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THE MUSLIM WHO WASN'T THERE: ORIENTALISMS IN COLLINS' *THE MOONSTONE*, HESSE'S *SIDDHARTHA*, AND TAGORE'S *THE HOME AND THE WORLD*

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Abstract

In this article I look at three distinct novels to be able to see different types of Orientalisms and how they function in a complex network of seemingly unconnected cultures and works: one British text, Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*; one German, Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*; and finally one Bengali example, Tagore's *The Home and the World*. I choose these texts as sampling three different cultural contexts: the heydays of the Victorian novel, the context of German Orientalist scholarship, and one "insider" from the South Asian continent. I interpret Collins's text, as a novel of Orientalism proper; Hesse's text of spiritual quest as situated in the backdrop of German Orientalist scholarship; and Tagore's text as an indicator of an intellectual culture that is highly influenced by Western values and historiography, thus coming close to the colonizer's gaze.

Keywords: Postcolonial Studies, Orientalism, Novel, Misrepresentation, East-West Discourse, World Literature.

Introduction

If the most obvious aspect of Orientalism is a totalization of a multiplicity of cultures and religions in the Middle East (a term itself being a result of this feature¹), then that of writings about this discourse would be the totalization of Orientalism itself. It is true that Said, in his seminal work, especially in the updated editions supported with forewords on the issue, differentiates between Euro-British Orientalism and the American version². Although he also points out to nuances between the experiences of the British and of the French, he is more invested in finding the common aspects of the discourse created by the colonizers about the colonized. As such, Said's work limits the European imagination to the context of the British and the French and excludes other European countries from his analysis. This is not to say that his pathbreaking book is flawed or reductive; I am far from making such an argument. *Orientalism* shouldn't be conceived as a dictionary of this discourse, which is all-inclusive; even an encyclopedia of a dozen volumes wouldn't suffice for that kind of enterprise. Moreover, he himself explains in detail in the introduction why he is choosing the texts he is doing and why he has to exclude many others. However, all the same, understanding these limitations behind Orientalism demonstrates the need to look at different contexts from different times and cultures.

Thus, to be able to see different types of Orientalisms and how it functions in a complex network of seemingly unconnected cultures and works, within the limits of this article, I will look at one British text, one German, and finally one Indian example (Bengali, to be more precise): Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone*, Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha*, and Tagore's *The Home and the World*, one work from the heydays of the Victorian novel, one from the context of German Orientalist scholarship, and one "insider" from the South Asian continent itself. I will most naturally focus on India as Said also points out, "Orientalism derives from a particular closeness experienced between Britain and France and the Orient, which until the early nineteenth century had really meant only India and the Bible lands" (2003a: 4).

I will not try to refute the Orientalist discourse as put forward by Said, but will argue that different cultures and contexts create quite different approaches to this commonly-held discourse. The main reason why I choose these specific texts lies in their ambiguous nature, and somewhat misleading surfaces, although each one has its own peculiar qualities. As we will see in myriad instances, these texts are not the first examples which come to mind when one wants to make an Orientalist reading; if anything, they are sometimes hailed as

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¹ One of the most recurrent countries in the Orientalist discourse is India, which is South Asian, and it is sometimes not considered to be in the Middle East.

² In the Preface to the twenty fifth anniversary edition of the text, Said reevaluates his analysis especially in the context of the Iraq War.

instances which disprove Orientalist tendencies with their liberatory and “against the grain” textual potentials and practices. I will argue otherwise.

The Moonstone: the Mystical Indians

Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* (1868) opens with a historical background of the diamond which gives its name to the title of the novel. In the eleventh century of the Christian era, “the Mohammedan conqueror, Mahmoud of Ghizni, crossed India; seized on the holy city of Somnauth; and stripped of its treasures the famous temple, which had stood for centuries—the shrine of Hindoo pilgrimage, and the wonder of the eastern world” (*sic.* 4). As such, at the heart of the tragedies of the gem lies a so-called most barbaric Muslim conqueror. This emphasis on the destroying nature of the Muslims is ubiquitous in the opening chapters. “[T]he rapacity of the conquering Mohammedans,” is only equaled by the “havoc and rapine,” “slaughter,” and the ultimate destruction of the Moguls in the following centuries (2001: 4). From the beginning of the novel, Collins's novel establishes “the Muslim rulers as the original usurpers of the diamond from a Brahmin-India” (Manavalli, 208: 77). The diamond, however, keeps moving from “one lawless Mohammedan hand to another;” from one Muslim Sultan to the next, ultimately ending up as “an ornament in the handle of a dagger” of one of these Sultans (Collins, 2001: 5). In these centuries old adventures of the diamond, the three Brahmins and their successors always keep an eye on their precious diamond; even if they do not possess it, they guard it with extreme determination. In the narration of these introductory paragraphs, if Muslims are thus cast as the “ultimate outsider,” then Brahmins are narrated as the “ultimate host,” a practice which reinforces and reifies the class structure of the Indian peninsula. As Manavalli suggests, the caste system as a definitive of social and religious identity in India foregrounds Brahmin supremacy in this system, “while simultaneously casting the Muslim as an outsider to this ‘homogenized’ Hindu-Indian tradition” (2008: 69).

