth-century Improvement ideology. Bringing together an early century belief in teleology and commoditization, and the Victorian ethic of labor as transformative of self and other, Improvement reflects a long nineteenth-century preoccupation with the joining of progress to capitalism—the very conjunction that informs the adaptations' portrayals of Development. While the films trace Development's lineage back to nineteenth-century Improvement, they also bring out Improvement's critiques layered into Romantic and Victorian novels. By translating and updating the settings, characters, and plots of nineteenth-century British fiction to postcolonial societies, the films argue for the relevance of adaptation studies to the analysis of political, social and cultural experiences of the nineteenth century as well as the post-1945 period. I hope that this dissertation has shown, as well, the need to rethink not just the boundaries of development, but of heritage criticism. Unlinking “heritage” from its historical associations with a conservative British regime allows us to see how British heritage, in the form of its classic novels, has traveled across the globe and been improved, in various and generative ways.

Future work in the field of cross-cultural adaptation studies would do well to explore not only the metaphorical “travels” taken by nineteenth-century British plots, characters, and social critique, but also the physical journeys made by the novels and their adaptations, as material objects, as they move around the world. Such projects might consider, for instance, what it would mean to read Jane Austen’s and Thomas Hardy’s novels not as British literature first and foremost, as I admittedly do here, but as cultural objects that circulated in different forms and through different media in the British colonies and post-colonies. Attention to histories of commodity exchange that reflect legacies of intellectual continuity would necessitate significant research delving into the connection between colonial and book history. Existing work that exemplifies this connection include Viswanathan’s *Masks of Conquest* and Priya Joshi’s *Another Country* on the uses and reception of nineteenth-century English texts in India, as well as the postcolonial book history of Isobel Hofmeyr’s *The Portable Bunyan*. A future cross-cultural adaptation study that maintains Improvement as its focus might reveal how novels and films as objects participated in the appropriation of nineteenth-century British Improvement ideology in various locations, and at different historical moments. Each instance of the adaptation of both Improvement’s ideology and its critique would strengthen the connection between Improvement and Development that this project establishes.

Cross-cultural adaptation criticism would also benefit by expanding the scope of this dissertation to emphasize the transnational dimensions of the field. One significant question that emerged as I worked through this project was how Victorian studies might participate with the recent turn to transnationalism in literary and film criticism.

Evaluating nineteenth-century progress ideology and its resurgence in development theory through a transnational, rather than postcolonial, framework would allow Improvement and its critiques to be re-contextualized as part of a long history of globalization that encompasses periods of colonialism, decolonization, and postcolonialism at local, regional, and international levels. A transnational framework would also allow projects that study empire's afterlives to include films that do not aim their political critique at empire per se, but nevertheless explore the legacies of imperial ideologies.

Nineteenth-century British novels and their adaptations participate in a history of global capital that is longer and larger in scale than an empire-postcolonial framework can contain. Although future work should seek to accommodate the expansive reach of these novels and films by adopting a transnational paradigm, it should also take care to retain and foreground the ethical injunctions of postcolonialism, in particular postcolonialism's insistence on revealing the power inequalities based on gender, class, and race that stand as legacies of imperialism. In addition to bringing together Victorian studies and the transnational turn in literary and film studies, future work in cross-cultural adaptation should serve as a foray into thinking through the responsible broadening out of the postcolonial into the global.

I hope this dissertation has contributed to the recognition of cross-cultural adaptation as an important and timely field of study with much room to grow, and with the ability to intervene in conversations about how the British Empire shaped, and continues to influence, global conditions of life in the postwar and contemporary periods. I hope, too, to have strengthened the ongoing effort to distinguish Development discourse

and its capitalist-imperialist roots from what an understanding of development as agency and human dignity might make possible. The nineteenth century is indeed long: we inherit its ideological constraints as well as the cultural productions that critique them. We make the most of our imperfect heritage by adapting what is most beneficial.

NOTES

¹ Linda Troost has identified a similar trend in updating and relocating source texts in Austen adaptations. Troost calls such adaptations “imitations,” and names *Clueless* (1995) as the most notable example of the group, as well as versions of *Pride and Prejudice* set in modern India (*Bride and Prejudice*, 2005) and Mormon Utah (*Pride & Prejudice: A Latter-Day Comedy*, 2003). See Troost 76.

² See Tuite (93-115), Jordan (29-55), Mee (74-92), Natarajan (149-72), Mohapatrajatindra and Nayak (201-18), and Park (219-32) in Park and Sunder-Rajan.

³ Mary Chan’s recent essay, for instance, supports Duckworth’s reading by claiming that although discussion of “change” lies at the center of the novel, resistance to change is the novel’s overwhelming attitude. Tim Watson and George Boulukos argue that Sir Thomas Bertram represents the benevolent, rather than the abusive, slave-master who takes up as his burden the improvement of his charges’ morals. Thus, Austen’s seemingly progressive position on slavery should be read as a version of Burke’s conservative philosophy on improvement—a slowly and steadily evolving improvement of the moral condition of the colonized by their upright English masters. Other critics recast Austen’s view on improvement as much more progressive. Richard Quaintance argues that the novel is deeply preoccupied with making a place and a life for oneself in a competitive, market-oriented world in which one must capitalize on one’s existing strengths. Situating Austen’s novels historically within the economic pressures forced onto England as a result of the Napoleonic trade embargo (1806-1812), Colin Winborn reads Austen as highly concerned with the national burden of improving resources, rather than trying to uphold an old social order. Katherine Kickel (in a rare essay that takes a novel other than *Mansfield Park* as its primary text in discussing Austen and improvement), argues that General Tilney’s use of clock-time to improve his estate’s productivity in *Northanger Abbey* is necessary and effective, although emotionally astringent, and that Tilney represents what Austen saw as the gentry’s timely improvements to their estates in light of the new pressures it faced.

