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**The North American Orient: Literature of the American Oriental Society
and U.S. Imperialism, 1842-1882**

By

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Doctor of Philosophy

English

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B.A., North Carolina State University, 2010

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An abstract of
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Abstract

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By William Tolbert

This dissertation investigates how nineteenth-century scholars and writers mapped their knowledge of a supposedly distant “Orient” onto North American regions, histories, and people. I read novels, travel journals, and academic texts in conjunction with U.S. congressional records and political speeches to demonstrate ways that Orientalism influenced major developments in U.S. foreign and domestic policy. I study Orientalist representations of Mexicans following the Mexican-American War, Indigenous Americans in the lead-up to the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871, and Black and white U.S. Southerners during the Civil War and Reconstruction. I also briefly discuss how popular Orientalist travel journals influenced the creation of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

I explore Orientalism and its effects on U.S. culture by recounting the early history of the American Oriental Society. This group, equal parts social, scientific, and political, included prominent U.S. lawmakers, university presidents, ethnographers, and explorers, as well as literary figures such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Cullen Bryant, James Russell Lowell, and Bayard Taylor. I show how literary production—including some of what we read as “canonical” literature—was instrumentalized in the spread of Orientalist ideas and associated policies. I explain how an Orientalist logic—the idea that the world can be separated into two unequal halves, the Orient and the Occident—often justified U.S. domination over various North American racial and cultural others. In doing so, I demonstrate that nineteenth-century scholars thought of “the Orient” as a geographically fluid concept.

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Introduction | Isolatos No More

On June 22, 1853, William Cullen Bryant stepped off a boat in New York City at the conclusion of a seven-month vacation. He had traveled to England, Italy, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Turkey to escape growing political tensions in the United States, personal losses and sadness, and the New York City winter. With his sun-tanned skin and lengthy beard, the fifty-eight-year-old took great pride in the fact that the trip had physically changed him. Despite being a famous poet, the editor of the *New York Evening Post*, and an all-around esteemed and influential New York socialite, Bryant was able to evade the recognition of the office clerk who was supposed to meet him that day. Bryant looked different. In his mind, he looked “Oriental.” This brought the author such joy that he decided to repeat the scenario a few days later with his neighbor, albeit with a more performative flair. In a letter to a friend, Bryant describes how he “went down to [his] place on Long Island, put on a Turkish turban and gown, and had a long conversation in broken English with a young lady, our next-door neighbor, who really thought that I was an Oriental” (*Letters*, Volume III, 315).

Bryant recounts this event in two separate letters, one to his friend Richard Dana and another to Eliza Robbins. In the second he adds more detail as well as a moment of Orientalist commentary:

The day I went to Roslyn I put on a turban, a Turkish silk shirt and striped silk gown, which I got at Damascus, and a pair of yellow slippers, and held a fifteen minutes’ conversation in broken English with Miss Hopkins, our next-door neighbor, she thinking all the time that I was a Turk. This is egotism, but I think you would have been interested in the people of the East if you had seen what I

did. I do not believe in the theory that there is no chance of recovery for nations that have once degenerated. A great change is going on in the East; religious bigotry is wearing out, and by and by religious freedom will be enjoyed in the Turkish dominions to a greater extent than in any other country except the United States. The missionaries have already successfully introduced girls' schools in the north of Syria. Let the example be followed in other parts of the East, and the reign of barbarism will be over. (318)

Bryant's trip to "the Orient" empowered him to make such grand statements about the past and future of "the people of the East," about the role of U.S. influence in the region, and about theories of social development more generally. That Bryant only spent a few months in "the East" or that he had but little experience or expertise in any of these fields hardly hindered his confidence in making such statements. To Bryant's amusement, his short trip to "the Orient" allowed him to *know* "the Orient." It allowed him, for one brief moment in Long Island, to *be* Oriental.

How does one go about explaining this event? Few scholars, if any, have discussed Bryant as an Orientalist. We might read these interactions as simply isolated, odd moments of cross-cultural cross-dressing, disconnected from Bryant's larger body of work. Maybe they are just unfortunate and uninformed performances of brown face to which Bryant never returned. Maybe Bryant was just an enthusiastic if ignorant tourist desiring to display his souvenirs.

Our interpretation of this event changes if we consider certain lesser-known facts about Bryant and his trip across the Atlantic. If one considers that Bryant read the work of Edward William Lane, the renowned English Orientalist, as he traveled across the ocean alongside the narrative of William Lynch, a U.S.-American Naval commander who led an expedition to the

Dead Sea, one must recognize Bryant's performance of and knowledge about "the Orient" as grounded in an already well-established textual field of Orientalist research. If one considers that Bryant recounted his own observations of "Oriental" people in periodic letters to the *New York Evening Post* and would later republish these letters together as *Letters from the East* (1869), one must recognize that Bryant himself desired to make his own mark upon this textual field. If one considers that Bryant would shortly thereafter join the American Oriental Society, or that many of the people with whom Bryant interacted during his vacation were already members of the AOS—such as the founder of the school for girls in Syria who Bryant mentions in his second letter—one must recognize that this was not an isolated moment for Bryant and he most certainly was not alone or idiosyncratic in his Orientalist interests. If we consider these facts together, we must recognize that Bryant's Orientalist performance was made possible by an entire web of transnational cultural, social, political, and textual influences. In other words, we can, and we should, understand this odd moment of popular, social Orientalism in relation to transnational Orientalist scholarship, the growth of institutionalized Orientalism within the U.S., and the spread of U.S. sociopolitical and imperial influence before the twentieth century.

William Cullen Bryant is known for so many other aspects of his life that an isolated example such as this, and even an entire text such as *Letters from the East*, often goes unnoticed. Moreover, scholars of Orientalism have also mostly treated nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism as something altogether different from European Orientalisms, as a quirky fad only loosely connected to ideas of geopolitical power and imperialism. They often separate nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism from the twentieth-century U.S. Orientalism that would later inform U.S. imperial practices across the Asian continent and Pacific islands. Yet Bryant's minor example, this odd moment of Oriental minstrelsy by which one neighbor displays his souvenirs

to another, is made possible by so many other people, events, and texts. Collectively, this web of social, cultural, and political influence has the power to change the scholarly understanding of Bryant's work and of nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism more generally. This small, cringe-worthy moment has the potential to unsettle some of the foundational tenets of the study of Orientalism today.

In the beginning of Edward Said's ground-breaking and field-defining work, *Orientalism* (1978), Said quickly separates U.S.-American Orientalism from European Orientalisms. On the very first page of his introduction, Said claims that "Americans will not feel quite the same about the Orient [as Europeans]." "Unlike the Americans," he explains, "the French and the British—less so the Germans, Russians, Spanish, Portuguese, Italians, and Swiss—have had a long tradition of what I shall be calling *Orientalism*, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience" (1). For Said, U.S. difference from Europe is largely based on three factors. The first is geography. The Orient, Said argues, is adjacent to Europe (1). The second involves Orientalism's ties to imperialism. The Orient, as he observes, "is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies" (1). The third factor is implied throughout the rest of *Orientalism* and has to do with the diffusion of Orientalism into most aspects of European culture. Said argues that this diffusion was missing in the U.S., at least before World War II. Scholars of Orientalism since Said have mostly maintained his separation between the U.S. and Europe based on the first two factors—geography and imperialism—despite many challenges to the third—cultural diffusion.

Said defines Orientalism as a "*distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts" (12). Orientalism is an "elaboration" of a "basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves,

Orient and Occident)” that finds expression in most aspects of Western thought (12). It is, most of all, a discourse that “exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power,” power political, power intellectual, power cultural, and power moral (12). Again, this widespread cultural diffusion is something that, for Said, is seemingly missing from the U.S.-American experience before the mid-twentieth century, and he provides a more detailed explanation for his dismissal of specifically nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism toward the end of his text:

The American experience of the Orient prior to [World War II] was limited. Cultural isolatos like Melville were interested in it; cynics like Mark Twain visited and wrote about it; the American Transcendentalists saw affinities between Indian thought and their own; a few theologians and Biblical students studied the Biblical Oriental languages; there were occasional diplomatic and military encounters with Barbary pirates and the like, the odd naval expedition to the Far Orient, and of course the ubiquitous missionary to the Orient. But there was no deeply invested tradition of Orientalism, and consequently in the United States knowledge of the Orient never passed through the refining and reticulation and reconstructing processes, whose beginning was in philological study, that it went through in Europe. Furthermore, the imaginative investment was never made either, perhaps because the American frontier, the one that counted, was the westward one. (290)

In other words, Orientalism in the U.S. never gained a cultural ubiquity until after the 1940s. Nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalists were “cultural isolatos.” While Orientalism undoubtedly existed in the U.S. before World War II, for Said it was more of an idiosyncratic offshoot.

However, scholars since Said have accomplished great work to counter this specific brand of American exceptionalism and my dissertation is a continuation of their efforts.

Today, most scholars readily recognize a robust culture of Orientalism in the U.S. well before 1900 that worked itself into most aspects of society. In *American Orient* (2011), for instance, David Weir provides a vast study of American Orientalism across three centuries, starting with Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin and ending with the commercialization of yoga in the twentieth century. He observes what he calls various “waves” of Orientalism throughout U.S. history that affected various aspects of U.S. culture. Likewise, Holly Edwards curates an art exhibit in *Noble Dreams, Wicked Pleasures: Orientalism in America, 1870-1930* (2000), in which she displays nineteenth- and twentieth-century examples of visual Orientalism related to U.S. architecture, clothing design, cigarette advertisements, religion, the practice of yoga, Hollywood films, fraternal orders like the Shriners, and virtually everything in between. In their more literature-focused study, Sabine Sielke and Christian Kloeckner edit a collection of essays titled *Orient and Orientalisms in US-American Poetry and Poetics* (2009) that demonstrates various ways that just like “British and French poetry in the nineteenth century, Orientalisms indeed became central to the evolution of US-American poetry and poetics from Romanticism across modernism to post-modernism” (9). Similar to Weir and Edwards, the essays in Sielke and Kloeckner’s collection demonstrate the influence of Orientalism on U.S. poetics across two centuries. Heike Schaefer likewise compiles a collection of wide-ranging essays in *America and the Orient* (2006) which begin by tracing Orientalism’s influence on U.S. literature as early as the eighteenth century. Schaefer states what has now become a widely held belief in the study of U.S. Orientalisms when he writes that early U.S.-American authors frequently employed a wide range of “Oriental characters, settings, imagery, themes, and poetics

in different ways, drawing on widely varying cultures, geographical regions, and historical times” (xi). Together these scholars, among others, have demonstrated that Orientalism influenced nineteenth-century U.S. culture in myriad ways. They have thus refuted Said’s third reason for separating U.S. from European Orientalisms—that only European Orientalism was distributed throughout most aspects of European culture. These scholars have proven beyond any doubt that nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalists were hardly isolatos. Still, one might argue that these previous studies only cover the not-so-easily defined nor contained realm of “popular culture.” My dissertation expands upon their work by tracing the influence that scholarly and literary Orientalism had on watershed moments of U.S. domestic and foreign policy.

In doing so, I also seek to counter Said’s other two reasons for U.S. exceptionalism in respect to nineteenth-century Orientalism: the disconnection to imperialism and the trickier issue of geography. Scholars are divided when it comes to the relationship between nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism and U.S. imperialism. Mishka Sinha, David Weir, David Brody, and Douglas Little each separately deny any direct relationship between Orientalism and imperialism in the U.S. before, at least, 1898. These scholars do not necessarily deny the presence of U.S. imperialism before the twentieth century, although that is certainly an issue within U.S. cultural studies more generally. As Gesa Mackenthun observes, “very few scholars associate [U.S.] territorial expansion of the early nineteenth century—which included the westward expansion of slavery, Indian dispossession, and ‘civilizing’ missions into the Pacific—with concurrent imperial ventures of France and Britain in the Middle East, India, or in Africa” (4-5). Amy Kaplan and Shelley Streeby each separately make a similar complaint in that, in the words of Kaplan, “United States continental expansion is often treated as an entirely separate phenomenon from European colonialism of the nineteenth century, rather than as an interrelated form of

imperial expansion” (17; see Streeby 9-10). Streeby outlines the implications of such a bifurcation when she writes that “while it is important to understand the specificities of the imperialisms of 1848 and 1898, to reserve the term ‘imperialism’ for the 1890s is to reproduce that tenuous and certainly ideological distinction and to marginalize or even dismiss a much longer history of U.S. imperialisms in the Americas” (10).

Likewise, and more directly related to the study of Orientalism, Malini Johar Schueller sets as one primary goal of her influential study *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890* (1998) to counteract “the assumed lack of an imperialist tradition in the U.S.” (17). Still, Schueller maintains a distance between Orientalism and imperialism. Schueller argues that U.S. figures appropriated “the imperial imperatives of European Orientalist discourses” and applied them “to the exigencies of the New World” (20). Thus, Schueller argues that U.S. cultural investment in the Orient aided U.S. imperialism elsewhere, presumably outside the Orient. In this way, Schueller’s argument is not dissimilar from Mishka Sinha’s that “the object [of nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism] was not so much a domination of the East by America, as it was to demonstrate the American capacity to dominate their own cultural and historical past and present” (78). As Schaefer observes, most scholars maintain that U.S. engagement with the Orient almost always “exhibits an overarching concern with domestic affairs” (xi). While this is certainly true, this focus on domestic affairs—combined with the way scholars have defined “domestic” versus “foreign”—has prevented scholars from demonstrating a direct relationship between U.S. Orientalism and U.S. imperialism before 1898, at least when it concerns imperialism *in* the Orient.

While I agree with Mackenthun, Kaplan, and Streeby that scholars must recognize imperialism in its various forms and should equate U.S. continental expansion to European

expansion throughout Africa, for instance, I contend that the problem lies less in how one defines imperialism and more in how one defines the geographical boundaries of “the Orient.” While most scholars readily recognize that the Orient is a mythical creation of Western imaginative geography, they simultaneously base their methodologies on real geographical places. One of Said’s primary reasons for isolating European Orientalism is because the Orient is adjacent to Europe geographically (1). Like Said, Little focuses almost all of his attention on the “Middle East,” more specifically on U.S. relations with Israel, Iraq, Libya, and Iran. Weir examines U.S. relations with India, China, and Japan. Brody looks for U.S. Orientalism in relation to the Philippines. Even Schueller, who provides a more nuanced take on the connection between Orientalism and U.S. imperialism, divides her study geographically, looking to North African, Near East, and Indic Orientalisms. Each of these scholars seemingly believes that the Orient is a real place that one might point to on a map. They shape their studies—what authors they read, what texts they select, which political contexts they find relevant—in large part, by wherever they assume the Orient to actually, geographically exist. Scholars tend to look for the Orient where they expect to find it and, in that way, many studies of Orientalism are guided by some of the same Orientalist ideologies that they tend to criticize.

Ironically, Said himself makes a minor observation in *Orientalism* that points to a way out of this geographical bind. Said posits that late-nineteenth-century developments in globalization changed the way that people in the West thought about geography. This had a profound effect on how Western people understood the location of “the Orient” and “Orientals.” Said identifies the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 as the major event that changed the way Westerners thought about the world as it fractured any belief in “the Orient” as a separate, distinct, and distant geographical location (92). “Thereafter,” Said explains, “the notion of the

‘Oriental’ [was] an administrative or executive one, and it [was] subordinate to demographic, economic and sociological factors” (92). The Suez Canal had “melted away the Orient’s geographical identity” and, from that moment on, “the Oriental, like the African, [was] a member of a subject race and not exclusively an inhabitant of a geographical area” (92). When the Suez Canal was complete, “the Orient” transcended geography. I agree with Said but I contend that this transcendence happened earlier than 1869. William Cullen Bryant concluded his Oriental vacation sixteen years before the Suez Canal was opened. In fact, most of the writers that I discuss in this dissertation completed their own travels and wrote their own texts even earlier. Moreover, other authors in this dissertation demonstrate that certain aspects of Orientalism were based on theorizations of global movements of people dating back centuries, millennia even, before the Suez Canal. Consequently, while Said’s observation is astute, we should assume that this geographical transcendence had already happened long before 1869. We might thus rethink the location of the Orient, and if we rethink *where* the Orient is, we might reevaluate the connections between Orientalism and imperialism.

The issue is methodological. The scholars I have mentioned thus far each attempt to explain the relationship between Orientalism and imperialism to some degree. However, despite their varying and contradictory answers, they each follow the same methodological process. They identify examples of Orientalism where they expect to find them and *then* look for connections to imperialism. For this dissertation, I reverse this sequence. I look for known examples of U.S. imperialism in the nineteenth century and then look for examples of Orientalism. I identify major developments in U.S. expansionist policies and look to ways that U.S. Orientalists wrote about the various peoples involved. In the lead-up to and fall out from the Mexican-American War, I find examples of Mexicans as the “lank and skinny Arabs of the

West” (*Eldorado* 4, 89). In the same year as the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871, I find portrayals of Indigenous Americans as the savage “Bedouin of America” (*Overland* 51). In the lead-up to and fall out from the American Civil War, I find instances in which Northern U.S. writers described the U.S. South and U.S. Southerners as Oriental. These examples, collectively, offer a compelling challenge to current theorizations of the geographical location of the Orient. In doing so, they also suggest a more direct relationship between U.S. Orientalism and imperialism in the nineteenth century.

When I began to look for imperialism first and then Orientalism, examples were surprisingly easy to find. That Orientalism abounded in newspaper articles about 1850s Mexico, for example, is in itself noteworthy, but we should take a moment to consider why. Why would a researcher even think to *look* at newspaper articles about 1850s Mexico for examples of Orientalism? The answer, again, lies in an idea that Said mentions in *Orientalism* but never fully develops. Said mentions in several places that Orientalism and imperialism share a close relationship. For example, he observes that “the period of immense advance in the institutions and content of Orientalism [the mid-1800s] coincides exactly with the period of unparalleled European expansion” and that “every continent was affected, none more so than Africa and Asia” (41). Later in his text, Said expands on this relationship:

To say simply that modern Orientalism has been an aspect of both imperialism and colonialism is not to say anything very disputable. Yet it is not enough to say it; it needs to be worked through analytically and historically. I am interested in showing how modern Orientalism . . . embodies a systematic discipline of accumulation. And far from this being exclusively an intellectual or theoretical

feature, it made Orientalism fatally tend towards the systematic accumulation of human beings and territories. (123)

More bluntly, an imperial mindset is a precondition for Orientalism; Orientalism is, then, one part of imperialism. This is Said's position and it is one that I share. While I am aware that several scholars diverge from Said on this point and claim to study instances of Orientalism disconnected from imperialism, those scholars have little bearing on my initial methodological choices. One might briefly counter those scholars by suggesting that this intellectual, systematic discipline of accumulation, this imperial mindset, might exist within certain individuals without any formalized, geopolitical, imperial relationships at the national level. Before we look for anomalies, though, we should complete the foundational work. If Said is correct that an imperial mindset—a systematic discipline of accumulation—is a precondition for Orientalism and that Orientalism is one aspect of imperialism, then we should be able to find Orientalism wherever one finds imperialism. One goal of this dissertation is to test this specific but meaningful hypothesis put forward in Said's *Orientalism*. I chose to test this hypothesis by studying imperialism specifically in places that no one today considers to be part of "the Orient."

A secondary, but related, methodological goal of my work is to trouble the boundary between Orientalist and imperialist discourses. The characteristics of Orientalist discourse which Said describes—the Oriental as "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, 'different'"—are the same characteristics of imperialist discourse described by writers like Albert Memmi and Aimé Césaire with reference to French colonial control of Tunisia and Martinique respectively (Said 40; see also Memmi vii, 82; Césaire 33, 41-3). Anti-colonial writers have been describing this general discursive formation long before Said and have been describing it as a global phenomenon. Said recognizes these similarities himself in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) where

he tries “to expand the arguments of the earlier book [*Orientalism*] to describe a more general pattern of relationships between the modern metropolitan West and its overseas territories” (xi).

My study assumes, following Said, that Orientalism should be understood as an aspect of imperialism and colonialism. Orientalist discourse is a type of imperialist discourse and, at times, possibly, the same thing.

However, Orientalist discourse and imperialist discourse, if and when the two discourses can be separated, have different relationships to nationalism. Orientalism relies upon a theoretical—and discursively produced—separation of West and East. Orientalism depends upon an understanding of shared characteristics *across* national borders. Conversely, writers of imperialism often imagine a national center for their empire and even imagine, paradoxically, firm national borders that insulate the center from the peripheral territories. Still, I aim to blur the line between the two, to ask questions about their relationship, and to ask questions about their shared rhetorical features. In what ways does Orientalism as a transnational discourse justify and bolster imperialism as a nationalist discourse, and vice versa? If we understand imperialism in purely economic terms like William Appleman Williams as “the metropolitan domination of the weaker economy (and its political and social superstructure) to ensure the extraction of economic rewards” (7), can we more easily identify *intra*-national imperialism and, in turn, trouble a connection between empire and nationalism? Can we understand Orientalism as a shared discursive production of certain imperial powers, or imperialism as a nationalist expression of Orientalism? Or do we need new, more comprehensive, names for these discourses altogether?

These are questions that this dissertation will raise but will not sufficiently answer. The research presented here is merely an initial step in that direction and more research must be done. I hope that readers will conclude my study of Orientalism within one specific national context—

the United States—with a general uneasiness about nationalist adjectives. If we fully recognize U.S. Orientalism, and in turn recognize the transnational nature of Orientalism in general, then the nationalist adjectives before the term “Orientalism” become not a signifier of national specificity, but a signifier of relationship to a nationalist imperialism: i.e. “French Orientalism” becomes a shorthand for “Orientalism related to French imperialism.” In other words, there is nothing particularly U.S.-American about Orientalism in the United States of America aside from the fact that it supports and is supported by U.S. imperialism. If we can understand the close relationship between Orientalism and imperialism and if we can understand that both forces operated to support U.S. expansion within the North American continent, then we might more easily revise formulations of Orientalism as a geographically stable and rigid concept. In other words, we might imagine a way to discuss Orientalism as a transnational discourse used to support transnational and intra-national cultural and racial supremacy while simultaneously supporting distinctly nationalist ideologies. Thus, my study of Orientalism is guided by three methodological prerogatives: seek imperialism first, disrupt notions of stable geographic boundaries, and interrogate Orientalism’s connection to nationalism.

In order to maintain Said’s crucial argument that Orientalism is a *transnational* phenomenon, I seek to refute his dismissal of U.S. Orientalism, but I only do so in order to eventually *deny* a specifically U.S. Orientalism. I aim to demonstrate ways in which nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalists mapped their knowledge onto the North American landscape to portray various peoples of North and Central America as “Orientals.” I identify a dynamic culture of Orientalism in the nineteenth century with intimate connections to U.S. universities, the U.S. government, and the U.S. military. I read popular nineteenth-century novels, travel journals, and academic texts in conjunction with U.S. congressional records and presidential speeches to

demonstrate that Orientalist logic often justified U.S. domination over various North American “Others” and animated debates over citizenship and assimilation. Questions about Mexicans after the Mexican-American War, Black and white U.S. Southerners before and after the Civil War, Indigenous Americans before and after the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871, and Chinese immigrants before and after the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, I argue, were all shaped by a culture of Orientalism. I ask, what kind of rhetoric supports imperial conquest? How do lawmakers use literature to rationalize oppression and exclusion? How did Orientalism—the belief that the world is separated into two unequal halves, the “Orient” and the “Occident”—shape the course of American foreign and domestic policy in the nineteenth century?

To trace the history of professional Orientalism in the U.S. and the diffusion of Orientalism into various aspects of U.S. culture, I look to the formation of the American Oriental Society—a society founded in 1842 and still in existence today. While scholars most often associate the early work of the AOS with the spread of missionaries around the globe, the Society also included influential people involved in virtually every aspect of U.S.-American culture in the nineteenth century. The membership included politicians, diplomats, university presidents and professors, linguists, ethnographers, geographers, and military leaders as well as famous authors and artists. The Society included numerous figures who directly and indirectly shaped the course of U.S.-American foreign and domestic policy for the second half of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth.

Most interesting for scholars in the humanities was the Society’s intentional effort to include and support members who did not work directly in Oriental studies. The AOS sought out members who were artists, writers, journalists, travellers, and editors. They viewed these specific members as the crucial link between the society’s scholarly efforts and the U.S.-American

public. The AOS, by design, worked to weave Orientalist studies into the nation's novels, poems, paintings, and newspapers, into the nation's political debates, and, most importantly, into the nation's plans for continental and global expansion. The AOS succeeded spectacularly. Within the first fifty years of its existence, the AOS included multiple senators and congresspeople, a U.S. Secretary of State, ambassadors and consuls, and some of the nation's most famous literary figures as well as numerous global scholars practicing Orientalism in other countries around the world.

One should note, though, that these people did not necessarily possess one shared understanding of Orientalism or Orientalist studies. Many of them likely never met each other. Some never attended the meetings of the Society, and very few of them ever published in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*. This is just to say that the AOS was not a secret society of powerful individuals who collectively met to develop a specific design for how to shape U.S. history. It did, however, offer a meeting place, a journal, and a way to exchange ideas. We might think of it, instead, as an important nexus for the Orientalist network that demonstrates both the institutionalization and the spread of Orientalism within U.S. culture.

This dissertation first expands upon this history of the American Oriental Society and its members. Chapter One begins with John Pickering's opening address to the AOS. This remarkably detailed and thoroughly-researched address demonstrates both the professional nature of the AOS members as well as the web of transnational cooperation that made Orientalism possible. I then explore texts written by prominent members of the AOS in conjunction with U.S. Navy expeditions. The U.S. Congress, for example, ordered Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, leader of the U.S. Exploring Expedition of 1838, to include in his crew several ethnologists and linguists. These scholars joined the AOS upon their return home and, afterward,

published accounts of their adventures. Together, this body of work reveals a group of professional Orientalists in the U.S. who were often active participants in U.S. imperial practices.

I close Chapter One with an analysis of William Cullen Bryant's *Letters from the East*, a collection of letters that Bryant wrote while editor of the *New York Evening Post* and published as a book several years later, after joining the AOS. Bryant's *Letters* operates as a kind of promotional tract for U.S. Orientalists abroad, most of whom were also members of the AOS. *Letters* demonstrates the outreach work that the AOS had dreamed of when it sought to include popular cultural figures. A reading of Bryant's Orientalist literature in conjunction with a reevaluation of the AOS demonstrates that nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism was an institutionalized cultural phenomenon with explicit links to U.S. imperial expansion. Furthermore, in reading these texts, one will notice an underlying anxiety about the mobility of the Orient and an underlying desire to define its geographical spread.

I expand on the idea of Oriental mobility in Chapter Two by revisiting the life and work of the nineteenth century's most famous U.S. Orientalist, Bayard Taylor. Taylor was an influential travel writer who some scholars praise for his nuanced depictions of people around the world. I analyze how Taylor composed his travel journals in conjunction with imperialist ventures and also how Taylor's writings were received back home. Most notably, one of Taylor's texts would live to inspire some of the most heinous anti-immigration laws of the nineteenth century as lawmakers would repeatedly quote his *A Visit to India, China, and Japan* as justification to ban Chinese immigration to the United States. Taylor's writing is equally important because his big break as a travel writer came after writing *Eldorado; or Adventures in the Path of Empire*, a text set in 1850 in Central America and the southwestern territories recently acquired from the Mexican-American War. It is in *Eldorado* that one notices the

transposition of Orientalist discourse onto the North American landscape. Taylor's text demonstrates one way that the Orientalist discourse was actually created, expanded, and maintained. Taylor relies on a series of transnational Orientalist comparisons to group Mexicans and Indigenous Americans with global, Oriental Others. The North American Orient was not just a work of fiction and comparison though. I trace ethnological theories from the period which reveal scientific "proof" that the original inhabitants of North, Central, and South America had migrated from Asia and were, therefore, actually Oriental. I argue that the Orient has always been moving and might be found anywhere in the world and I demonstrate various ways that nineteenth-century Orientalist "found" it.

In Chapter Three, I continue to identify ways that the discourse itself was developed, expanded, and maintained with a study of John William De Forest and his reliance on what Edward Said calls the strategic formation of Orientalist texts. Said argues that Orientalism is made up of a large body of texts that continually reference each other. For example, when William Cullen Bryant traveled across the Atlantic to compose *Letters from the East*, he was reading Edward William Lane's texts about Egypt. He then references Lane in his own text, uses his observations to confirm Lane's opinions, and uses Lane's opinions to support his observations. Through this interaction both texts gain authority. De Forest's work exemplifies a more complex iteration of this process. His first published work was an entire history of the Indigenous Americans of Connecticut which he composed without ever speaking to any Indigenous Americans or referencing any of their own texts. Instead, he references an incredible number of white, European, male historians who were already referencing each other. In short, De Forest's work demonstrates that Orientalism often operates within a closed loop of often secondary information. I close Chapter Three by analyzing how De Forest's Orientalism shaped

his portrayal of Indigenous Americans in his western romance novel *Overland* which was published the same year as the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871. In doing so, I connect common cultural representations of Indigenous Americans as Orientals to U.S. imperial practices within North America. Simultaneously, I draw on Shelley Streeby's argument about the nineteenth-century Western romance novel that we should understand this genre within a hemispheric frame of reference. Although I agree with Streeby, I contend that a hemispheric frame may not be big enough. In order to understand De Forest's version of this genre, at least, we must consider popular nineteenth-century theories of *global* racial and social development.

Chapter Four examines a lesser-studied type of Orientalism, what some scholars call "internal Orientalism." I look to ways that writers in the northern U.S. characterized the southern U.S. as Oriental in the years before and after the U.S.-American Civil War. Following the work of Jennifer Rae Greeson who traces historical imperialist discourse about the U.S. South, I search for ways that this imperialist discourse was sometimes specifically Orientalist. I study members of the AOS such as James Russell Lowell, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the aforementioned John William De Forest as well as Harriet Beecher Stowe whose husband was a founding member of the society. I identify examples in which these authors not only portray the South as a place of savage otherness but also compare the South to other Oriental places and characterize the South explicitly as "Oriental." Consequently, these texts reveal the flexibility of Orientalist discourse. Moreover, what is most surprising in these instances is that the object of the Orientalist discourse is most often white U.S. Southerners. White Northerners denigrated white Southerners through a discourse of geographical otherness which suggests that Orientalist discourse is not always a racist discourse. Scholars might thus begin to look for similar examples of intra-national and intra-racial Orientalism in similar situations elsewhere.

Ultimately, while my primary goal is to change the way scholars think about nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism and its connections to U.S. imperialism, I also want to change the way scholars think about Orientalism as a geographically bounded concept. A too heavy reliance on our own unexamined geographical assumptions has shaped our methodologies in a way that has obscured valuable data. Like Edward Said, I also hope I have contributed here “a better understanding of the way culture domination has operated” (*Orientalism* 28). I, too, want to “stimulate a new kind of dealing with the Orient,” and I, too, seek to eliminate the “Orient” and “Occident” altogether (28). In order to accomplish these goals, though, we must first fully understand what and *where* the “Orient” is. We must account for the historical, discursive formation of the North American Orient.