This opening focus with an emphasis on the role of the “Mohammedans” serves myriad purposes in the text. We should first of all note that the term “Mohammedan” is a Christian nomenclature for the religion of Islam, which neither Muslims nor Hindus, nor Brahmins use in their discourse (including everyday speech and their *own* historical texts [excluding those written by the colonizers *for* them]). The followers of Islam are either called simply as “Muslims,” or “Mussulmans,” (the second one is occasionally visible in texts dating from the sixteenth century onwards in the Christian discourse). The use of “Mohammedan” is quite old, dating back to the Medieval Ages, when Christians tried to understand Mohammad (pbuh.), the prophet of Islam, with comparison to Jesus Christ, which Christians worship as a deity hence resulting in the term “Christianity.” As Christians tried to see Mohammad as an impostor trying to replace their own religion, some of them consciously, others by mistake assumed Mohammad to have claimed to be a deity, as well, which he did not, at all. On the contrary, the “*tawhid*” belief in Islam that there is only one God (Allah in Arabic) and “He begets not, nor is He begotten” (Al-Qur’an 112:1-4) is the first and foremost notion for all Muslims. As Muslims accept Mohammad as a human being as much as they do Jesus Christ as a human prophet, the naming of “Mohammedans” is quite misleading; as he is not worshipped, at all. However, in this discourse, what is important is that the text’s point of view is distinctively Christian as can be seen in this instance. The history of India is not history *per se*, but thus the *historiography* of the Eurocentric sources, which has its own political agendas in the making. This is to say that although the writer puts India in the heart of his novel, the real epicenter is still distinctively British and colonial; although the margin seems to be foregrounded, it is still a European identity which shapes the Indian discourse.

This brings us to the second important aspect of the clash between the so-called rapacious Mohammedans and the ever-watching, sublime Hindu-Brahmins. According to this specific history, the Muslim always emerges as a threat to the Indian peninsula. They always come to destroy and damage, and ultimately overwrite the Hindu culture. This can be interpreted in two interrelated ways. The British discourse can be said to be attempting to demonize the Islamic culture, by depicting them as an outsider to the region, thus reinforcing the stereotypical “barbaric Muslim” and secondly, by doing so, they vindicate and rationalize the colonization process; the British come out as the saviors of the Indian culture at its best, and as stabilizers in the region at its worst. Needless to say, this is also the cornerstone quality of the “divide and rule” policy of the colonizers. Maybe we should here also note that Mahmud of Ghazni, mentioned in the text, is cited both in Western and Eastern sources, as a Muslim ruler who brought wealth and welfare to the larger Middle East, including India. Within the limits of this article, it should suffice to add that his tolerance of his Hindu subjects is a recurrent theme in the chronics of the time; his most respected generals were Hindus, an issue which led some to argue that he might have been a Hindu himself (Holt and Lewis, 1971: 3-4). As for the Mongol invasion, although the historiography in the text at this point might bear some factual grounds, it doesn’t change the fact

that the text has far-reaching generalizations about the Eastern empires; they are always barbaric, and they always come to destroy.

All these instances prepare the reader for what is to come in the next pages, the storming of Seringapatam by the British. Here it can be argued that the British are no less destructive than the Eastern empires, which does indicate an anti-colonialist perspective on the part of the writer. If Collins is overgeneralizing and totalizing the Eastern Empires as destructive, then he is not excluding the Western powers from the same framework. However, although a superficial reading can prove this to be case, a closer analysis shows that the British assault on the city is depicted with quite important nuances. It is not that the British are inherently barbaric; on the contrary, it is "Herncastle's unlucky temper," which "got the better of him" (Collins, 2001: 5). General Baird "finds" the body of Tippo "already dead." The general is quick to send a party "to prevent the plunder and confusion" (2001: 6). It is ultimately Herncastle and the narrator himself who "met to enforce the laws of discipline" on the soldiers. It is true that "There was riot and confusion" but "no violence" (2001: 6). It was more like a friendly gathering; "All sorts of rough jests and catchwords were bandied about among them" (2001: 6). When ultimately Herncastle kills the Indian while trying to get hold of the moonstone, it is quite telling that he does this with a dagger in his hand (as opposed to a British-made gun). Once again, it is the Oriental curse, which makes Herncastle the villain he turns into. If anything, it is the dagger, which is guilty (!) All these details make the previous Eastern invaders seem much more starkly barbaric than the British who seem to be "caught up" in a moment of riot.

Another interesting aspect of these opening remarks is their unquestioning submission to the dominant Orientalist discourse with respect to the diamond itself. One of the defining characteristics of the Orient is always pictured as its endless bounty and treasure, a world of priceless stones, magnificent palaces, and sparkling daggers, so inviting and irresistible to the Western gaze. This obsession with material beauty and bounty in the text can be interpreted as a most subconscious desire to possess and rule the area. This orientalization is also interestingly visible in the name of the stone, the Moon is always held sacred in the Islamic imagination; thus the crescent being the ubiquitous symbol of the Muslims. Muslim calendar is also defined by the lunar cycles. All these instances can only point out to the reduction of the so-called Oriental cultures to a monolithic block, which Muslims paradoxically and confusingly, create and destroy, appear and diminish.

The starting of the novel in India, which thus forms the background of the diamond ending up in a mansion in Britain also suggests that nothing but trouble emerges from these "cursed" lands. After all, it is not only the diamond which finds its way to England, but also the three guardians, the Hindu-Brahmins who follow the diamond wherever it goes. Thus are introduced the three prominent Oriental figures which have a significant role in the rest of the novel with respect to Orientalist characterizations. These Indians are first encountered by Penelope, the little daughter of Gabriel Betteredge, the house-steward. This first moment the Brahmins are seen in London serves as a crucial starting point which establishes the character of the Indians henceforth. The three guardians are carrying an English boy with them and one of them magically spells the boy somewhat by force. One of the Indians asks the boy to hold out his hand, the kid does so unwillingly, and with a bottle the Indian takes out from his bosom he pours some black stuff inside the palm of his hand, which thus turns the boy into a psychic figure. From this moment on the boy can answer questions one cannot logically know. Thus they learn from the boy that "the English gentleman" is on the way to the house and, yes, he has "it" (Collins, 2001: 21-23). These magical talents of the Indians come pages before the famously analytical and rational qualities of the Sergeant Cuff are demonstrated, which thus contrasts the mystical Indians with the detective English. It is true that the detective fails in the end which thus might be read as the success of the mystic India over the rational Britain. Ian Duncan is one such critic, who particularly reads this instance as "positive alterity of India, its victory over English police skill" and argues that it complicates the approaches to the novel. However, the victory here doesn't belong to the Indians, but the framework which positions Indians in an age-old discourse of ahistorical irrationality whereas aligning the British identity in a mathematical world; nothing about it should suggest positiveness in the depiction of India.