⁴ Thus, we should read Burke’s haranguing of Warren Hastings as a clarion call for future leadership of India to be better than it was in the past, for nineteenth-century improvers to replace eighteenth-century despots.

⁵ For a discussion of how *Clueless* expresses a neo-colonial world view, see Gayle Wald in Park and Sunder Rajan (233-48).

⁶ Conservatives like Burke and Thomas Munro railed against the Liberals' desire to break up and uproot an old and venerated society with time-worn, established traditions. They saw radical Anglicization as disrespect toward the heritage of the Indian past: whereas Liberals devalued Indian culture as stagnant, immobile, and unchanging, conservatives valued it highly for those same reasons. But even for the conservatives, India was not to be left to mark time on its own without British interference; rather, now that Britain had acquired much of it and benefitted from its resources, it had the responsibility to lead it—slowly and by way of preserving its past to inform present circumstances—into the future as a modern trading partner. Eric Stokes has written that the conflict between these two philosophies produced a British Raj that was benevolent in theory but authoritarian in practice (xvi).

⁷ This liberal historiography of India's radical Anglicization leading to improvement in every sphere of life, and finally to independence, defeated the conservative philosophy by the mid-1830s, a victory that owed much to Macaulay's writings on Indian education and free trade (Stokes 44).

⁸ Nehru's strategy implied heavy dependence on imports, foreign exchange, and foreign aid in the first stage of the process, then increasing economic self-sufficiency, and only after achieving that would the focus shift toward development of agriculture, job creation, balanced regional development, and bettering the quality of life for the rural poor (Brass 275-76). The span of years between Nehru's administration and that of his grandson, Rajiv Gandhi—years roughly termed "the Nehru Dynasty" by many historians—saw no less than five "Seven-Year Plans" (Brass 276) that hoped to bring about state-driven economic development.

⁹ Chetan Ghate writes that "while India's economic growth has been impressive, rapid growth has been accompanied by a slow decline in poverty, widening regional disparities, and continuing sociopolitical instability. The incidence of extreme poverty remains high. Large sections of the population continue to be deprived of basic health and education" (1).

¹⁰ Before the Second World War, Hindi films catered to the educated, affluent middle and upper classes of Indian society residing mostly in urban areas. After the War, peasants who had migrated to the cities in search of jobs joined these middle- and upper-class movie-goers, and their presence changed the content and form of Hindi films. Until the mid-1940s, Mumbai filmmakers focused mainly on social issues, the independence movement, and problems in postindustrial India. In the early 1940s, a massive shortage of raw film stock and other economic problems that beset the film industry pushed producers to make light musicals to attract a larger audience (which now included the less educated masses) to see them through their financial problems. The first formulaic Bollywood blockbusters, *Kismet*, *Shakuntala*, and *Ram Raya*, were all made in 1943, as a result of Hindi cinema's transition to popular forms and content. Formulaic films dominated the Mumbai market until the New Indian Cinema movement and the Indian New Wave rose to prominence in the 1950s and 1960s. The New Indian Cinema and the

Indian New Wave (together referred to as Indian parallel cinema) turned deliberately against the song-and-dance sequences, melodrama, spectacle and plot digressions of popular cinema. Directors such as Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Ritwik Ghatak, and Shyam Benegal turned a serious eye to socio-political problems that beset a modernizing India and the plight of the rural poor, drawing on the realism and naturalism of postwar European art cinema, particularly Italian neo-realism. Parallel cinema, with its social democratic values, was funded and promoted by Nehru's state apparatus through the National Film Development Corporation and the Film Institute at Pune (Gokulsing and Dissanayake 7). Against this backdrop, Rao-Singh neoliberalism laid the groundwork for popular cinema's resurgence.

¹¹ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0361411/>. Accessed 12/23/2014.

¹² For more on the relationship between anachronisms and anachronisms, see Chandler 108.

¹³ During the trade embargo, Napoleon exacted a constrictive hold on Britain's economy that amounted to a continental blockade, preventing Britain from import or export relations with the rest of Europe (Winborn 84). Just as improvers sought to turn an enclosed parcel of land into the most profitable version of itself, early century economists such as William Spence, James Mill, David Ricardo and William Cobbett concerned themselves with how best to turn their island nation's limited resources to the best possible account.

¹⁴ Economically, such improvement of domestic resources as a response to England's international situation benefitted the English economy considerably, making the years between 1793 and 1815 years of growth and increasing wealth despite fighting a major war all the while (Winborn 87). Although the poor experienced much hardship and discontent, farmers found the domestic agricultural demand much to their advantage, and land enclosures were organized on an unprecedented scale to meet this demand with the most efficient methods of cultivation (88).

¹⁵ On the connection between climate, madness, and nineteenth-century ideas about the degenerate character of the white Creole, see Sue Thomas 31-53.

¹⁶ Carolyn Vellenga Berman reads Bertha not as a generic racist stereotype of the native Other, but as a figure who "encompasses the unruly wildness that British [slave] emancipators attributed to both Creole blacks and Creole whites. [She] is the amalgamation of two distinct discourses of reform—targeting madhouses and the West Indies—that produces the moral-medical horror of the Creole figure.... Bertha Mason's insanity marks the Creole as a target for moral-imperial intervention, thereby emphasizing the equivalent historical mismanagement of madwomen and colonial slaves. Lunatic and/or colonial, Bertha is semi-human because she has not been (properly) tamed" (130-131). Thus, Bertha is significant because she represents the lack of control over the volatile emotions, both at home and abroad.

¹⁷ Vellenga Berman also argues that “both slavery and the bourgeois family were forms of domestication, in the sense of adapting humans—like domestic animals—into intimate relations, to the advantage of (a class of) man, within the confines of a household” (12). Thus, the colonial space itself could be seen as “a domesticated home—comprising tamed bits of the wild, with intimately subjected peoples and breeding ‘wives’” (13).