1 | “Common Duties”: Transnational Orientalism, The American Oriental Society, and the Growth of U.S. Empire

Americans will not feel quite the same about the Orient . . .

- Edward Said, *Orientalism*

Europe and the United States constitute but one literary community; and the reputation of our country demands the continued efforts of every American, to perform his proportion of the common duties as a member of the republic of letters.

- John Pickering, Founder of the American Oriental Society,
from his address at the first annual meeting of the Society, 1843

The American Oriental Society began in 1842 with an “informal meeting of a few gentlemen, interested in Oriental Literature” (“Extract” ii). Although this reads like a humble meeting among friends vaguely interested in a topic, it actually describes a society founded by a prestigious scholar from an eminently influential U.S.-American family. The Society, by the time of its initial membership roll, would include world-renowned scholars, university presidents, politicians, explorers, writers, and leaders of the nation. This “meeting of a few gentlemen” would expand throughout the nineteenth century into a society that included hundreds¹ of members spread across the globe, a society that remains in existence to the present day, 179

years later. Yet scholars have written little about the American Oriental Society and its members, particularly in relation to nineteenth-century Orientalism in the United States.

Through no fault of their own, the rare scholars of Orientalism who have mentioned the AOS have mostly mischaracterized the make-up of the society's early membership and the work that these members accomplished.² David Weir, for instance, quotes historian Carl T. Jackson as writing that "the typical member [of the AOS] seems to have been a minister, theologian, or missionary" (qtd. in *American Orient* 76). While the AOS certainly included numerous prominent ministers, theologians, and missionaries, such a description only accounts for a portion of the society's membership. Like Jackson, Weir downplays the professional nature of the original group when he writes that "the early members of the Society were hardly orientalists in the same sense that, say, the first members of the British Asiatic Society were." He adds that John Pickering, the founding president of the Society, "did have some claim to philological knowledge, although he seems to have been more of an amateur than a scholar" (76). Like Jackson and Weir, Malini Johar Schueller links the AOS most prominently to missionary activity and philological research to support those activities, although she recognizes that the Society contained professional scholars who wrote about topics ranging from "Oriental religions to treatises on Oriental economies and medicine" (33, 42-4). Both Weir and Schueller reference the index of articles for the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, but, despite their incredibly thorough work otherwise, neither scholar recognizes that most of the U.S.-Americans that they discuss within their own research were actually members of the AOS.

Mishka Sinha gives the most complete representation of the AOS thus far in recent scholarship when she recognizes that a few prominent members of the AOS were well-known, transnational scholars and that the AOS "offered a forum for scholars who could not have an

academic career in Sanskrit to participate in scholarly exchanges and publish their research” (84). Sinha focuses mostly on non-religiously affiliated scholars and uses the AOS as evidence of the rapidly growing “institutionalization of Oriental studies” in the mid-nineteenth century, especially in the realm of higher education (73). Still, Sinha overlooks a large number of AOS members who were neither missionaries nor scholars. One explanation is simply that the AOS included a diverse group of people that defy neat categorization. A second is that these scholars may not have had access to the early membership rosters of the AOS which are now readily available online.³

While Jackson, Weir, Schueller, and Sinha are not necessarily incorrect in their assessment of the AOS membership, they overlook a number of members who have the potential for drastically changing the current scholarly conceptualization of Orientalism in the United States. In its early years, the AOS included among its membership influential politicians and diplomats, presidents of the nation’s top universities, world-renowned scholars, journalists, explorers, and some of the nineteenth century’s leading writers and cultural figures. The society’s founder, John Pickering, was also the president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Edward Everett, a founding member, was at different times the president of Harvard, a U.S. senator, and the U.S. Secretary of State who was responsible for sending the U.S. Navy to “open” Japan—by force—for commerce. The Society included ambassadors and consuls spread across the world as well as leaders of U.S. Naval expeditions. From 1842 to the close of the century, members of the AOS were connected in various ways to virtually every aspect of U.S. foreign policy. These members, specifically, might serve as the missing link that scholars have been looking for—or denying the existence of—to demonstrate the overt and intentional interconnectedness between U.S. Orientalism and U.S. imperialism in the nineteenth-century.

Furthermore, the AOS also included another group of often overlooked members. The Directors of the AOS intentionally sought to include cultural and literary figures. In the words of an 1847 Annual Report of the Directors of the AOS, the Directors sought to promote the work of “those members of the Society whose avocations do not permit them to engage directly in oriental studies.” The Directors of the AOS understood these members to be the crucial link between the Society’s academic work and the U.S.-American public. Some of the prominent cultural figures in the AOS were, among others, Ralph Waldo Emerson, William Cullen Bryant, Bayard Taylor, James Russel Lowell, John William De Forest, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and William Rounseville Alger. Later, the Society would include Edward Morse, William Bigelow, Ernest Fenollosa, and Percival Lowell, each of whom Weir discusses as integral to the formation of modern U.S.-Japanese cultural and political relations and each of whom made indelible impacts on U.S. modernist art and poetry of the twentieth century. While these members did not all participate in scholarly Orientalism, they did publish popular literature about “the Orient,” write newspaper articles and essays about “Oriental” topics, and give public lectures about their “Oriental” travels. These members helped to make Orientalism an integral part of U.S. popular culture in the nineteenth century.

This chapter expands on past explorations of U.S. Orientalism and the AOS by tracing the histories of some of the Society’s early members. In doing so, I hope to challenge two long-held scholarly beliefs about Orientalism in the U.S., namely that nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalists were mostly what Edward Said called “cultural isolatos,” and that early U.S. Orientalism was different from European Orientalism because it was disconnected from U.S. imperialism. I begin with the founder, John Pickering, and his opening address of the AOS to read Orientalism in the U.S. as always, already transnational in nature. While Pickering carves

out a space for a distinctly U.S.-American body of Orientalist scholarship, he simultaneously demonstrates a body of global, Orientalist knowledge constantly moving across national borders. We might thus read nineteenth-century Orientalism in the U.S. as an institutionalized cultural phenomenon made up of professional, transnational scholars and, in turn, rethink the appropriateness of nationalist adjectives before the term “Orientalism.” I then examine texts produced by members of the AOS in coordination with the U.S. Navy—texts created with the explicit goal of aiding in the expansion of what Congress called the U.S. “empire of commerce”—to observe the integral connections between Orientalism in the U.S. and U.S. imperialism in the nineteenth century. Finally, I read selected texts from one of the more famous members of the AOS, William Cullen Bryant, to suggest that the AOS intentionally sought to embed Orientalist research within U.S. popular culture and did so through the work of prominent literary members who had little to do with scholarly Orientalism. Bryant’s *Letters from the East*, specifically, demonstrates how members of the AOS promoted each other’s work outside the Society’s official meetings and outside the pages of the *Journal of the AOS*. In studying the early membership of the AOS, we notice not only a strong culture of Orientalism within the U.S., but a culture of Orientalism that supported policies of U.S. expansion.

Pickering and the Definition of Borders

At the first official meeting of the American Orientalism Society in 1843, the founder and president, John Pickering, delivered a sprawling and remarkably thorough address to welcome the members of his newly-formed society. This speech, which likely lasted well over an hour, would later occupy sixty pages in the first issue of the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* and would require another eighteen pages in appended notes. In what one would best describe as

a literature review of transnational Orientalism to date, Pickering covers an incredible range of topics, but he closes his speech with one important message of inspiration: U.S. Orientalism had arrived.

Throughout this pronouncement, however, there exists a tension between Pickering's national pride and his encouragement of transnational cooperation, which is best evident in his closing remarks. Toward the end of his speech, Pickering asks those present, "With these examples of substantial services in the cause of learning, within the short space of a few years, ought we to entertain a doubt, that we shall one day have it in our power to cooperate on more advantageous terms with our European brethren in promoting [Orientalism's] farther advancement?" (53). He answers his own question with a call to action: "At the present day, Europe and the United States constitute but one literary community; and the reputation of our country demands the continued efforts of every American, to perform his proportion of the common duties as a member of the republic of letters" (53). Few statements offer a greater challenge to the current scholarly understanding of nineteenth-century U.S. Orientalism as something separate from European Orientalism. The AOS, from the beginning, was a society of dedicated Orientalist scholars who understood themselves as part of one larger transnational community, and Pickering, the society's leader, was foremost among them.

John Pickering was not just a lawyer who happened to have an interest in Oriental studies. To begin with, when he became the president of the AOS, he was also already the president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a position which he held from 1839 to his death in 1846. This was a position with predecessors that included U.S. Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams among other prominent U.S. intellectuals. Nor was this his only connection to the Adams family. John's father, Timothy Pickering, was the U.S. Secretary of

State under both John Adams and George Washington. Pickering's uncle, a U.S. District Judge also named John, held the more dubious distinction of being the second person ever impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives and the first person ever convicted and removed from office by the U.S. Senate.⁴ Despite his uncle's political problems, the Pickerings were a well-known and influential family with personal connections to the most powerful people in the nation. His own name-recognition is at least somewhat evident in a widely circulated advertisement for a serialized biography of George Washington which began publication in 1844. One version of the advertisement includes Pickering in a list of names of those "who have given the work the aid of their subscriptions and influence" ("Great National Work" 4). His is the third name in a long list behind former U.S. Presidents John Q. Adams and Martin Van Buren. Pickering always kept illustrious company.

He was also a respected and nationally known politician and scholar himself. Pickering was a representative in the Massachusetts legislature from 1812 to 1813 and again in 1826 as well as a Massachusetts Senator from 1815 to 1816 and again in 1829. Harvard College offered him the position of Hancock Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental Languages in 1806 and, several years later, the Eliot Professorship of Greek Literature. He declined both positions even though the President of Harvard College reportedly offered him any amount of compensation that would convince him take them (Eulogy xxxiv). Pickering later earned a law degree from Harvard in 1835 and became a member of the Board of Overseers at the College. His list of scholarly affiliations is immense and includes being president of both the American Orientalist Society and the aforementioned American Academy of Science and Arts as well as being the Foreign Secretary of the American Antiquarian Society, a fellow of the American Ethnological Society and the American Philosophical Society, and a member in various historical and

scientific societies all around the nation (“Eulogy” lxvii). He was also a corresponding member to various international historical societies including the Oriental Society at Paris (lxvii). When he died in 1846, newspapers around the nation published his obituary. The *American Republican* of Baltimore described him as a “gentleman distinguished for his extensive attainments” who “was regarded as one of the greatest philosophers of the age” with a name “connected with the brightest upon the literary and scientific record of our country” (4). The *Sentinel* of Ypsilanti, Michigan called him a “sound and learned lawyer, and one of the ripest scholars in the country; especially in Greek literature and Indian antiquities” (2). The American Academy of Arts and Sciences honored him with an expansive, eighty-three-page eulogy in their journal. Pickering was hardly an amateur at anything, but was instead one of the leading scholars in the United States in respect to both jurisprudence and Oriental studies.

Pickering makes his expertise evident in his opening address to the American Oriental Society which can only be described as the work of a learned scholar. In the address, Pickering does what one might expect. He defines the key subjects of inquiry, explains the overall state of Orientalist research both globally and within the United States, outlines the obstacles that U.S.-American Orientalists face, and proposes a few motives and justifications for further study. All of these, in turn, justify the formation and maintenance of an American Oriental Society. Yet what is remarkable about this sprawling address is the way that Pickering situates U.S. Orientalists in relation to their European counterparts and the way he defines “the Orient” as the object of study for the American Oriental Society. His address is essentially a literature review of transnational Orientalist research as he moves from location to location recounting at least one prominent finding about each place, beginning with Egypt, moving to Northern Africa, then to the Holy Land, and then in a north-to-south, west-to-east fashion across what he considers to be

the “Orient.” Along the way, the AOS president identifies promising areas for future research and creates an interesting tension between his national colleagues and their European counterparts, one of both cooperation and competition. Embedded within his explanation of a thoroughly transnational Orientalism is a connection to national pride, national achievement, and national expansion.

The address itself is material evidence of the transnational nature of Orientalist scholarship. Pickering’s speech could not have existed without the exchange of information and cooperation between researchers across national boundaries. Cooperation is most often found in Pickering’s frequent examples of knowledge and of actual texts traveling between nations. For example, he mentions the French-born U.S.-American, Peter Du Ponceau, who recently created a Chinese vocabulary that is widely referenced by European scholars and is currently being stored in the museum for the East India Marine Society in Salem, Massachusetts—a museum that in 1844 had already long been housing cultural artifacts from around the world (43). Elsewhere, in a footnote, he mentions a colleague who has recently returned from Germany “with a rich collection of Oriental Manuscripts (formerly in De Sacy’s library) and a valuable body of works in Sanscrit [*sic*] language” (42). Three countries—the U.S., Germany, and France—sharing one body of texts. Another footnote mentions an 1811 vocabulary created by William P. Richardson of Salem which “is made the subject of a particular notice and acknowledgement by the late eminent philologist Baron William Von Humboldt (to whom it was communicated about twenty years ago)” (52). This is just one connection among many between U.S. and German Orientalists (see Sinha 79-81). Almost every description of research contains at least one international connection and at least one footnote identifying an Orientalist scholar. In all, Pickering’s address contains 121 footnotes with twenty-five referencing U.S.-American scholars and seventy

referencing a scholar from either England, Germany, or France. Interestingly, these references are almost evenly divided by country. Whether intentionally or not, Pickering creates an image of Orientalist scholarship that is shared among four principal countries with no one country in the ascendency.

At the same time, other moments in Pickering's address demonstrate a level of nationalist competition. In only the second and third paragraphs of the address, Pickering sets U.S.-Americans against their European counterparts. He first implies that U.S. missionaries and travellers have had greater "results" in the last few years of travel in the East than their European counterparts have had in the past two hundred (1). He continues to say that,

as Americans, deeply interested in the reputation of our country, we cannot but take pride in the reflections, that, at the numerous stations of the American missionaries in the East and other parts of the globe, we have reason to believe there is a greater number of individuals, who are masters of the languages and literature of their pagan and other converts, than are to be found among the missionaries of any one nation of Europe. (2)

For Pickering, the ability to be fluent in the languages of the East is paramount. He repeats the same boast later in his address (48). This quote partly explains why the *Journal of the AOS* devotes so many of its pages to the study of linguistics. Pickering directly ties linguistic mastery to the religious conversion of people and suggests that the U.S. is the best at both.⁵

While this is Pickering's only direct nationalist boast within his address, he closes the printed version of his text with a lengthy appendix of mostly U.S. resources that cumulatively outweigh the numerous transnational footnotes. The first section of his appendix lists texts from U.S.-American missionaries—twenty-nine in all—who have provided translations and

vocabularies of the Syriac, Mahratta, Hindustani, Tamil, Telugu, Siamese, Chinese, Japanese, and Hawaiian languages, and other texts about missions in China, Western Africa, Greece, Syria, Constantinople, Siam, Tavoy, and Assam (62-4). Pickering adds that “this summary is very incomplete, in consequence of some documents not being at hand” (64). His appendix then continues with a section on “American Voyages, Travels, and Other Works Relating to the East and Polynesia” which includes memoirs of independent travel from years living among some specified peoples, narratives of shipwrecks and captivities, travel journals through various locations, reports on travels with the U.S. Navy, missionary researches, and several voyages around the world (64-67). They include, in no particular order, specific voyages to Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, Afghanistan, Kurdistan, Armenia, India, Hawaii, Burma, Japan, Malaysia, Siam, China, the Society Islands, Liberia, and Asia and Africa more generally. Pickering thus closes his address with abundant evidence that the U.S. had already expanded across the globe and had already built an extensive body of Orientalist scholarship before the birth of the American Oriental Society. For Pickering, this list does not so much represent U.S. dominance as it suggests that U.S. scholars will continue to “perform [their] proportion of the common duties as a member of the republic of letters” (53). The founder of the AOS uses this address to plant his country firmly within the category of “countries that study the Orient.” In other words, Pickering uses his address to define the boundaries of the “Occident” and, simultaneously, the boundaries of the “Orient.”

Pickering is more explicit about this second definition when he attempts to outline the parameters of study for the AOS. What is most interesting, and what is most important in framing the chapters that follow in this dissertation, is that Pickering recognizes that the term

“Oriental” has a “somewhat indefinite” meaning. He explains that the goal of the AOS is to study the

history, languages, literature, and general characteristics of the various people, both civilized and barbarous, who are usually classed under the somewhat indefinite name of *Oriental* nations; including not only those nations who at this day are inhabitants of Asia, but those who in ages past had their origin from Asiatic ancestors, and have been driven by wars, or other causes, from their original abode into Africa or Europe, but have still kept up their Oriental character, and are properly to be considered as Orientals. (5)

Therefore, two things might mark one as Oriental: one's genealogy and one's cultural characteristics, both of which are things that an Orientalist could usually only guess at or ascribe onto an-other. While genealogy today might *seem* like a fact-based science, this was not the case in 1842, when knowledge about the movement of civilizations was largely based on limited data and often premised on racist ideologies.⁶ Some genealogical theories—like those we will see later in this chapter from Horatio Hale—were based on linguistic features or similarities between cultural artifacts or mythologies. Most other genealogical theories—like those I analyze in subsequent chapters of this dissertation—were based primarily on subjective interpretations of cultural characteristics. In practice, this becomes a kind of chicken-egg relationship. Orientalists use ascribed characteristics as evidence for certain genealogical theorizing; the genealogical theorizing, in turn, primes the researcher for certain observations of character. Regardless, the important point in Pickering's definition of the “Orient” is that the “Orient” is not isolated to a single geographical area because “Oriental” people have, since “ages past,” been moving from their “original abode.”⁷ Hence, in practice, an Orientalist might define any group anywhere in the

world as "Oriental." Scholars today often overlook the nineteenth-century belief in historical Oriental mobility. Consequently, most studies of Orientalism today first establish geographical, and most often nationalist, boundaries for their selection of evidence. Just as Orientalism as a scholarly field of study existed as what Sinha calls "a collection of ideas, which was not singular, nor consistent, but rather fungible and fragmented," so was the "Orient" and the "Occident" fungible and fragmented (76). Pickering and his fellow AOS members understood the mobility of both Occident and Orient, and this knowledge shaped their Orientalist practices.

While Pickering creates a division between those who *study* Orientals and those who *are* Orientals, and while he clearly recognizes that the study of Orientalism is connected to the spread of U.S.-Americans across the globe, he never directly attaches U.S. Orientalism to U.S. imperialism. In fact, he actually attempts—maybe naively—to separate the two. At one point in his address, he quotes the famous English Orientalist, Sir William Jones, as saying that the English only support Oriental studies because of "interest" (49). Here, Jones means economic and political interests rather than scholarly curiosity. Pickering writes that "whatever we may accomplish, it is to be hoped that we may be stimulated in our efforts by a higher motive than the poor and sordid one of *interest*, which Sir William Jones so emphatically ascribes to his countrymen" (50). Pickering explains that the focus on linguistics and language is a "simple and yet so certain" method for testing the "affinities and differences of nations" (57). The study of Oriental languages, he argues, is the key to understanding the history of humanity. He recognizes that "some persons . . . may be ready to ask, in the current formula of the day, what *utility* is to be derived from these extended studies of the languages and literature of the globe?" (57). Ultimately, Pickering settles that the research must be done "because a natural desire for such a knowledge has been implanted in man by his Creator for wise purposes" and that they must

pursue this desire even though he “cannot demonstrate their direct applicability to any common purpose that would in popular language be denominated practically *useful*” (60). In other words, Pickering argues that the English study the Orient for economic and political reasons and that U.S.-Americans should study the Orient out of a pure desire to learn.

One might label Pickering’s desire to protect Orientalism from politics naive or willfully ignorant. Of course, it is this exact address that Edward Said references in order to make his claim that “Oriental studies—then as now—was political, not simply scholarly” (294). Said observes that Pickering “made the very clear point that America proposed for itself the study of the Orient in order to follow the example of the imperial European powers,” as numerous references within his speech, such as his references to the Treaty of Nanking and to the screw propeller, “all suggest the imperial constellation facilitating European American penetration of the Orient” (294). Said uses Pickering’s speech to argue that Orientalism was implicated in EuroAmerican⁸ expansion. What Said misses from Pickering’s address—likely because he only quotes from a summary of the address written over eighty years later⁹—is the fact that the U.S. was already an imperial power and also that Pickering did not view the AOS as “following” their European counterparts but rather viewed it as already in competition, and in some respects already ahead of, their European counterparts. Still, Said’s point is particularly astute.

Even before the founding of the AOS, Pickering recognized the transnational mobility of the “Orient,” and he also recognized that his scholarly Orientalism was dependent on the global mobility of the U.S. government and military. One of Pickering’s eulogists, Daniel Appleton White, explains that “when the United States Exploring Expedition was in contemplation, Mr. Pickering exerted all his influence to draw the attention of the government, and those more immediately concerned in the undertaking, to ‘the various native languages of the different tribes

of people that might be visited by the expedition” (liv). In fact, Pickering and fellow AOS founder Peter Du Ponceau were in frequent communication with the Secretary of the U.S. Navy to ensure that the expedition included scientists. Du Ponceau wrote the official instructions for the scientist on the expedition and he and Pickering selected who those scientists would be (see Mackert). The Navy and Congress heeded Pickering and Du Ponceau’s advice. When the U.S. Exploring Expedition began in 1838, Congress ordered the commanding officer, Charles Wilkes, to include a number of scholars, including several naturalists, philologists, and linguists who would become members of the AOS upon their return to the United States (Wilkes viii). One was Pickering’s nephew, Charles, and another was Horatio Hale, both of whom became prominent members of the AOS and published their own texts with information gathered during the expedition. Aside from the expedition, Pickering surely also must have been aware of the numerous members of the AOS who were already deeply connected to the U.S. government and U.S. expansion. Although Pickering’s opening address does not directly speak to how embedded Orientalism was in U.S. culture or to the connection between transnational Orientalism and U.S. imperialism, the original membership roll from the first issue of the *Journal of the AOS* speaks to both.

Early Members of the AOS: Leaders in Education, Culture, Politics, and Empire

The first membership roster of the AOS includes numerous influential leaders in U.S. society, politics, and academia. These were leaders of the country who had name recognition at home and abroad. For instance, Pickering’s two vice presidents at the time of the Society’s founding were world-renowned scholars themselves. The *New York Times* described one, Dr. Edward Robinson, as “one of the most distinguished scholars of biblical learning in this

country,” but he was actually one of the most distinguished scholars of biblical learning anywhere (“Death of Prof. Robinson”). Robinson published *Biblical Researches in Palestine and Adjacent Countries* in 1841, a text he compiled while living in Germany. One biographer describes the text as the work that “gave the first impetus to modern biblical research” (“Robinson” 284). The text also earned Robinson a gold medal from the Royal Geographical Society of London, awarded to Robinson in 1842, the same year of the founding of the AOS (see letter from Jackson to Robinson).¹⁰ Robinson was a U.S. scholar who trained and published in Germany, did research in Palestine, and gained his highest recognition in England.

Moses Stuart, Pickering’s other vice president of the AOS, was equally well-known and influential. The *New York Herald* called him the “Father of Biblical Literature,” and he was a professor of sacred literature at Andover Theological Seminary for thirty-eight years (“Death of Professor”). He was well-known within U.S. media as one of the nation’s leading religious educators. Stuart’s name also appears frequently within mid-nineteenth-century debates on U.S. slavery due to his controversial interpretation that the Bible sanctioned slavery, but that slavery in the U.S. was still morally wrong (See Garrison; Wilson).

Other influential members of the AOS included Reverend Theodore D. Woolsey, President of Yale College, and Edward Everett, President of Harvard University.¹¹ Everett was not just the president of Harvard, though, as if that is not influential enough. When he joined the AOS, he was the acting U.S. Minister to the United Kingdom under President John Tyler and, later, under President James Polk. President Tyler offered Everett the position of Minister and Commissioner to China in 1843, but Everett declined the appointment (see “Changes at Washington”).¹² He had only recently ended his governorship of Massachusetts when he joined the AOS and would later go on to become a U.S. Senator and the U.S. Secretary of State under

President Millard Fillmore. Before his political career, he was already a well-known orator and was the editor of the *North American Review* (see “Everett, Edward”).¹³

The initial membership rolls also included numerous people directly involved in crafting U.S. foreign policy. Elijah Cole Bridgman was the first U.S.-American missionary to China (Bridgman). John Porter Brown was the secretary and dragoman of the U.S. Embassy in Constantinople. While there he wrote an Orientalist text titled *The Dervishes; or Oriental Spiritualism*, a book he published in London. Elihu Burritt was a prominent peace advocate, abolitionist, lecturer, publisher, and the U.S. Diplomat to England. Alexander Cotheal was the founder of the American Geological Society and the President of the American Ethnological Society and in 1871 became the Consul General of Nicaragua in the U.S. (“The Obituary Record”). Cotheal also became a Director of the AOS in 1866 and held the position for more than twenty years.

Some members were missionaries, like Hiram Bingham, but missionary work did not preclude them from the sordid influence of economic and political interests, nor did it prevent them from capitalizing on the publication of Orientalist scholarship. Bingham was the leader of the first missionary trip to the Hawaiian islands where he lived for twenty years. According to *Appletons' Cyclopaedia of Biography*, he held “strong influence over the rulers of the islands” (“Bingham” 263, Vol. 1). After his time in Hawaii, Bingham published a book titled *A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands, or the Civil, Religious and Political History of those Islands: Comprising a Practical View of the Missionary Operations, Connected with the Introduction and Progress of Christianity and Civilization among the Hawaiian People*. One advertisement for the book describes the original condition of the “rude barbarians” as living “in a state of unmitigated heathenism and idolatry” until Bingham and his missionaries brought

about a “change, so radical, so rapid, so great, and so *beneficent*” (“New Work on the Hawaiian Islands”). In short, Bingham opened the Hawaiian islands for colonization.

James Jackson Jarves similarly built his career upon his time in Hawaii. Jarves was a world traveler who settled in the Hawaiian islands where he started the islands’ first newspaper, *The Polynesian*. *The Polynesian* printed an extensive article praising the first issue of the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* on October 26, 1844 (Jarves). In 1844, Jarves became the director of the government press in Hawaii and later became the Hawaiian government’s special commissioner to negotiate treaties on behalf of Hawaii with the U.S., France, and Great Britain (see “Jarves”). Jarves, a U.S.-American citizen, was the person negotiating on behalf of the Hawaiians with the United States.

Another prominent AOS member and U.S. treaty maker was Caleb Cushing, a lifelong politician and diplomat and an enthusiastic proponent of U.S. expansion.¹⁴ President John Tyler contentiously appointed Cushing the U.S. Minister to China in 1843 after the Senate refused Cushing’s nomination to be Secretary of the Treasury (see “Washington”). The next year, Cushing brokered the first treaty between China and the U.S. in 1844 (“Cushing” *Appletons’* Vol. 2, pp. 38). Cushing’s membership in the AOS and background in Oriental studies likely helped him secure his position as Minister to China. The *New York Herald*, for instance, describes Cushing’s appointment as “eminently felicitous” partly because Cushing’s “acquaintance with the history, literature, politics, customs, and present condition of China is remarkably extensive and accurate; and considerably surpasses, we will venture to say, that of any European who has resided in the Celestial Empire” (“The Chinese Mission”). While Cushing’s appointment was embroiled in political intrigue, several newspapers readily conceded that Cushing’s background in “Oriental” studies made him an apt choice for the job.

Cushing is but one example of many direct ties between the American Oriental Society, the U.S. government, and U.S. foreign policy. Like Cushing, George Gliddon, a U.S. Consul in Cairo, was also a member of the AOS. He assisted fellow AOS member Samuel George Morton in writing *Crania Aegyptica* (1844) which followed Morton's own *Crania Americana* (1839). Both texts argued for Morton's belief in polygenism and contributed to scientific racism more generally. Gliddon himself published his own ethnological tome with fellow racial scientist Josiah Nott, a text titled *Types of Mankind* (1854). Gliddon used his position as the U.S. Consul in Cairo for profit in numerous ways. Not only did he collect Egyptian skulls to send to Samuel Morton, but he also procured and shipped the first giraffe to the United States (Vivian 105).¹⁵ After his time as a U.S. Consul, Gliddon traveled throughout England and the U.S. giving lectures and displaying numerous African artifacts of various kinds (see Vivian 105-111). His final venture was to join the Honduras Inter-Oceanic Railroad Company, a Pennsylvania-based company that desired a railroad across Central America to cut the time of oceanic travel (Vivian 110).

Examples of AOS members intersecting with the U.S. government and U.S. foreign policy are common in the early days of the Society, and this continued throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁶ The list of people here is hardly comprehensive. Still, two other early members, in particular—Horatio Hale and William Lynch—demonstrate how scholarly Orientalism supported U.S. imperialism, and vice versa, more than anyone mentioned thus far. Specifically, the work produced by these two members reveal how U.S. imperialism enabled the production of Orientalist texts which, in turn, supported, justified, and made possible further imperial ventures.

Orientalists at Sea: The U.S. Navy, Orientalism, and the Empire of Commerce

Horatio Hale and William Lynch were early members of the AOS who participated in U.S. naval expeditions to foreign lands and, afterward, produced texts at the behest of the U.S. government. William Lynch was himself a commanding officer in the U.S. Navy. He published not only an official report but also a personal narrative. As both took part in congressionally sanctioned and funded expeditions and published texts based on these expeditions, the connection between imperialism and Orientalism is especially explicit. In reading the texts that these Orientalists produced, we can also recognize various ways that Orientalism operated in relation to the United States—some that scholars of Orientalism in Europe will find familiar, and some that may challenge the way scholars have previously thought about Orientalism. Horatio Hale's text demonstrates how philology could be used in real time to dominate a foreign population as the circumstances of the text's creation illustrate how Hale's philology supported the destruction of the Fiji islands. Lynch's text shows how the idea of "the Orient" was not geographically bound and could instead be mapped onto any place or any people, while the book's publication history reveals how popular these types of texts were with both U.S. and European readers.

Horatio Hale joined the U.S. Exploration Expedition of 1838 as the official philologist. He was not invited by the expedition's commanding officer, Charles Wilkes of the U.S. Navy, but was rather appointed by the U.S. Congress who designed and planned the Expedition and who provided extensive instructions to Wilkes before the commencement of the voyage. Congress instructed Wilkes and the naval ships under his command to explore the islands of the Pacific Ocean, Australia, China, Japan, and the western coastline of North America, all in an effort to inform, support, and secure the U.S. whaling industry and commerce in general (see Wilkes xxv-vii). Congress also saw fit to include a group of scholars among Wilkes's crew. They

wrote that “although the primary object of the Expedition is the promotion of great interests of commerce and navigation, yet you will take all occasions, not incompatible with the great purposes of your undertaking, to extend the bounds of science, and promote the acquisition of knowledge” (xxix). A list of names followed this command paired with their scientific occupations which included two members of the AOS, one of them being Horatio Hale.¹⁷ He used this appointment to collect observations on various cultures and languages that he would ultimately publish as *Ethnography and Philology* (1846).