Other details of how the Brahmins are narrated in this instance demonstrate this point further. The way Indians talk to the English boy is interesting; by repeating certain sentences and phrases as if using a magical formula to reveal what the boy can answer. This is even more appealing when we bear in mind that they always "jabber and dispute in their own language" (2001: 21) from the house stewardess. As much as their language is alien to Ms. Betteredge, English sounds alien and quite weird in their mouth, too. One would expect a much more realistic description of Indians in a Victorian novel of high realism, but what we have here is a most stereotypical, almost caricature images; the threatening magicians, who are positioned as all things opposite to

the Western identity. The fact that it is Penelope, who first sees them brings to mind a most intentional attempt at picturing Indians in complete contrast to a most innocent figure, who confronts them. Moreover this also gives Ms. Betteredge the opportunity to question what her daughter describes, which even more reinforces a rational, questioning European identity, which is thus brought to a clash with the mystical and irrational East; in this respect, the position of Ms. Betteredge is replaced by Sergeant Cuff later on, and this exchange goes on in the rest of the novel.

The emphasis of the rational and logical workings of the European mind is not random. Among innumerable reasons, I believe that the main reason why Ms. Betteredge, the main narrator in the novel, cites time and again *Robinson Crusoe* as her Biblical text lies in this aspect. The first sentence of this narrator points out to an epigraph from the famous eighteenth century text: "Now I saw, though too late, the Folly of beginning of a Work before we count the Cost, and before we judge rightly of our own strength to go through with it" (Collins, 2001: 11). We should also add that Ms. Betteredge finds this quote "at page one hundred and twenty-nine," on the morning of "May twenty-first, Eighteen hundred and fifty." The point is this: more than half of the opening lines of the narrator is mentioning numbers in detail; spelled out in letters. Ms. Betteredge is a woman of reason; a rational human being, who counts and numbers, and calculates with precision. After all, is Robinson Crusoe, her favorite character, any different? Doesn't he first and foremost count the animals, the vegetables, the weight and number of his food supply, the number of days he spends on the island with minute details? However, once again, Indians confront this framework, and this time I agree with Duncan: "Stylized, spectral, confected from the tropes of Gothic romance, India represents an alternative symbolic economy that defies scientific detection and sympathetic reciprocity alike" (304). As such, India is beyond science; the detective fiction cannot solve that mystery.

The similarities between Ms. Betteredge and Robinson Crusoe are even more: Just like him, Ms. Betteredge is soon going to confront some primitive people; just like Crusoe's Friday, these people will be of dark skin, and just like Crusoe, Ms. Betteredge will use every possible logical process to make sense of the situation in front of him. Similarly, her mathematical qualities will prove futile to the irrational acts of the three Brahmins. The eighteenth century is the first time when England starts to be a major maritime power, which thus initiates her colonial enterprises overseas. As such, it has long been argued that Robinson Crusoe represents the European Puritan man who sails out to explore the world and tame the wildlife out there. That is how and why he tries to rule a "kingdom" on his own, with his own rules on a deserted island, which then turns out not be so deserted after all. But, it is *his* anyway, and the others can only be intruders who should submit to his own rule. Friday, is *his man* Friday who needs to learn his language; after all, he is the master, the other one is his ever-submissive voluntary slave. Yet, when one comes to the nineteenth century, the Britain is not only at the zenith of its maritime explorations and colonial possessions, but also this is time when the first instances of trouble start to emerge; the colonies begin to threaten the British dominance. That's why the Indians are now at the heart of England; and Ms. Betteredge, a future Crusoe, if you will, has to face the Indians not on a deserted island, but in a most British mansion of high aristocracy.

However, as Duncan states, this reversal of the typical colonial narrative "does not propound an anti-imperialist sympathy for oppressed colonial peoples, or admiration for a devilish Hindu culture (1994: 300). Yet, Ms. Betteredge and Sergeant Cuff are not the only characters whose rational capacities are challenged by the mysterious Brahmins. Mr. Franklin is as puzzled as his house maid, but at least he has some answers while he is trying to make sense of the situation with an attempt to come to a meaningful conclusion:

The idea of certain chosen servants of an old Hindoo superstition devoting themselves, through all difficulties and dangers, to watching the opportunity of recovering their sacred gem, appears to me to be perfectly consistent with everything that we know of the patience of Oriental races, and the influence of Oriental religions (Collins, 2001: 43).

Mr. Franklin's remarks are quite telling in terms of the British conceptualization of the East which can thus be summarized as : (1) The Hindus, once chosen for a proper mission, dedicate themselves to the service of that proper mission in total obedience. They do not question or criticize the mission, they just do it no matter what the consequences will be. They are inhumanly perfect. (2) The Hindus believe in superstitions and they are always ready for devoting themselves totally in service of these beliefs. (3) There are a myriad of countries in the East, which can be grouped as Oriental races, and they are all the same. (4) These Oriental races are inhumanly (or for that matter superhumanly) patient. And finally (5) all Oriental religions are more or less the same, and they are ruling the lives of these Oriental peoples.

And all of these are consistent with what Mr. Franklin knows about the Orient; that is his claim. What we can say, if there is much left to argue in the obvious stereotypical nature of the above passage, might be to clarify much more explicitly that the character's conceptualization of the East is an archetypical embodiment of all things Orientalist, or a manifesto on the differences between the West and the East, the former being always rational, logical, and humane, whereas the latter is mystique, ahistorical, and irrational. Here we should remember the quite interesting detail how immediately the differences between the Muslims and the Hindus, which form the main characteristic of the opening narrative, are eroded completely here; all Orientals are now the same. I am leaving it to the reader how to make sense of such inconsistent remarks and what it tells about the European discourse about the "Orient."