¹⁸ See Poovey for an insightful analysis on the disenfranchisement of Victorian governesses.

¹⁹ See Dayan 3-65.

²⁰ The most significant exceptions to this were the colonies of marooned, or escaped, slaves located in the mountains, forests, jungles, swamps, or other “inhospitable” areas. See Price 6.

²¹ James Scott makes a similar argument about aerial views. He writes that in order to rule its population effectively, a state must increase the “legibility” of that population by simplifying the complex life of the society it governs. It does this by “a series of typifications that are always some distance from the full reality these abstractions are meant to capture....Legibility implies a viewer whose place is central and whose vision is synoptic. State simplifications...are designed to provide authorities with a schematic view of their society, a view not afforded to those without authority” (76-79).

²² Nemerov interprets these hanging objects as allusions to slave lynchings. He reads Carrefour’s body posture, the figurehead of *Ti Misery*, and these objects as the film’s set of visual references to the persistence of slavery’s legacies in the twentieth century. See 97-131.

²³ An example of such an argument would be Mitchell’s reading of colonial resistance in Egypt. He writes that “Colonial subjects and their modes of resistance are formed within the organisational terrain of the colonial state, rather than some wholly exterior social space” (xi).

²⁴ Gelder offers a different reading that interprets this scene as an allegory for the limitations of postcolonial studies more broadly. For Gelder, Mrs. Rand’s presence in the hounfort is an *aporia* into which the difference between white and black, Christianity and voodoo, colonizer and colonized, disappears:

Where you expect to find blackness, in other words, you find whiteness: a whiteness that is rational and mystified simultaneously: both banal and fatal, ordinary and extraordinary....The forbidden realm of black magic and the transparent world of white magic...seem somehow, here, to be inhabiting the same space. This feature may in fact provide us with one of the difficulties faced by postcolonial studies which horror texts can lay bare: how to describe that point at which a lack is reconfigured as a surplus; how to tell the difference between the

one who possesses and the one who is possessed; how to articulate the point at which scepticism and enchantment touch and affect each other. (97)

²⁵ See, for instance, Washbrook and Moore.

²⁶ Afghanistan has been called the “graveyard of empires” since antiquity (Jones xxxiv). The phrase refers specifically to the staggering losses that Alexander the Great and his Greek-Macedonian army suffered in Bactria (now part of Afghanistan) in 330 BC, losses that ultimately forced Alexander to retreat (Jones xxv). But the phrase has also been used in reference to the defeats of subsequent imperial powers that have tried to conquer the region: the British Empire in the nineteenth century, the Soviet Union (1979-1989), and, as Jones argues, the current American Empire.

²⁷ One such question reads:

What circumstances made Alexander anxious to commence his expedition to India? What was the extent of his views? Quote any passages of Quintus Curtius that bear upon this point. Examine the statement of this author with regard to Alexander, that he was “*semper bello quam post victoriam clarior*” (“*being always more illustrious in war than after victory*”). (qtd in Hagerman 348-349)

²⁸ See Fowler’s engaging account of the legacies of British-Empire-era stereotypes of Afghanistan as they resurface in the discourse surrounding Operation Enduring Freedom and the renewal of Anglo-American military presence in Afghanistan. See especially her account of British and American journalists’ use of Kipling “as a resource for describing Afghanistan to British audiences” (49-50).

²⁹ For an historical account of the relationship between Elphinstone and Shah Shujah, and the failure of the British Empire’s efforts to secure the Shah as an ally—a loss which led to the First Anglo-Afghan War—see Ewans 40-73. Fowler reads “Peachey and Dravot’s ill-fated attempt to conquer the region...[as] an almost parodic replay of the First Anglo-Afghan War” (29).

³⁰ See, for instance, Draudt, Shippey and Short, Meyers, and Fussell; and more recently, Sullivan, Banerjee, and Almond.

³¹ On Kipling’s own involvement with Freemasonry and the Masonic influence within the British Empire, see Harland-Jacobs and Rich. For an account of how Freemasonry influenced Kipling’s understanding of his position as an imperialist in India, and his later writings on India, see McBratney 26-27.

³² On the “special relationship” (Plotz, “Kipling’s Very Special” 37) that Kipling had with the US and his complex understanding of Anglo-American solidarity, see Plotz in Booth (37-51) and Plotz in Rooney and Nagai (37-57).

³³ On the “American myth” and Vietnam’s “disruption” of it, see Hellmann 3-40; on how Vietnam was subsequently folded back into American myths and “fantasies” about its supremacy in the world, see Franklin.

³⁴ See Chong 33-126. Franklin also reads the last of these images—the 1968 execution of a National Liberation Front (“Viet Cong”) prisoner by General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, head of the South Vietnamese police—in relation to *The Deer Hunter*, a film I examine below. Franklin argues that the film reverses the roles of shooter and victim, reimagining American soldiers as victims of the war and the NLF as ruthless murderers (14-17).

³⁵ See Chong 1-32.

³⁶ Codell reads the opening sequence as “a string of stereotypes” and suggests that it was partly responsible for the film’s banning in Afghanistan (39).

³⁷ Kreitzer 113.

³⁸ Kreitzer 114-115.

³⁹ See Kreitzer and Fussell.

⁴⁰ Kreitzer 114-115.

⁴¹ The Khyber Pass sequences were shot on location in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. Much of the rest of the film was also shot in Morocco, including the Indian bazaar and street scenes, shot in Marrakesh. Other filming locations included Glen Canyon, Utah, and the Grande Montee in Chamonix, France (Kreitzer 118).