Brief attention to the Wilkes Expedition and Wilkes’s instructions from Congress can demonstrate not only the global spread of U.S. empire and the way U.S.-Americans thought of this empire, but also the role of Orientalist scholarship in supporting this empire. The expedition was hardly the first of its kind. As William Appleman Williams recounts in *Empire as a Way of Life*, “[U.S.-] American merchants and traders were sending their ships on far voyages into the Pacific, as well as to Europe and Latin America” by the end of the American Revolution (81). By 1821, the U.S. Government had established the South American Squadron, and by 1835 it had ships stationed in Asia (Williams 82). Williams connects this expansion of the U.S. Navy directly to the global expansion of the U.S. economy. In one stunning statistic, Williams observes that U.S. exports were already \$52.6 million USD in 1815, but would reach more than \$400 million USD in 1860 (83). The U.S. public was very much aware of these figures as government officials frequently connected the expansion of the U.S. Navy with access to Asian markets, and access to Asian markets with the growth, prosperity, and greatness of the U.S. (see Williams 83-8).

Wilkes’s instructions from Congress echo this belief and reveal how U.S. lawmakers framed the expansion of U.S. empire. The instructions printed in Wilkes’s *Narrative of the*

United States Exploring Expedition (1845) state that “the Expedition is not for conquest, but discovery. Its objects are all peaceful; they are to extend the empire of commerce and science; to diminish the hazards of the ocean, and point out to future navigators a course by which they may avoid dangers and find safety” (Wilkes, Vol. 1, xxviii). This quote entails an odd paradox often found within U.S. imperialist ideologies: empire, but not conquest. Despite this disavowal of conquest, and despite Congress’s instruction that the Expedition should “neither interfere, nor permit any wanton interference with the customs, habits, manners, or prejudices of the natives of such countries or islands as you may visit,” Congress also recognized that the U.S. intended to keep a squadron of naval ships cruising in the South Pacific in the future. Thus, they also instructed Wilkes and his men to find a port in or near the Fiji islands and “use your endeavors to make such arrangements as will insure a supply of fruits, vegetables, and fresh provisions, to vessels visiting it hereafter, teaching the natives the modes of cultivation, and encouraging them to raise hogs in greater abundance” (xxvii). In other words, effect an indirect colonization. Teach the natives to be friendly, teach them to feed U.S. sailors, but do not harm them or interfere with their culture.

Wilkes was not successful in fulfilling these instructions, at least in relation to Fiji. After he spent a short time in the island chain, a group of Fijians stole a small boat from the Expedition and about a thousand dollars’ worth of equipment. In retaliation, Wilkes ordered his men to burn an entire village. Shortly thereafter, a second misunderstanding between the Expedition and the Fijians resulted in the death of two U.S.-Americans, one being the nephew of Captain Wilkes. In retaliation, Wilkes and his men burned two more villages and killed between fifty-seven and eighty-two Fijian warriors (Wilkes, Vol. 3, 281).¹⁸ At the ceremony of surrender, Wilkes proudly ensured the Fijians that any future act of aggression towards white people would result in their

complete annihilation (281-2). While Congress was explicit that the Expedition was to be a friendly venture to secure commerce, Wilke's actions did not necessarily contradict his instructions. Congress had also informed Wilkes that "treachery is one of the invariable characteristics of savages and barbarians" and that theft is the most common problem when traveling among them (Vol. 1, xxviii). Wilkes was allowed to protect his ships against treachery and punish theft as he saw fit. If we learn anything from Wilkes's account of the Expedition, we learn that the U.S. "empire of commerce" was always secured through U.S. military force.

The conflict between the Fijians and Wilkes's men, and the general spread of the "empire of commerce," has more to do with Horatio Hale, the ethnographer and philologist, than one might originally assume. Ethnographers, like Hale, provided cultural knowledge about the people of the Pacific Islands that explorers like Wilkes used to their advantage. One specific example of this occurs directly after Wilkes's conflict with the Fijians. After what would be the final conflict, Wilkes observes a woman on shore with a number of peace offerings. He declines this offering because, he explains,

I had obtained a sufficient knowledge of their manners and customs to know that it was usual for them, when defeated, and at the mercy of their enemies, to beg pardon and sue for mercy, before the whole of the attacking party, in order that all might be witnesses. I also knew that they never acknowledged themselves conquered unless this was done, and would construe my failing to require it of them into an admission that I had not succeeded in overcoming them. (Vol. 3, 279-280).

Hale himself does not mention this specific information within *Ethnography and Philology*, but he does include an extensive section on Fijian governmental practices during peacetime and

wartime. Although he does not mention this specific practice of peace-making, Hale was the first U.S.-American to compile such information about the Fijian culture and language. Wilkes likely received his information from Hale, his resident ethnographer, or from a similar ethnographic text. Congress explicitly instructed Wilkes to “neither interfere, nor permit any wanton interference with the customs, habits, manners, or prejudices of the natives of such countries or islands as you may visit,” and they needed Orientalists like Hale to inform them exactly what customs they should not interfere with.

Ethnography and Philology explains clearly what kind of information Wilkes was learning about the Fijians. One crucial example that may have shaped Wilke’s violent show of force lies in Hale’s section on Fijian character. As Hale transitions from a study of Polynesians to the study of Fijians, he struggles to express just why the Fijians are so much worse despite sharing many of the same cultural and character traits (50). Hale finally settles on the following explanation:

The truth perhaps is, that the difference in the character, as in the physiognomy of the two races, lies not so much in any particular trait, as in a general debasement of the whole,—a lower grade of moral feeling, and a greater activity of the evil passions. The Polynesians seem to be cruel, dishonest, and selfish, rather because they have always been so, and no better path has ever been opened to them, than from any violent propensity to those vices. . . . But the Feejeeans are by nature and inclination a bloodthirsty, treacherous, and rapacious people. Their evil qualities do not lie merely on the surface of the character, but have their roots deep in their moral organization. (50)

This specific example is critical because it justifies the imperial violence that the U.S. Exploring Expedition ultimately enacts on the Fijians. The Fijians will not respond to diplomacy because they are a “bloodthirsty, treacherous, and rapacious people.” Hale’s final conclusion about the difference between Fijians and Polynesians is that “the Feejeean may be said to differ from the Polynesian as the wolf from the dog; both, when wild, are perhaps equally fierce, but the ferocity of the one may be easily subdued, while that of the other is deep-seated and untamable” (50). The Fijian is not only a dangerous animal, but one that is “untamable.” Wilkes’s demand of a public surrender was likely informed by knowledge gathered from Hale and it followed a series of events in which Wilkes’s men burned three entire villages and killed between fifty-seven and eighty-two Fijians. Hale published his conclusions about the Fijians after the Expedition and after Wilkes’s military domination of the islands—an event that Hale seemingly forgets in *Ethnography and Philology*—but the sentiment is certainly related to the events of the Expedition. The former justifies the latter, and vice versa, as Wilkes likely began his relationship with the Fijians with some preconceived idea that Fijians were “untamable.”

Hale’s text demonstrates how professional Orientalism supported U.S. imperialism in a direct, immediate way. The U.S. government desired compliant supporters of U.S. trade. Accordingly, the U.S. government directly funded and supported the creation of Orientalist texts like Hale’s *Ethnography and Philology* in order to inform and guide the U.S. empire of commerce. The first half of Hale’s text provides information on cultural practices that must be understood and might be exploited. The second half of his text provides an extensive dictionary of Pacific and Indigenous American languages and extended discussions on various linguistic practices. The empire of commerce could not be built without communication. Hale’s ethnographic and philological knowledge thus supports the “empire of commerce” by acting as a

crucial guide book which likely informed, in real time, the actions of Charles Wilkes and the U.S. Navy. While Hale was maybe a more nuanced Orientalist than most, his work still supports a separation of the world into two distinct categories and still supports and justifies U.S. imperialist practices.¹⁹

The Wilkes Expedition was not the only U.S. naval expedition involving members of the AOS, though, and one final example is relevant here as it consolidates and expands upon many of the issues pertinent to my readings of John Pickering and Horatio Hale. Shortly after the conclusion of the U.S. Exploring Expedition in the Pacific Ocean, the U.S. also sent a naval expedition to explore the River Jordan and the Dead Sea. At the head of that expedition was William F. Lynch, an officer in the U.S. Navy and a member of the American Oriental Society.

The text that Lynch produced as a result of this expedition was immensely popular. Lynch printed his official report for the U.S. Senate in 1849, but it was mostly a simple, linear narration of basic events. In 1851 and 1852, the Senate added other materials from the Expedition including geological, ornithological, and botanical reports and maps of the area explored.²⁰ Alongside the official Senate report, Lynch independently published his *Narrative of the U.S. Expedition to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea* (1849). The book received rave reviews and merited nine U.S. editions in less than four years and another British edition in 1855. One 1850 review from *Lady's Book*, reprinted in an advertisement for a sixth edition, states that Lynch's work "will do more to elevate the character of our national literature than any work that has appeared for years" (*Narrative* 340). Lynch's *Narrative* essentially turned each sentence of the Senate report into an entire chapter replete with stories of adventure and personal observations. The book kept swelling with additional information, maps, charts, and drawings with each new edition and, apparently, people kept buying it. While the Senate's report was only

thirty-seven pages, an advertisement for the sixth edition of Lynch's *Narrative* boasted of over five hundred pages (see *Narrative* 340).

The makeup of Lynch's readership also lends support to John Pickering's claim that "Europe and the United States constitute but one literary community," what Pickering describes as a "republic of letters." In the preface to an 1855 British edition, British dramatist James Sheridan Knowles refers to Lynch as a "man of genius" and speaks directly to the transnational relationship between British and U.S. scholarship. Knowles writes, "[W]e hail with honest, warm, and prideful satisfaction any triumph in arts, letters, or science, which our Transatlantic brethren may achieve—even though, as in the present instance, they happen to out-do us. Both are of the same stock; and, therefore, *their* success is *ours*, though not our *own*" (Knowles iv). Knowles groups himself with Lynch, collectively opposed to "that region of most mysterious interest—the Dead Sea" (iii). He then suggests that Lynch's text would "present an instructive lesson and example to all who may contemplate the chance of coming into contact with human nature in its wildest and most lawless phase" (iii-iv). Knowles essentially summarizes Lynch's representation of the Orient: a place where human nature exists in its wildest and most lawless phase. Knowles also summarizes Lynch's authorial perspective: the Orient is a region of "mysterious interest," wild and lawless, that explorers can travel to and readers can "contemplate."

With such an introduction, one might guess at many of the characteristics of Lynch's *Narrative*. Lynch was sent by the U.S. government on an exploratory expedition to take geological measurements of the area surrounding the Dead Sea. Lynch never indicates exactly why these measurements were important. Instead, he produces a narrative that reads more like a tale of adventure than an account of scientific observations. His Orientalist text is particularly

fitting with its genre and nothing is particularly noteworthy about Lynch's narrative: he did not "discover" any new location or experience something previously unexperienced. What is noteworthy is that his Orientalist text comes with the express support of the U.S. government and that his Orientalist depictions often draw comparisons to non-EuroAmerican Others within the U.S. empire.

Lynch describes the people he meets in and around the Dead Sea via typically Orientalist discourse. The Arabs are a "wild people," "notorious thieves," a rabble with "thievish propensities" and "costumes picturesque and dirty," a "sensually imaginative" people "incapable of a refined, spiritual idea" (62, 67, 85, 147). Each description of the Arab within Lynch's *Narrative* serves to separate the Arab from the white EuroAmerican on a spectrum of civilization. One passage in particular stands out, when Lynch describes meeting a Turkish sultan in the sultan's palace. Lynch remains confident and controlled as he enters the sultan's palace as an emissary of the U.S. government. He describes the excessive decadence as he passes through the interior, and he notes the mysterious covered room that he assumes is a harem. He then recounts an awkward exchange between himself and a guard over his refusal to remove his sword. When he finally reaches his interview with the sultan, a misunderstanding throws Lynch into a brief moment of shock:

The interview was not a protracted one. In the course of it, as requested by [Dabney Carr, U.S. Resident Minister to the Ottoman Empire], I presented him, in the name of the President of the United States, with some biographies and prints, illustrative of the character and habits of our North American Indians, the work of American artists. He looked at some of them, which were placed before him by an attendant, and said that he considered them as evidences of the advancement of

the United States in civilization, and would treasure them as a souvenir of the good feeling of its government towards him. At the word “civilization,” pronounced in French, I started: for it seemed singular, coming from the lips of a Turk, and applied to our country. I have since learned that he is but a student in French, and presume that, by the word “civilization,” he meant the arts and sciences. (49)

Lynch provides no other information about this meeting aside from the fact that he was granted leave to travel through the sultan’s territory. He never attempts to explain if the sultan’s judgement on civilization refers to the people depicted in the texts and prints or if it refers to the people who created the documents. Lynch just cannot bring himself to believe that a Turk could have any authoritative knowledge about “civilization” at all, and especially any right to judge the progress of Lynch’s culture. This startling scene evidently haunted Lynch afterward as his concluding statement, “I have since learned,” suggests that he left this meeting confused and searched for knowledge to correct the power imbalance within his own shattered psyche. His superiority is ultimately restored in his own mind and the text continues.

Why Lynch felt it appropriate to present a Turkish sultan with biographies and prints about Indigenous Americans in the name of the President of the United States illustrates a separate theme within Lynch’s text. Lynch frequently develops his representations of Arabs through repeated comparisons to global Others. In this way, Lynch’s Orientalism is primarily a transnational Orientalism. Just as important, his transnational Orientalism is directly connected to imperialist practices. Upon leaving the interview with the sultan, Lynch remarks that “the expression of [the sultan’s] features at the moment of passing, was that of profound melancholy. Like the Mexican prince, of whom he so much reminded me, his mind may be overshadowed by

the general spreading of opinion, that the Ottoman rule upon the European side of Turkey is drawing to a close” (53). Lynch’s “Mexican prince” refers to a defeated Mexican prince whom Lynch observed during his service in the Mexican-American War. Like the Mexican prince who was losing his power to the U.S.-American invasion, the Turkish sultan was losing his power to the invasions of Europeans.

Similarly, Lynch equates the Egyptian occupation of the Jordan river and their subsequent repression of the Bedouins with “our plan of the military occupation of Florida” (107). In this instance, he equates Indigenous Americans with Bedouins, a comparison that would continue throughout the nineteenth century (as I discuss at greater length in Chapter Three). Still elsewhere in the text, Lynch describes Arabs in general as “bold and dexterous swimmers, as much at home in the water as the natives of the Sandwich Islands” (61). While this reads like a compliment, the compliment serves to connect these Arabs to other oppressed “Orientals” and, in turn, to separate these Arabs from Lynch and his “Occidental” readership. Lynch repeatedly uses the knowledge he already has about his “Orient”—Mexico, Indigenous Americans, the Sandwich Islands—to understand his encounters in his new “Orient”—Egypt, Turkey, Syria. For Lynch, his new observations confirm what he already knew, that the Orient includes all of these people and all of these people are as different as one might be from EuroAmericans.

The texts produced by Hale and Lynch—both members of the American Oriental Society—were each produced as a result of U.S. military expeditions sanctioned and funded by the U.S. government with the express purpose of expanding the U.S. “empire of commerce.” We learn from these texts that this empire of commerce was not benevolent and was actually more similar to Europe’s direct colonization than many scholars may have previously thought. The

expedition of which Hale was a part destroyed three villages and killed numerous Pacific islanders, and forced other Pacific islanders, under threat of annihilation, to drastically alter their agricultural practices to support U.S. economic and military activity in the region.

In respect to Orientalist discourse, we should recognize, as Schueller does, that U.S.-Americans have written “about different Orients and produced a series of literary works in which the nation was variously embodied as vigorous, active, masculinized, and morally upright Columbia-as-empire, against versions of a decaying, passive, demasculinized, deviant, or spiritual Orient” since as early as the 1790s (3). Schueller, though, describes what she calls U.S. Orientalisms—with special attention to the pluralization—as a diverse nationalist tradition observing and writing about various, distinct, geographically-bound Orients. I am suggesting that these three texts, and the various texts produced by members of the American Oriental Society, demonstrate that nineteenth-century Orientalism was not always constructed along nationalist or even regional boundaries. Within the texts of Hale and Lynch, each author recognizes and interacts with a transnational body of Orientalist precedents—what we now call Orientalist discourse—that rarely remarks on national distinctions between scholars. Each author uses his scientific observations to separate the world into two distinct categories—Occident and Orient, civilized and savage—but these categories flow across and within national and regional borders. Finally, each author develops definitions of these two separate worlds through descriptions of migrations and comparisons across cultures.

When we take into account members of the AOS like Hale and Lynch in combination with the numerous other members connected to the U.S. government and U.S. imperial practices in various ways, we might recognize that the United States did in fact contain a robust body of professional Orientalists who supported and were supported by nationalist, political, and

economic interests abroad. And while the United States may have never had the exact type of direct colonization that its European counterparts had—not that Europeans practiced the same types of colonization in each part of the world—the U.S. government and U.S.-American explorers explicitly understood their global practices as the expansion of a U.S. “empire of commerce” early in the nineteenth century. This empire demanded changes to numerous cultures, economies, and agricultural systems as part of its effort to dominate “Oriental” spaces and control global trade. Professional Orientalists within the U.S. supported these efforts. Yet the membership of the American Oriental Society was not limited only to professional Orientalists. The society made intentional efforts to include members who could translate Orientalist research to the U.S. public, members who could provide the crucial link between the U.S. empire, the American Oriental Society, and the U.S. public.

The “Author of America” and the AOS

The American Oriental Society was not only composed of professional Orientalists, Biblical scholars, missionaries, philologists, ethnologists, explorers, congresspeople, and members of the U.S. Navy. Orientalism has never been only related to science and imperialism. The Society also included journalists, novelists, poets, and artists who were not “professional” Orientalists. A study of the AOS must include these people because their inclusion within the Society was intentional and powerful as their *cultural* contributions were critical for the success of the scientific, political, and imperial contributions of the Society’s other members. Said explains Orientalism as “a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts,” and his attention to the “aesthetic” is one of the primary reasons why the study of Orientalism has become so relevant to the field of

literary studies (*Orientalism* 12). Attention to the aesthetic is crucial for linking the actions of a military or a government to the culture that sustains such militaries and governments, especially in democratic republics like the United States. But even more important than garnering social support, Said adds later in *Culture and Imperialism* that “the authority of the observer, and of European geographical centrality, is buttressed by a *cultural discourse* relegating and confining the non-European to a secondary racial, cultural, ontological status” (59; emphasis added). Said argues that texts circulating within popular culture primed the consumers of these texts to accept the authority of “professional” Orientalists, and we might recognize this theory operating within the conscious practices of the AOS.

In the 1847 Annual Report of the Directors of the AOS, the Directors include a plea addressed specifically to “those members of the Society whose avocations do not permit them to engage directly in oriental studies” (“Proceedings, 1849” xxvi). This would likely include most of the aforementioned literary figures. The Report encourages these members to promote the Society through their individual interests and explains that “their cooperation is important to the prosperity of the Society, as they form a connecting link between the few in this country who give themselves to oriental researches, and the literary public of the country, at large, and may be expected to spread the interest in such pursuits, more widely, among our men of education” (xxvi). Thus, the professionally diverse membership of the AOS was an intentional design. Even more important, the Directors of the Society understood that their non-scholarly, non-missionary members were the crucial link between the Society’s works and U.S.-American culture.

Who were these members whose avocations did not permit them to engage directly in Oriental studies? The membership of the AOS included the likes of William Cullen Bryant, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bayard Taylor, William Cowper Prime, John William De Forest,

Thomas Wentworth Higginson, James Russell Lowell, and William Rounseville Alger. Each of these figures was, and still is, known much more for their literary influence than their Orientalism, but they were each crucial to the spread of Orientalism within the United States and the American Oriental Society knew that.

One brief example, before I explore these literary members in the chapters that follow, is the work of William Cullen Bryant. Bryant joined the American Oriental Society in 1859 with a letter to Daniel Coit Gilman²¹ that reads, “I enclose you five dollars—the Annual Assessment for the Oriental Society, together with a stamp. May I ask the favor of a receipt” (*Letters*, Volume IV 124). He was first listed on the membership roll in the sixth volume of the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* in 1860 and remained a member until at least 1870 when he sent his last known letter to Gilman with his annual membership fee (“May, 1860”; *Letters*, Volume V 372).²²

Bryant was not what one would likely think to call an Orientalist. Scholars today typically think of Bryant as either one of the first great American poets or as the politically active and influential editor of the *New York Evening Post*. Gilbert Muller describes him as “arguably the country’s foremost cultural authority,” a “celebrity for almost seventy-five years,” “America’s premier poet,” and “the nation’s most respected newspaper editor,” “famous since childhood, celebrated for decades as ‘America’s first poet’ and New York City’s ‘first citizen’” (1). Muller subtitles his biography of Bryant after a quote from James Fenimore Cooper who declared “We others get a little praise now and then, but Bryant is the author of America” (2). However, he was equally popular overseas. Few people in the U.S. were as widely-known and influential as William Cullen Bryant in the mid-nineteenth century.

He was a member of numerous societies, he was close friends with the most popular literary figures and artists of the day, and he was also close friends with numerous politicians including several American presidents. His biweekly meetings of the Sketch Club during the 1850s, for example, put him in frequent conversation with many of the most popular artists of the period, fellow writers like Bancroft, Cooper, Emerson, Holmes, and Thackeray, numerous publishers, past president Martin Van Buren, governors, judges, attorneys, businessmen, and railroad tycoons (*The Letters*, Volume III, 311-12). Bryant is largely responsible for championing the creation of Central Park in New York City (*The Letters* 312; Muller 4). He was also an ardent supporter of abolition and the Civil War while simultaneously traveling to the southern United States and maintaining a nuanced, unionist perspective. In other words, a lot might be written about William Cullen Bryant because he was such a popular public figure and because his interests and occupations ranged so widely. Still, few scholars have written about his travels to the “Orient” and fewer, if any, have mentioned his membership in the AOS.²³ Yet Bryant is precisely the kind of member the Directors of the AOS were speaking to in their 1847 report to promote Oriental studies in their connections with the different spheres of the U.S. public. Furthermore, thinking of Bryant as an amateur Orientalist may help scholars reframe Bryant’s nationalist imagination and his frequent mentions of various non-European Others within his poetry.

Few texts respond more directly to the call from the Directors of the AOS than Bryant’s *Letters from the East* (1869), mostly because Bryant actually references numerous other members of the AOS within his letters, typically professional Orientalists who did not enjoy the kind of access to an extensive popular audience like Bryant had as editor of the *Post*. *Letters from the East* consisted of collected letters Bryant wrote to the *New York Evening Post* during his

trip to “the Old World” in 1852 to 1853. Bryant’s partners at the *Post* published many of these letters as they received them. Of course, Bryant wrote his letters to the *Post* in 1852-53 before joining the AOS in 1859, but he collected these letters and published them as a book ten years after joining the AOS. Bryant gives the only explanation for publishing these letters as one book in his introductory note “To the Reader.” He writes that “the author has been induced to collect and present [these letters] in this form by the encouragement of the Publisher, who thought that the volume might be fortunate enough to find readers” (3). The publisher, G. P. Putnam & Sons, was, incidentally, also the original publisher for the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* until the sixth volume in 1858 when the Society began printing at Yale College. Bryant also happened to be close friends with the president of the AOS at the time, Edward Robinson, whose book, *Biblical Researches in Palestine* (1841), Bryant read on the steamer at the start of his journey” (see Muller 225; “Proceedings, 1851” x). This is just to say, while few texts responded better to the Directors’ call to promote the works of the Society, one cannot be sure that Bryant did so intentionally. Still, his frequent references to fellow members of the AOS prove at least one of two things and possibly both: either the members of the AOS were so integral to U.S. Orientalism that Bryant could not avoid mentioning their names, or Bryant included their names purposefully to promote the interests of the Society.

Bryant never mentions the Society itself within *Letters from the East*, but his first reference to a fellow member suggests that Bryant did, in fact, include certain individuals with the unstated intention of promoting their work. In his opening chapter, Bryant writes, “Among my fellow-passengers who left New York in the steamer Arctic, was Captain Lynch, the enterprising and successful explorer of the Dead Sea” (10). This is, of course, the same William Lynch of the AOS who led the U.S. Expedition to the Dead Sea. Bryant continues,

[H]e made, as you know, an official report of his expedition to the government, which has been printed by order of Congress. Besides this, he prepared a personal narrative of his expedition, a very interesting work, which was published at Philadelphia by Lea & Blanchard. Bentley, the London publisher, imported into England a number of copies of the work in sheets, procuring them to be bound.

(10)

Bryant then uses Captain Lynch as an example of the complicated situation that occurs as a result of competing copyright claims in England and the U.S., but Bryant could have easily used himself or another person. In fact, he mentions a second person who has his books examined but never names this person. With Lynch, a fellow member of the AOS, not only does Bryant praise his work, but he provides an advertisement for where people can find his books whether they live in the U.S. or in England.

Bryant similarly promotes the work of other AOS members. Bryant praises the work of George P. Marsh, the U.S. minister in Constantinople; he provides short profiles on a list of U.S.-Americans working in Syria, including Dr. Eli Smith, Rev. Simeon Calhoun, and Dr. Henry DeForest; and he shares the cautionary tale of Mr. Van Lennep, “a respectable merchant of Smyrna” who was kidnapped “about two years ago” while “walking out with two of his children” (199-200, 207).²⁴ Each of these men—Smith, Calhoun, DeForest, and Van Lennep—were members of the AOS. Shortly thereafter, in a passage about ship travel, Bryant references the work of a Captain Forbes (247). Here, Bryant refers to Captain Robert Forbes, a leading ship merchant in trade with China and initiator of the massive wealth that would come to be associated with the Forbes name. Robert was not a member of the AOS, but his brother and business partner John Murray Forbes was a member, along with a Frank B. Forbes who was

based in Shanghai and likely a fellow family member involved in trade with China (see “List of Members. July, 1878”). Finally, in one fascinating passage, Bryant recounts the trial of a Dr. Jonas King in Greece, who was also a member of the AOS.²⁵ King had previously preached a controversial sermon to which the Greek Church took offense. He was convicted of countering the church and put into a dungeon for a short period and eventually faced banishment from Greece. The conflict, as Bryant tells it, comes to its crescendo when a mob of angry Greeks shows up at King’s house and “seemed ready to tear him in pieces” (227). Because the U.S. consul in Greece was absent from the country, Dr. King had just a few days earlier been assigned as his acting replacement. With the mob at his door, Dr. King “bethought himself of the flag, and hastily unrolling it, let it stream from one of the windows” (227). The mob immediately hushed and dispersed. This final example speaks to a common theme within Bryant’s *Letters*: the importance of the U.S. government and, specifically, the U.S. military in protecting U.S. citizens abroad.

Bryant chose to write about these specific people who were all members of the AOS within a text in which Bryant chooses to exclude other names and mentions very few names altogether. For instance, in a private letter to Frances Bryant, his wife, Bryant mentions a boat trip on the Nile with a party of fifteen people including six U.S.-Americans other than himself and his traveling partners. He lists these people in this private letter: Mr. Balch, Mr. Barley, Mr. Keith, Mr. Reding, and two men he only names as the son of Mr. Havemeyer and the son of Moses Taylor (*The Letters*, letter 818, Volume III, 226). Bryant never mentions any of these men in *Letters from the East*. Bryant mentions a group of nine U.S.-American sculptors and painters working in Rome, Italy, he mentions two U.S.-Americans involved with shipping in France, and he mentions President Millard Fillmore and Congressman Daniel Webster. With only one

exception—a reference to U.S. consul David Offley—every other U.S.-American that Bryant mentions by name, which ends up being every U.S.-American working in “the Orient,” was a member of the AOS. Therefore, regardless of Bryant’s intentions, *Letters from the East* is at once both an Orientalist travel journal and a promotional tract for members of the AOS and their importance to the various U.S. missions abroad.

Letters from the East is also worthy of further analysis as a work of Orientalist literature for ways that the text both rigidly conforms to the genre and breaks it. On the whole, Bryant’s representations of Arabs match with what Said calls the “strategic formation” of Orientalist texts. Said discusses the strategic formation of Orientalist texts as a body of knowledge that continually grows in reference to itself (*Orientalism* 20). This large body, or formation, of texts secures authority as it acquires mass, density, and referential power within itself. These texts can continue to cite each other without ever citing any primary source material or incorporating other perspectives. Readers can recognize the operation of the strategic formation in Bryant’s use of common Orientalist tropes and also in his frequent references to other Orientalists, especially to Edward William Lane.

A passage from a private letter to Frances Bryant during the trip summarizes his overall representation of Arab people in *Letters* and also gives an example of the strategic formation in action. Bryant writes to his wife,

The people seem to be a good-natured race, easily amused, with wants which are easily satisfied. They are lively, noisy, ignorant, abject, but are capable of regular industry when tolerably well paid, at least so I am told by foreign residents in the country. Their habits seem to me dirty, though Lane in his book on Egypt calls them cleanly; a people who never wash their clothing, and whom you see at every

turn picking the lice from their garments, cannot deserve the epithet cleanly. They squat in the dust and sand whenever they are not standing at their work, and, with their mud floors and mud-walls, they are, of course, begrimed more or less with the dry mould with which they are almost always in contact. (*Letters of WCB*, Volume III, 227-8)

The fact that Bryant seems to disagree with Lane in this instance is not as important as the fact that Bryant references Lane, an English Orientalist, as the authority on Arabic sanitation.

Similarly, Bryant also draws information from this group of “foreign residents in the country,” or EuroAmericans who can, in Bryant’s opinion, maintain a position of authority. Bryant assumes the authority to make such sweeping generalizations of an entire group of people and only ever enlists the opinions of other Orientalists who assume a similar position of authority.