At the end of the novel, we get back to India, and once we are there, the differences are again foregrounded with the same underlying tone of conflict between these different cultures. Mr. Murthwaite, the spy who can pass for a native because of his dark skin and fluency in languages, writes in a letter, "the population is fanatically devoted to the old Hindoo religion—the ancient worship of Bramah and Vishu. The few Mohametan families, thinly scattered about the villages in the interior, are afraid to taste meat of any kind" (Collins, 2001: 479). He further adds that any Mohametan who dares do this act is put to death "without mercy." Once again, the Brahmins are the host, the Muslims outsiders. Thus, as Manavalli states, "Collins portrays his romanticized India as a predominantly 'Hindu-Brahmanical' society. His vision of India reveals the degree to which he draws from the current Orientalist ideologies which defined India [. . .] largely in terms of its Brahmanical traditions to the detriment, and hence silencing, of other ethnic and religious communities" (2008: 67). The circular framework of the novel becomes complete when Mr. Murthwaite mentions the city of Somnauth, "sacked, and destroyed, as long since as the eleventh century, by the Mahometan conqueror, Mahmoud of Ghizni" (Collins, 2001: 480). With the return of the diamond, India is once again the same as it was seven centuries ago; not only prehistoric and primitive, but also caged in an ahistorical context of conflict. Time does not move in India; history does not change. That is why I have difficulty reading this as a success for the Indians unlike Duncan: "The English failure to recover the Moonstone mirrors an Indian success. The Moonstone is not lost but restored" (1994: 302). The fact that the diamond is restored also points out to an interesting feature, a reversal of fact in fictional narrative; such precious gems and antique artifacts do not find their way back to their original countries, the rich museums in London and many other Western metropolises are their ultimate destinations.

Siddhartha: An Existentialist India

As seen, Collins' text is an example of typical Victorian Orientalism with its direct encounter with the colonial periphery. Thus the text provides the British imagination with the rationalization of the colonial enterprise, by reinforcing the binary between the West and the East, between the Londoner and the Oriental, the latter locked in an ahistorical cage. As Manavalli concludes, "Collins's novel portrays Indian society as religious and caste-ridden. In his text, India becomes fixed in a primordial past, one that is opposed to and distanced from European modernity" (2008: 72). However, how should we approach to texts which occur in countries which are still "European" but which didn't have a direct interaction with India, countries which did not have colonies in the Middle East or the South Asian peninsula, to be more precise? One such instance is the case of German Orientalism, and the analysis of Hermann Hesse's *Siddhartha* (1922) will give us some answers.

First of all, this kind of context one would expect a much more politically disinterested text, as the bifurcation of the East and the West is not going to serve any political consequences in the region on the part of the Germans. Said himself excludes the Germans in out of the Orientalist framework quite consciously: "Unlike the Americans, the French and the British--less so the Germans, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, and Swiss--have had a long tradition of [Orientalism]" (Said, 2003: 1). Moreover, such a positive, un-Orientalist attitude is indeed the case in the cultural perception of Hesse's unusually popular short novel, which is redeemed (in this popular imagination) as a powerful story of a young man, the son of a Brahmin, the emancipation of the individual, a coming of age narrative, a younger Robinson Crusoe who sets out to find his own way, an effective *bildungsroman*³.

Although the German novelist's text is all of these things, it also applies certain conscious strategies, which give in to the Orientalist textual practices, albeit in a totally different way. We should start with the subtitle, "An Indian Poem," which I will interpret as a contextual and structural framework that appeals to so-

³ See Ian Watt (2001), *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, U of California P.; Michael McKeon (2002), *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740*, Johns Hopkins UP, and Michael McKeon (2000), *Theory of the Novel: A Historical Approach*, Johns Hopkins UP, for more on the origins of the novel in the eighteenth century and the role of Robinson Crusoe in this context.

called the spiritual and mystical dominance in the East. Even if the text is prose, Hesse chooses to name its genre as poetry, and it is true that the text has poetic qualities, or at least it is as close to the novel as it is to poetry; one would have difficulty naming the genre of the text clearly as the novel with its ignorance of nineteenth and twentieth century realism. Yet, this structural positioning already locates the East in a poetic, thus emotional and spiritual context, rather than, let's say, an industrial Europe of harsh realities, the world of reason and logic. It is obvious that Hesse is looking for a different topography, one which he will be able to make far-reaching abstractions on the essential human characteristics. However, the cost of these abstractions will be, as we will see, an ahistorical India, once again. One point of consideration should be the distinction between high civilizations and the conception of prehistoric cultures. Duncan mentions this difference between high civilization and prehistoric culture while discussing Collins' text which conforms to familiar Orientalist fantasy. The same contrast is most true for Siddhartha, as well. What we have here is not a high civilization of India but a prehistoric culture, a fantasy, an arbitrary abstraction to create different possibilities and situations for the character, those unlike the writer's own culture, an imaginary topography, if you will, to write over. Said observes, "European culture gained its strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" (Said, 2003: 3).

Siddhartha is unhappy among the Brahmins, unhappy because, as his close friend and follower Govinda says, he would be "no ordinary Brahmin, no indolent pen pusher overseeing the sacrifices, no greedy hawker of incantations, no vain, shallow orator, no wicked, deceitful priest, and no foolish, good sheep among the herd of the multitude" (Hesse 4). What we witness here is a rejection of all things Brahmin. What might first be interpreted as the questioning of traditional practices in a religion is actually a total rejection of the Brahmin faith itself. This tone of unwillingness to submit to the dominant religion is also visible in Siddhartha's approaches to other religious practices. When he is among the Samanas, who first affect him with their devotion and dedication to their faith, he starts to question their practices such as fasting and meditation: "It is all an escape from the Self, it is a brief respite from the torment of being Self, a brief numbing of the pain and senselessness of life. This is the same escape, the same numbness the ox driver finds at the inn when he drinks a few bowls of rice wine or fermented coconut milk (Hesse, 2006: 15).