⁴² Bascom has argued in relation to Kipling’s original story that its “highest good is not order, nor is it discipline or work. It is fellowship itself. . . . The two self-made kings and their silent partner [the narrator] are admirable not because they have done something inherently good, but because what they have done they have done together” (169).

⁴³ On the varieties and functions of “magic” in Kipling’s fiction, especially in relation to the transformative potential of the middle-class and its values, see Kucich 136-195.

⁴⁴ “Call It Magic: The Making of *The Man Who Would Be King*,” *The Man Who Would Be King*, DVD.

⁴⁵ Nagai in “God and His Doubles” writes that another model for Kipling’s Danny was likely James Brooke (1803-1868), the ex-East India Company operative who sailed for Borneo as an adventurer in 1838 and became the “White Rajah of Sarawak” in 1841. Nagai contextualizes “The Man Who Would Be King” and Conrad’s *Lord Jim* and *Heart of Darkness* in relation to Brooke and the trope of the white European man who becomes a “native god,” a trope that greatly influenced in the “construction of the western subject”

in the “non-Western space of power” (100). Marx writes that William Watts McNair (1849-1889) may have provided another source of inspiration for Danny’s character. McNair was the first white man to travel to Kafiristan disguised as a *hakim*. Marx’s essay also gives much helpful historical context as to how much was actually known about Kafiristan at the time of Kipling’s writing “The Man Who Would Be King.” McBratney offers another possibility: Danny and Peachey are throwbacks to the “Punjab style” of John and Henry Lawrence, “whose success within the ‘non-regulation’ province of the Punjab during the 1840s inspired Anglo-Indians of the 1880s, including Kipling, to yearn for a rejection of the administrative style of impersonal, centralized governance dominant at the time in British India” (27-28).

⁴⁶ For more on the production history of Huston’s *TMWBK*, see McBride and Voeltz. On how *TMWBK* fits into Huston’s long career as an actor and director in Hollywood, see Long ii-xiii.

⁴⁷ For more thorough accounts of American narrative films about the Vietnam War produced during this period, see Adair, Anderegg, Muse, and Dittmar and Michaud.

⁴⁸ Jeffords writes that the Vietnam War regenerated “the concepts, constructions, and definitions of masculinity in American culture” and restabilized a gender system built on male authority and power (55). She reads the *Rambo* cycle in particular as exemplifying Hollywood’s portrayal of the post-Vietnam triumph of heteronormative masculinity. Boyle, however, suggests that the war produced the opposite effect on discourses of American masculinity. She writes that post-Vietnam Hollywood films “pluralized” masculinity and showed that “gender is performative, amorphous, and historically contingent,” as well as bisected by race, sexuality, and disability (1).

⁴⁹ See, for example, Martell, Morgan and Rode, Meadowsong, and Valdez Moses.

⁵⁰ In Hardy’s Wessex novels, even the oldest examples of the natural world are somehow compromised by human touch. As Megan Ward argues in her recent essay on *The Woodlanders*, nature for Hardy is always already cultivated. See Ward 865-882.

⁵¹ Comparing Angel’s valuation of Tess to an investor’s valuation of property is especially apt considering *Trishna*’s transformation of the novel’s male protagonists into Jay Singh, who obviously equates his investment in Tess with his real estate investments.

⁵² My understanding of the “missed opportunity” owes much to Galperin, who writes that the concept provides an alternative history to that which “happens” in the plots of Jane Austen’s novels, and thus retains the narrative possibilities that plot leaves out (“Describing What Never Happened” 355-56). On Hardy’s mixing of recorded and unrecorded histories in the Wessex novels, see Gattrell.

⁵³ On inclusion as a modern sensibility that arises in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, see Morris.

⁵⁴ The film's Mumbai sequence can be read as a cinematic expression of Angel's and Tess's idyllic time at Talbothays Dairy, as well as their prolonged stop at Bramshurst Court (the "desirable Mansion to be Let Furnished" (Hardy 409), where, at the end of the novel, the lovers delay their escape from the police to savor the fantasy of living together as a married couple. I am grateful to one of my anonymous readers at *Genre* for pointing out the connection between the Mumbai sequence and Talbothays.

⁵⁵ Urry and Larsen define the "tourist gaze" as a "socially organised and systematised" way of seeing difference in people and places separate from one's everyday experience (2-4). The tourist gaze is constructed through signs, the meaning of which are determined through "frames" (2) of history, culture, race, gender, and class. Tourism—as I, too, emphasize here—is a collective discourse, a viewing position with a "mass character," as opposed to "travel," which has an "individual character" (4).

⁵⁶ Urry and Larsen write that the tourist gaze is "often visually objectified or captured through photographs, postcards, films, models and so on. These enable the gaze to be reproduced, recaptured and redistributed over time and across space" (4). In my reading, the film objectifies an already objectified idea of India originally associated with the guidebook and the postcard.

⁵⁷ Buzard traces this phenomenon back to the period after the Napoleonic Wars, in which anti-tourism evolved into a symbolic economy in which travelers and writers displayed marks of originality and 'authenticity' in an attempt to win credit for acculturation; and visited places were perceived as parts of a market-place of cultural goods, each location chiefly of interest for the demonstrably appropriable tokens of authenticity it afforded. . . . Correspondingly, the authentic 'culture' of *places—the genius loci*—was represented as lurking in secret precincts 'off the beaten track' where it could be discovered only by the sensitive 'traveller,' not the vulgar tourist (6).

⁵⁸ My use of the term "polite tourist" draws from Tinniswood, who describes visitors to the country houses of polite society as "polite tourists" that were, ironically, more often impolite than courteous to the owners of the properties they visited. Accompanying the increase in polite tourism in England in the late eighteenth century were incidences of vandalism and theft, as well as general perturbation on the part of country house owners whose private lives were constantly intruded upon by what Horace Walpole called the tourist "plague." See Tinniswood 91-99.