The representations of Arabs in his letter to Frances match Bryant’s representations in *Letters to the East* which follow many of the same tropes one might expect to find in a work of Orientalist travel literature deeply informed by other works of Orientalist travel literature. Bryant frequently characterizes Arabs as dirty, thievish, and lazy (60, 69, 72, 76-7, 125, 143, 168, 175-6, 184, 206). He continuously criticizes their architecture, peeking into mosques that look ornate on the outside but are “ill-built, ruinous, and ill-patched within” (72). He frequently describes the houses in the region as mostly composed of “mud-cottages” that look “like the habitations of mud-wasps magnified” (63, 77, 141). The connection to mud-wasps is matched with other, less frequent, comparisons to animals. His most common description for Arab children is “creatures,” for instance (49, 64, 194, 221). “Creatures” is also his word for describing a horse, a monkey, and a group of gazelles (20, 165, 173). His description of Arab’s “creeping” out of their small houses matches his description of “land-tortoises creeping beside the way” (63, 132). Bryant

includes several anecdotes, common in writings on travel in the Near East, of hypocritical and corrupt government soldiers or local militias who request payment in return for “protection” through a certain stretch of land. He quotes his traveling companion who observes that “they keep the road clear of robbers . . . and are themselves the greatest robbers of all” (118). Bryant later writes of a group of Bedouins that “they accept the tribute as a compensation for the robberies they would otherwise commit” (146-7). He describes the city of Cairo as a “dirty masquerade,” he is awe-struck by the showy and striking spectacle of horsemen “armed and arrayed in the Oriental fashion” and dismayed that the government is beginning to change the clothing styles of their soldiers, and—of course—he must interact with a “lazy Turk” who, as governor of the place, must drink coffee and smoke his pipe before he can approve Bryant’s travel documents (69, 144, 145).

Occasionally, Bryant muses about the physical beauty of some group of Arab people, and he is fascinated at times by their religious devotion and some of their cultural practices that lead toward an appreciation of community or the environment, but Bryant always falls back onto a textually and discursively informed distrust and dislike of his non-European Others. Bryant’s feelings toward the people he encounters is best summarized in one minor interaction with which he concludes one of his letters. While traveling to Jerusalem, Bryant and his party camp for the night and encounter a group of local Arabs who visit their encampment to offer various services and supplies. Bryant looks at the physical form of the visitors in awe at first, but this is shortly thereafter discounted as he vacillates toward disgust. He writes, “I could not but admire the grand looks of these brown people of the desert, the perfection of their forms, combining activity and strength, their well-formed features, eyes full of life, and white, even, undecayed teeth” (125). He continues, “I bought of them a little basket, handsomely wrought of a kind of rush, but

before putting it into my travelling bag, I bethought me of a passage in Lane's account of the modern Egyptians. 'Lice,' says that minute and candid describer, 'with the most scrupulous cleanliness, are not always to be avoided'" (125-6).²⁶ Bryant remembers Edward William Lane's account of lice among Arabs and taps the basket on a table. Upon seeing several insects, he tosses the basket "into a thicket of young palms" (126). Bryant begins this passage with praise for the "people of the desert," but ends it with an act of sardonic wastefulness. No one should fault Bryant for discarding a basket infested with lice, although one should probably fault him for his littering. What is interesting here is why Bryant thought to look for lice in the first place. This moment is one of the few in the text where Bryant unintentionally reveals an Orientalist filter for his interactions during his travels. His readings about the Orient shape, in real time, his actions within the Orient. Finally, his placement of this seemingly minor event at the end of a chapter adds significance. The buying of a small, lice-filled basket becomes symbolic for economic exchange in general in the Orient.

One should also note, however, that *Letters* occasionally breaks from the typical Orientalist travel journal genre. One very important difference has to do with Bryant's representations of people. While Bryant's overall tone toward the people he encounters can best be described as a lackadaisical disdain, or at least an apathetic distance, rarely does he ever make the generalizing statements so common in Orientalist literature.²⁷ In other words, Bryant often avoids what Said observes as the Orientalist's reliance on the copula *is* or what Albert Memmi describes as the "mark of the plural" (*Orientalism* 72; Memmi 85). Although the words "Arab" and its plural "Arabs" appear fifty times in Bryant's text, they are never preceded by the words "is" or "are," and instead are almost always preceded by a specifying qualifier: "an Arab" or "the Arab," meaning one specifically, or "our Arabs," referring to those traveling with Bryant.

Bryant's representations certainly create a cumulative image of Arab people and Arab spaces, but his treatment of individual people and individual events occasionally belies attempts to craft a single image of the "Orient." What readers are left with in Bryant's *Letters* are the subjective observations of an individual traveler with little pretense at expertise or comprehensive knowledge.

A general perception of amateur Orientalism is bolstered by Bryant's irregular choices in how he organizes his material. The typical nineteenth-century Orientalist text is generally organized by various topics of cultural interest rather than by chronology, with each chapter usually including some kind of anecdote to support the overall observations. This is the case for Horatio Hale's *Ethnography and Philology*, but one might look to Edward William Lane's popular text *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (1836) as a primary example of the genre which Bryant most certainly read. Lane begins his book with an introduction titled "The Country and Climate—Metropolis—Houses—Population" and moves through chapters on "Personal Characteristics," "Infancy and Early Education," "Religion and Laws," "Government," "Domestic Life," "Superstitions," "Character," "Industry," etc. These texts are overtly pedagogical in nature, and this style of organization seemingly wraps an entire culture neatly into a single volume. These broad categorical chapter titles make the author appear omniscient, they make the text appear comprehensive, and they make the people appear static.

Unlike the texts of Edward William Lane or Horatio Hale, Bryant organizes his text by the chronology of his voyage rather than by cultural characteristics.²⁸ Bryant's authorial position is more closely aligned with someone like Mark Twain's in *Innocents Abroad* than it is with William Lynch's in his *Narrative*. Bryant was never an academic Orientalist and even seems rather to have been more of a tourist than a journalist during his trip east.²⁹ Both Muller and Voss

suggest that Bryant took his trip as a way to escape the sadness following the death of numerous close friends and the disappointment following the U.S. elections of 1852. Again though, one should not assume that “amateur” Orientalism is less powerful, impactful, or purposeful than “professional” Orientalism, if any real distinction even exists. Bryant seems to write more for entertainment than for pedagogical purposes, but his writing is still deeply informed by the strategic formation of Orientalist texts. Even this popular, less overt, tourist-style Orientalism is still connected to U.S. imperialism and, specifically, to the U.S. Navy.

Bryant writes one letter from quarantine in Smyrna, near the harbor, which he describes as “one of the finest harbors in the Levant” (186). While this reads like a simple, observational judgement, one should assume that most observations in Orientalist travel writing serve some rhetorical purpose. This is especially the case if one is aware that fellow AOS member, John William De Forest, whom I discuss at greater length in Chapter Three, describes the very same harbor several years before Bryant by writing that “the failing timbers of a ruinous wooden quay, symbolical, in their rottenness, of the people and government of the country, gave me footing on the shore of Turkey” (*Oriental Acquaintance* 3). De Forest describes the same harbor again in his novel *Irene the Missionary* (1879), written ten years after Bryant’s *Letters*, as similarly ruined and decrepit and he describes the city of Smyrna in the same way as Bryant describes the other Arab villages that he passes through: ugly, filthy, and full of beggars (*Irene* 55-6).

Bryant’s reasons for depicting the harbor of Smyrna as beautiful and safe become apparent when he suggests that “here whole navies might ride in safety, and never feel the storms that vex the open sea” (186). He continues, in a section subtitled “Use of Our Navy,” by writing,

It is sometimes asked by Americans, why it is that our squadron in the Mediterranean never makes its appearance in the waters of this excellent harbor.

The design of maintaining vessels of war in this quarter of the world is, of course, to inspire respect, by creating an impression of our power to assert our rights against encroachment. A whole fleet of frigates anchored at Port Mahon or at Spezzia, would not have this effect in a much greater degree than if they were stationed at Brooklyn or Norfolk. Nobody makes a voyage to Port Mahon to admire the strength of our men-of-war, their capacity for speed, the excellence of their discipline, or the terrible beauty and perfection of their arrangements for dealing death upon our enemies. . . . But if the Navy Department would give a little attention to this matter, they might be employed to somewhat better purpose.

(186)

Bryant does not want the U.S. to take over the Turkish Empire. In fact, despite his praise for British colonialism in the opening chapters, he speaks against direct imperial rule later in the text.³⁰ Bryant paints a picture of Turkey as a complicated political sphere mostly controlled from without by England and continuously threatened by local proxies for Russia (192). He never suggests that the U.S. should be more directly involved but rather desires a level of international protection that secures for himself an independent liberty to move about wherever he chooses. Bryant's feelings on international intervention in Turkey read like a precursor to the naïve and paradoxical neoliberal beliefs of the twentieth century. He wants U.S. warships in the harbor and he wants powerful U.S. consuls with complete control and jurisdiction, but he wants them both at a distance, never interfering, so he can do as he pleases, where he pleases. It never slips Bryant's mind that he is a U.S.-American, and he does not want it to slip anyone else's mind either. This idea of U.S.-American distinction is at the center of Bryant's Orientalism even if his Orientalism is largely shaped by a transnational body of Orientalist scholarship. With this in mind, we might

return to Bryant's poetry—the writing he is best known for—and look for the imprint of his particular brand of Orientalism.

In *Thirty Poems* (1864), a collection published after Bryant's trip to the "Orient" and five years before the publication of his collected *Letters from the East* (1869), Bryant never uses the term "Orient," and only uses the term "East" twice as a proper noun referencing the opposite of the "West" (38, 69). The first of these references occurs in "An Invitation to the Country," a poem about flowers blossoming in spring. Bryant writes of a violet that "breathes, by our door, as sweetly / As in the air of her native East" (38). Among his many interests, Bryant was an avid horticulturist and collected plants from around the world. His second reference to the "East," though, is more explicitly grounded in the political and economic relationship between "East" and "West." This occurs in "The Song of the Sower."

"The Song of the Sower" is a ten-part poem that describes the sowing of a wheat field and imagines the numerous lives that the wheat will someday support in some way or another. Each section of the poem catalogs the different types of people who either support the growth of the wheat or consume some wheat-based product after harvest. These various images ostensibly serve as inspiration to the sowers as they "fling wide the golden shower" over the dark ground (61). Bryant thus imagines the nation through the simultaneous consumption of wheat. At the center of Bryant's nation, though, not surprisingly, is the farmer. As the poem progresses, the sower thinks of the "men who toil"—the quarry-worker, the lumberjack, the sailor—of the women who sew clothes "[i]n the long row of humming rooms," of the participants in a wedding ceremony, of ship-wrecked men and poor mothers and famished children in need of food, and religious communicants (62-67). While many of these images might reference any kind of people, Bryant's allusions to the timing of seasons, to certain architectural features, to a wedding

ceremony, Christian communion, and the “roof-trees of our swarming race,” all seem to indicate a setting in “the West,” if not specifically in the United States.

This imagined boundary is solidified in the final section when Bryant looks outward. In the tenth and final section, the speaker thinks of the “blessed harvest yet to be” that will “fill thy spikes with living gold” (68-9). He then imagines a life for the coming wheat that extends past the nation, across the earth, and into the “Orient.” The speaker imagines the wheat,

Then, as thy garner give the forth,
 On what glad errands shalt thou go,
 Wherever, o'er the waiting earth,
 Roads wind and rivers flow.
 The ancient East shall welcome thee
 To mighty marts beyond the sea,
 And they who dwell where palm groves sound
 To summer winds the whole year round,
 Shall watch, in gladness, from the shore,
 The sails that bring thy glistening store. (69)

These are the final lines of the poem. Bryant's nation—“our swarming race”—expands outward. The images of the final section are markedly different from the images of laborers in the preceding sections. Where a theme of connection pervades the first nine sections, section ten initiates a theme of separation. Instead of a relationship of cooperation and multidirectional benefit—sowers feed sewers while sewers clothe sowers—section ten introduces a relationship of dependency and unidirectional globalization—from the U.S. “o'er the waiting earth.”

This section only fits within “The Song of the Sower” if we understand the United States in 1864 as an already global, economic power, a nation continuing to build what the U.S. Congress named over thirty years previous their “empire of commerce.” Not only is wheat at the center of an imagined national unity, but it is also at the center of the imagined U.S. empire.³¹ Furthermore, Bryant’s empire is built with Orientalist discourse. Both the term “ancient East” and the image of people who “dwell where palm groves sound / To summer winds the whole year round” touch on different aspects of Orientalist discourse and would likely elicit from the reader a range of associations: the “ancient East” reminding readers of stereotypes of a fallen, decrepit Orient; the palm groves reminding readers of climatic determinism or beliefs of stadial development that suggest that climate and environment heavily affect the development of human societies and cultures. Here also, Bryant imagines a “waiting” or passive earth and groups of people that “watch, in gladness” for the coming of U.S. ships. The U.S. is figured as a benevolent supplier of sustenance. Finally, Bryant connects U.S. agriculture, national unity, Orientalist discourse, and benevolent imperialism all to the economy with his image of “mighty marts beyond the sea” as he imagines an Orient ripe for economic development. Most important though, Bryant delivers these messages in the form of a poem, a poem that became so popular that Bryant would republish it as a stand-alone book in 1871 with forty-two illustrations by some of the most popular artists of the day (see *Song of the Sower*). Bryant could reach an audience that Pickering, Hale, Lynch, and the other scholars of the AOS could never reach. Bryant could turn scholarship into song.

Redefining “The Orient”

Further study of the AOS and its full range of members should thus help scholars reexamine two widely held beliefs that shape the study of nineteenth-century Orientalism in the U.S. Both beliefs stem from two widely accepted statements from the foundational work of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979). The first is that "Americans will not feel quite the same about the Orient" as their European, and especially English and French, counterparts (1). Said's nationalist separation appears on his first page and receives little explanation or supporting evidence, but Said's argument—as scholars of Orientalism since have understood it—is essentially that English and French Orientalists had direct links to English and French imperialism. Many scholars have since mostly accepted this statement as a starting point for studies of Orientalism in the U.S. As Gesa Mackenthun observes, "very few scholars associate [U.S.] territorial expansion of the early nineteenth century—which included the westward expansion of slavery, Indian dispossession, and 'civilizing' missions into the Pacific—with concurrent imperial ventures of France and Britain in the Middle East, India, or in Africa" (4-5).³²

Sinha summarizes the scholarly consensus with some nuance when she writes that "American Orientalism does not provide a simple relation between colonial power and Oriental knowledge" (77). David Brody, likewise but more bluntly, denies "a direct causal relationship between pre-1898 examples of American Orientalism and post-1898 imperialism" with the assumption, albeit incorrect, that U.S. imperialism did not start until 1898. Similar to Brody, Weir echoes Said's belief that "Americans will not feel quite the same about the Orient," and explains that this differentiation is primarily due to the fact that "the imperial might of the United States was not unleashed until fairly late in its history" (*American Orient* 3). Weir echoes this claim in his chapter from *Orientalism and Literature* (2019) where he writes, "Orientalism in the

American context differs from its better-known British and Continental manifestations in some significant respects. Principal among these is the absence of anything like the centuries-long colonialist projects that rendered the inhabitants of distant lands of either the Near or the Far East as subjects—but not citizens—of Western empire” (202). Much of Weir’s argument relies on the premise that U.S. citizens had little direct contact with anyone who might be labeled as an “Oriental” until foreign labor from the Asian continent was used to build railroads on U.S. soil. However, as we will see as my dissertation progresses, the U.S. government did, in fact, have direct contact with people from foreign lands far earlier than Weir observes. Scholars such as William Weeks, William Appleman Williams, and Amy Kaplan have each separately demonstrated a culture of U.S. imperialism early in the nineteenth century and provided numerous examples of U.S. expansion within the North American continent and throughout the world before the twentieth century. Weir isolates only two major events in the history nineteenth-century U.S. imperialism: Commodore Perry’s “visit” to Japan in 1853 and the U.S. invasion of Cuba during the Spanish-American War of 1898. To the contrary, William Weeks lists *ninety-four* U.S. incursions into foreign territory between 1798 and 1898, excluding declared wars (71-4; 97-106).

Furthermore, the U.S. government used the U.S. military to force people of various foreign lands to change their cultural, agricultural, and economic practices. In effect, the U.S. government made these people “subjects” but not citizens, in that these people were subjected to U.S. rule without equal protection under U.S. law. This was the case throughout the Pacific islands, such as Fiji, not to mention large swaths of North America. Scholars today must not conflate today’s definition of “foreign lands” with the definition of the same, ever-evolving, concept from the 1800s. Additionally, as I will demonstrate in the later chapters of this

dissertation, nineteenth-century Orientalists were far more flexible in their application of the term “Oriental” than Orientalists might be today.³³ In looking to the AOS, its early membership, and its connections to U.S. expansion within North America and elsewhere, we might reevaluate the connection between institutionalized Orientalism and U.S. imperialism in the nineteenth century.

The second belief that a further study of the AOS and its diverse membership should counter was that nineteenth-century Orientalism in the U.S. was limited mostly to what Said calls “cultural isolatos” (290). Said’s general argument is that numerous U.S.-Americans engaged with “the Orient” in a number of ways, but that Orientalism in the U.S. never became a cultural and scholarly institution in the way that it did in Europe. This is not to say that individual, amateur Orientalists or “cultural isolatos” were any less influential. They still contributed to what Said calls the

very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, [who] have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, “mind,” destiny, and so on. (2-3)

To be an Orientalist, according to Said, was to hold a belief first that the Occident and Orient were separate and distinct, and second, that the relation between Occident and Orient was always a relationship of cultural opposites, a relationship “between a strong and weak partner”: “The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, ‘different’; thus the European is rational, virtuous, mature, ‘normal’” (40). Isolated, individual enthusiasts were just as responsible as their scholarly counterparts for developing these beliefs into a cultural discourse; however, the

existence of scholarly, professional Orientalists relies upon a culture-wide belief that Orientalism is worthy of serious scholarly attention and professional dedication.

Contradicting Said, Sinha has demonstrated that Orientalism reached its scientific, professional phase in the U.S. early in the nineteenth century as it became possible to build a career as a professor of Oriental literature, as a naturalist or ethnologist publishing exclusively on Oriental people and cultures, or as a travel writer or journalist writing about visits to foreign places.³⁴ She contends that “American Orientalism, in an academic sense, began more than a century before the Second World War” and adds that “Orientalism in America existed as a scholarly subject and a rudimentary disciplinary formation, as well as a means of organizing ideas, from as early as the 1830s” (74). Even before the founding of the AOS in 1842, Orientalists were publishing multiple editions of their works, they were holding political positions around the nation, they were advising Congress on various decisions, they were leading U.S. Naval expeditions, and they were editing some of the nation’s leading periodicals. Orientalism in the U.S., then, was not only limited to people who Said calls “cultural isolatos” (290). Orientalism was serious *business*.³⁵ For proof of professional Orientalism in the U.S. as early as the 1840s, one need only to look at the AOS, whose early membership included numerous professional Orientalists.

Finally, as I demonstrate in the following chapters, further study of the AOS and its members will not only help to develop our understanding of U.S.-American Orientalists in the nineteenth century but also help to redefine Orientalism more generally. As the U.S. expanded throughout the nineteenth century into geographical places that scholars today do not commonly associate with the “Orient,” many writers still used Orientalism to describe the people they encountered in these spaces. This is partly due to a reliance on metaphor: many EuroAmericans

compared Arabs to Indigenous Americans and Mexicans. However, this transmutation of Orientalism—which was not really a transmutation at all—was mostly due to a genuine belief in theories of historical Oriental mobility, such as those proffered by John Pickering in his opening address to the AOS. A recognition of Orientalist representations of Indigenous Americans and Mexicans can help us qualify Edward Said’s claim that U.S. Orientalists never made “the imaginative investment [in the Orient] . . . perhaps because the American frontier, the one that counted, was the westward one” (*Orientalism* 290). While Said may or may not be correct that the western frontier was “the one that counted,” for many U.S.-Americans the western frontier *was* the “Orient.”³⁶ Much more important though, we must remember that Orientalism relies on an *imaginative* geography and that the “Orient” has never been confined to any one *real* place or nation. Scholars of Orientalism thus far have almost exclusively limited their selection of material based on connections to real geographical locations commonly associated with the “Orient.” What we have missed is the fact that while the “Orient” originates in a geographical imaginary, its explanatory reach might extend anywhere. Sinha’s assumption, for instance, that nineteenth-century “American Orientalism does not provide a simple relation between colonial power and Oriental knowledge” is dependent upon a belief in a real geographical place called the “Orient.” The U.S. did have colonial power related to Oriental knowledge, but it existed in geographical locations not commonly associated with the “Orient” as scholars think of it today.

One final example from Bryant’s oeuvre speaks to this notion of Oriental mobility and the ways that Orientalism collided with U.S. nationalism in the nineteenth century. In 1864, Bryant wrote an introductory note to Martha Noyes Williams’s book *A Year in China; and a Narrative of Capture and Imprisonment, When Homeward Bound, On Board the Rebel Pirate Florida* (1864). Williams was the wife of a Commissioner of Customs in China and used her

time to make observations about the Chinese people. In his introductory note, Bryant explains that Williams's book is of great importance, not because U.S. readers might want to go to China, but because China is coming to the U.S.

He begins his preface with a statement written in the most typical Orientalist style:

The Empire of China, with its immense population, its peculiar customs and arts, the character of its peoples, so unlike that of the nations of Western Europe, and the imperfect stage of civilization at which it has halted for many centuries, if indeed, it has not somewhat receded towards barbarism, presents an interesting subject of inquiry and speculation to all who concern themselves with the welfare and future destiny of the human race. (xiii).

Few sentences in Orientalist literature better exemplify Said's summation of a central belief of Orientalism that "the Orient and everything in it was, if not patently inferior to, then in need of corrective study by the West" (41). China, in this example, is an immense, ancient, barbarous, and strange object of study, but, as Bryant later informs the reader, the country is beginning to "allow entrance to the ideas and improvements of European civilization," and to open itself "to the teachers of Christianity," and to show signs "of a willingness to adopt new and better modes of intellectual and moral training" (xiv). China is of greater importance to the U.S., though, as "the settlement of the Pacific coast of the United States, and the navigation of the ocean by steam, have made China our immediate neighbor, and will bring us into relations with her people far closer and more fruitful, either of good or evil, than the subjects of any European power can have" (xiii). Bryant builds upon this reasoning in his observation that "emigrants from that populous land have already made a descent upon our Pacific States, and with whatever jealousy or aversion their arrival may be regarded, they will probably from henceforth form a part of the

stock from which that region is to be peopled” (xiii).³⁷ In other words, Chinese people are on U.S. soil, and we need to learn as much as we can about these barbarous people since they will live among us.³⁸ The “Orient” was no longer “out there”; the “Orient” was already within the U.S.³⁹

The writings of Pickering, Hale, Lynch, and Bryant all demonstrate that the “Orient” is always moving, that the “Orient” is defined by cultural boundaries rather than geographical boundaries. In the chapters that follow, I look to the writings of other AOS members who write about Mexicans as the “lank and skinny Arabs of the West” and Indigenous Americans as the “Tartars and Bedouin of America,” and who explain that U.S. Southerners “revered power like an Oriental” (Taylor 89; *Overland* 51; *Union* 158). These writers use the term “Oriental” to designate a transnational collection of people that exist in relational opposition to a second transnational collection of people, the “Occident.” They rely on transnational Orientalism to justify U.S. empire within the North American continent and, in doing so, continue to redefine the boundaries of the “Orient.” In exploring these texts, we can begin to understand the full extent of Edward Said’s argument that Orientalism creates an imaginative geography that separates the world into two parts, “Occident” and “Orient.” Orientalism, then, at its very core, is a transnational project and neither the Occident nor the Orient can be confined within any national borders. Neither word inherently corresponds to any real geographical space. Ultimately, if scholars can recognize the full mobility of “the Occident,” then we might also begin to recognize the full mobility of “the Orient.” We can begin to explore how Orientalism has been used across nations, between nations, and within nations. We can begin to explore different types of imperialisms—specifically U.S. expansion across North and Central America—within new, global frames of reference.

2 | “Bedouins of the West”: Bayard Taylor, Transnational Comparison, and the North American Orient

“All this part of India reminded me strongly of the table-land of Mexico. There are the same broad, sweeping plains, gashed by deep ravines and gullies; the same barren chains of hills, and the same fertile dips of lowland, rich in corn and cane. I passed through more than one landscape, where, if I had been brought blindfold and asked to guess where I was, I should have declared at once: ‘This is Mexico.’”

- Bayard Taylor, *A Visit to India, China, and Japan in the Year 1853*, p. 72-3

In January of 1879, Congressman Albert Willis of Kentucky brought to the floor of the House of Representatives a report on Chinese immigration in relation to a bill that was currently up for debate. Willis argued that Congress had a problem: the U.S. House had before it several bills that sought to limit or ban Chinese immigrants, but these bills violated a standing treaty with China. As the Willis report outlines, violating such a treaty would be unconstitutional, and, thus, any law banning Chinese immigration would be null and void, but one simple piece of logic could circumvent both the treaty and the Constitution. While the Constitution provides that treaties shall be the law of the land, Willis argues that

The general welfare, justice, domestic tranquility, and the blessings of liberty are of supreme importance, and cannot be taken from the people by any treaty

however solemnly ratified. The treaty-making power is limited by these objects. Moreover, both in nature and by international law, the first duty is self-preservation. If, therefore, it be true that the presence of the Chinese endangers the peace or prosperity of our people, no mere technical considerations should intervene to prevent an increase of the evil. (Congressional Record 793)

The only hurdle to overturning a U.S. treaty, then, for Willis, was the need to prove that Chinese immigration endangers the U.S.-American people.

Whether these people were a threat to U.S.-Americans was never really up for debate. Willis was certain that they were. He goes on to explain that a growing consensus believes that Chinese people and their “sordid, selfish, immoral, and non-amalgamating habits” have developed into a “standing menace to the social and political institutions of the country” (793).⁴⁰ The ultimate problem, as Willis states, is that “it is neither possible nor desirable for two races as distinct as the Caucasian and Mongolian to live under the same government without assimilation. The degradation or slavery of one or the other would be the inevitable result” (793). The very future of white U.S.-Americans depended on banning Chinese immigrants.

The bill up for debate before the forty-fifth Congress was H.R. No. 2423, which sought to limit the number of Chinese people on any incoming vessel to under fifteen, and fine or imprison any ship operator who violated this law. Willis’s arguments, alongside those of his supporters, were successful. After a brief debate, the bill passed with bipartisan support resulting in 155 yeas, 72 nays, and 61 not voting. However, a pocket veto from President Rutherford B. Hayes eventually prevented the bill’s passage into law (*Congressional* 800; “Rutherford” 58). And, thus, H.R. No. 2423 and the debates that took place on that January day in 1879 represent a

mostly unremarkable bump along the road to the more comprehensive Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, except for one odd feature.

While Congressman Willis mostly relied on legal precedent and logic—albeit racist and Orientalist logic—to argue his case, the next two speakers, Congressman Martin Townsend of New York and Congressman Horace Page of California, both supported their competing claims with references to two U.S.-American literary figures. Townsend, jokingly, recited an entire poem by Bret Harte. Page, a few minutes later, recited a passage of travel writing by Bayard Taylor. While both literary references exemplify direct instances of literature influencing government policy, these two texts also demonstrate different ways that Orientalism operated within U.S. culture. The differences between these texts and how these Congressmen used them illustrate the separation between the amateur and the scholar, the popular and the authoritative.

During a brief speech in opposition to the bill, Congressman Townsend elicited the support of an incredibly popular comic poem to lampoon the bill's supporters. The poem that he eventually recited was Bret Harte's "Plain Language from Truthful James," more commonly known as "The Heathen Chinee." Harte originally published his poem nine years earlier in 1870 in *Overland Monthly*, but the poem only grew in popularity throughout the decade. Mark Twain wrote in an 1871 letter to John Henry Riley, "Do you know who is the most celebrated man in America to-day?—the man whose name is on every single tongue from one end of the continent to the other? It is Bret Harte. And the poem called the 'Heathen Chinee' did it for him" (338). Numerous newspapers reprinted the poem, Harte republished it in several illustrated editions, and one Chicago music house even transformed the poem into song ("Plain Language"). Twain would eventually collaborate with Harte to produce an 1876 play named for the Chinese character in Harte's poem, Ah Sin. "Heathen Chinee" quickly became a catch phrase across the

nation, according to one newspaper review, and remained such at least until Congressman Townsend's speech in 1879.⁴¹ The renown of Harte's poem is evident in the fact that before Townsend even mentions the name of the poem, he makes several references to the names of characters and uses the phrase "Heathen Chinees" four times, each time to great applause and laughter (*Congressional* 794).

Harte's poem and Townsend's subsequent recitation nine years later provide an interesting example of Orientalism pervading popular culture and eventually influencing Congressional lawmaking. The poem's overall message, combined with Townsend's deployment of the poem, also suggests that Orientalism in the U.S. was not uniform in its rhetorical purposes.⁴² "Plain Language"—a poem about a Chinese card player who outcons two frontier conmen and is subsequently assaulted in retaliation—deploys common Orientalist tropes that portray "Orientals" as duplicitous; however, Townsend used the poem to argue that the Chinese would not be so "wicked" if U.S.-Americans were less wicked to them.⁴³ He compared the two frontier conmen to the two greatest proponents of H.R. No. 2423. Ultimately, though, Townsend's speech was brief, comical, and ineffective, and his failure was partly due to his choice of this specific literary reference as the centerpiece for his argument. Harte's poem exemplifies one specific strand of comic Orientalism within the U.S. but it is so obviously comical and satirical that it lacks the kind of authority required to support a Congressional debate. This becomes evident when one considers the literary work that Congressman Page deployed shortly thereafter.

Page opened his defense of H.R. No. 2423 with twinned economic and moral arguments against "Oriental immigration" before providing a petition signed by seventeen thousand Californians. He then proceeded to "submit also an estimate of Chinese character, given by a

distinguished American citizen, lately deceased, which is entitled to great consideration” (796). Here, Page quotes from Bayard Taylor’s 1855 travel journal, *A Visit to India, China and Japan*, and does so in a way that suggests a definitive authority behind his argument. The lengthy quote from Taylor’s text states, in part,

It is my deliberate opinion that the Chinese are, morally, the most debased people on the face of the earth. Forms of vice, which in other countries are barely named, are in China so common that they excite no comment among the natives. They constitute the surface level, and below them are deeps and deeps of depravity so shocking and horrible that their character cannot even be hinted. . . . Their touch is pollution, and harsh as the opinion may seem, justice to our own race demands that they should not be allowed to settle on our soil. Science may have lost something, but mankind has gained, by the exclusive policy which has governed China during the past century. (qtd. in *Congressional* 796)

Page concludes the quote by adding that “this brief *historical statement* suggests the necessity and supplies the reasons for the legislation recommended by the committee and provided for in the pending bill” (796; emphasis added). Page framed Bayard Taylor as an authority on Chinese character and framed Taylor’s text as a “historical statement.” Congress accepted both as such. The stenographer records neither laughter nor objection, and Page includes Taylor’s words within a litany of “factual” information before he even begins his more interpretive arguments. Because of this, Taylor’s text operates within a different rhetorical register than Harte’s poem and, in doing so, lends more credibility to Taylor’s text and to Page’s argument.