After he compares Samanas to drunkards, he joins the followers of Buddha, but a couple of days is enough for him to realize that there is one "tiny hole," with which, "the entire unified law of the world is smashed to pieces, rendered invalid," thus destroying Buddha's doctrine (2006: 29). One after another almost all the religions in India prove futile to Siddhartha, his "that's all the same" attitude not only reduces a vast number of different religions to one large chunk of irrational practices, but also renders them invalid, which thus implies an outsider's perspective into the issues. From a bird's view, far away from the ground, things appear to be small and close to each other; reductions and generalization are much easier made when one has a non-native perspective, and Siddhartha's opinions about these different religions seem to mimic the writer's own alien situatedness. It is also interesting how in these descriptions, not a word of Muslim or "Mohematan" is mentioned; India is once again exclusively spared for Brahmins and "the like," although some of the practices the narrator cites are clearly implying Muslims. Can it be that Muslims cannot be used in a spiritual context according to Hesse? Can it be that Buddhism or Hinduism, according to this conceptual framework, redeemed more sterile and manageable than the "impostor Mohematan," who directly threatened the Christian existence in Europe? Whereas the visibility of the Brahmins and Buddhists reinforces the spiritual tone of the work, can it be that the word "Islam" is thought to ruin it?

Brahmanization of India is a clear enterprise in Hesse's novel, and when one brings to mind peculiarities of German Orientalist scholarship, this becomes no surprise, after all. Suzan Merchant indicates, "While English, French and Dutch orientalist of [the 19th century] generation made the Orient a career by going there, as officials or travelers, German orientalist in this period made the Orient a career by becoming academics, and especially by becoming scholars of Sanskrit, Sumerian, and other safely dead oriental languages" (2001: 466). Institutions and departments which focus on Sanskrit philology and Semitic literature, works of scholars like A. W. Schelegel and Franz Bopp at universities of Bonn and Berlin in the beginning of the nineteenth century created a lasting pattern. As more more orientalist scholars ransack a vast quantity of textual and archeological documents, they come to realize "the powerful influence of Zoroastrian Persia, the esoteric depths of ancient India, and the primeval innovations of the Assyrians and Sumerians" (2001: 468).

Thus, Merchant claims that a new Orientalism is born; "The 'primitivism' of the East had become a positive virtue, and the Orient no longer seemed weak or weird" (2001: 471). Although one can only agree with and learn from Merchant's efficient synthesis of historical background, it is difficult to do the same on her

concluding remarks about this type of new Orientalism, which she presents as a discourse to disprove Said's assumptions. It is true that this is indeed a different form of Orientalism, not driven by colonial desires, nor by political agendas. Whereas British Orientalism is directly shaped by its encounter with India, its people and culture; German Orientalism evolves first and foremost as an academic enterprise. Manavalli also states, "Contemporary European (especially German) philologists constructed a history of world languages deriving from an Indo-European original, which supported the notion of a universal Hindu and Sanskrit Brahmin tradition, tracing it back to an immemorial Indian past" (2008: 69)

However, in both of these discourses, the binaries of the East and the West are always intact regardless of the methodology. In the German context, an esoteric, mystic East is pictured and reified to contrast to the ever-changing revolutions and reforms of the West. With an attempt to question and criticize the industrially changing and growing culture of Western Europe, a most antithetical discourse is found (literally and figuratively) to contrast to these changes. The classism of aristocracy, which generally champions Greek and Latin, the traditional practices of Christianity of the bourgeois, could thus be critiqued with the foil of the culture of Indians, nothing similar to the Western discourses. And this is exactly what the Orientalist discourse enables the European scholar to do, let it British or German, to rewrite his own cultural identity, to develop it further by creating a well-contrasted culture.

Within this light, Siddhartha's rejection of religious practices gains a new context and perspective. Hesse, who is highly influenced by the existential philosophies of his time as much as the Orientalist scholarship around him, uses the Indian context to create his own life philosophy. However, the last thing a well-established European writer would do would be a risk to be associated with Islam, a religion which has deep roots and repercussions in the Western imagination because of the Ottomans who became an imminent threat to the heart of Europe since the fall of Constantinople and the siege of Vienna. Islam has thus always been associated with fear and threat; nothing about it can be "peaceful" in this particular imagination. That's why Hesse in his work, following a long tradition of some part of Orientalist scholarship simply ignores the Muslims of India. That's also the main reason why he uses Brahmin religion and the doctrine of Buddha as a covert attempt, or a as a spring board, to philosophize and intellectualize about what the life is all about. At the end of his quest, it is interesting how Siddhartha builds on Buddha and goes beyond it:

The sinner who I am and who you are is a sinner, but one day he will again be Brahman, he will one day reach Nirvana, will be a Buddha – and now behold: This one day is an illusion, it is only an allegory! The sinner is not on his way to the state of Buddhahood, he is not caught up in a process of developing, although our thought cannot imagine things in any other way. . . . In him, in yourself, in everyone you must worship the future of Buddha, the potential Buddha, the hidden Buddha. (2006: 119-120)

As much as the excerpt is about Buddhism, it is not about it, at all. Hesse's approach to this belief system is not less colonialist than his British colleagues; he is molding Buddhism into a shape which he thinks proper, thus colonizing maybe not the land but the doctrines. Reading the instance when Siddhartha is seduced by a woman in the village just before he arrives to the city also lets us interpret this perspective beyond an exclusively existential one; the following lines suggest that the basic Biblical story is still intact in the writer's subconscious: "As she spoke, she placed her left foot upon his right and made the gesture a woman makes when she is inviting a man to indulge in the sort of love pleasure the instructional books call 'climbing the tree.'" When he collects himself, the charm vanishes from the smiling face of the young woman, and all he sees is the "dewy gaze of a beast in heat" (Hesse, 2006: 45). The details here -the seducing female, the tree, the temptation- all suggest an application of the Eurocentric Christian discourse, the superimposition of it on an Indian story.