⁵⁹ Trinh T. Minh-ha writes:

The fact that the loudest claims to representative truth and information have been voiced and legitimized through the documentary form does not mean that in order to bring about change, one has to banish it and adopt other, more adequate, forms. When handled creatively, repetition is a way of affirming difference. Rather than using it routinely to reproduce the same, one can use it, to continue saying what

one has said, to shift a center, to lighten the burden of representation, to displace a form from its settled location, and to create new passages through the coexistence of moments.” (*Cinema Interval* 23)

WORKS CITED

- Adair, Gilbert. *Vietnam on Film: From The Green Berets to Apocalypse Now*. New York: Proteus Books, 1981.
- Aisha*. Dir. Rajshree Ojha. Perf. Sonam Kapoor, Abhay Deol, Amrita Puri. PVR Pictures Home Entertainment, 2010. DVD.
- Almond, Ian. "Lessons from Kipling and Rao: How to Re-Appropriate Another Culture." *Orbis Litterarum: International Review of Literary Studies* 57.4 (2002): 275-287.
- Anderegg, Michael, ed. *Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television*. Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1990.
- Armstrong, Douglas V. and Kenneth G. Kelly. "Settlement Patterns and the Origins of African Jamaican Society: Seville Plantation, St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica." *Ethnohistory* 47.2 (2000): 369-397.
- Austen, Jane. *Emma*. 1815. New York: Oxford UP, 2008.
- . *Mansfield Park*. 1814. New York: Penguin, 2003.
- Banerjee, Bidisha. The Native as '(An)other' Self: Colonial Anxiety in Rudyard Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King." *Kipling Journal* 85 (2011): 7-20.
- Bascom, Tim. "Secret Imperialism: The Reader's Response to the Narrator in 'The Man Who Would Be King.'" *English Literature in Transition* 31.2 (1998): 162-173.
- Beckerman, Jim. "On Adapting 'The Most Audacious Thing in Fiction.'" *The English Novel and the Movies*. Eds. Michael Klein and Gillian Parker. New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co, 1981. 180-186.
- Beer, Gillian. "Hardy: the After-Life and the Life Before." *Thomas Hardy: Texts and Contexts*. Ed. Phillip Mallett. New York: Palgrave, 2002. 18-30.

- Berman, Carolyn Vellenga. *Creole Crossings: Domestic Fiction and the Reform of Colonial Slavery*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 2006.
- Bhattacharya Mehta, Rini and Rajeshwari V. Pandharipande, eds. *Bollywood and Globalization: Indian Popular Cinema, Nation, and Diaspora*. London: Anthem Press, 2011.
- Bishop, Kyle William. *American Zombie Gothic: The Rise and Fall (And Rise) of the Walking Dead in Popular Culture*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2010.
- Booth, Howard J. *The Cambridge Companion to Rudyard Kipling*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011.
- Boulukos, George E. "The Politics of Silence: *Mansfield Park* and the Amelioration of Slavery." *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 39.3 (2006): 361-83.
- Bourne Taylor, Jenny and Sally Shuttleworth, eds. *Embodied Selves: Anthology of Psychological Texts, 1830-1890*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.
- Boyle, Brenda M. *Masculinity in Vietnam War Narratives: A Critical Study of Fiction, Films and Nonfiction Writings*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., 2009.
- Brass, Paul R. *The Politics of India since Independence*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994.
- Brebach, Raymond. "Conrad in Context: *Heart of Darkness* and 'The Man who would be King.'" *Conradiana* 42.1-2 (2010): 75-80.
- Bride and Prejudice*. Dir. Gurinder Chadha. Perf. Aishwarya Rai, Martin Henderson, Daniel Gillies, Anupam Kher. Buena Vista Home Entertainment, 2005. DVD.
- Briggs, Asa. *The Age of Improvement: 1783-1867*. 2nd ed. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2000.
- Brontë, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*. 1847. New York: Oxford, 2008.
- Burnes, Alexander. *Travels in Bokhara, Together with a Narrative of A Voyage on the Indus*. 1834. Vols 1-3. Karachi: Oxford UP, 1973.
- Buzard, James. *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature, and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993.
- Cardwell, Sarah. *Adaptation Revisited: Television and the Classic Novel*. Manchester, UK: Manchester UP, 2002.
- Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan. "Introduction – Literature on screen: a synoptic view." Cartmell and Whelehan 1-12.
- Cartmell, Deborah and Imelda Whelehan, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Literature on Screen*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007.

- Certeau, Michel de. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.
- Chan, Mary. "Mansfield Park as Greenhouse: 'The Effect of Education' in *Mansfield Park*." *Persuasions On-line* 27.1 (2006): n. pag. Web. 5 Feb 2014.
- Chapman, James and Nicholas J. Cull. *Projecting Empire: Imperialism and Popular Cinema*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2009.
- Chong, Sylvia Shin Huey. *The Oriental Obscene: Violence and Racial Fantasies in the Vietnam Era*. Durham, NC: Duke UP, 2012.
- Clingman, Stephen. *The Grammar of Identity: Transnational Fiction and the Nature of the Boundary*. Oxford: Oxford UP 2009.
- Clueless*. Dir. Amy Heckerling. Perf. Alicia Silverstone, Stacey Dash, Brittany Murphy, Paul Rudd. Paramount, 1999. DVD.
- Codell, Julie. "The Ideological Adventure of *The Man Who Would Be King*." *John Huston: Essays on a Restless Director*. Eds. Tony Tracy and Roddy Fynn. Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2010. 33-46.
- Coming Home*. 1978. Dir. Hal Ashby. Perf. Bruce Dern, Jane Fonda, Jon Voight. Metro Goldwyn Mayer, 2004. DVD.
- Danvers, Frederick Charles, Monier Monier-Williams, Steuart Colvin Bayley, Percy Wigram, Brand Sapte, and Many Contributors. *Memorials of Old Haileybury College*. Westminster: Archibald Constable and Company, 1894.
- Dayan, Joan. *Haiti, History, and the Gods*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Deer Hunter, The*. 1978. Dir. Michael Cimino. Perf. Robert De Niro, Meryl Streep, Christopher Walken. Universal Pictures, 1998. DVD.
- DeLong, J. Bradford. "India since Independence: An Analytic Growth Narrative." *Rodrik* 184-204.
- Dirks, Nicholas B. *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, Harvard UP, 2006.
- Dittmar, Linda, and Gene Michaud, eds. *From Hanoi to Hollywood: The Vietnam War in American Film*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1990.
- Draudt, Manfred. "Reality or Delusion? Narrative Technique and Meaning in Kipling's *The Man Who Would Be King*." *English Studies* 4 (1984): 316-326.
- Duckworth, Alistair M. *The Improvement of the Estate: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971.