The question, then, is not whether Congress *should* have treated Taylor’s text as more authoritative or accurate than Harte’s poem; they did. The question is *how* did Taylor’s text

accrue such authority? I would argue that the difference between the two is not only a matter of genre or rhetorical framing but actually has more to do with Taylor's career and the connections between his literary output, the American Oriental Society, and the U.S. government. We should ask, how did Taylor's personal travel journal stay relevant for twenty-four years? How did Taylor, an aspiring poet turned journalist—a man with no college degree or scholarly background of any kind—achieve the status of an expert on Oriental culture? How did a poor farmer's son from Pennsylvania go on to shape not only popular U.S.-American views of “the Orient” but foreign policy debates within the U.S., and what does his work suggest about Orientalism more generally? The answers to these questions reveal crucial links between Orientalism and U.S. imperial and exclusionary policies. Moreover, as we dig into the history of Taylor's literary career, we quickly recognize that Taylor's Orientalist views were not limited to Chinese people but also shaped U.S.-American views of India, Japan, the “Middle East,” and, surprisingly, the American West and Central America.

In this chapter, I review the scholarly reception of Bayard Taylor's Orientalism alongside his history of Orientalist travel writing. I look to Taylor's *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*—a text that Taylor produced, in part, as a member of the U.S. Navy on Commodore Perry's expedition to “open” Japan. Not only do I demonstrate that U.S. Orientalism often operated in tandem with U.S. imperialism, but I also demonstrate one way that Orientalists discursively produced “the Orient.” Taylor's frequent reliance on transnational Orientalist comparisons across his oeuvre places “the Orient” not only in Asia or Africa but also in the Americas. In making these transnational comparisons, Taylor often superimposed U.S. race relations onto “the Orient” and, simultaneously, wrote “the Orient” onto the North American landscape.

I then analyze the scientific writing of Charles Pickering, a fellow AOS member and one of the Congressional appointees to the infamous Wilkes Expedition. In his ethnological text *The Races of Man*, Pickering provides scientific backing to Taylor's North American Orient when he theorizes historical migrations from Asia into North and South America. Together, these texts suggest that nineteenth-century Orientalists often thought of "the Orient" as less of a stable, identifiable, geographical location and more of a fluid range of cultural characteristics that had been moving around the world throughout history. Orientalism could thus easily connect disparate geographical locations; "the Orient" could be found anywhere in the world, and the Orientalist had the job of identifying "the Orient" wherever it might appear.

Bayard Taylor's Orientalism

Bayard Taylor is one of the most cited U.S.-American figures in the growing number of scholarly texts on U.S. Orientalism partly because he was, as scholars have observed, "America's first great popular Orientalist" and "the most prolific of Oriental travel writers" (Ziff 138; Schueller 32). Liam Corley describes him as "one of the best-known men of his day," "a literary prodigy," and "one of the most celebrated literary figures of the mid-nineteenth century" (5). Taylor is also just as prominent within studies on Orientalism because of what scholars have viewed as his nuanced, idiosyncratic style. Taylor was no John Pickering or William Cullen Bryant. He achieved his fame as a result of his Orientalism, and not vice versa, and he did so without the aid of a well-connected family or even the most basic resources. He was a poor, rural, farmer's son from Kennett Square, Pennsylvania who became the most famous U.S.-American travel writer of the nineteenth century, one of the nation's leading journalists, and a celebrated public speaker. This background shaped a style of Orientalism that was often nuanced

and sometimes subversive. Taylor was a self-made Orientalist who never attended a university and had no academic training, but instead crafted his work from his own experience and shared it with a common newspaper-reading audience, likely composed of people like himself. In short, Taylor created an unscholarly, mass-market, pop-culture Orientalism, which was a key element of his success.⁴⁴ His career leaves scholars today with numerous debates over his position within the field of transnational Orientalism and even more anecdotes of his public engagement with Orientalism—the most common being that he gave highly-attended lectures while fully dressed in Arab clothing, complete with a scimitar, and, reportedly, made women faint.

A study of Taylor's writings offers scholars today with a view of how the average U.S.-American may have encountered "the Orient" as Taylor crafted a kind of everyman's Orientalism. As Corley insightfully posits, attention to Taylor's travel writing is important because "as the original form of American multicultural education, travel literature is the most fruitful site in which to explore how the citizenry of the United States has developed its views of 'America' in concert with its views of the world" (48). Taylor's writing career from 1844 to his unexpected death in 1878—in Berlin, as the acting U.S. Minister to Prussia—coincided with a rapid growth of United States territory and global influence. During that time, he was the most prominent reporter for U.S.-Americans abroad, publishing numerous letters, mostly in the *New York Tribune* and mostly detailing how one might travel the world with limited resources. The *New York Times* described him in an obituary as the prototypical American, achieving honor "in face of many discouragements, and without the adventitious aid of any of those influences which, in other lands, are the inheritance of the fortunately born" (4). Thus, Taylor's Orientalism was voraciously consumed domestically because it was intimately tied to the growth of U.S. influence globally and because it conformed to the mythology of the self-made American.

However, scholars are in disagreement as to what that variety of Orientalism actually consists of. While some recognize Taylor as a famous writer who supported and participated in U.S. imperialism, others read Taylor as a subversive figure who challenged Orientalist stereotypes. Malini Johar Schuller and Christoph Irmscher, for instance, separately argue that Taylor's texts demonstrate a resistance to dominant strands of nineteenth-century Orientalism and, as such, should encourage us to revise our scholarly practices. Larzer Ziff argues almost the exact opposite, that Taylor's writing fit well within dominant ideologies of the time and that Taylor understood himself and his travel writing as part of the imperial process. Corley attempts to find a middle ground when he suggests that both "Ziff and Schueller's 'complicit' and 'resistant' assessments" might be more attentive to questions of ideology and "historical factors that shaped the experiences of Taylor and his audiences" (50). The greatest questions about Bayard Taylor's work typically ask about Taylor's faithfulness to what scholars, in the vein of Edward Said, have come to recognize as Orientalist discourse. In other words, does Taylor's work support an ideology that separates the world into two distinct, unequal, and opposed parts—the Orient and the Occident—and does his rhetoric justify Occidental authority and dominance over the Orient?

Irmscher attempts to challenge typical Saidian readings of nineteenth-century Orientalism first by casting Taylor as resistant to common "Western" ideologies on the "East." Irmscher detects an uncommon "strategic location" for Taylor—to use Said's term—in Taylor's authorial relationship between himself and his subject. He observes that, "when [Taylor] wrote about his experiences in the Middle East, Taylor often did so without the self-righteousness and condescension that has characterized much of American pontification about the region" (80). Drawing on Wai Chee Dimock and Lawrence Buell's work, Irmscher then attempts to frame

Taylor as “a figure in ‘world literature’” (81). Irmischer points to the fact that Taylor often boasted of learning local languages and wearing local clothes and exhibited the most pride when he was mistaken for a local person. He even occasionally mocked tourists for not blending in— Taylor likely would not have called himself a “tourist” (see Ziff 136). Such a strategic location is most evident in Taylor’s poetry collection *Poems of the Orient*, in which Irmischer finds a nuanced, “oriental insider’s perspective” (89). Irmischer believes that Taylor’s “insider’s perspective” combined with his chastisement of U.S.-Americans and his passionate love for “the Orient” is enough to challenge the typical Saidian reading of nineteenth-century Orientalism more generally:

In Said’s reading of Orientalism, the East almost always figures as the ‘other,’ the place of mysterious, possibly dangerous adventures, whose experience will ultimately reinforce the reassuring difference between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ For Taylor, however, the opposite was true: the East was the place where he wasn’t different anymore but could be and live like others. (89-90)⁴⁵

Irmischer thus argues for a new way of reading nineteenth-century literature. He advocates for a “more capacious, messier view of nineteenth-century literary history, one that doesn’t seek to exonerate the uncontroversially ‘major writers,’” such as Emerson, “while at the same time further degrading the uncontroversially ‘minor writers,’” such as Taylor (98).

Schueller provides a similar reading of Taylor’s Orientalism, this time focusing on his travel journal *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*, when she observes that he frequently “corrects misconceptions about ‘ignorant’ natives created by previous Orientalist writers, recounts the complex diplomatic maneuvers of Commodore Perry, and satirizes the imperial presumptions of his countrymen” (32-3). Thus, “as Taylor’s perspicuous narrative indicates, Oriental travel

writing often contested the raced imperial ideologies of nineteenth-century-USAmerica” (33). His sharp critique of British racism in India demonstrates, according to Schueller, that Taylor’s “racial beliefs were no doubt at variance with most nineteenth-century theories of race that separated Asians from Caucasians” (149). Furthermore, Schueller adds that his comments on British colonialism linked “EuroAmerican colonialism with internal colonization within the United States” and, in turn, “challenged theories of the westerly movement of civilization” (149-50). In short, Imscher and Schueller both posit what Holly Edwards has argued most succinctly, that Orientalism was “not a monolithic or static phenomenon but rather a conflicted and multivocalic process that can only be understood cumulatively and retrospectively” (Edwards 16). The same might be said for Bayard Taylor’s Orientalism specifically. Taylor wrote about numerous different places and peoples at different times during his life under very different contexts and situations.

Not all agree with a reading of Taylor as a subversive or resistant Orientalist. Imscher and Schueller both set their arguments against an earlier reading of Taylor’s work by Larzer Ziff who argues that Taylor’s writings provide “a fascinating (albeit disturbing) account of the rise in America of the twinned ideologies of the culture of travel . . . and that of imperialism” (120). Ziff draws on passages from Taylor’s *A Journey to Central Africa* demonstrating Taylor’s belief that, “where a Traveller has once penetrated, he smoothes the way for those who follow, and that superior intelligence which renders the brute creation unable to bear the gaze of a human eye, is the defense of civilized man against the barbarian” (120-1; see *A Journey to Central Africa* 307). In this quote, one will notice the common Orientalist separation of the world into two parts, in this case the “civilized man” and the “barbarian.” One should also recognize, as Ziff argues, a statement of rhetorical purpose behind Taylor’s travel journals: he writes so that others like him

might follow. When one considers that most of the places Taylor travelled to were places in which Europeans and U.S.-Americans were actively colonizing, one should find it difficult to separate Taylor's work from the geopolitical forces that made his work possible.⁴⁶ Ziff recognizes that Taylor provides nuanced representations of his subjects. He agrees with Irmscher that "Taylor's love of Eastern life is genuine and his convincing rendering of an immersion in it remarkable" (139); but Ziff adds the important qualification that "even as [Taylor] indulges himself in different practices he conveys an awareness of himself as a participant in a performance that he can end whenever he wishes although the other actors cannot" (139). Furthermore, nineteenth-century writers such as Taylor often held cultural ideologies that seem paradoxical by today's standards. For instance, Taylor was an ardent abolitionist in the U.S., but he was still a white supremacist. Ziff recounts Taylor's belief that "slavery was abhorrent to all that was civilized, however, civilization itself was for [Taylor] a function of race and," quoting Taylor directly, "'the highest Civilization, in every age of the world, has been developed by the race to which we belong'" (Ziff 140; quoting from *Central Africa* 237). In other words, slavery, for Taylor, was bad for civilization, but that did not mean that non-white people could be civilized.

Instead of ascribing Taylor's nuance to a resistant, anti-imperial ideology, Ziff suggests that Taylor's nuanced representations of his "Oriental" Others results largely from Taylor's personal background as a poor, independent traveler, who undertook his adventures out of personal pleasure and a desire to escape difficult issues back home such as the death of his first wife. As Ziff observes, Taylor's journals are "structured by his own interests rather than by any obligation to report on specific matters" (133). Most of his writings were originally composed as letters sent to the *New York Tribune* because he knew that the editor, Horace Greeley, would

publish them and send him money in return. Despite the popularity of Taylor's initial travel journal *Views A-Foot* (1848), Taylor was not yet the incredibly famous persona that he instantly became when he returned from his travels through Africa and the "Orient." According to Ziff, Taylor "had had no idea of the enthusiasm that had sprung up in his wake" (132). Taylor was certainly aware of and interacted with what Edward Said calls the "strategic formation" of Orientalist literature—he frequently references other Orientalist works and seems conscious of common Orientalist tropes—but he was not yet aware, at the time of writing, of how much weight and influence he himself would have. Taylor had not gone to school for this. He was not an academic, he had not trained in an academic style of research and writing, and he did not gain financial success as an Orientalist until after he returned from his travels. At the time of writing, he was a struggling newspaper correspondent, poorly paid, trying to demonstrate that one can travel the world with very little money. Such a position will obviously create a different kind of writing than someone like Horatio Hale (see Chapter One) who was commissioned by the U.S. government to produce Orientalist knowledge.

Thus, one finds in Taylor's travel journals, as Corley aptly observes, a hypocritical and often inconsistent application of racial ideologies that is not actually all that uncommon in imperialist literature more generally, and one that is certainly still common in the U.S.-American media today:

Taylor's confident racial mapping of the world and his contradictory championing of the need to empathetically [understand] foreign peoples reflect in explicit terms a sentimental and incoherent racial perspective that still appears to inform most Americans. When a person's epistemological approach to large social questions is reduced to the anecdotal inferences he or she can draw from personal interactions,

the ground is prepared for inconsistent applications of received prejudices and perspectives. The key to Taylor's inconsistent application of his racial ideology can be found in the dynamic interplay of his egalitarian ideals and the social, economic, and linguistic factors that affected his interactions with persons he recognized as racial others. (12)

Scholars have used this dynamic in Taylor's work to set him apart from the tradition of Orientalist/imperialist literature, but writing about large social questions through anecdotal inferences drawn from personal interactions is actually a characteristic of most Orientalist/imperialist travel writing. Taylor's genuine love for the occasional Arab guide is just one more example of the all-too-common "good native" trope.

Corley is right to call attention as well to the "social, economic, and linguistic factors that affected [Taylor's] interactions." When one recognizes that Taylor's entire Orientalist career was only made possible through the already extant, EuroAmerican imperial structures, we have to recognize that Taylor's anti-imperial sentiments can only go so far. Here, Albert Memmi's question "Does the Colonial Exist?" is particularly instructive. The "colonial" for Memmi is a person traveling through, or living in, a colonized place without directly taking part in the colonizing process. In Memmi's words, the colonial is "a European living in a colony but having no privileges, whose living conditions are not higher than those of a colonized person of equivalent economic and social status" (10). This is precisely what Taylor attempts to become, and, in fact, much of the scholarship on Taylor has attempted to prove that he actually inhabited this position. Memmi's observation that the colonial will often mention as their reason for travelling "adventure, the picturesque surroundings or the change of environment" could be lifted almost directly from Taylor's introductions to his travel journals (5). But Memmi contends

that the colonial cannot exist—it is a theoretical position that one can aspire to, but never actually hold—because ultimately, remaining a colonial is not an option to the European in the colonies even if he desires to do so. Whether he expressly wishes it or not, he is received as a privileged person by the institutions, customs, and people (17). The colonial finds that the colony is “a place where one earns more and spends less” regardless of their views on the colonized or colonization and imperialism generally (4). Taylor’s experiences traveling through “the Orient” and his career as a whole provide numerous examples of this situation.

Taylor’s travels through the Orient placed him mostly in places that were either currently or soon-to-be British colonies. The U.S did not have colonies in northeast Africa, the Middle East, India, or China, but Taylor still documents his many privileges as a EuroAmerican traveler. Thus, his work serves as evidence that Orientalist ideology was a transnational ideology, one that separated the world into two parts, Orient and Occident. No matter where Taylor travelled, he benefited from being a member of the Occidental side of the dichotomy.

Taylor has the most direct interaction with imperialism and colonialism in his text *A Visit to India, China, and Japan in the Year 1853* which Ziff describes as “not a journey into the exotic but a journey into colonialism” (150). Taylor’s first landing in India is particularly illustrative of his privilege as a EuroAmerican in the colonies. When he reaches the shore, he collects his bags and searches for a way to get to a hotel. He notices “a line of cabs, buggies and palanquins” and chooses a palanquin—a box suspended on poles and carried by servants—“in order to be as Indian as possible” (35). A few things happen here. First, Taylor associates the palanquin with India, even though the cabs and buggies exist in the exact same space for the exact same purpose and had existed in India for thousands of years. Regardless, being in India, for Taylor, means being carried by humans. For what it is worth, Taylor adds a nuanced critique

of this mode of travel on the next page when he calls the palanquin “a conveyance invented by Despotism” and recognizes that the carriers “groan and struggle” under his weight (36). He even suggests a certain unfairness when he writes that he “[has] legs of [his] own” (36). Yet, in the same sentence, he writes, “And yet, I warrant you, nothing would please them less than for me to use those legs” (36). In the characteristic fashion of the Orientalist travel journal, small interactions and small objects become symbolic for entire countries. India is despotic and the servants are treated poorly, but, in Taylor’s opinion, they would not have it otherwise. Taylor adds on the next page that “India is especially the country of servant and master, every person is expected to have one for his own use” (37). In this sentence Taylor displays his privilege. In the “country of servant and master” Taylor never comes close to questioning which role he fits into. More damning, though, he betrays any egalitarian ideal in his phrasing that “every *person* is expected to have *one*.” Masters are people; servants are *things*.

One need not read into Taylor’s word choice or interpret Taylor’s actions to discern that his writings consistently contribute to the strategic formation of Orientalist literature. One might look to a letter Taylor wrote to his friend Carter Harrison⁴⁷ at the beginning of the journey that would eventually inspire *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*. In a letter from Constantinople on July 23, 1852, Taylor mostly explains his future travel plans to his friend and references the suggestion from Horace Greeley, the editor of the *New York Tribune*, that he travel to China to join with Commodore Perry of the U.S. Navy on his expedition to Japan. At the end of the letter, Taylor includes for his friend an original sonnet inspired by his travels titled “The Orient.”⁴⁸ The poem demonstrates both his love for “the Orient” and his very mainstream Orientalist ideology:

The bliss of slumber unto weary eyes;
 The balm of peace unto a troubled brain;
 Quiet, that on the heart so gently lies,
 No thought of toil can cloud its heaven again;

Trust in the will of God; serener joy
 In all the Present gives, the Future dreams;
 A Faith undarkened by the worlds alloy,
 A sun-like orb of never-clouded beams;—
 This is the life the golden Orient brings,
 The gifts that ripen 'neath her perfect sky,
 And might exalt the race on god-like wings,
 Were Man and Nature once in harmony;
 Yet here, where Heaven seems nearer and more bright,
 The sons of men are sunk in foulest night. (*Selected Letters* 100-1)

“The Orient” exhibits a romanticization of the picturesque “golden Orient,” a place where “no thought of toil” can cloud the brain and where “Man” and Nature might live in harmony. One should consider while reading these descriptions that the history of Orientalism is full of positive representations. Still, each of these images simultaneously serve to separate “the Orient” from the “civilized” world where industry crowds out Nature and people constantly think of work. The “Orient” here is an exotic place of Otherness, a place seemingly untouched by “progress,” and a place that would be perfect if the people living there were not “sunk in the foulest night.” Taylor thus depicts “Orientals” as backward, fallen humans who are wasting the potential of the landscape around them. It is this kind of representation that justifies either the “elevation” or removal of the local inhabitants.

The trope found in “The Orient” of the Edenic location with the foulest inhabitants is common in Orientalist literature, and this trope is repeated throughout Taylor’s travel journals. While certain isolated passages exist in which Taylor “[contests] the raced imperial ideologies of nineteenth-century USAmerica,” these passages are overwhelmingly outweighed by the cumulative negative representations of “Orientals” that support the westerly movement of civilization and the raced imperial ideologies of the U.S. (see Schueller 33). We have to understand Taylor’s work “cumulatively and retrospectively,” in Edwards’s words, and in relation to the “social, economic, and linguistic factors that affected [Taylor’s] interactions,” in

Corley's words. We must consider Taylor's travel journals as entire pieces and must recognize the historical circumstances that made these texts possible. If we do so, a consistency certainly develops, and debates on Taylor, nuanced and idiosyncratic as he is, are easily resolved. To discern the relationship between Taylor's Orientalism and the "raced imperial ideologies" of the U.S. in the nineteenth century, the most likely place to begin is Taylor's *A Visit to India, China, and Japan in the Year 1853* because it is the text in which he actually joins the U.S. Navy on an expedition to Japan.⁴⁹ This text is central to understanding Taylor's oeuvre and his influence on U.S.-American culture and politics because it was the culmination of a series of travel journals and was the work that finally marked his breakthrough into U.S.-American fame. It is also the text that Congressman Horace Page would eventually use as justification for his multiple efforts to ban Chinese immigration.

Taylor's *Visit with the U.S. Navy*

A Visit to India, China, and Japan is replete with the most common Orientalist tropes. The "Orientals" that Taylor encounters are almost unfailingly passive, cunning, superstitious, corrupt, unpunctual, ugly, dirty, and full of vice. Visiting "the Orient" for Taylor is an act of time travel to the past: upon entering Bombay, he writes, "I took a step further back into the past, than ever in all my previous experience" (45). The reader learns from Taylor that virtually every native government he encounters is corrupt and deceptive. The native court of India, for example, "with its army of pensioned idlers, is a hot-bed for all forms of vice, and Delhi is only surpassed in this respect by Lucknow and Hyderabad" (153-4). He almost repeats the same descriptions when he visits the independent state of Oude (228). Readers learn that "there is no equivalent for 'punctuality' in the Hindustanee tongue" and that the natives are frequently late

(163). The natives at Roorkee are astonishingly stupid, as evidenced by the way they operate an imported locomotive (170). The Chinese, Taylor informs us, are “inveterate gamblers” and missionaries in China are ineffective because “the Chinese nature appears to be so thoroughly passive, that it is not even receptive” (331, 333). He adds that “the mental inertia of these people seems to be almost hopeless of improvement” (331). Shockingly, this is likely the least negative, hate-filled thing that Taylor writes about the Chinese people. He closes his chapters on China with a joke: “The reader may have rightly conjectured that I am not partial to China, but this much I must admit: it is the very best country in the world—to *leave*” (499). The Japanese are cunning and deceptive and they accepted the impingements of the U.S. Navy, Taylor informs us, “with true Eastern passiveness” (373). Their political negotiations with Commodore Perry, Taylor recounts, were “a good illustration of the insincere, evasive diplomacy of Eastern nations” (451). Taylor also frequently connects external physical features to internal character traits. When describing the link between Japanese physical features and their morality, he informs the reader that “notwithstanding the spirit of cunning and secrecy which, through the continual teachings of their government has become almost a second nature to them, their faces were agreeable and expressive” (434). Throughout his text, Taylor employs almost every Orientalist trope one can think of and rarely deviates from an overtly negative, cumulative representation of “Orientals.”

On top of these frequent and repetitive cultural denigrations, Taylor is often explicitly and undeniably racist when he describes the bodies of non-white Others. While one might still argue that Taylor occasionally—and one should stress the word “occasionally”—created nuanced representations, one cannot avoid the fact that he was indefensibly racist. On the initial boat ride of his journey, he comments on the crew which included men he describes as “hideous,

monkey faced negroes from Mozambique” (21). The animal comparisons continue shortly thereafter when he describes the hair of Somalians as giving a “goat-like, satiric air to their lank, nimble figures” (26). When he encounters a group of people he describes as “Chinese Gypsies” in Shanghai, he wonders “if there be any thing in human nature more loathsome than their appearance” before describing their housing as “lair” and describing the people as “vermin” (325). When Taylor first sees a group of Chinese people in Singapore, he describes them as nonhuman: “This was my first sight of a large Chinese community, and the impression it left was not agreeable. Their dull faces, without expression, unless a coarse glimmering of sensuality may be called such, and their half-naked, unsymmetrical bodies, more like figures of yellow clay than warm flesh and blood, filled me with an unconquerable aversion” (285). These cumulative, repetitive images certainly outweigh any critiques Taylor has of the raced ideologies of imperialism. Yes, Taylor denounces the “contemptuous manner” in which English people treat the natives in India (273), and yes, Taylor occasionally praises Oriental architecture,⁵⁰ but praise for anything “Oriental” is rare in *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*.

Furthermore, when Taylor actually finds something positive in any of the places he visits, he often quickly juxtaposes his praise with a reminder of something negative. For example, Taylor’s awe for the landscape near Oude and Lucknow is obvious when he describes the end of the day by writing that the “sun is setting, and the noises of the great city are subdued for the moment The scene is lovely as the outer court of Paradise . . .” (228). Passages like this might lead one to believe that Taylor was truly appreciative of his “Oriental” environment, and he was, but he finishes the sentence by adding, “Yet what deception, what crime, what unutterable moral degradation festers beneath its surface” (228). A similar shift happens at sunset in Calcutta when Taylor writes that the “languor of the Indian day was forgotten, and the rich,

sensuous life of the East flashed into sudden startling vividness” (267). In this single sentence, not only do readers encounter two contradictory representations of India as both languorous in the day and sensuous and vivid at night, but Taylor also uses Calcutta as a synecdoche for both India and for “the East.”

In a similar way, Taylor sometimes tempers praise with a reminder to the reader that anything good about the Orient originates in Europe. For example, Taylor remarks on the skill of workers at Roorkee, writing that he “was struck with the skill and aptness of the natives employed” in making implements for use on the canal works. However, this admiration is quickly tempered by Taylor’s admiration for imperialism: he notes that the natives learn much quicker than English workmen, but adds that “their imitative talent is wonderful, but they totally lack invention. This makes them a people easily improved, as they are anxious to learn, but never knowing more than is taught them, never using their knowledge as a lamp to explore the unknown fields of science and art” (171).⁵¹ He repeats a similar construction later when he speaks of Chinese furniture, jewelry, and other crafts. He explains that he has “seen no article of Chinese workmanship which could positively be called beautiful, unless it was fashioned after a European model. Industry, perseverance, and a wonderful faculty of imitation belong to these people; but they are utterly destitute of original taste” (330). In short, the best parts of the “East” are imitations of the “West.”

Throughout his text, Taylor never challenges this dichotomy. Virtually every chapter, from the first to the last, serves to separate East and West and explain the comparative superiority of the West. This separation is explicit throughout *A Visit*. For example, Taylor closes his opening chapter with a visit to the English outpost at the port of Aden which he calls the

“Gibraltar of the East” (29). While here, he looks at a physical embodiment of a specifically English imperialism but sees instead an architectural symbol of Anglo-Saxon dominance:

The fortifications are most admirably planned. The skill and genius exhibited in their design impressed me far more than the massive strength of Gibraltar. I never felt more forcibly the power of that civilization which follows the Anglo-Saxon race in all its conquests, and takes root in whatever corner of the earth that race sets its foot. Here, on the farthest Arabian shore, facing the most savage and inhospitable regions of Africa, were Law, Order, Security, Freedom of Conscience and of Speech, and all the material advantages which are inseparable from these. Herein consists the true power and grandeur of the race, and the assurance of its final supremacy. (29-30)

This summation occurs at the end of his opening chapter with no indication of irony or sarcasm. Taylor firmly believes that the conquests of the Anglo-Saxon race bring with them “Law, Order, Security, Freedom of Conscience and of Speech,” and, in a moment of apocalyptic prophesy, he predicts that the “power and grandeur of the race” will assure “its final supremacy” (30). Thus, in one short passage, Taylor separates “Anglo-Saxons” from Arabs and Africans, justifies imperialism, and dreams of ultimate white supremacy.

A Visit culminates with a chronicle of Taylor’s experience as a part of Commodore Perry’s U.S. Naval expedition to open trade negotiations with Japan. Taylor’s journey to join the Navy began at the encouragement of his editors at the *Tribune* to get to China as fast as possible so that he could convince Commodore Perry to let him join the expedition (see *Selected Letters* 99). Because Perry would not allow any non-Naval crew members, Taylor agreed to join the Navy for the duration of the mission (see *Visit* 361).

The Japan Expedition was of great interest to the U.S.-American public and especially to members of the American Oriental Society. In the 1853 volume of the *Journal of the AOS*, Edward Salisbury summarizes the purposes of the Expedition, reprints the letter from President Millard Fillmore to the emperor of Japan, and boasts that “one of [the Society’s] own members is included in it” (Salisbury 494). Here, Salisbury references “Rev. George Jones, U.S. N., who accompanies the Commodore as chaplain, whose knowledge of the world, gathered on long absences from his native country in our national vessels, and scientific and literary accomplishments, justify the expectation that the Society will hereafter receive important communications from him” (Salisbury 494). While Bayard Taylor would not become a member until after the publication of his trilogy of Orientalist travel journals, sometime between 1858 and 1860, several other members of the AOS were also prominently involved in the success of Commodore Perry’s mission. Peter Parker acted as Secretary of Legation and interpreter on the naval ship *Susquehanna*; Francis Hawks collected the official accounts of the expedition and compiled the *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to The China Seas and Japan* (1856) on behalf of Commodore Perry; and, finally, and maybe most important, Edward Everett was the Secretary of State under President Millard Fillmore when the expedition began. Everett wrote the initial letter to the Japanese emperor that Perry was to deliver on behalf of President Fillmore. AOS members played significant roles in the Japan Expedition before, during, and after its execution.

The expedition itself began in November of 1852 when President Fillmore sent Commodore Perry and a fleet of warships to Japan with a letter requesting “friendship, commerce, a supply of coal and provisions, and protection for our shipwrecked people” (see Hawks 257). Another primary goal, as stated by Commodore Perry, was to “bring a singular and

isolated people into the family of civilized nations” (qtd. in Hawks 236). The expedition was ultimately a “success” for the U.S.-American Navy in that Commodore Perry repeatedly ignored Japanese refusals and, instead of leaving, threatened Japan with annihilation until they signed a trade treaty and allowed Perry to purchase land for a coal depot.

Taylor uses his detailed account of the Navy’s interactions in Japan to explore a theme found elsewhere in his travel journal: the difference between U.S. and “Eastern” diplomacy and government. This is such a common theme that Taylor includes his summary of the completed treaty process under the subtitle “Eastern Diplomacy Again” (see *Visit* 451). When describing negotiations over the coal depot with a Regent in “Loo-Choo,” or the Ryūkyū Islands, Taylor explains that “the reply of the Regent was a good illustration of the insincere, evasive diplomacy of Eastern nations” (451). He then praises the effective response of Commodore Perry:

The Commodore however took a blunt, straight forward course which obliged them to give a decisive answer, and as in the case of the Japanese, he gained his point. His diplomacy, no doubt, seemed somewhat arbitrary in both cases, but where dissimulation and evasion form the web of a policy, as with these nations, there is no course so effective as plain common sense, backed up by a good reserve of physical force. (452)

The Regent in the Ryūkyū Islands serves as a synecdoche for “Eastern nations” “where dissimulation and evasion form the web of a policy.” Of course, one should note that Taylor is incorrect in his assessment of Japanese diplomacy: by his own account, the Japanese were consistently direct and explicit that they did not want to sign any treaties and, instead, wanted the U.S. Navy to leave immediately. They delivered this message directly to the Commodore on several occasions, not as a bargaining tactic but as a sincere request to be left alone. Less

important than the relative accuracy of his account is the fact that Taylor uses these descriptions first to separate East from West and, second, to justify Western aggression and exploitation. Taylor and the U.S. Navy not only assume the power and knowledge required to speak for all “Eastern” governmental policy but also use their assessment of “Eastern” policy as justification for physical force. In a manner similar to Charles Wilkes in Fiji, who I discuss in Chapter One, Perry threatens Japan with added warships and bloodshed should they refuse to sign a trade treaty.