When Siddhartha meets Kamala, his sexual partner and teacher, further develops this idea. As an object of desire, Kamala is the embodiment of all sexual pleasures, and that's the most important, and in this case the only thing which Siddhartha learns from her. What is interesting however is the application of this rhetoric on the Eastern context, thus bringing to mind the stereotypical Eastern woman; indolent, sexual, and tempting; a Christian narrative being utilized and solidified in the exotic East. Once again, we witness an attempt to experience the subconscious, which is already there in the European imagination, in the subaltern, another way of re-defining West by mirroring the desires in the East.

Hesse's text has its own share of the colonial Robinsonad discourse, as well. Just like Crusoe, Siddhartha has a very utilitarian perspective, he sees and interprets events as much as he is benefited from them intellectually or practically; and he is at the centre of the world, everything around him serves to fulfill his quest; his devote friend Govinda also reminds one of Crusoe's Friday. Siddhartha also learns how to earn money easily

and effectively in the city; even though he wouldn't be as good at calculations as Crusoe, he realizes that these practices are an inevitable part of his emancipation process. Ultimately, the human self is prioritized over nature, and this human self is mostly male; women are more or less a part of the nature, according to this discourse. All in all, this egocentric discourse implies a most conscious Western writer similar to the colonial practices of the British. If, it is true, as Serequeberhan argues in "Critique of Eurocentrism," that "modernity is the globalization of Europe" (1995: 89-90), *Siddhartha* is an example of how this rhetoric of emancipation is written and dictated on the abstracted Indian topography. By creating realities and imitations in these pseudo-imaginary lands, Europe reinvents its own history and identity that has otherwise the risk of erosion.

After all, some scholars like Manavalli claim that the German scholarship was not as much different from its British example as it is generally thought to be. Manavalli indicates that Germans were always at least as politically motivated as the British. Reminding the nineteenth century valorization of Aryan and Hindu-Brahmin traditions in India, she states, "it is important to remember the major Orientalist endeavor, which was largely German, in spite of its posture of 'disinterested' scholarship not only 'colluded' with British imperialism but even advanced its own racial agendas"(2008: 70). While Hesse was in search of a new form, motivated by modernism, to demonstrate the emancipation of the individual, he was also thus creating a narrative which feeds on and is fed by a type of Orientalism which indirectly formed the pretext to larger national political agendas.

The Home and the World: India from Inside

As covert and complex as it is, the German example of Orientalism, nonetheless, shares a lot with its British counterpart. What about those texts written from the subaltern? Those which are written by non-European writers? Rabindranath Tagore's *The Home and the World* is going to provide us with an example text written neither by a British or any other European but by a Bengali writer, therefore showing us the insider's share of Orientalism. While Said was writing *Orientalism*, the most unlikely writers he would think must be the writers who emerge from the colonized lands. The framework of Orientalist reading seems to fail in this context at first thought given that at the centre of this methodology lies the idea that the West tries to create an Orient with an epistemological authority so that the former can rule over the latter, the colonizer can vindicate and facilitate the process of colonization. So, the first question is, of course, why would an Indian writer himself apply such a rhetoric; why submit to the Orientalist discourse in the first place? In this final part of the paper, I will try to show how native texts themselves borrow a lot from Orientalism, and also try to find an answer to why they do so.

Bimala has problems with her color: "The sky which gives light is blue, and my mother's face was dark, but she had the radiance of holiness" (Tagore, 2005: 17). These opening remarks demonstrate how the most prominent woman character in the novel dislikes the idea of a dark skin; she not only contrasts it with beautiful sky, but also implies a racial curse, coming from her mother. She feels she *has to* explain that *even if* her mother was dark skinned, she was good natured. Her remarks about her race are not random, but they function on a systematic pattern: "I thought that it was God's unfairness which was wrapped round my limbs - that my dark features were not my due, but had come to me by some misunderstanding" (2005: 17). The first negative quality she mentions about her husband is also along the same lines; "But my husband's face was not of a kind that one's imagination would place in fairyland. It was dark, even as mine was" (2005: 18).

With these remarks, the narrator initiates a discourse which defines and situates itself with reference to, with respect to, and in contrast to the assumed "beautiful white." Similar to Fanon's argument in "The Fact of Blackness" that the black man among his own starts to feel inferior with the interpolation of the white or that "the Jew is disliked from the moment he is tracked down" (1995: 291-92), the specific starting date of Bimala's inferiority can be traced back to the colonial practices of the British. Therefore, these kinds of references to race will help us to determine to see whether the writer is looking from the perspective of an insider to his own culture, or from that of an outsider, an important question to be answered while analyzing native texts emerging from colonized lands. Bimala does not only feel inferior with her own racial identity, but also believes that she is somewhat cursed by her fate, dominated by her arranged marriage. She tells she was married to a "Rajah's house;" (please note she doesn't say "to the Rajah" himself), and the day she is brought to the astrologer, who reads fate by looking at hands. The astrologer's answer is simple: "This girl has good signs. She will become an ideal wife" (Tagore, 2005: 17).