- Elphinstone, Mountstuart. *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul and its Dependencies in Persia, Tartary, and India*. 1815. Graz, Austria: Akademische Druck – u. Verlagsanstalt, 1969.
- Ewans, Martin. *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics*. New York: Perennial, HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.
- Flynn, Suzanne J. 2010. “Hardy in (a Time of) Transition.” *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Rosemarie Morgan. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited. 87-100.
- Foster, Gwendolyn Audrey. “The Corruption of the Family and the Disease of Whiteness in *I Walked with a Zombie*.” *A Family Affair: Cinema Calls Home*. Ed. Murray Pomerance. London: Wallflower Press, 2008. 149-160.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. 1975. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage, 1979.
- . “Space, Knowledge, and Power.” *The Foucault Reader*. Ed. Paul Rabinow. New York: Pantheon Books, 1984. 239-256.
- Fowler, Corinne. *Chasing Tales: Travel Writing, Journalism and the History of British Ideas about Afghanistan*. Studia Imagologica, Amsterdam Studies on Cultural Identity. Amsterdam: Rodopi: 2007.
- François, Anne-Lise. *Open Secrets: The Literature of Uncounted Experience*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. 2008.
- Franklin, H. Bruce. *Vietnam and Other American Fantasies*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000.
- Fussell, Paul. “Irony, Freemasonry, and Humane Ethics in Kipling’s ‘The Man Who Would Be King’” *ELH* 25.3 (1958): 216-33.
- Galperin, William. “Adapting Jane Austen: The Surprising Fidelity of *Clueless*.” *Wordsworth Circle* 42.3 (2011): 187-193.
- . “Describing What Never Happened: Jane Austen and the History of Missed Opportunities.” *ELH* 73 (2006): 355-82.
- . *The Historical Austen*. 2003. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005.
- Gandhi, Mohandas K. *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*. Madras: G.A. Nateson and Co., 1921.
- Gatrell, Simon. *Hardy’s Vision of Wessex*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2003.
- Gelder, Ken. “Postcolonial Voodoo.” *Postcolonial Studies*. 3.1 (2000): 89-98.
- Ghate, Chetan, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of the Indian Economy*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012.

- Ghate, Chetan. "Introduction." Ghate 1-29.
- Gilbert, Sandra M. and Susan Gubar. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1979.
- Giovannetti, Jorge. "Grounds of Race: Slavery, Racism and the Plantation in the Caribbean." *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 1.1 (2006): 5-36.
- Gokulsing, K. Moti and Wimal Dissanayake. *From Aan to Lagaan and Beyond: A Guide to the Study of Indian Cinema*. Staffordshire, UK: Trentham Books, 2012.
- Green Berets, The*. 1968. Dir. Ray Kellogg and John Wayne. Perf. John Wayne, David Janssen, Jim Hutton, Aldo Ray. Warner Home Video, 2007. DVD.
- Hagerman, Christopher. "In the footsteps of the 'Macedonian Conqueror': Alexander the Great and British India." *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 16.3-4 (2009): 344-392.
- Hall, Stuart. "Whose heritage? Un-settling 'the heritage', re-imagining the post-nation." *The Politics of Heritage: The Legacies of "Race."* Ed. Jo Littler and Roshi Naidoo. London: Routledge, 2005. 23-35.
- Hardy, Thomas. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented*. 1891. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Citations refer to the Oxford edition.
- Harkin, Maureen. "Matthew Lewis's *Journal of a West India Proprietor*: Surveillance and Space on the Plantation." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 24.2 (2002): 139-150.
- Harland-Jacobs, Jessica L. *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Harvey, David. *Spaces of Global Capitalism: Towards a Theory of Uneven Geographical Development*. London: Verso, 2006.
- Hellman, John. *American Myth and the Legacy of Vietnam*. New York: Columbia UP, 1986.
- Hjort, Mette. *Small Nation, Global Cinema: The New Danish Cinema*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005.
- Holt, Frank L. *Into the Land of Bones: Alexander the Great in Afghanistan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Hurston, Zora Neale. *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica*. 1938. New York : Harper Perennial, 2009.
- I Walked with a Zombie*. 1943. Dir. Jacques Tourneur. Prod. Val Lewton. Perf. Frances Dee, Tom Conway, James Ellison, Edith Barrett, Darby Jones, Christine Gordon. Turner Entertainment Co. and Warner Bros. Entertainment, 2005. DVD.