We cannot overlook Taylor’s connection to overt governmentally sanctioned U.S. imperialism in the form of the Perry expedition, nor should we overlook the influence that Taylor’s *A Visit to China, India, and Japan* had on U.S.-Americans’ popular reception of the expedition. Because Commodore Perry would not allow non-Navy personnel as part of his expedition, and because the official *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron* was slow to make it to print,⁵² Taylor’s travel journal was the primary source of information about the expedition. The U.S. public greedily consumed it. In its first five years, from 1855 to 1860, the text went through an astounding sixteen U.S. editions. By the time *A Visit* came out in print, Taylor was *the* U.S.-American voice on “Oriental” culture, mostly because his writing had already been circulated in the nation’s periodicals, and because he just happened to be at the right place at the right time and was able to beg his way onto a ship where no other civilians were allowed. Because of his fame, scholars should not view Taylor as an isolated, individual traveler with idiosyncratic views on “the Orient.” Not only does his brand of Orientalism align with the most common tropes of Orientalist literature more generally, but his writings were the most popular Orientalist texts in the U.S. at the time. More importantly, as discussed at the

beginning of this chapter, this specific text continued to shape U.S. views of “Oriental” people in a way that directly influenced U.S. policy even after Taylor’s death in 1878.

When Congressman Horace Page stepped onto the floor of the U.S. House that January day in 1879, he was not just a congressman from California, and Taylor was not just a random writer of historical information. Taylor had become one of the most popular and prolific U.S. Orientalists of the nineteenth-century and Page was already making a name for himself as a staunch opponent of immigration. Page was already the architect of the Page Act of 1875 which prohibited the recruitment of unfree laborers from “China, Japan, or any Oriental country” and was primarily concerned with “the importation into the United States of women for the purposes of prostitution” (*Statutes at Large* 477). Page would go on to become the primary architect of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. As a proponent of strict immigration laws prohibiting “Oriental” immigrants, Page found a natural ally in the texts of Bayard Taylor. When Page quotes from Taylor’s *A Visit* that “the Chinese are, morally, the most debased people on the face of the earth” and “their touch is pollution, and harsh as the opinion may seem, justice to our own race demands that they should not be allowed to settle on our soil,” he is quoting from a text that had achieved a wide readership and a place of authority within U.S. culture.

Page describes Taylor’s writing as a “historical statement” and argues that his account, by itself, “suggests the necessity and supplies the reasons for the legislation recommended by the committee and provided for in the pending bill” (796). Page was not alone either. In the years leading up to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and in the years following, other congress people continued to quote Taylor’s work as evidence that Chinese people should be excluded from the United States. A year before Page’s support of H.R. No. 2423, Congressman Cox of New York quotes Taylor amidst a desultory speech within a section in which he lampoons the

Chinese model of civil service (“House 1878” 1708). A few years later, during the debate on Senate Bill No. 71, a precursor to the Chinese Exclusion Act, Congressman Murch of Maine quotes the same paragraph that Page quotes to suggest that “the Chinese” are an “evil” that “came upon us” (46). After using Taylor’s quote as an early warning against Chinese immigration, Murch asks

are we to make this fair land the lunatic asylum, the leper’s hospital, the criminal’s refuge, the barbarian’s resort, the lazzaroni’s dumping ground, and the festering cesspool of the criminals of the whole earth, with no regard for the rights of our own race and the duties we owe to ourselves and the sons of those who have made this form of government possible for the highest nations of the Caucasian race? (Murch 46)

Congressman Abraham Herr Smith quotes the exact same passage from Taylor’s writing later that same day (Smith 49). Two days later, Congressman Speer quotes both Taylor’s passage from *A Visit* as well as Bret Harte’s “Heathen Chinees” poem, both to, again, support Chinese exclusion. Days later, Mr. Townshend of Illinois also quotes Taylor’s assessment of Chinese character for the same purposes (“House March 23, 1882” 2214). Not only did lawmakers frequently quote Taylor in the lead-up to the Chinese Exclusion Act, but they also quoted his text each time the law was set to expire. Congressman Cutting quotes from *A Visit* in 1892, Congressman Caminetti in 1893, and Congressman Kahn in 1902 (“House April 4, 1892” 2915; “Caminetti” 1520; “House April 4, 1902” 3693).

Each time a lawmaker quoted from Taylor’s text they explained him as an authority on the topic, and each time they quoted his text, his work accrued authority. When Congressman Speer quotes Taylor in 1882, he also states that Taylor is “a man of keen powers of observation

and perception, and for his eminent abilities is classed among the more distinguished of the *littérateurs* of America” (2028). Speer adds that “because of his ability and his understanding of foreign questions he was appointed to represent our country, after this book was written, at the court of the greatest empire of Europe” (2028). Speer refers here to Taylor’s position as the U.S. Minister to Prussia. Taylor’s government position retrospectively lends credibility to Taylor’s earlier Orientalist travel writing. Speaking eleven years after Speer, Congressman Caminetti makes this connection more direct when he explains why his fellow lawmakers should trust Taylor’s text: “I consider this authority important for two reasons, first, the high character of the author, and second, the official nature of his pilgrimage, as he was then acting under an assignment of the Secretary of the United States Navy” (1520). Caminetti’s assessment is not exactly accurate—Taylor was only part of the U.S. Navy during the Japan section of his travels—but that does not really matter. Taylor only joined the Navy for a few weeks so that the Commodore would allow him to tag along on their trip to Japan, but that alone was enough to transform his entire travel journal into an authoritative text in the eyes of the U.S. Congress.

One will likely find neither a more direct example of literature shaping culture and politics nor a better example of the power afforded to the individual Orientalist.⁵³ Yet Bayard Taylor was only a poor, aspiring poet from rural Pennsylvania with no ethnological or anthropological experience or a college degree of any kind. His view of Chinese culture was thrown together in a *single day* after *one single walk* through just a few streets in Shanghai. We cannot overlook this fact. Taylor had one bad day in Shanghai, wrote about it in his diary, and Congress treated his account as an authoritative historical document and decided to ban Chinese immigrants because of it. Congressman Speer in 1882 claims that Taylor provides an image of “the Chinaman in his own home,” but Taylor never even visited a single Chinese home (“House

March 18, 1882” 2029). Thus, some of the most pivotal moments relating to U.S. immigration in the nineteenth century were inspired by the travel diary of a man who made no claim to expertise, no claim to comprehensiveness, and no claim to extensive first-hand experience.⁵⁴ *A Visit* just happened to tap into certain U.S.-American desires, certain anxieties, all while attaching itself to one of the most popular events in U.S. foreign policy in the 1850s.

Taylor’s 1855 travel journal and its Congressional citations both demonstrate an anxiety about the mobility of “the Orient,” an anxiety that ultimately justified the passage of the Page Act and the Chinese Exclusion Act over twenty years after the publication of *A Visit*. Taylor writes of the Chinese “touch” as pollution and Page later describes Chinese immigration as an “evil of great magnitude” that will eventually threaten the entire nation. Such a belief in Oriental migration was common among nineteenth-century Orientalists in the U.S., and the existence of such a belief suggests that scholars should reevaluate our methodologies for studying Orientalism. By exploring the belief in what I call Oriental mobility, we learn that “the Orient”—as these writers created it—was never confined to one geographical area but was rather crafted from transnational comparisons and a genuine belief in historical movements. In other words, “the Orient” was never limited to Asia or Africa; “the Orient” could be anywhere. Scholars thus must look for Orientalism in relation to people and places not commonly associated with “the Orient” as we have come to understand it as a geographically bound entity. Again, we might turn to Taylor’s *A Visit to India, China, and Japan* to observe the formation of “the Orient” via transnational comparison.

Where in the World is the Orient?

One significant trait of Taylor's travel writing is that he often delivers observations of any given place via comparisons to other places. Most descriptions throughout Taylor's travel journals are filtered through Taylor's past experiences and, especially, through texts that Taylor had read. Almost every person Taylor encounters stirs a memory of another; every building either conforms to or contrasts with a model example; every event reminds him of an event from elsewhere. As Ziff observes in Taylor's early travel journal in Europe, Taylor sees London through Byron and Scotland through Burns and Scott (Ziff 125). These past texts shape Taylor's descriptions of his travels and inform certain biases and predilections. Adding to Taylor's complexity and nuance, Ziff contends that Taylor's observations are "in the main . . . formed by aesthetic rather than social predilections" (125). Ziff makes a crucial argument here about Taylor's writing process but, maybe, needlessly separates the aesthetic from the social. As Christopher Castiglia and Russ Castronovo note, "aesthetics are always transitive: they take an object, oftentimes, by force" (426). What they mean is that aesthetics "invite the possibility of constituting and producing subjects at the site of dialogue and power" (426). Ziff is correct that Taylor's observations often focus on aesthetic concerns, but if we look for this same propensity for comparison in Taylor's Orientalist texts, we might realize that aesthetic observations *were* social observations as they often served to define the boundaries and culture of "the Orient." In Taylor's travel journal in "the Orient," his observations only stir memories, either aesthetic or social, of other Oriental spaces. Cumulatively, these comparisons create an Oriental consistency and operate to confirm the traditional Orientalist ideology that the world can be divided into two parts, "Occident" and "Orient." What is most interesting, and challenging to scholars of Orientalism today, is that Taylor sometimes includes people and places that have thus far remained unaccounted for within this Orientalist dichotomy.

Oriental comparisons fill Taylor's *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*. In Bombay, he visits a house that contains couches that are "not so lazy and luxurious as the Turkish divan" (56). He watches nautch dancers whom he assesses as far from "as handsome or graceful as the *Almehs* who danced for us in the temple of Luxor" in Egypt (57). The performers, he writes were "spiritless and inexpressive" but the songs were pleasing; "less wild and barbaric than the Arab chants, they are pervaded with the same expression of longing and of love" (58). When leaving Bombay, he stops to change horses at "a village of mud and bamboo huts, so thoroughly Egyptian in appearance that I could have believed myself on the banks of the Nile" (66). Thus, in one ten-page section, Taylor finds his memory transposed between a Turkish home, the temple of Luxor, the banks of the Nile, and the city of Bombay. Similarly, the soil of Nerbudda reminds Taylor of "the black loam of Egypt" (86). In Japan, Taylor writes that the clothing of the Imperial guard "somewhat resembl[e] the modern Egyptian dress" (429). Everywhere he goes, Egypt and Turkey seem to appear.

The comparisons extend also, not surprisingly, to the people. Couched within a comparison of Indian and Egyptian towns, Taylor informs the reader that the Indian native "has the same natural quickness of intellect [as the Egyptian Fellah], the same capacity for deception, the same curious mixture of impudence and abject servility, and the same disregard of clothing" (73). Much later, in China, Taylor makes a more general comparison when he concludes that "in the fanciful and figurative character of their signs, the Chinese remind us of the Arabic races" (333). These frequent comparisons repeatedly serve to connect Oriental places and people and to separate these collective groups from any Occidental counterparts. Even the most seemingly innocuous comparisons still serve first to collect and then to separate.

Architecture is likely the most common point of comparison. Taylor frequently observes what he calls a “Saracenic” style. While traveling near Madras, Taylor enters a town through a “Moorish arch” and views “a scene which recalled forcibly to my mind, a midnight ramble through the town of Ekhim, in Upper Egypt” (72). “Portions of Indore,” Taylor informs, “are well built,” and remind him “somewhat of Konia, and other places in the interior of Asia Minor” (88). The architecture is Saracenic, “though not of a pure style” (88). While traveling through Agra, the reader learns that “the verandahs and hanging balconies, with their exquisite Saracenic arches, carved ornaments and stone lattice-work, remind one of Cairo” (102). The architecture of Delhi, similarly, has “a strong resemblance to Smyrna, and other large Turkish towns” (152). Each of these observations connect one “Oriental” place to another. When Taylor sees Agra, he also sees Cairo; when he sees Delhi, he also sees Smyrna. Only on one occasion does he see England, and the result is jarring. When Taylor sees a church in Cawnpore, he describes it as “English from turret to foundation stone, and an exile, like those who built it” (213). He then adds a bit of architectural and cultural theory to help his reader understand his feelings: “A Gothic building looks as strangely among palm-trees, as an Oriental palace on the shores of Long-Island Sound” (213). Architecture, for Taylor, corresponds to culture and location, and the best architectural examples are those that match.

These architectural comparisons are not only subjective judgments of style, though, but rather fit into broader cultural theories. In one instance, Taylor cites a theory connecting physical landscape to style and art. While traveling through the “Ghauts” [*sic*], Taylor posits that the sharp mountain peaks “bear an extraordinary resemblance to works of art, and what is very striking, to the ancient temples of the Hindoos” (70). He then connects his observation to an uncited theory: “Is this an accidental resemblance, or did not the old races in reality get their

forms of architecture directly from Nature? It is certainly a striking coincidence that all the hills in the Nubian Desert should be pyramids, and all the peaks of the Indian Ghauts pagodas” (70). Once again, this observation of landscape and culture in India draws a comparison to Northern Africa. Similarly, when Taylor visits the Temple of Elephanta, he deduces that

the architecture, judged by its style alone, appears to be the antecedent of the Egyptian, which would then represent its perfect development, modified somewhat by being transplanted to a different soil. But I believe that most ethnographers now consider that the ancient Egyptians and Hindoos are kindred branches of one stock, whose seat is to be looked for somewhere in Central Asia. (51-2)

Thus, Taylor adds to his subjective observations of architecture the backing of ethnological science. These architectural similarities are not mere coincidence; they are results of historical, scientifically observable, Oriental mobility.

One observation in particular demonstrates the nineteenth-century belief in Oriental mobility and also stretches the geographical bounds for what scholars today commonly consider “the Orient.” When traveling past the Indian Ghauts, Taylor writes, “All this part of India reminded me strongly of the table-land of Mexico. . . . I passed through more than one landscape, where, if I had been brought blindfold and asked to guess where I was, I should have declared at once: ‘This is Mexico’” (72-3). Taylor limits his comparison between Mexico and India solely to the landscape, but we must understand that Taylor’s observations of landscape are just as deliberately political as his observations of architecture and culture.

Just as Ziff recognizes that Taylor’s observations are often mediated through comparisons to past texts, James Weaver observes this trait specifically in relation to landscapes.

Taylor himself writes in his 1867 journal through what was then the territory of Colorado that “new landscapes are often best described by comparison with others that are known” (qtd. in Weaver 274). Weaver argues that Taylor uses landscape comparisons to suggest a unity between diverse locations. For instance, Weaver posits that Taylor measures and describes the Colorado Rockies in relation to the Catskill Mountains, the White Mountains, and Mount Washington of the northeastern United States as a way to promote a national unity and the acceptance of Colorado as a new state. Taylor simultaneously compares the Colorado landscape to international landscapes such as the table lands of Cashmere and Tibet. These diverse comparisons, as Weaver suggest, demonstrate Colorado’s complicated position as both a symbol for U.S.-American unity and a symbol for U.S. imperial expansion. Weaver reads in Taylor an intertwining of imperialist attitudes with environmentalist sensibilities, a position that “[insists] on the land’s capacity to restore and redirect the nation’s imperial project” (256). New lands resulted in new resources and offered new opportunities for U.S. growth, development, and pride. What Weaver writes about Taylor’s views of Colorado is even more applicable to Taylor’s views of Mexico.

While Taylor does clarify that “[India’s] resemblance to Mexico, however, does not extend to the towns and population, which are rather those of Egypt,” he still groups Mexico with places like India within a category of places that Occidental countries might “possess” (73). In one explicit moment in which Orientalism entwines with imperialism, Taylor observes India, thinks of Mexico, and dreams of U.S. expansion. He explains that

in general, Mexican scenery is on a broader and grander scale than here [in India].

We Americans need not envy England the possession of India; for, if we were not a people obstinately opposed to the acquisition of new territory—if we were not

utterly blind to ‘manifest destiny,’ and regardless of the hints which ‘Geography’ is constantly throwing out to us—we might possess ourselves of Cuba and Mexico and thus outrival her. (73)

Within a text in which Taylor only compares “Oriental places” to other “Oriental” places, such a passage should force scholars to ask, where exactly does a place like Mexico fit within the Orientalist dichotomy between “the Orient” and “the Occident”? Taylor does not explicitly call Mexico “Oriental” in this passage, but he links Mexico to other “Oriental” places. Furthermore, as we see in Taylor’s other writings as well as those of other AOS members, the belief that Mexico was “Oriental” was not uncommon and was actually derived from ethnological research of the period.

Mexico and “the Orient”

When Bayard Taylor looked around the Indian table land and proclaimed “This is Mexico,” he drew Mexico into a larger body of comparisons between “Oriental” places, but this was not necessarily a new move on his part. Taylor uses Mexico to understand “the Orient” because, as he writes in his later travel journal *Colorado*, “new landscapes are often best described by comparison with others that are known” (qtd. in Weaver 274). After Taylor’s European travels that resulted in *Views Afoot* (1846) and before his trip that resulted in *A Visit to India, China, and Japan* (1855), Taylor traveled from New York, through Mexico, and into California as a correspondent for the *New York Tribune* to report on the Gold Rush and on California’s admittance into the United States. Taylor titled the resultant book *Eldorado, Or, Adventures in the Path of Empire* (1850) and in this text, one will notice that Taylor was already

drawing Mexico into his body of Oriental comparisons by using “the Orient” to understand Mexico.

Eldorado is divided into two volumes of travel writing in the typical Taylor style. The first volume follows Taylor as he sails from New York, through the Gulf of Mexico, across Panama to the Pacific, and then up to San Francisco. Taylor then travels throughout California and the surrounding areas, mostly chronicling rapid economic growth due to gold mining. The first volume culminates in the Constitutional Convention of California and ends with Taylor’s decision to travel into Mexico. Volume two details a somewhat desultory trot through Mexico, mostly visiting battle grounds from the recent Mexican-American War, and culminates in Taylor’s visit to the capital city and his attendance at a session of the Mexican Congress. Corley insightfully argues that these two volumes are intentionally mirrored. While Taylor does not make many direct comparisons between Mexico and California, the parallel structures of the two volumes suggest a comparison between the workings of government in the U.S. and the workings of government in Mexico.

As the subtitle, *Adventures in the Path of Empire*, might suggest, Taylor’s book is essentially an advertisement for U.S. expansion. The first volume frames the Mexican-American War and the formation of California as imperial expansion, and the second volume suggests Taylor’s desire for further expansion into Mexico. Corley reads in the organization of *Eldorado*—the first half describing the development of the new state of California and the second part describing the workings of the Mexican government—an attempt to “suggestively link the state-building that was occurring rapidly in California with a possible agenda of reform and assimilation should the United States annex larger portions of Mexico” (55).⁵⁵ Corley argues that Taylor’s narrative supported “the annexation of vast tracts of Mexican land” and,

furthermore, that “Taylor’s ambition meant the near complete obliteration of Mexico as a sovereign nation” (54). At the center of Taylor’s argument for further U.S. expansion is his portrayal of the Mexican people.

Corley writes that in order to “allay reader concerns about the ability of the United States to assimilate the existing non-Anglo populations of California and northern Mexico, Taylor theorized a political and social explanation for the superior characteristics attributed to the USAmerican people” (54-5). He adds that “Taylor confronted in California and Mexico a less developed tradition of racial and national stereotyping” and that this lack of tradition “allowed him some freedom in constructing his own criteria for evaluating and recognizing differences that could be attributed to race and, what was for Taylor its functional equivalent, nationality” (54). While Taylor certainly provides numerous examples of Mexican people who wanted to join the U.S.⁵⁶ and gives ample reasons why the U.S. should take control of Mexico, the word “assimilate” might be a stretch. More important, though, while Taylor may have found in Mexico a “less developed tradition of racial and national stereotyping,” the representational schema that he develops is not “his own.” To support his imperialist desires, Taylor employs Orientalist discourse to describe Panama, the southwestern U.S. territories, and Mexico. When Taylor sees these places, he sees “the Orient.”

The first indication that Taylor relies on his Orientalist background to describe his adventure along the “Path of Empire” occurs on the third page of his journal. When Taylor leaves Florida on a steamer headed into the Gulf of Mexico, he instantly remarks on the change in climate. Nearing Cuba at sunrise, Taylor writes, “I had reached the flaming boundary of the Tropics, and felt that the veil was lifting from an unknown world” (3). Here, Taylor explicitly establishes a climatic boundary that separates worlds. He simultaneously taps into a belief in

climatic determinism, a prominent feature of Orientalist discourse that suggests that climate largely shapes individual character, society, and culture.⁵⁷ On the next page he then begins to connect this tropical climate to “the Orient,” when he passes Cuba and observes Havana with “its terraced houses of all light and brilliant colors, its spacious public buildings, spires, and the quaint, half-oriental pile of its cathedral” (4). Taylor does not explain what he means by “half-oriental,” but judging from his architectural judgements in his other travel journals, he probably recognizes certain features of the church that correspond to what he describes as an “Oriental” or “Saracenic” style.

Taylor solidifies the connection between the climate and the Orient shortly thereafter in a passage in which he remarks on the heat in this part of the world and, simultaneously, separates himself from the climate and the culture:

The heat, during this part of the voyage, was intolerable. . . . Under its influence one’s energies flag, active habits of mind are thrown aside, the imagination grows faint and hazy, the very feelings and sensibilities are melted and weakened. Once, I panted for the heat and glare and splendid luxuriance of tropical lands, till I almost made the god of the Persians my own. I thought some southern star must have been in the ascendant at my birth, some glowing instinct of the South been infused into my nature. Two months before, the thought of riding on that summer sea, with the sun over the mast-head, would have given a delicious glow to my fancy. But all my vision of life in the tropics vanished before the apathy engendered by this heat. The snowy, bleak and sublime North beckoned me like a mirage over the receding seas. Gods! how a single sigh of keen north-west wind

down some mountain gorge would have beaten a march of exulting energy to my spirit! (35)

These seemingly innocuous complaints of a single individual ultimately lend support to larger cultural and political judgements. A few days in this environment is enough to reduce Taylor's energy and destroy his "active habits of mind" and imagination. Heat engenders apathy, while the snowy, sublime North provides "exulting energy." These personal observations about the effects of the weather on the human body and mind are commonly found in representations of "the Orient" as indolent and apathetic (see Greeson 6). Furthermore, Taylor makes this connection between heat and "Oriental" culture more direct when he references "the god of the Persians."

Similar to Taylor's later work in *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*, Taylor draws comparisons across disparate landscapes to suggest unity, in this case an "Oriental" unity. The weather in the Gulf of Mexico makes him think of "the god of the Persians" and tropical weather more generally. These same comparisons occur in other forms elsewhere in the text. When he reaches San José, for example, Taylor writes, "The scenery around [San José] corresponded strikingly with descriptions of Syria and Palestine" (43). Taylor had not been to Syria or Palestine at this point in his life, so these "descriptions" likely came from other Orientalist writers. Likewise, Taylor compares the Valley of Humboldt's River to the "uplands of Central Asia" another place to which he had never been (286). His comparison to Central Asia is comparison simply for comparison's sake and does little to advance his narrative or develop his descriptions. In a similar move, Taylor explains the nature of the grizzly bear in relation to an Indian tiger.⁵⁸ In both cases, other comparisons could have been made, or the comparisons could have been omitted altogether, but Taylor seemingly cannot help but make Oriental comparisons.

When Taylor looks at Mexico and the newly acquired southwestern U.S. territories, he often sees the Orient. The city of Guanajuato reminds Taylor of fourteenth-century Moorish towns in Spain (389). He notices Arabesque patterns adorning houses in Guadalajara (399). In another city he visits a café with “light Moorish corridors” (420). When he learns of Chief Polo, a leader of indigenous resistance to mining in California, Taylor compares him to a leader of anti-imperial, Algerian resistance (240).⁵⁹ In talking of the new-found riches of the formerly working-class miners, Taylor writes, “Secure in possessing the ‘Open Sesamé’ to the exhaustless treasury under their feet, they gave free rein to every whim or impulse which could possibly be gratified” (254). Here, he references *The Arabian Nights* which he picks up elsewhere in his text as well. When he sits down to eat with some miners who had recently struck gold, he writes, “I will not pretend to say what [the food] cost, but I began to think that the fable of Aladdin was nothing very remarkable, after all. The genie will come, and had come to many whom I saw in California” (86). Later, he describes the rapid growth San Francisco by comparing it to the “magic seed of the Indian juggler, which grew, blossomed and bore fruit before the eyes of his spectators” (302). *Eldorado* is filled with references to “Oriental” people, “Oriental” places, and “Oriental” literature.

Taylor’s Orientalist comparisons also shape his representation of Mexican people. This feature especially applies to Sonorians, the people of northern Mexico most frequently connected to questions of assimilation, citizenship, and U.S. expansion in the nineteenth-century. The first comparison occurs when he describes a Sonoran guide as “our Bedouin, whom we christened Tompkins” (71). This example demonstrates both the cultural separation that Taylor creates between himself and this other man as well as the power that Taylor assumes to rename him. Surely, Tompkins had his own name. Shortly thereafter, Taylor meets a group of Sonoran miners

who he describes as “these lank and skinny Arabs of the West” (89). In isolation, these comparisons seem like idiosyncratic and superfluous descriptions based, likely, on skin tone, but these Orientalist comparisons have important sociopolitical implications.

One prominent theme in *Eldorado* involves an exploration of the kinds of people who will make up the new state of California. Taylor frequently comments on the kinds of U.S.-American emigrants who are traveling to the new territories as well as all the other people from around the world who are attempting to find riches in the gold mines. One might interpret *Eldorado* as an argument for who should be, and who should not be, a U.S.-American citizen. Involved in this argument, for Taylor, is a separation between native Californians and Mexicans, both of whom fought in the war against the U.S. and both of whom still make up part of the population of the newly acquired territories. Taylor once again uses an Orientalist comparison to separate these two groups. He writes, “The Californians, as a race, are vastly superior to the Mexicans. They have larger frames, stronger muscle, and a fresh, ruddy complexion, entirely different from the sallow skins of the tierra caliente or the swarthy features of those Bedouins of the West, the Sonorians” (144). He goes on to explain that the Californians had kept their “pure Castilian blood” as well as their “original physical superiority” over the Mexicans for over two hundred years. He adds that the Californians were already nicknamed “Americanos” by the Mexicans on account of their physical distinction. Taylor thus makes the case that Californians will be easily assimilated into U.S. culture as “they have no national feeling in common with [the Mexicans], and will never forgive the cowardly deportment of the Sonorians toward them, during the recent war” (144). The Californians are racially Spanish and thus “Occidental.” The Mexicans, and specifically the Sonorians, are the “Bedouins of the West” and thus “Oriental.”

With these comparisons in mind, we might return to Corley's observation that "Taylor confronted in California and Mexico a less developed tradition of racial and national stereotyping" and that this lack of tradition "allowed him some freedom in constructing his own criteria for evaluating and recognizing differences that could be attributed to race and, what was for Taylor its functional equivalent, nationality." Taylor's often explicit reliance on Orientalist discourse to describe the landscape and people of California, Mexico, and Central America provide a framework for understanding his other representations of these peoples. In other words, Taylor did, in fact, adhere to a well-developed tradition of racial and national stereotyping, but not a tradition that one would expect to find on the North American continent.

While Taylor never explicitly calls the people he encounters "Orientals," his descriptions match descriptions commonly found throughout Orientalist texts that represent "natives" as naked, lazy, backward, thievish, and often sexually charged. Furthermore, one should read these descriptions in relation to their juxtaposition to the more direct "Oriental" comparisons of landscape, architecture, and culture. In Chagres, Panama, for example, while he and his fellow travelers are looking for boat passage up the river, he writes, "without a single exception, the natives were not to be found, or when found, had broken their bargains" (11). He calls the natives "naked boatmen" and observes that "the doors of the huts were filled with men and women, each in a single cotton garment . . . while numbers of children, in Nature's own clothing, tumbled about in the sun" (11). When Taylor finally finds a boatman, he explains that the man "took such good care of some of our small articles as to relieve us from all further trouble about them" (13). Taylor summarizes that "this propensity [for theft] is common to all of his caste on the Isthmus" (13). Not only does Taylor repeat representations of "native" nakedness, laziness, and thievery, but he does so via an assumed authoritative, omniscient position. In this summary

of boatmen on the Isthmus, one should notice what Edward Said calls the copula *is*, or the tendency of the Orientalist to make statements that are “declarative and self-evident” in a tense that marks “the timeless eternal” (*Orientalism* 72). Albert Memmi, writing of colonization more generally, explains grammatical patterns such as this as “the mark of the plural” which contributes to the depersonalization of colonized people (85). Both Said and Memmi point to the authorial power that one must assume to make such an irrefutable, unchangeable, metaphysical statement about an entire group of people. This is the Orientalist’s authorial position or what Said calls the “strategic location” of the Orientalist writer (*Orientalism* 20).

Taylor continues to deliver these common Orientalist tropes through minor descriptions and racist jokes throughout *Eldorado*. These continuously serve to separate Taylor and his own culture from the people and cultures that he encounters. For example, shortly after his night in Chagres, Taylor comes across a party that the locals throw for the travellers. Taylor describes this simple dance with guitars and violins as a sexually charged party. The dancing of the “natives” is “voluptuous” and “coquettish” and ultimately results in a “half-barbaric org[y]” (22). Later, Taylor repeats racial myths that Mexicans never use soap, that Mexicans always have large families that require comically oversized carriages, and that vultures and wolves will not touch a dead Mexican body because their flesh is “always too highly seasoned by the red-pepper [they have] eaten” (368, 371, 379). Likewise, the reader learns in other passages that in Panama, “the natives are not to be depended on,” that “gambling is a born habit with [Mexicans],” and that Sonorians are all thievish (28, 119, 133).

All of these descriptions might be summarized in Taylor’s uncharacteristically lazy description of Vera Cruz. After chapters and chapters of description, Taylor oddly refuses to

describe Vera Cruz and resorts to half-hearted generalizations that demonstrate his cumulative representation of Mexico and its people:

I cannot say much of Vera Cruz. A town built and sustained by commerce alone, and that not the most flourishing, presents few points of interest to the traveler. Its physiognomy differs but little from that of the other Mexican cities I have described. There is the Plaza, flanked by the Cathedral,—the same pink mass of old Spanish architecture, picturesque only for its associations—the Diligence Hotel . . . the dreary, half-deserted streets, with their occasional palaces of stone enclosing paved and fountained court-yards—the market, heaped with the same pyramids of fruit which have become so familiar to us—the dirty adobe huts, nearest the walls, with their cut-throat population—and finally, the population itself, rendered more active, intelligent and civilized by the presence of a large number of foreigners, but still comprised mainly of the half-breed, with the same habits and propensities as we find in the interior. (441)

In other words, Vera Cruz is just like every other city in Mexico: unnoteworthy and full of fruit, dirty huts, and half-breed cut-throats who are only improved through foreign influence. Again, Taylor never explicitly calls the people of Central America “Orientals,” but his descriptions of dirty, naked, thievish, uncivilized “natives” living in huts fit within a well-developed tradition of Orientalist stereotyping that Taylor’s readers would likely recognize, especially when they are surrounded by Taylor’s more explicit Orientalist comparisons between landscapes and architectures. At the very least, his cumulative descriptions of Central Americans suggest a cultural divide between Taylor and his subjects.