These details in the first two pages of the novel would be more than enough as a sample to demonstrate the text's tendency to orientalize the subject matter quite efficiently for the rest of this paper. However, I will try to limit my observations to three points about these details. First of all, the image of the astrologer suggests a

culture imbued with superstitions, a society submitted itself to blind fate, a trademark characteristic of the Orientalist discourse, which reminds oneself what Franklin Blake was saying about the "influence of the Oriental religions," and the three Indian magicians. This is not the only common point between a Victorian novel and a Bengali one; just like its British example, Tagore's text defines women in quite strict terms, remind one of Mohanty's argument: "Indian womanhood draws on Victorian ideas of the purity and homebound nature of women but is specially constructed in opposition to both Western materialism and lower caste/class sexual norms" (1991: 20).

What the astrologer says creates a second important point, being good for a woman can only become by being a good wife, which is further reinforced by Bimala's remark that she is married to the house, rather than to the Rajah himself. The image of the Eastern woman oppressed by the lustful Eastern man shouldn't be a new item in the discourse we are analyzing.⁴ Finally, the opening sentence of the novel mentions the vermilion mark, which denotes that the woman is married. I will also add that the first word "mother" completes this discourse about the image of a woman who is already trapped by her race and gender in a cyclical oppression. What follows in the text is how she would take the dust of her husband's feet cautiously, without waking him up, and how at these moments she remembers that vermilion mark as the shining morning star. To be a Bengali woman is no easy job.

If these are the problems of Bimala, there are also other things which she consolidates herself, things which she looks up to, and things which will hint at what kind of context she would have in mind to contrast while describing her pitiful situation above. "But my husband was absolutely modern," she says with excitement, "He was the first of the house to go through a college course and take his M.A. degree." To be able to get her own share of education, his husband hires a private tutor, Miss Gilby "to teach" her (Tagore, 2005: 18-9). According to Bimala, modernity comes from the West, and it does so with a good college education, with a master of arts degree, and with Miss Gilby. How can be it otherwise in a world governed by *pashas* and rapacious sultans? She contrasts her husband's education and his degree with "the days of the Badshah," "of the Moguls and Pathans" (2005: 18).

We should here add some lexical background information. The word "badsha," which is here in corrupted version, is originally "*paşa*" (pronounced and thus usually spelled in English as "pasha") in Turkish and it comes from the Ottoman tradition of administration. Pashas were high ranking officials, and sometimes were responsible for governing states as big as Egypt and India. As such, it denotes an Islamic title, as Ottomans were Sunni Muslims. However, the text interestingly aligns once again Moguls with Muslim rulers, which are not the same thing, at all. The opening chapters of *The Moonstone* comes to mind with its attempt to generalize all things Oriental. At least in the Indian culture, one would expect to pay attention to such important details, but the narrator is too hasty to bifurcate a Western type of education with its most antithetical counterpart. But, as for education, pashas were those who belonged to the most elite part of the society in the Ottoman culture; they were not only imbued with religious sciences such as *kalam* and *fikh*, but also with secular ones such as math, sociology, chemistry, etc. One can argue for ignorance and uneducation in several parts of the society of the Ottoman world, but pashas would not be one of those categories.

Bimala's fascination with Europe is not limited to its education; she also enjoys wearing European clothes and reading stories from English books (2005: 24-5). But her newly found happiness comes to end -most voluntarily- with the *Swadeshi*, a nationalist movement which urges people to buy domestic products so that the national economy can compete and ultimately confront with the colonizer's. While we are just about to think of the ambiguous nature of the narrator with Bimala's welcoming of the *Swadeshi* movement, the underlying motifs behind both Bimala, and Sandip, one of the leaders of the movement are portrayed in harmony with the opening theme of the novel. Bimala is influenced by the charisma of Sandip, and she immediately proposes to burn all the European clothes to Nikhil. Here neither Sandip is moving with sincere patriotic intentions while orating Bimala, nor can the latter help being affected by the former's charisma. Moreover, the idea to burn the clothes is the first of many instances which is going to be emphasized time and again to foreground the violent and destructive nature of the *Swadeshi* movement, harshly critiqued by Nikhil.

Nikhil is a modern man with a modern education, and as such he positions himself against the violent nature of these nationalist movements. He dislikes those who "cannot love men just because they are men," and who "love excitement more than their own country." He goes so far to claim that "So long as we are impervious to truth and have to be moved by some hypnotic stimulus, we must know that we lack the capacity for self-

⁴ For a discussion of the representation of women in nineteenth century Victorian texts, see Filiz Barin-Akman (2011), *Batılı Kadın Seyyahların Gözüyle Osmanlı Kadını*, İstanbul: Etkileşim.

government" (2005: 42). It is interesting how neither a British nor a German writer, but a Bengali one argues for the incapacity to govern oneself. As a result, for Nikhil, the Swadeshi is nothing but pure excitement and a movement which leads to discriminations among the society. As a man of reason and logic, he cannot find any persuasive strategy in Sandip's arguments.

Yet one shouldn't blame Nikhil for strongly arguing against his counterpart as the nationalist leader is depicted with most hypocritical qualities. Sandip keeps talking about saving the nation, but he doesn't refrain from seducing a good friend's wife at the same time by taking advantage of his money. He talks about using national products, but cannot help smoking British cigarettes, an exception he sees worthy of himself. His definitive characteristic is passion and following violent acts, he sees himself above common moral principles. "Passion," he indicates, "is the street lamp which guides us" (2005: 60). For him "the savage side of truth" shouldn't be ignored. In one of his recurrent discussions with Sandip, Nikhil, however, states, "in Europe people look at everything from the viewpoint of science" (2005: 61). The contrast between Nikhil, a man of western education, of reason and logic, and Sandip, always driven by passion, the national and emotional Bengali who fights against the British is thus nicely completed in the text.