- James, C. L. R. *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. 1938. New York: Vintage Books, 1963.
- Jeffords, Susan. *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1989.
- Jones, Seth G. *In the Graveyard of Empires: America's War in Afghanistan*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2010.
- Jordan, Elaine. "Jane Austen Goes to the Seaside: *Sanditon*, English Identity and the 'West Indian' Schoolgirl." *Park and Sunder Rajan* 29-55.
- Joseph, Nigel. "Robert Clive and Imperial Modernity." *Comparative Literature and Culture* 12.2 (2010): 1-8. <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol12/iss2/2>. Web.
- Joshi, Priya. *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India*. New York: Columbia UP, 2002.
- Joyce, Simon. *The Victorians in the Rearview Mirror*. Columbus: Ohio UP, 2007.
- Karnow, Stanley. *Vietnam: A History*. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.
- Kickel, Katherine. "General Tilney's Timely Approach to the Improvement of the Estate in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 63.2 (2008): 145-169.
- Kipling, Rudyard. "The Man Who Would Be King." 1888. *The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories*. Ed. Louis Cornell. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. 244-279.
- Koepnick, Lutz. "'Amerika gibt's überhaupt nicht': Notes on the German Heritage Film." *German Pop Culture: How "American" Is It?* Ed. Agnes C. Mueller. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004. 191-208.
- Kordas, Ann. "New South, New Immigrants, New Women, New Zombies: The Historical Development of the Zombie in American Popular Culture." *Moreman and Rushton* 15-30.
- Kreitzer, Larry J. "'The Son of God Goes Forth to War': Biblical Imagery in Rudyard Kipling's 'The Man Who Would Be King.'" *Borders, Boundaries and the Bible*. Ed. Martin O'Kane. New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002. 99-125.
- Kucich, John. *Imperial Masochism: British Fiction, Fantasy, and Social Class*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2007.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. 1974. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 1991.
- . *State, Space, World: Selected Essays*. Ed. Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, trans. Gerald Moore, Neil Brenner, and Stuart Elden. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2009.

- Long, Robert Emmet, ed. *John Huston: Interviews*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001.
- Man Who Would Be King, The*. 1975. Dir. John Huston. Perf. Sean Connery, Michael Caine, Christopher Plummer, Shakira Caine. Warner Home Video, 1997. DVD.
- Martell, Jessica. "The Dorset Dairy, the Pastoral, and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 68.1 (2013): 64-89.
- Marx, Edward. "How We Lost Kafiristan." *Representations* 67 (1999): 44-66.
- McBratney, John. "India and Empire." Booth 23-36.
- McBride, Joseph. "John Huston Finds That the Slow Generation of *King* Has Made It a Richer Film." Long 56-59.
- McClintock, Anne. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Conquest*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- McFarlane, Brian. *Novel to Film: An Introduction to the Theory of Adaptation*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996.
- . "The Novel and the Rise of Film and Video: Adaptation and British Cinema." Shaffer 194-209.
- . "Reading film and literature." Cartmell and Whelehan 15-28.
- Meadowsong, Zena. "Thomas Hardy and the Machine: The Mechanical Deformation of Narrative Realism in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*." *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 64.2 (2009): 225-48.
- Mee, Jon. "Austen's Treacherous Ivory: Female Patriotism, Domestic Ideology, and Empire." Park and Sunder Rajan 74-92.
- Memmi, Albert. *Decolonization and the Decolonized*. 2004. Trans. Robert Bononno. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
- Meyers, Jeffrey. "The Idea of Moral Authority in *The Man Who Would Be King*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 8.4 (1968): 711-723.
- Mill, James. *The History of British India*. 1817. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.
- Mill, John Stuart. *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*. Ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963-1991. 33 vols.
- . *Considerations on Representative Government. The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XIX – Essays on Politics and Society Part II*. Ed. John M. Robson. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977. 371-613.

- . *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, XXX – Writings on India*. Ed. John M. Robson, Martin Moir, and Zawahir Moir. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1990.
- Minh-Ha, Trinh T. *Cinema Interval*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- . *Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989.
- Mitchell, Timothy. *Colonising Egypt*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1991.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses." *Boundary 2: A Journal of Postmodern Literature and Culture* 12.3 (1984): 333-58.
- Mohapatra, Himansu S. and Jatindra K. Nayak. "Farewell to Jane Austen: Uses of Realism in Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*." Park and Sunder Rajan 189-204.
- Moir, Martin. "Introduction." *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, XXX – Writings on India*. Ed. John M. Robson, Martin Moir, and Zawahir Moir. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1990.
- Moore, Robin J. "Imperial India, 1858-1914." Porter 422-446.
- Moreman, Christopher M. and Cory James Rushton, eds. *Race, Oppression and the Zombie: Essays on Cross-Cultural Appropriations of the Caribbean Tradition*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2011.
- Morgan, Rosemarie with Scott Rode. "The Evolution of Wessex." *The Ashgate Research Companion to Thomas Hardy*. Ed. Rosemarie Morgan. Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2010. 157-77.
- Moses, Michael Valdez. "Hardy: The Archaeology of a Vanishing Life." *The Novel and the Globalization of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995. 30-31.
- Muse, Eben J. *The Land of Nam: The Vietnam War in American Film*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1995.
- Nagai, Kaori. *Empire of Analogies: Kipling, India and Ireland*. Cork, Ireland: Cork UP, 2006.
- . "God and His Doubles: Kipling and Conrad's 'The Man who would be King.'" *Critical Survey* 21.2 (2009): 88-102.
- Natarajan, Nalini. "Reluctant Janeites: Daughterly Value in Jane Austen and Sarat Chandra Chatterjee's *Swami*." Park and Sunder Rajan 141-162.
- Nemerov, Alexander. *Icons of Grief: Val Lewton's Home Front Pictures*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. Oscherwitz, Dayna. *Past Forward: French Cinema and the Post-Colonial Heritage*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 2010.