This cultural divide is bolstered by other common motifs that one might not immediately associate with Orientalism. Other, seemingly isolated, non-Orientalist descriptions in *Eldorado* draw connections between Central Americans and “Orientals” because they resemble common intertextual tropes of Orientalist travel literature. For instance, Taylor’s most common traveling complaint throughout *Eldorado* is fleas. In Panama, he attempts to write but quickly gives up because he says that his paper is covered with fleas (16). At another stop en route to San José, Taylor jokes, “We should have slept, had fleas been lobsters. But as they were fleas, of the largest and savagest kind, we nearly perished before morning” (65). He loses sleep again to fleas on several other occasions while traveling through southern California and Mexico (68, 136 365, 372). In one passage, Taylor explains that the flea is “an annoyance by no means peculiar to California” and writes that he has encountered it in “the temples of the Incas and the halls of the Montezumas” as well as “in the Pantheon of Rome,” while “many a traveler has bewailed its visitation while sleeping in the shadow of the Pyramid” (136). The inclusion of the Pantheon in Rome may suggest that fleas are just part of the life of a traveler, but each of these places also connote an ancientness, a lack of modernization, and, likely, a level of uncleanliness.

More important though, the idea of fleas specifically and pests more generally is a common topic in Orientalist travel writing. Taylor references fleas in a similar manner on multiple occasions in another of his travel journals, *The Lands of the Saracen* (20, 192, 233, 439). Likewise, both William Lynch and William Cullen Bryant, who I discuss in Chapter One, reference fleas as common pests in “the East” that prevent sleep. Lynch mentions fleas on multiple occasions in his *Narrative of the United States’ Expedition to the River Jordan and the Dead Sea* and on two occasions references a joke that the “king of fleas holds his court in Tiberias” (156, 166). Lynch inserts this joke in one passage to describe the house of a “slatternly

family” and thus to equate fleas with uncleanness. In Bryant’s *Letters from the East*, he mentions fleas disturbing sleep and elsewhere references the British Orientalist Edward William Lane’s account of pests in Egypt (172). Bryant alludes to Lane’s summary that in Egypt “lice are not always to be avoided in any season, but they are easily got rid of; and in the cooler weather fleas are excessively numerous” (Bryant 126; Lane 14). Lane, later in his text, also equates fleas with a lack of cleanliness (157). Taylor seems to do the same in both *The Lands of the Saracen* and *Eldorado*. Ultimately, nineteenth-century readers of travel writing, especially Orientalist travel writing, would likely connect the fleas in Taylor’s Mexico with the fleas from Taylor’s Syria, Lane’s Egypt, Bryant’s Palestine, and Lynch’s Turkey.

A similar Orientalist trope appears in *Eldorado* that might at first read like a localized description, albeit an obviously biased and rhetorical one: the presence of robber-laden roads with minimal protection from the local government. Taylor recounts actually being robbed on his way to Guadalajara. Despite recognizing this event as a moment of “genuine adventure,” he is greatly outraged by both the actions of the robbers and the response of the local authorities (369). When he is able to reach a military station, he comes across “thirty or forty idle soldiers” laughing and playing games (371). When he explains what happened to him and describes his assailants, “the zealous functionary merely shrugged his shoulders and said nothing” (371). Taylor adds that “a proper distribution of half the soldiers who lay idle in this guard-house, would have sufficed to make the road perfectly secure” (371). He makes the rhetorical relevancy of this passage explicit when he adds that he “passed on, with a feeling of indignation against the country and its laws” (371). This passage fits within Taylor’s continuous portrayal of the Mexican army as lazy, ineffective, apathetic, and also under-supported, ill-fed, and improperly maintained.

Like fleas, the dangerous road swarming with robbers was a hallmark of nineteenth-century Orientalist travel writing. In *The Lands of the Saracen*, for instance, Taylor notes that Jaffa lies in a district “famous for robbers” (44). Later, on a trip to the Dead Sea, he writes that he paid an armed escort for protection from local “robber Arabs” but “never considered their attendance as anything more than a genteel way of buying them off from robbing us” (67). Bryant recounts several similar incidents in *Letters from the East* of paying corrupt soldiers or escorts in return for protection. As noted in Chapter One, Bryant’s traveling companion comments that these soldiers “keep the road clear of robbers . . . and are themselves the greatest robbers of all” (118). Bryant observes a group of Bedouins along a highway who “accept the tribute as a compensation for the robberies they would otherwise commit” (146-7). Lynch, likewise recounts an extended conversation in his *Narrative* in which a “Bedawin sheikh,” acting on the part of the Turkish government, attempts to, in Lynch’s mind, intimidate him into buying protection for his overland journey through warnings of violence and robbery (128-30). Lynch refuses the exorbitant cost and comes to learn that this sheikh was the former perpetrator of such violence and robbery but was paid off by the Turkish government to negotiate on their behalf. In each of these instances, the presence of robbers suggests a violent and immoral population and, simultaneously, the presence of an ineffectual and often corrupt government. Taylor’s *Eldorado* contains one of the few examples of robbers actually appearing, but whether they appear or not is not so important. The trope of the robber-filled road supplied the travel writer with what Taylor calls “genuine adventure.”

Taylor’s use of common Orientalist travel writing tropes combines with his stereotyping of the local population and his direct Orientalist comparisons of landscape and architecture to create a text that readers of the genre would readily find familiar. In doing so, he writes Central

America into “the Orient.” Scholars today would only reestablish the imaginary boundaries of “the Orient” if we ask if Mexico is, or was, *actually* part of “the Orient.” Such a question only reaffirms the Orientalist separation between “Occident” and “Orient.” We must instead subvert the question: Mexico is not actually part of “the Orient” because “the Orient” is an imaginary creation of “the Occident.” No location today is, or ever has been, part of “the Orient.”

Instead, we should recognize that Taylor’s work demonstrates how Orientalism’s famous “two worlds” model both absorbed more variegated racial systems of differentiation and was in turn absorbed into them. The question must inevitably arise: how do we account for the indigenous people of North, Central, and South America in the two-world system that Orientalism created in the nineteenth century? While we might hypothesize that some other discourse arose in Orientalism’s place, that the two-world system was thrown off balance, or that, as Liam Corley posits, writers were able to confront “a less developed tradition of racial and national stereotyping,” Taylor’s work suggests a different answer. As the Occident moved into North America, the geographical foundation of the East/West divide became muddled. Still, Orientalist writers like Taylor were always certain that Indigenous Americans and Central and South Americans were not Occidentals. As simple as it seems, there is only one other category available within an Orientalist ideology. As Orientalist discourse spread across the Western hemisphere it simply became more inclusive. As the Occident moved, so did the Orient.

One final example from *Eldorado* demonstrates the discursive mobility of “the Orient” in the nineteenth century. At the end of one 1850 edition, the publisher, G. P. Putnam, includes a list of “New Publications” related to “Travels, Adventures, and Discoveries.” In appending this list of books immediately following the conclusion of Taylor’s journal, the publishers place *Eldorado* within a specific genre and market similar texts to Taylor’s readers. The advertisement

also separates these publications into three categories. The first, and longest, category is “Travels, Adventures, and Discoveries, In The East.” The list includes what one might expect: *Adventures in the Libyan Desert, The Crescent and the Cross, Egypt and its Monuments, Oriental Life Illustrated*, etc. Of note, though, is the final text in the “East” category: Dr. J. J. Von Tschudi’s *Travels in Peru*. The attached summary describes a text about “braving the dangers of a land where throat-cutting is a popular pastime, and earthquakes and fevers more or less yellow, and vermin more or less venomous are amongst the indigenous comforts of the soil” (“G.P. Putnam’s New Publications” 6). Putnam’s advertisement and Taylor’s use of Orientalist discourse demonstrate that at least by the mid-nineteenth century the categories of “East” and “West” were not confined to any literal geographical boundaries. These texts suggest a belief in Oriental mobility, and while this mobility may seem to be only a discursive mobility built through cultural comparisons, scientists of the period gave credence to such a belief through their own theories of historical, *genetic*, Oriental mobility.

Ethnology and the American “Orient”

One might dismiss Taylor’s Orientalist descriptions of Central America as the unscientific, quasi-fictional writings of an idiosyncratic, individual Orientalist with an interesting take on world geography. Of course, one could only do so if one forgets that Taylor’s obviously flawed and subjective travel writing provided the justification for infamous landmarks in anti-Chinese legislation. One might also dismiss his publisher’s grouping of Peru as part of “the East” as just a strange or possibly lazy choice in a hastily thrown-together advertisement. However, these choices would not have been as strange to readers of the nineteenth century as they are to readers of the twenty-first century. One text published two years before *Eldorado* by a different

member of the AOS demonstrates that these choices were actually backed by the prevailing science of the day.

Like Horatio Hale, whom I discuss in Chapter One, Charles Pickering was one of the scientists chosen by the U.S. Congress to be part of the U.S. Exploring Expedition of 1838. He also happened to be the nephew of AOS founder, John Pickering, and became a Director of the AOS shortly after the Expedition, a position he held until his death in 1878. As a result of the Expedition and his independent travels afterward, Charles Pickering published *The Races of Man: and their Geographical Distribution* (1848), an academic treatise with the stated intention of enumerating the various races of man and defining “the geographical boundaries of these races” (3). The book was fairly popular in the U.S. and England, earning numerous editions until at least 1863, most of them published in London.

The author essentially attempts to fully explain his uncle’s observation within the opening address to the AOS that “the Orient” includes “not only those nations who at this day are inhabitants of Asia, but those who in ages past had their origin from Asiatic ancestors, and have been driven by wars, or other causes, from their original abode into Africa or Europe, but have still kept up their oriental character, and are properly to be considered as Orientals” (“Address” 5). Because of Pickering’s stated goal to discern geographical dispersion, scholars today can look to *The Races of Man* to learn how nineteenth-century Orientalists defined “the Orient” and especially how they understood the Orient’s geographical boundaries. More specifically, Pickering’s text illustrates that the “Orient” was constructed as a foil to the “Occident,” as the term “Oriental” suddenly, and unexpectedly, appears late in his text at the precise moment when Pickering begins describing the white European.

The Races of Man is loosely organized into two halves. The first outlines eleven distinct races of humans before providing extended descriptions of each. Pickering enumerates the eleven races in the opening chapter and further subdivides these races into four general categories based on skin tone. Under the “White” skin tone category, he includes the Arabian and Abyssinian races. The “Brown” skin tone category contains the Mongolian, Hottentot, and Malay races. The “Blackish-Brown” category consists of Papuan, Negrillo, Indian or Telingan, and Ethiopian races. Finally, the “Black” races are the Australian and the Negro (10-11). The second half of the book describes various types of migrations: migrations of people across sea and land, migrations of knowledge and literature, and finally migrations of animals and plants. As a naturalist rather than an anthropologist, Pickering rarely goes into much depth on character, habits, or cultural practices but instead limits his observations mostly to physical features and easily recognizable cultural artifacts like clothing. He wants to observe the historical movement of various races rather than explain how these races currently live. However, similar to Bayard Taylor, he often draws comparisons between races and hypothesizes about racial dispersion through observations of linguistic similarities and similarities in literature and art.⁶⁰

One should note, Pickering does not use the term “Oriental” in his initial enumeration of races. In fact, his complexion-based categorization actually connects groups of people across disparate geographic areas and suggests that skin-tone is the primary determinant of cultural characteristics rather than one’s location. While Pickering writes later in his book that “mankind are essentially alike,” he admits “the existence of character” and is persuaded “that there is besides, a character of race” (280). In the beginning though, the term “Oriental” denotes neither race nor character nor skin tone, and Pickering completely omits the term from his opening chapters. However, Pickering’s initial categories drift as his book progresses and become

increasingly confusing. His introduction of the term “Oriental” is crucial to one of these moments of change.

Pickering only uses the term “Oriental” twice within the first two hundred and twenty-five pages of *The Races of Man*. However, he uses the term twenty more times in the last half of his text and another fifteen in his appendices, and this shift in frequency occurs at a specific, strategic moment. The word becomes significantly more frequent at the precise moment in *The Races of Man* when Pickering attempts to classify a “European White race” as separate from other types of “White” people. Like “Oriental,” Pickering completely omits the term “European” from his initial categorization. “European,” for Pickering, is neither a race nor a skin tone, and any “white” European would have to fit within his “White” complexion-based category under either the “Arabian” or “Abyssinian” races. Yet, much later in this book, when Pickering writes his chapter on “The White or Arabian Race,” he makes an odd and interesting switch. He opens his chapter by identifying his target group as “Europeans or European colonists” (225). In the next paragraph he describes this group as “the White race then, as it exists in Northern climates” (225). All of a sudden, Pickering casts aside his initial categories and introduces climate as a distinguishing factor, seemingly adding a twelfth race—White Europeans—that he separates from both Abyssinians and Arabs.

It is precisely at this point in the text where the term “White” ceases to be used as a general skin tone category and becomes its own race, a race that is instantly equated to Europeans. It is also precisely at this point where the term “Oriental” becomes more frequent. Twenty of Pickering’s twenty-two usages of the term “Oriental” occur after this moment in the text. In other words, at the moment when the idea of a “White European” race enters the text, so does the idea of the “Oriental” as its counterpart. Pickering neither introduces nor alludes to

either of these races at the beginning of the text. These two categories just appear, out of nowhere, when Pickering attempts to include white Europeans within his grand theory. The “Orient,” then, for Pickering, is not so much a definable, scientific category or race but an idea or rather, a negation or opposite.

As his text continues, Pickering makes the differentiation between Europeans and Orientals explicit and, in the process, indirectly defines the term “Oriental.” His initial categories seemingly forgotten, Pickering writes, “At the present day, the White race may be conveniently disposed in two divisions, as well geographical, as differing in institutions and habits of life; the Frank or European, and the Oriental” (227). Confusion is understandable at this point: in the opening pages of *The Races of Man*, “White” was a category divided into two races, the Arabian and the Abyssinian. Midway through the book, “White” becomes the exact opposite: a race divided into two categories, neither of which he mentions in the beginning. Regardless, Pickering uses these mid-text revisions to explicitly define the term “Oriental.” He writes that “Oriental” people are “men physically like ourselves [white Europeans], who yet differed from us in their customs, and who had not derived their arts and acquirements from Europe” (234). Another confusing twist takes place in this definition. While the term “Oriental” is related to geography, here it primarily denotes a cultural distinction. An “Oriental,” for Pickering, is essentially any non-Black person who is not culturally European.⁶¹ Furthermore, because Pickering’s project is just as much about hypothesizing the geographical *dispersion* of races—and the cultures associated with them—he suggests that one might find the Oriental in numerous places, just as one might find the European in numerous places. Discerning the difference between the two requires a trained individual such as Charles Pickering.⁶²

Pickering's definition of "the Oriental" as a geographically dispersed, cultural distinction should have a profound impact on how scholars of nineteenth-century Orientalism understand the Orientalist imaginative geography. While scholars today readily recognize the imagined separation between Occident and Orient, we have yet to fully consider this differentiation as a cultural distinction separate from any geographical distinction. We have thus yet to recognize how such a belief shaped EuroAmerican representations of non-EuroAmerican Others throughout North America. The U.S. Exploring Expedition also explored the western coasts of North, Central, and South America in search of viable ports. Along the way, Pickering and the other scientists on the trip made observations about the various people they encountered from Oregon all the way to Peru.

In *The Races of Man* Pickering uses his theory of Oriental dispersion to account for the physical features of many of the people he meets, including Indigenous Americans and Mexicans. Fitting with his theory, Pickering's chapter on "The Mongolian Race" hypothesizes the dispersion of this race from central Asia, into the Arctic, and down the western coast of North America, all the way into Mexico and beyond into South America (15-16, 41-2). His section on Mexico is immediately followed by a section on "Northeast America" and the "aboriginals of the United States," which is then immediately followed by a section on the "Chinese." Each of these groups, according to Pickering, share physical and cultural features and can be described as "Mongolian." For example, Pickering describes a Mexican man he sees as "scarcely distinguishable in his personal appearance from the pure Malay" (42). Later in his text, he refers to this same Mexican as "so similar to the Polynesians" (112).

In respect to the aboriginal inhabitants of North America, Pickering first traces the spread of the Mongolian race and Mongolian linguistic features through the Chinook, Nootka, and

Nisqually tribes, down the west coast and into Mexico (41). For the Atlantic side of North America, he mostly relies on portraits of Indigenous Americans to deduce their racial characteristics. For instance, he writes, “I have never seen Seminoles, but from portraits and descriptions, I am satisfied that they belong to the Mongolian race” (44). Pickering returns to this idea later in his text when he looks to cultural similarities between aboriginal Americans and Pacific Islanders (281-292). Few examples of Orientalist research better exemplify the operation of what Said calls the “strategic formation” of Orientalist texts or a body of Orientalist scholarship that continues to build both mass—in terms of sheer number of texts and cultural ubiquity—and authority—in terms of cultural acknowledgement and acceptance—through reference to itself. Pickering bases at least part of his theory of race on portraits created by other Orientalists. Not photographs, not empirical evidence, but paintings. Pickering’s comparisons are no more objective, scientific, or verifiable than Bayard Taylor’s personal observations in *Eldorado or A Visit to India, China, and Japan*, but they appear within a scholarly text that the U.S. Congress sanctioned and supported. Texts like Pickering’s thus provided scientific authority for classifying a place like Mexico or Peru as part of “the East.”

Interestingly enough, this section on Mexicans, Indigenous Americans, and Chinese also includes Pickering’s earliest use of the term “Oriental” to connect different cultures across disparate geographical spaces. Two paragraphs after explaining that Chinese theater was too “grotesque” and “not agreeable to European taste,” Pickering moves on to explain Chinese architecture. He describes one temple by writing, “In the outline, and especially in the form of the roof, I thought I could, equally as in the Malay architecture, distinguish the Feejeean [*sic*] style. I remarked in the interior of the building, a difference from other Oriental forms of worship, in the apparent absence of a sanctuary” (48). Again, the term “Oriental” appears shortly

after the introduction of the “European,” but what is more important here is Pickering’s explicit use of subjective comparisons of architecture to create a cultural formation that he calls “Oriental,” a cultural formation that, here, includes many of the inhabitants of North, Central, and South America.

Pickering does not explicitly label Mexicans as “Orientals,” but he places them under the “Mongolian” race and continuously links Mexicans to other groups that readers would readily recognize as “Oriental.” For example, in the paragraph immediately preceding the first appearance of “Oriental,” Pickering explains an exhibition of a “masked demon” in a Chinese carnival by writing that it looked like “the very original of Humboldt’s ‘Mexican priest, in the act of swallowing a human victim’” (48). At the end of the paragraph, Pickering adds that “some further connexion [*sic*], may possibly be established between China and Mexico, through the use of grotesque masks by the maritime tribes of Northwest America” (48). While the term “Oriental” only appears at greater frequency much later in the text, Pickering defines the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America as “Orientals” via comparison to others in locations like China, the Polynesian Islands, and Asia more generally.

The point here—one that is crucial to the chapters that follow—is that Pickering’s drive to define the geographical boundaries of these races which he classifies “as forming in a good degree the basis of our reasoning on the whole subject” was, in practice, more about defining the geographical dispersion of these races. Orientalists created an imaginative geography of East and West, but they simultaneously recognized that people had always been moving across the globe. They recognized—or at least theorized—that the “East” had never remained in the physical, geographical East, and they used this theory to explain how people like Indigenous Americans, South Americans, and Pacific Islanders could be what they perceived as different in physical

features and cultural habits from their EuroAmerican counterparts.⁶³ In other words, as EuroAmericans encountered new groups of non-EuroAmerican Others, the Orientalist imaginative geography did not change; a third category did not disrupt the balance between Occident and Orient; the “Orient” just got bigger. As we will continue to see in the following chapters, for the writers of the American Oriental Society, Indigenous Americans and Mexicans especially were not just Orientals via metaphor, but Orientals via natural science. This was not just comparison; it was empirical fact.

Pickering’s scientific theories and Taylor’s transnational Oriental comparisons provide a minor revision to one of Said’s most important arguments about the relationship between Orientalism and geography. Said argues that the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 changed the way Westerners thought about the world and fractured any belief in “the Orient” as a separate, distinct, and distant geographical location (92). “Thereafter,” Said explains, “the notion of ‘Oriental’ [was] an administrative or executive one, and it [was] subordinate to demographic, economic and sociological factors” (92). The Suez Canal had “melted away the Orient’s geographical identity” and, from that moment on, “the Oriental, like the African, [was] a member of a subject race and not exclusively an inhabitant of a geographical area” (92). When the Suez Canal was complete, “the Orient” transcended geography. The texts of Pickering and Taylor suggest that this moment may have happened earlier and may have happened as a result of a different world-changing event. It is likely the case that the realization of U.S.-American Manifest Destiny—the spread of the U.S. from the Atlantic, across North America, and into the Pacific—was as defining a moment as the completion of the Suez Canal and had an equally profound effect on nineteenth-century Orientalist discourse.

3 | Mexico, Indians, and the Strategic Formation of Orientalist Literature:

John William De Forest's *Overland* and U.S. Policy in 1871

In presenting the sword, General Carleton said he offered it as a gift from a General of the United States who had been fighting the Bedouins of America for the past ten years, to a Turkish general who had, for a longer time, been fighting the Bedouins of Asia. General Hussein responded in becoming terms.

- *New York Herald* article, "Washington: Present to General Hussein Pasha," October 23, 1867

In the opening chapters of his 1871 Western romance novel *Overland*, John William De Forest describes the appearance of his Mexican villain by writing, "There was in general nothing Oriental about him, no assumption of barbaric pompousness, no extravagance of bearing" (10). Any reader holding the contemporary understanding of what or *where* "the Orient" is might be confused about De Forest's description. When De Forest writes that there is nothing Oriental about his Mexican character, we must ask, "Why would there be?"

De Forest was likely familiar with Bayard Taylor's depictions of Mexicans as the "lank and skinny Arabs of the West" and Charles Pickering's scientific theories about ancient Oriental migration, and he likely subscribed to the popular scientific belief in transnational Oriental mobility or, at least, participated in the popular travel writing practice of transnational Oriental

comparison. Yet several features of De Forest's writing process set him apart from the other writers in this dissertation and illustrate key features in the maintenance of Orientalist discourse. While William Cullen Bryant, Bayard Taylor, and Charles Pickering each traveled the world to create their non-fiction works, De Forest also created works of fiction and non-fiction about "Oriental" places, but he did so without leaving his own home. What separates De Forest from his counterparts in the American Oriental Society is his ability to weave scholarly Orientalism into popular fiction without any first-hand experience or knowledge.

The genre of De Forest's work also sets him apart. John Pickering's lectures, Charles Pickering's ethnographic texts, Bayard Taylor's journalism, and William Cullen Bryant's travel writing were all incredibly popular but still likely only reached specific audiences. De Forest's writing, however, is a primary example of the kinds of works that the AOS Directors requested in an 1847 report in which they address a plea specifically to "those members of the Society whose avocations do not permit them to engage directly in oriental studies" to promote the Society through their own interests and skills ("Proceedings" xxvi). The Directors explain that "their cooperation is important to the prosperity of the Society, as they form a connecting link between the few in this country who give themselves to oriental researches, and the literary public of the country, at large, and may be expected to spread the interest in such pursuits, more widely, among our men of education" (xxvi). De Forest's background in Orientalism combined with his desire to write fiction that directly responded to popular interests made him the perfect candidate for completing the task set forth by the Directors of the AOS.⁶⁴

Moreover, the fact that he wrote about people such as Mexicans and Indigenous Americans with whom he had never come in contact reveals that Orientalist discourse can operate detached from any empirical knowledge.⁶⁵ In this way, De Forest's texts set in North

America simultaneously serve as an example of what Edward Said calls the “strategic formation” of Orientalist discourse. Said argues that Orientalism relies upon a large body, or formation, of texts that secure authority as they acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves. Because of this formation, each writer and reader approaches a text with the assumption of “some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies” (20). These texts can continue to cite each other without ever citing any primary source material or incorporating other perspectives. This strategic formation allows Orientalists to gather all the information they need about “the Orient” from other Orientalist texts rather than from empirical reality or, crucially, from the voices of the people whom they write about (see Said 80). Ultimately, this formation becomes anti-empirical, as it takes on “the self-containing, self-reinforcing character of a closed system, in which objects are what they are *because* they are what they are, for once, for all time, for ontological reasons that no empirical material can either dislodge or alter” (Said 70). One can recognize and analyze this strategic formation because these texts cannot make sense, cannot make meaning, cannot be legible, can have no authority, without reference to the formation and without employing shared voices, structures, images, themes, and motifs.⁶⁶ The result of the strategic formation is that Orientalism, as Said explains, “produced not only a fair amount of exact positive knowledge about the Orient but also a kind of second-order knowledge—lurking in such places as the ‘Oriental’ tale, the mythology of the mysterious East, notions of Asian inscrutability—with a life of its own” (52). Not only did this second-order knowledge exist in the “Oriental” tale, but it also thrived in the American Western romance novel.

In this chapter, I explore how an author often celebrated as a vanguard of American realism, an author who claimed that he always “wrote from real life,” could write a popular,

realist novel with no first-hand experience of his subject. De Forest wrote about the U.S.-American West and the various people living there without ever leaving Connecticut. I attempt to explain why De Forest would choose such a topic in the first place by contextualizing his literature in relation to developments in U.S. policy involving Mexico and Indigenous Americans in the 1870s. In developing these connections, I also build upon our understanding of the strategic formation of Orientalist literature by tracing discursive similarities across a range of popular texts and political speeches of the period. While I demonstrate that nineteenth-century U.S.-Americans often employed Orientalist discourse to characterize Indigenous Americans, and further that these discursive practices informed imperialist practices across North America, I suggest that these discursive practices never required any empirical knowledge of Indigenous Americans at all. De Forest's work about Mexicans and Indigenous Americans exists as but one link in a long chain of secondary, Orientalist sources, and in looking to his writing process and the references that he makes within his work, we might better understand how the Orientalist network operates.

John William De Forest and Orientalism

A review of De Forest's Orientalism is particularly relevant primarily because his Orientalist ideologies deeply informed his entire oeuvre, especially his literature set in North America. De Forest's introduction to the American Oriental Society likely came through his brother, Henry. Henry was what one might call a professional Orientalist. He was a medical missionary in Syria, where he eventually opened a school for girls with his wife Catharine (Hijjiya 14; see note 25). Once there, he became a corresponding member of the AOS,⁶⁷ sending letters and translations and donating artifacts to the society (Salisbury "Translation"; "Additions"

xxxii). Henry published his first article in the *Journal of the AOS* in 1851 and remained an active member until his death in 1858.

John William De Forest first visited his brother in Syria in 1846 around his twentieth birthday (Hijiya 14). This trip also facilitated John's first direct involvement with the AOS in 1851 when he donated "some bronze antiques found in Mt. Lebanon" alongside his brother's donation of "a head-dress worn by the married women of Mt. Lebanon" ("Additions" xxxii). John joined the AOS around the time of his brother's death and was officially on the membership roll in May of 1860. He remained a member until 1878 without ever publishing anything in the *Journal* or donating anything else to the library. Arguably, though, he advanced the work of the Society through his literary works. His experience and travels in Syria inspired his first explicitly Orientalist text published ten years later, a travel journal titled *Oriental Acquaintance; or, Letters from Syria* (1856). This travel journal, in turn, partly inspired his later novel *Irene the Missionary* (1879).

Unlike his brother, De Forest never published in the *Journal of the AOS*, even though John was an Orientalist from the beginning of his writing career to the end. This is likely because the *Journal* in the nineteenth century was primarily a scholarly publication consisting mostly of articles about linguistic features or historical artifacts. De Forest wrote more non-fiction than fiction early in his career while a member of the AOS, but his interests were mainly in ethnography and in the separation and classification of world cultures, two topics that fell mostly outside the purview of the *Journal*, but not outside the Society's general interests.

De Forest only ever published two texts set in the geographic region commonly referred to as "the Orient," the aforementioned *Oriental Acquaintance; Or, Letters from Syria* (1856) and *Irene the Missionary* (1879). Both texts are replete with Orientalist tropes that collectively depict

the East as a degraded land fallen from ancient grandeur because of its backward, lazy, morally inept, and often dangerous inhabitants. His overall relationship to the East is neatly summarized in the opening remarks of *Oriental Acquaintance* as the author's boat lands in Turkey: "Before my western eyes were spread out, in oriental strangeness, the shabby wharves, the fragile minarets, and the rough, red-tiled roofs of the Queen of Ionia. . . . The failing timbers of a ruinous wooden quay, symbolical, in their rottenness, of the people and government of the country, gave me footing on the shore of Turkey" (3). De Forest immediately separates himself and his "Western eyes" from the shabby, fragile, ruinous, and strange landscape he associates with the East.

Like William Cullen Bryant's travel journal through the Holy Land which I discuss in Chapter One, De Forest's journal rehearses many common Orientalist representations of his subjects.⁶⁸ For instance, De Forest writes, in a section titled "Syrian Manners and Conversation," that "their faults are a large spice of envy, a plentiful peppering of lies, vanity, lack of moral courage, and a particular susceptibility to ridicule" (145). The Orientals are "feeble barbarians," lazy, shabby, fallen from a state of ancient vigor, superstitious, incompetent, beggarly, deceitful, and "savage[ly] incompetent" (28-9, 123, 225, 235, 237, 242, 285). Arabic language is "embarrassing" with its "particularly large and unpronounceable alphabet" (157). Arabic singing is a "wild quavering trill" which sounds "as if the performer was being shaken at the time by a giant, or a grizzly bear, or a sawmill, or anything else excessively strong, uneasy and ill-tempered" (69-70). Their sacred sites and traditions are so absurd that "they excited unbelief and irreverence rather than faith and devotion" (80). He describes one scene of traditional practice as "the strangest pictures that ever superstition mosaicked out of morsels of stupid humanity" (99). Elsewhere, similar to Bayard Taylor's Orientalist descriptions of landscapes in Chapter Two, De

Forest views the land in Syria as a “rude, untilled, forsaken country” but recognizes that “the turf at our feet was green and hopeful, and the whole land showed large possibilities of richness and beauty” (30). De Forest views the Syrian landscape as a place of potential, but one that is wasted by incompetent inhabitants.⁶⁹

His classically Orientalist representations in *Oriental Acquaintance* collectively create a single image of the Arab as socially, politically, economically, and morally degraded. Yet these cumulative representations are only one aspect of Orientalist rhetoric. What is equally important is the way De Forest crafts his own authorial voice and the way he situates himself in relation to his subjects. Said calls this positioning the “strategic location,” which is “a way of describing the author’s position in a text with regard to the Oriental material he writes about” (20).⁷⁰ In explaining this position in relation to the body of common Orientalist representations, Said writes that,

Rather than listing all the figures of speech associated with the Orient—its strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth—we can generalize about them as they were handed down through the Renaissance. They are all declarative and self-evident; the tense they employ is the timeless eternal; they convey an impression of repetition and strength; they are always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which is sometimes specified and sometimes not. For all these functions it is frequently enough to use the simple copula *is*. (72).