It is not in vain that Nikhil is portrayed favorably as he is according to most scholars a figure representing the writer himself. Mitra explains:

Given his own class position as a member of one of the wealthiest landowning families at the time, Tagore's sympathies were naturally aligned with this group. From this perspective of nationalism then, it is hardly surprising that the novel accords a distinct moral advantage to its landlord hero, Nikhil, who is ostensibly tied to the traditional social order, to the "land." (1995)

The characterization of Sandip, as such, is a complete misrepresentation doomed to be ridiculed and critiqued. With such a negative depiction, one cannot help but think Tagore's motivation behind it. One can argue that it is indeed in the nature of such movements that they are violent, destructive, simplistic, and discriminative, and its leaders mostly corrupt and hypocritical. If this is the case behind the writer's perception, then one should ask, why are we objectifying, focalizing on these people rather than on the historico-social colonial practices which have created these contexts in the first place? Weren't the colonizers as violent, destructive and discriminative? Yet, it's not Tagore's concern to point out to the background of the antipathy against European products, and the dissent among certain nationalist movements; he is more interested in representing what comes out as a "common sense" through the character who covertly defends for the dominance of the market by the European goods. However, such a perspective is naïve at best, and destructive itself at worst.

In the twenty-first century, today's readers are more closer to understanding the inherent, organic relationship between colonization and economic globalization movements, which then leads to global capitalism. In an age where IMF practices are either creating markets in the third world countries in service of the Industrial West, or totally bankrupting national economies as recently been observed in South American countries. Every single day, it has long been argued that the World Bank makes more and more small countries dependent on its own patterns which then damages the sovereignty of the governments and states. The assignment of Paul Wolfowitz, one of the leading neo-cons who designed the Iraq invasion, as the president of the World Bank at the time suggests the uncanny connection between international politics and national economies. In "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak reminds Lenin's redefinition of capitalism, which changes considerably at the beginning of the twentieth century and how capitalism has been transformed into imperialism. "Today's program of global financialization," Spivak concludes, "carries on that relay" (1995: 35).

Yet, all of these issues are outside the lens of Tagore's vision; he is closer to vindicating for the European supremacy of the markets. He is intentionally fusing and conflating chauvinistic nationalism with national liberation so as to blur the intricate workings of the colonial economies. It is true that Sandip is short sighted, he is driven by immediate rage and emotions, and doesn't think about the consequences of his actions such as what a small shopkeeper is going to do without cheap European goods. However, outside the textual expectations of the writer, I claim that Nikhil, thus Tagore's viewpoint, is at least as short sighted, as he cannot take into account that future generations would enjoy a much more sovereign nation with cheaper goods, as more and more people depend on national products, the supply-demand paradigms will change in favor of the national market.

Economic issues is not the only aspect of the novel which favors European mentality. The cliché representation of the clash of Indians and Muslims is in line with Collins's text. There is a recurring tension between Sandip, his followers and the Muslims, which results in the ultimate tragedy of the novel. However,

here there is an interesting twist in terms of representing the power relations with respect to who is arguing for whom. Following the analysis above, one would expect Nikhil to be positioned against Muslims. However, it's just the opposite. Sandip says, "we have come to realize that we shall never be able to bring [Muslims] wholly round to our side. So they must be suppressed altogether and made to understand that we are the masters. They are now showing their teeth, but one day they shall dance like tame bears to the tune we play" (Tagore, 2005: 120). At another point he forms this hate against the Muslims as a part of his ideology, "I can swear that Durga is a political goddess and was conceived as the image of the *Shakti* of patriotism in the days when Bengal was praying to be delivered from Mussulman domination" (2005: 122).

On the other hand, "If the idea of a United India is a true one," objects Nikhil, "Mussulmans are a necessary part of it" (2005: 120). He usually tries to find the common ground between the leaders of the Swadeshi or Hindus and the Muslims, especially when more and more Hindus start to speculate that Muslims kill cows for meat. This shift of defending the rights of Muslims for the co-existence of Hindus and Muslims to a figure who is coming to terms with the British colonization process forms the most peculiar and unusual quality of another type of Orientalism. After creating fractures by the practice of "divide and rule," leading to fragmented cultures and societies, who have learned to hate and label one another, these people are now asked to leave in peace together with a discourse fed by the European ideals of human rights, which were partly formed in contrast to the so-called Eastern barbarisms. "If the effect of colonial power is seen to be the production of hybridization rather than the noisy command of colonialist authority or the silent repression of native traditions," Bhabha explains, "then an important change of perspective occurs. It reveals the ambivalence at the source of traditional discourse on authority and enables a form of subversion, founded on that uncertainty." This then turns the discursive conditions of dominance into reasons of intervention (1995: 43). Without realizing and taking into account the historical context of the issues, the frontiers of the anti-colonialist movement is toppled upside down, pushed to turn back onto itself and thus focus on the dominant problems of the nation, which were emphasized by external powers in the first place. However, even in such a relatively different discourse (as opposed to the literature produced by European authors), the word *Mohamedan* is used without any reservation.

Conclusion

In an attempt for a very rough synthesis of these three works (which might have the risk of eroding the important differences I have been trying to cover in this paper), we can say that Collins's text, as a product of nineteenth century British imperialist culture, can be seen as a novel of Orientalism proper. Said's work is mostly built on analyses of these Victorian texts, which exhibit a myriad of systematic patterns in the depiction of the colonized lands. Hesse's text of spiritual quest, on the other hand, is formed on the backdrop of German Orientalist scholarship which mostly reduces India to an abstraction through which traditional Western values can be critiqued. Tagore's text finally points out to an intellectual culture which is highly influenced by Western values and historiography, which thus makes the national intellect turn back on itself situating oneself outside one's own cultural identity, thus coming close to the colonizer's gaze. However, despite these important differences, all of the texts demonstrate similar contextual practices such as casting Muslims as outsiders, creating an India which is mystical and irrational more than anything else (or at least as a topography which Western scientism can be contrasted to), and ultimately not talking about the real violent practices of British colonization in the South Asian continent.

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