- Ohm Clement, Christopher. "Settlement Patterning on the British Caribbean Island of Tobago." *Historical Archaeology* 31.2 (1997): 93-106.
- Park, You-Me. "Father's Daughters: Critical Realism Examines Patriarchy in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Pak Wansö's *A Faltering Afternoon* [Hwichöngkörinūn Ohu]." Park and Sunder Rajan 205-217.
- Park, You-me and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan. *The Postcolonial Jane Austen*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Parker, Jason C. *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962*. New York: Oxford UP, 2008.
- Parkinson, David. *100 Ideas that Changed Film*. London: Laurence King Publishing, 2012.
- Peters, Laura. *Dickens and Race*. Manchester UP, 2013.
- Poovey, Mary. "The Anathematised Race: The Governess and Jane Eyre." *Jane Eyre*. Ed. Heather Glen. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.
- Porter, Andrew, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. 3: The Nineteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*. London: Routledge, 1992.
- Price, Richard. "Introduction: Maroons and Their Communities." *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*. 2nd ed. Ed. Richard Price. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996. 1-30.
- Quaintance, Richard. "Humphry Repton, 'any Mr. Repton,' and the 'Improvement' Metonym in *Mansfield Park*." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 27 (1998): 365-384.
- Rabel, Robert J. "The Imitation of Alexander the Great in Afghanistan." *Helios* 34.1 (2007): 97-119.
- Rajan, Rajeswari Sunder. "Austen in the World: Postcolonial Mappings." Park and Sunder Rajan 3-26.
- Rich, Paul. "*Kim* and the Magic House: Freemasonry and Kipling." *Secret Texts: The Literature of Secret Societies*. Ed. Marie Mulvey Roberts and Hugh Ormsby-Lennon. New York: AMS Press, 1995. 322-338.
- Rist, Gilbert. *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*. 2nd ed. Trans. Patrick Camiller. New York: Zed Books, 2002.
- Rodrik, Dani, ed. *In Search of Prosperity: Analytic Narratives on Economic Growth*. Princeton UP, 2003.
- Rooney, Caroline, and Kaori Nagai. *Kipling and Beyond: Patriotism, Globalisation and Postcolonialism*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

- Roy, Tirthankar. "India and the World Economy, 1757-1947." Ghate 33-55.
- Rushton, Cory James and Christopher M. Moreman. "Introduction: Race, Colonialism, and the Evolution of the 'Zombie.'" Moreman and Rushton 1-15.
- Sadoff, Dianne F. *Victorian Vogue: British Novels on Screen*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. 1993. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.
- . *The World, the Text, and the Critic*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1983.
- . "Yeats and Decolonization." *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*. Ed. Terry Eagleton, Fredric Jameson, Edward W. Said. Minneapolis, University of Minneapolis Press, 1990. 69-95.
- Scott, James C. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1998.
- Shaffer, Brian W., ed. *A Companion to the British and Irish Novel, 1945-2000*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Shippey, Thomas A. and Michael Short. "Framing and Distancing in Kipling's 'The Man Who Would Be King.'" *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 2.2 (1972): 75-87.
- Smith, Neil. *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991.
- Sontag, Susan. "The Aesthetics of Silence." *Styles of Radical Will*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969. 3-35.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988. 271-313.
- Stam, Robert. *Literature through Film: Realism, Magic, and the Art of Adaptation*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.
- Steinbach, Susie L. *Understanding the Victorians: Politics, Culture and Society in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Stocking, George W. *Victorian Anthropology*. New York: The Free Press, 1987.
- Stoddard, Eve Walsh. *Positioning Gender and Race in (Post)Colonial Plantation Space: Connecting Ireland and the Caribbean*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Stokes, Eric. *English Utilitarians and India*. 1959. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1982.
- Sullivan, Zohreh T. *Narratives of Empire: The Fictions of Rudyard Kipling*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993.

- Thomas, Sue. *Imperialism, Reform, and the Making of Englishness in Jane Eyre*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Tinniswood, Adrian. *The Polite Tourist: Four Centuries of Country House Visiting*. London: National Trust, 1998.
- Trishna*. Dir. Michael Winterbottom. Perf. Freida Pinto, Anurag Kashyap, Riz Ahmed and Kalki Koechlin. London: Revolution Films, 2011. Film.
- . Dir. Michael Winterbottom. Perf. Freida Pinto, Anurag Kashyap, Riz Ahmed and Kalki Koechlin. London: Artificial Eye, 2012. DVD.
- Troost, Linda. "The Nineteenth-Century Novel on Film: Jane Austen." Cartmell and Whelehan 75-89.
- Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977.
- . *Landscapes of Fear*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979.
- Tuite, Clara. "Domestic Retrenchment and Imperial Expansion: the Property Plots of *Mansfield Park*." Park and Sunder Rajan 93-115.
- Urry, John and Jonas Larsen. *The Tourist Gaze 3.0*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2011.
- Viswanathan, Gauri. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. New York: Columbia UP, 1989.
- Voeltz, Richard A. "John Huston, Sean Connery, Michael Caine, and the Epiphany of *The Man Who Would Be King*." *McNeese Review* (2002): 40-50.
- Wald, Gayle. "*Clueless* in the Neo-colonial World Order." Park and Sunder Rajan 218-234.
- Ward, Megan. "The Woodlanders and the Cultivation of Realism." *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 51.4 (2011): 865-882.
- Washbrook, D. A. "India, 1818-1860: The Two Faces of Colonialism." Porter 395-421.
- Watson, Tim. "Improvements and Reparations at Mansfield Park." *Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*. Eds. Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005. 53-70.
- White Zombie*. 1932. Dir. Victor Halperin. Perf. Bela Lugosi, Madge Bellamy, Joseph Cawthorn. Netflix.com. Accessed 9 May 2014.
- Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. New York: Oxford UP, 1973.
- Winborn, Colin. *The Literary Economy of Jane Austen and George Crabbe*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2004.

Young, Robert J. C. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001.