Representations may vary from text to text, author to author, context to context, but the rhetorical situation remains consistent. This authorial position enables the author to use the copula *is* to make sweeping pronouncements that separate, explicitly or implicitly, East from West. Such

copulae are found in De Forest's pronouncements that "Arab faults *are*," that "Arab singing *is*," that "another Syrian annoyance *is* the begging disposition of the people" (69, 145, 237).

Furthermore, the strategic location is shaped, or constrained, by social and generic conventions, audience expectations, discursive formations, and the political environment in which it operates. Behind the declarative copula *is*, we must read the power that makes *is* possible.

One will notice a similar strategic location in De Forest's only fictional text set in "The Orient," his 1879 novel, *Irene the Missionary*. In *Irene the Missionary*, a young American woman travels east in the late 1850s to become a missionary after the death of her parents. She ultimately settles in Damascus. On the boat over, she meets Huberstein DeVries, a young American archeologist who wants to prove that the Philistines from the Bible were of European origin (20). The two soon-to-be lovers split ways for parts of the novel while Irene helps to develop a mission and DeVries continues his archeology. DeVries almost falls in love with a young Syrian girl⁷¹ before the climax of the novel when the local Muslim population runs riot and attempts to kill all the Christians in the area. DeVries swoops into the mission just in time to whisk Irene to safety. Once they escape the city, they quickly declare their love for each other and get married. The two ultimately give up their lives in the East, move home to participate in the American Civil War, and live a wonderful life together.

Irene the Missionary is replete with characterizations of Arabs similar to those in *Oriental Acquaintance*. De Forest even repeats the boat landing scene from *Oriental Acquaintance* with a few additional flourishes. Irene's boat lands in Beirut on a "shapeless and half-ruinous jetty" with evidence of former architectural magnificence, now in ruin, visible beneath the water and around the jetty and evidently wasted by the current inhabitants (55). Upon leaving the ship, Irene finds Beirut crowded, irregular, and unorganized. She thinks the

city is “very dirty, too, and haunted by odors of decaying vegetables and refuse and none the sweeter for the generally shabby Orientals who lounged through it” (55-6). The reader learns that Arab men generally do not speak of their wives out of scorn for women, that Syrians sound like jackals when they speak, and that the Orient is tremendously leisurely and lazy (6, 52, 155). Various characters also describe the East as fallen from its ancient grandeur (19, 25, 50). DeVries calls the East “savage lands,” and his missionary interlocutor agrees that they are traveling “from civilization down to the companionship of semi-barbarism” (7-8). These are all just passing observations voiced by the main characters that support a reading of the Orient as shabby, dirty, wasteful, lazy, and ultimately different.

The most critical representations of the Arabs occur in the climax of the novel, but in this instance the omniscient narrator delivers them directly. When the local Muslim population begin their riot in Damascus, the narrator declares that the local authority was unhelpful and duplicitous: "Like a Turk, he promised everything, and, still like a Turk, he did nothing, or worse than nothing" (348). As the violence begins, De Forest writes, "All the rest of that day and all night the holy city held carnival of plunder, lust, and murder" (350). He continues,

A host of Damascenes, Bedaween, Koords, Druses, and Metawileh, followed by many soldiers of the Turkish garrison, poured, howling, into the Christian quarter, and ravaged it without let or hindrance. The timorous, unarmed inhabitants hid as they could in closets, wells, chimneys, and other coverts, only to be dragged forth, insulted, spit upon, beaten, subjected to every degrading violence, and butchered by the thousand. (350)

Granted, De Forest does include a few minor Muslim characters who help the Christian characters escape and his novel is based on the real events of the Syrian Civil War of 1860 in

which reportedly twenty thousand Christians were killed during one unexplainable outbreak of violence in Damascus (see Rogan 493-496). De Forest's novel is not without its complexities and its connections to real-world events, but these complexities never threaten the primary image of the Orient that he creates as odd, exotic, sexual, ancient, fallen, and ultimately fanatical and dangerous.

Two final passages from *Irene the Missionary* demonstrate how De Forest's Orientalist ideologies might map onto the North American landscape.⁷² Both are completely fictional and have little to do with the plot. These are simply moments when De Forest uses his characters to expound upon cultural ideologies. The first passage takes place early in the novel when De Forest develops his two principal characters. The titular character, Irene, travels to Beirut on a boat with many kinds of people. De Forest juxtaposes Irene beside a group of harem women whom he describes as "female satellites of a pasha who was on his way to some Asiatic province" (40). These women sit contentedly on the deck of the ship veiled within their low tent of "Turkish rugs and carpets," and "so long as they had their pipes and coffee, and their idle communications concerning harem matters, they appeared to care for naught beside" (40). De Forest creates the harem women as the opposite of Irene because of their clothing and veils, their skin color, and their implied sexuality, but Irene herself voices the most important difference: their lack of an inherent will to control themselves and to control others. Conversely, Irene assumes that she naturally possesses this inherent will as a member of the Anglo-Saxon race. Irene thinks of these women as "entertaining and absurdly queer and irrationally unaccountable." She adds, "They were *foreigners*; no matter if they were under their native skies, they were foreigners; she alone, the American citizen was a native and possessor everywhere" (40-1). In contrast to the harem women, Irene thinks that she "ha[s] (though she laughed at it) the Anglo-

Saxon feeling that only the Anglo-Saxon knows fully what he is about, and that the other denizens of earth are grown children who need Anglo-Saxons to direct their ways” (41). Her mentor, Mr. Payson, confirms her beliefs. He tells her that she is “not so far wrong, at least in this part of the world. . . . If you could understand the talk of these Orientals, you would be pained by their ignorance and shallowness. I would almost as lief listen to the observations of dogs about their bones, or of ducks and geese about their puddles” (41).⁷³ Irene’s presumption of the inherent superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race and Mr. Payson’s racist comparisons between Orientals and animals are both common motifs voiced by various characters throughout De Forest’s oeuvre. More important though is Irene’s idea that an American—at least an Anglo-Saxon American—can be a possessor anywhere, while others might be a foreigner even in their native land. This genealogical argument might transfer anywhere in the world. Imperialism requires no more justification than the apparent fact that the Anglo-Saxon is home no matter where they travel. Thus, Orientalism provides evidence to support familiar justifications of imperialism.

A second passage from the final chapters of *Irene the Missionary* demonstrates this idea in practice and suggests specific transnational comparisons. As the riot in Damascus rages, DeVries, Irene, and their party work their way through the burning city avoiding groups of fanatical, Christian-killing Muslims. After a few narrow escapes, they reach the city gates only to encounter a “gigantic negro.” De Forest explains further,

His eyes were wild, and he had a silly, brutish expression, as if he were half-witted, or possibly downright mad. But in the Orient a lunatic, and even an idiot, is considered inspired, and may often commit outrages, if not crimes, with impunity. Roaring 'Ullah! Ullah!' this black monster

bounded toward DeVries, and aimed a blow at him with a rusty khanjar, or large dagger. (371)

One of DeVries's men quickly renders this threatening man unconscious. However, once the caravan reaches a place of relative safety, DeVries's friend, Wingate, says about the black man, "I feel as though our colored brother had pommeled me from head to foot . . . Miss Grant, we Americans do quite right in thrashing negroes. I wish an able South Carolina paddler had our misbelieving friend in hand" (373). When Irene responds with worry that the guide had killed the black man, DeVries, the hero of the novel, responds only, "I hope so" (373).

The author's description of this Black Oriental character and the subsequent reference to the South Carolina paddler abounds with transnational discursive connections. First, we read the description of a mad, half-witted, brutish "negro" that American readers would surely recognize from common racial stereotypes of African Americans within U.S. media and literature.⁷⁴ The connection is confirmed when Wingate adds that "Americans do quite right in thrashing negroes." Wingate's reference brings the novel back to the U.S.-American context in a somewhat unexpected way. Unexpected, because the author, De Forest, fought in the Union Army and later served as an military officer in Reconstruction. The main characters, DeVries and Irene, also ultimately decide to return to the United States to support the Union during the American Civil War. Of course, a minor character voices the comparison between this Black Oriental and Black Americans, but no other characters challenge his opinion, and DeVries ultimately hopes that the Black man is dead. This comparison is perhaps less surprising if we consider Irene's thoughts about the Anglo-Saxon from the beginning of the novel. These characters from the northern United States find solidarity with an imagined South Carolina overseer in the belief that the Anglo-Saxon, especially the American Anglo-Saxon, is a native and a possessor anywhere they

go.⁷⁵ This is the ideology that informs and connects American travel in the Orient, American imperialism across the world, and American racism at home. It is an ideology that operates within De Forest's writing about Arabs in *Oriental Acquaintance* and *Irene the Missionary* as well as his writings about Mexicans and Indigenous Americans in the American West.

De Forest's North American Orient

Before De Forest published *Oriental Acquaintance* and *Irene the Missionary*, he made his first mark on the literary world with his publication of a nonfiction text titled *History of the Indians of Connecticut: From the Earliest Known Period to 1850* (1851). This first book still came four years after his visit to Syria and the influence of his Orientalist interests were already evident. In fact, De Forest initiates an Orientalist frame of reference on the very first page. He opens his first chapter by juxtaposing the "civilized and Christian community" of Connecticut with the "few barbarous tribes of a race which seems to be steadily fading from existence" (1). The "barbarous tribes" to which he refers are the Indigenous Americans of the region. He continues with a litany of characteristics replete with the copula *is* in past tense:

Their origin was Asiatic; their language was totally unlike any European tongue; their government was rude and founded solely upon custom; their religion was a singular system of paganism without idolatry; their character was ferocious, yet not undistinguished by virtues; and their mode of life was precarious and unsettled, dependent almost wholly for subsistence upon fishing and the chase. (1)

De Forest's first historical claim that "their origin was Asiatic" immediately labels Indigenous Americans as Oriental.⁷⁶ More important though, each item in the list that follows demonstrates that the Indigenous Americans were—the past tense suggests that they no longer *are*—the

inferior opposite of the white EuroAmericans who claimed to control over the land that the author calls Connecticut.

De Forest returns to this Orientalist frame of reference later in the book when he draws comparisons between Indigenous Americans and what he calls “savages” world-wide. He compares Indigenous American religious performers to “howling dervishes of Turkey” and the “pagan priests of the South Sea Islands” (28). Indigenous Americans, for De Forest, are just one subgroup of a larger, global group who are collectively the inferior opposites to EuroAmericans. Their rapid demise is simply part of a larger process within the “pages of history” that takes place when “communities of entirely savage and uncultivated men” encounter “the trading visits and colonies of the civilization-hardened races of Europe” (348).

The separation of the world into these two groups—savages and Europeans—is one aspect of a “civilizationalist” logic that pervades De Forest’s work. According to *History*, certain populations exist outside of and in opposition to “civilization,” and these populations are doomed to extinction because of inherent physical and moral failings. The entire text essentially justifies this belief. In his final paragraph of *History of the Indians of Connecticut*, De Forest questions whether white, Christian, EuroAmericans are responsible for the destruction of Indigenous American cultures. He answers:

My own belief is, that had the latter never been deprived of a foot of land otherwise than by fair and liberal purchase, and had not a single act of violence ever been committed upon them, they would still have consumed away with nearly the same rapidity, and would still ultimately have perished. Their own barbarism has destroyed them; they are in great measure guilty of their own destruction; yet is this guiltiness also their deep and pitiable misfortune. And,

while we must admit that the white population of Connecticut has not fulfilled its responsibilities as a civilized and Christian race, we are also bound to admit that, judge by the rule of the ordinary course of human conduct, it has not, on the whole, in its behavior toward the Indians, been guilty of any peculiar degree of heedlessness, or inhumanity, or injustice. (490)

These closing passages of *History of the Indians of Connecticut* explain the rhetorical exigency for the book's creation. De Forest wrote *History*, at least in part, to excuse the destruction of the Indigenous Americans and the occupation of their lands. His final paragraph elaborates a belief in inherent characteristics of races and in a teleology through which barbarous populations will ultimately disperse and disintegrate while white, "civilized," EuroAmerican Christians will eventually occupy and rule the entire world as part of a natural progression.⁷⁷

Equally important to his Orientalist frame of reference and his justification of imperialism is De Forest's writing process and the way he compiled his text. De Forest's *History of the Indians of Connecticut* is a textbook example of how the strategic formation operates because it enabled a young aspiring author to write and publish an immense text about a subject on which he had absolutely no expertise and about which he had no first-hand knowledge or experience. To write *History*, as De Forest explains in his preface to the volume, he began reading "those works, which, being the most common, were most likely to fall in my way" (1). This included "Trumbull's History of Connecticut, Barber's Historical Collections of Connecticut, and Thatcher's Indian Biographies" (v). From there, De Forest went to the Library of Yale College to search their records; he read "Winthrop and Hazard and their host of associate worthies;" he gained access to the records of the Secretary of State and studied "Colonial Records, the State Records, the Papers on Indians, on Towns and Lands and on Ecclesiastical

Affairs;” he travelled to small towns to search their “records pertaining to the aborigines”; he searched the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society; and finally, he adds a list of other influential texts including “Miss Caulkin’s History of Norwich, M’Clure’s Life of Wheelock and the Memoirs of Mrs. Sarah L. Smith . . . Morse’s Report on the Indian Tribes, Dwight’s Travels, Tracy’s History of American Missions, Allen’s Biographical Dictionary, the American Archives and the printed volumes of Executive Documents issued by the general government” (v-vii). One should notice a trend in these sources: they are mostly secondary sources created by non-Indigenous American writers. De Forest read a lot of papers *on* Indians rather than papers *by* Indians.

De Forest’s complete history of the Indigenous Americans of Connecticut never consults the easily attainable source material created by the native people about whom he writes. As thorough and diligent as De Forest claims to be in his preface to *History*, with as many people and texts as the author consults, one should find it hard to believe that he had not at least heard of William Apess, a prominent Pequot orator, minister, and writer who died just ten years before De Forest began researching *History*. Similarly, De Forest writes about the Iroquois but mentions neither Red Jacket, a Seneca orator and diplomat who published various speeches in the 1820s and 30s, nor David Cusick, a Tuscarora whose *Sketches of Ancient History of the Six Nations* (1827) was popular enough for multiple editions (see Konkle 240).⁷⁸ De Forest spent over two years traveling from library to library and historical society to historical society to collect information that he would compile in *History*. De Forest either chose not to include the voices of Apess, Cusick, and Red Jacket—among others—or these voices were never admitted into the libraries and collections that make up this specific strategic formation.

DeForest's omissions reinforce the authority of white-authored historiography over Indigenous experiences of history. Heather Sutherland, in her study of the political, scientific, and Eurocentric origins of historiography and the ways that non-Europeans have challenged the concept of "World History" over time, observes that "in many societies, stories about the past constitute charters with profound political consequences; relationships traced over time support claims to entitlement." These entitlements might include "the status of citizen, or rights of access to resources, office, or marriage partners, or even pretensions to international legal or moral authority" (496).⁷⁹ De Forest's belief that the native people of Connecticut have no future is largely based on his conception of these native people's past. As the nineteenth century continued, these same ideas about Indigenous American pasts, or lack thereof, became justification for denying these very same entitlements within or in relation to the United States. De Forest's *History* claims an authority not only over representation of native character but also over representation of natives' place in time. Maureen Konkle, in *Writing Indian Nations*, argues similarly to Sutherland that Native writers wrote their own histories during this period primarily because "European history excludes Native people from time" (36). She continues to argue that "to claim progress through time, to argue that Native peoples can and will persist into the future, is to claim political standing and to insist on recognition" (36). With De Forest's text, we can recognize the opposite of this political process. De Forest ignores Native historians, reimagines Native pasts, and rejects any possibilities of Native futures. De Forest furthers this strategic formation in his 1871 novel about Indigenous Americans in the western U.S., *Overland*.

Overland concerns a group of white Americans travelling with Mexicans across Indian Territory in the 1850s. De Forest—the writer recognized then and now as a vanguard of realism—had no first-hand knowledge or experience of this migration.⁸⁰ Before 1871, De Forest

was never anywhere near the American West and had had very little experience, if any, with either Mexicans or Indigenous Americans. Throughout *Overland*, De Forest blends many of the ideas found in *Oriental Acquaintance* and *History of the Indians of Connecticut*—ideas that one will also find in the later *Irene the Missionary*—to create his Mexican and Indigenous American characters. For De Forest, as we will see, the Arabs, Indians, and Mexicans are all part of the same group. For him, he might do all the research at once by reading any Orientalist text.

Overland is a complex tale of treachery and romance. The heroine, Clara Van Diemen, a young woman with both Dutch and Mexican heritage, is set to leave her deceased father's home in Santa Fé, New Mexico to return to New York, where she has been in school for the last few years. A series of minor twists encourages Clara to first visit her grandfather in California. However, unbeknownst to her, her grandfather has recently died and left his immense fortune to Clara. The only character who knows about the new-found fortune is Clara's devious cousin, the treacherous Mexican, Carlos Coronado. Coronado, along with his doubly devious and ugly Mexican uncle, Garcia, convinces Clara to take the overland journey to California across the American desert rather than the far safer route by ship up the Pacific coast. Coronado's plan is to either kill Clara or forcibly marry her; the two options weigh equally in Coronado's conscience. The hero of the novel and Clara's ultimate savior is the most honorable, white, American man, Lieutenant Thurstane, a member of the U.S. Army who happens to be surveying in the area. Thurstane befriends Clara and offers his services as an escort to California. Thurstane and Clara fall in love almost immediately, but they do not admit this to each other until half-way through the dangerous journey.

Coronado secretly plots to assassinate Thurstane as well, but both men find a common enemy in a roving band of savage, thievish Apaches who want to kill all Americans out of

revenge for past grievances. De Forest's Apaches are animalistic and demonic. One can buy them with money or alcohol but they will always break any deal that one makes with them. Worst of all, they enjoy torturing innocent women more than anything else in the world. Their reason for being in the novel is not altogether very clear as the conflict and plot could easily unfold without them. They mostly provide Thurstane with opportunities to demonstrate his heroism and valor and provide De Forest with opportunities to expound upon ethnological differences between Indians and white people. The novel is essentially a series of near-death experiences brought about by either the treachery of the Mexican Coronado or the savagery of the Apaches, with Thurstane proving the honorable hero in each event.

De Forest began serializing *Overland* in the *Galaxy* in 1871. It was a popular and profitable novel. He received one hundred dollars per issue and 10 percent from sales of the volume and planned to publish a second edition with the subtitle "A Story for Boys" (Hijiya 97). This subtitle that never was, combined with De Forest's stated desire to write to contemporary interests, possibly indicates that De Forest drew inspiration from the widely popular "dime novel" genre—the cheap, often formulaic, paperback novels marketed to young boys and most often featuring adventure on the American frontier. In 1871 alone, Beadle & Company published over twenty dime novels about characters in the American West, most of them including something about dangerous Indians in their titles.⁸¹ These include titles such as LaSalle's *The Mohave Captive; or, the Lost Hunters*, Whittaker's *The Grizzly Hunters; or, The Navahoe Captives*, and Badger's *The Forest Princess; or, The Kickapoo Captives* and Badger's *Mink Coat; or, The Death Shot of the Miamis*. If the titles of these novels are any indication, U.S.-American readers seem to have had a craving for frontier adventure literature combined with a deep fear of captivity among the natives.

Overland certainly includes the most common tropes of these Western dime novels, which, as Shelly Streeby insightfully observes, often featured maturation stories that “marry a romance plot to a sensational story of Western adventure” and operate as “pedagogical stories for boys that teach lessons about the forging of white egalitarian manhood at the expense of Indian ‘savages’” (224). De Forest also likely drew inspiration from the precursors to these dime novels, the international, borderland romance novels of the 1840s and 50s. For example, Streeby points out that “the heroine of story-paper international romances is almost always a Mexican woman, although sometimes one parent is a U.S. citizen” (116). “In almost every case,” Streeby explains, “the heroine is repeatedly, if rather anxiously, described as white” (116). These white Mexican heroines are almost exclusively wealthy and elite as well and almost always fall in love with a U.S. officer “whose manly body and status as a representative of the nation are the most important things about him” (124). As I discuss later in this chapter, such a description applies perfectly to De Forest’s heroine, Clara Van Diemen, a mixed race woman of Mexican and Dutch heritage who is unaware of a large fortune she has recently inherited and who falls in love with the ever-honorable, ever-manly Lieutenant Thurstane of the U.S. Army. Furthermore, *Overland* is a novel deeply concerned with “questions that were also being raised in Congress, in the newspapers, and in popular culture more generally, about the boundaries of whiteness and about the incorporation of nonwhites and Catholics into the republic” (Streeby 112). In this sense, De Forest’s novel is very much an American novel in an American context responding to a specific sensation in American culture. The main characters travel through the West in constant fear of capture by Indians while they are, unbeknownst to them, already held in captivity by a treacherous and duplicitous Mexican. Everything about *Overland*—its author, its characters, its plot, its setting—is North American.

However, the novel abounds with Orientalist characterizations and comparisons. Why? De Forest had at least some interest in Orientalism as he was a member of the American Oriental Society, but he was not particularly active in the Society. In other words, one should not assume that the Orient fascinated him so much that it pervaded all his writing. The more likely answer lies in De Forest's more general support of Anglo-Saxon expansion and the common connection between Orientalism and imperialism. Where one finds the former, one will likely find the latter, and vice versa. Just like the members of the AOS in Chapter One who developed their Orientalist knowledge through engagement with U.S. global exploration, and just like Bayard Taylor relying on Orientalist imagery as he traveled the U.S. "Path of Empire," De Forest's Orientalist representations are directly connected to moments of U.S. imperial expansion. De Forest published *Overland* in a year when both Mexicans and Indigenous Americans were a common topic throughout American newspapers and within American political debates. That same year, the U.S. government reconsidered annexation of Mexico and passed the 1871 Indian Appropriations Act by which the U.S. government rewrote its policies in respect to the recognition of Indigenous American nations. Streeby argues against a reading of Western dime novels, such as *Overland*, as "simply internal to the U.S. 'West'" and posits that "in order to address these complexities [historical and social contexts for dime novels], however, we need to think about multiple racial formations and to place the U.S. 'West' in a hemispheric frame" (218). In the case of De Forest, a hemispheric frame may still be too small. De Forest's frequent reliance on Orientalist discourse within *Overland* suggests that he was not only thinking of a unifying, national Anglo-Saxon identity, but a unifying, transnational Anglo-Saxon identity.

***Overland* and Mexican Annexation Schemes of 1871**

Imperialist rhetoric toward Mexico in *Overland* is unsurprising if one considers the historical context in which the novel was written. De Forest began writing *Overland* in the early 1870s amidst what one *New York Times* article labeled “The Mexican Problem.” In 1870, Mexico had only just regained its independence after a French invasion that temporarily installed an Austrian Emperor. The Mexican people had reestablished the Republic of Mexico and reinstated its president, Benito Juarez, but the country struggled to reorganize while its president struggled to reestablish authority over his entire population. This is a complicated time in the history of Mexico that is outside the purview of my own project, but I am concerned with the way Americans responded because these responses provide context for De Forest’s narrative.

Debates over Mexican annexation, or some form of U.S. imperial control, began before the Mexican-American War of the late 1840s and gained renewed interest within the political speeches, newspaper articles, and popular literature of the 1870s.⁸² A *New York Times* article from March 23, 1870 lays out two options for U.S. policy in relation to Mexico. The first was some form of annexation, whether as a temporary protectorate, annexing the entire country outright, or annexing certain states along the U.S. border to provide the Mexican government with a more manageable amount of land and people. The second option was economic intervention. The *Times* attributes this option to General William Rosencrans, the former U.S. Minister to Mexico, who had recently made this argument before Congress. The *Times*, paraphrasing Rosencrans, suggests that Mexico “does not so much need American laws, institutions, authority, and Government for her highest welfare, as an influx of American capital” (“Mexican Problem” 4). The *Times*, via Rosencrans, essentially lays out what one might call economic imperialism.

The topic was still up for debate at least a year later when the editors of the *New York Herald* revisited the protectorate debate in December of 1871, on the morning of President Ulysses S. Grant's third State of the Union address. The editors' argument is clear from the article's title, "The Annexation of Mexico—A Fine Chance for General Grant." The opening of the article lays out the pro-imperial position in favor of annexation replete with the most common themes of the American imperialist ideology: more land ensures more wealth, more wealth ensures more freedom, and, thus, expansion ensures national security.⁸³ The editors write,

None of General Grant's predecessors in the White House have had a finer opportunity than he has of adding to the glory and prosperity of this country, and of acquiring a great name in history. Mexico affords that opportunity. The annexation of that rich country would be of incalculable value to the wealth and commerce of the United States, a great boon to the Mexican people and a benefit to the world. ("The Annexation" 6)

The editors expound upon the benefits that annexation would bring for national character and brotherhood: "It would arouse national ambition, do more than anything else to destroy sectionalism, and the sectional feeling which resulted from our late war, extinguish the Ku-Klux of the South, and unite the people of all the States in the common cause of national expansion and glory" (6). Few paragraphs capture the spirit of American imperial thought better than this. The editors of the *New York Herald* speak here for the section of American society that viewed expansion as the key to internal safety, prosperity, and overall happiness: empire as the American panacea.

The *Herald* printed another article two weeks later encouraging Congress and the President to quickly declare Mexico a protectorate and suggesting that it was the only way to

establish law, order, systematic industry, and commercial enterprise within their southern neighbor. In this follow-up article the rhetoric is more patronizing and imperialistic. The editors close their article by explaining economic possibilities. After recounting the wealth that Americans have made in lower California in just a few years, the *Herald* muses:

May we not, then, reasonably assume that, with the annexation of Mexico and the occupation of the whole country by our government, the inquiring and enterprising spirit of our people will soon reveal the resources of those older States to be ten times greater than the discoveries or estimates of the indolent Mexicans? Surely the time approaches for the settlement of this question of “manifest destiny” . . . (“United States and Mexico” 6)

Grant never attempted to annex Mexico. Still, this topic was a national talking point of public interest while De Forest composed his 1871 novel, *Overland*.

Not only did many U.S.-Americans think of Mexico in imperial terms as one possible location for national expansion, but since at least the Mexican-American War, Americans commonly compared Mexico to and listed Mexico among Oriental locations. One example is the spread of missionaries. A newspaper story covering a meeting of the Woman’s Union Missionary Society of Baltimore, for instance, boasts of the Society’s spread of missionaries in “Mexico, Africa, India, Syria, Burmah, China and Japan” (“Local” 3). This listing does not explicitly classify Mexico as Oriental, but it contributes to a separation of the word that classifies places where Christians live and where Christians proselytize, which, in turn, contributes to an Orientalist logic.⁸⁴ A similar example involves the spread of U.S. industry. In a newspaper advertisement for Pratt’s Southern-Made Cotton Gin, the Pratt company states that their gin has “given general satisfaction” throughout “India, Egypt, Mexico, Brazil and the Southern States”

(“Pratt’s” 3).⁸⁵ This seemingly innocuous advertisement builds upon a few fundamental pillars of imperial thought, namely climatic designation and climatic determinism⁸⁶ and the principle of using northern industry to capitalize on southern resources. Moreover, these examples encourage today’s scholars to describe these discursive practices not in relation to static and imagined geographical boundaries but instead in relation to cultural practices like the flow of missionaries, the flow of machines, and the flow of capital.

None of these examples is necessarily important or widely influential on its own. Yet these are just a few examples among many of locally held beliefs about Mexico and its place within geopolitical groupings, or hierarchies, of nations. These all come from popular media consumed daily from different locations within the U.S. With these examples in mind, we might read De Forest’s claim that “there was in general nothing Oriental” about his Mexican villain in relation to a particular discursive context within U.S. culture (10). De Forest’s readers would likely have been aware of the all-too-common way that the nation’s newspapers and the nation’s most prominent political figures discussed Mexico as a target for possible annexation. Similarly, readers would likely recognize that De Forest’s depictions of his Mexican characters suggest that Mexico and Mexicans share certain “Oriental” characteristics.

Overland is replete with several simple, flat characters, each obviously designed as a synecdoche for larger populations of people. De Forest creates one American man, one American woman, one Scottish-American immigrant, one Texan, and one primary Mexican—although De Forest adds a Mexican co-conspirator to serve a minor role in the plot. Carlos Maria Muñoz Garcia de Coronado, or just Coronado—the character who has nothing Oriental about him—is the primary character of the Mexican type. Coronado is the fourth cousin, through marriage, of the heroine, Clara Van Diemen (9). De Forest needs them to be related for the plot

to work, but he repeatedly stresses that the two are not related by blood and are so far apart in their relation that they really are not the same kinds of people. Clara is the heroine; Coronado is the villain. De Forest reveals this before the end of the second chapter, but the other characters are ignorant until the end. Yet it is not enough for De Forest to characterize his Mexican as simply tricky, deceitful, and untrustworthy. *Overland* is a novel about the separation between cultures, separations created by inherent, unalterable, racial differences. Coronado, with his brown skin and his greed-driven, murderous desires, is the consummate foil character for the perfect American hero, Lieutenant Thurstane.

It is through Coronado that De Forest first introduces Oriental references. To convince Clara that she should travel to California, Coronado tells Clara that the trip “will all end, like the tales of the Arabian Nights, in your living in a palace” (9). *The Arabian Nights* was an immensely popular text in the nineteenth-century United States. That reference, by itself, is not enough to classify Coronado as Oriental, but this is the first moment in the text where De Forest cues his reader to think about the Orient. One page later, De Forest includes the previously mentioned comment about Coronado’s Oriental character, but the statements that lead up to this comment are equally important. In Coronado’s opening character description, De Forest writes, “His manner was sometimes excitable, as we have seen above; but usually he was like what gentlemen with us desire to be. Perhaps he bowed lower and smiled oftener and gestured more gracefully than Americans are apt to do. But there was in general nothing Oriental about him, no assumption of barbaric pompousness, no extravagance of bearing” (10). In this description, De Forest subtly introduces an “us,” to which Coronado does not belong, and in turn also imagines an audience, likely an audience of white Americans. The words “like,” “lower,” and “oftener” suggest a comparison of two different things—a gentlemen “with us” versus the gentleman

Coronado *appears* to be. The words “usually” and “perhaps” trouble this comparison as they imply an inconsistency in character or doubt in the mind of the narrator. This is all evidence of De Forest’s imperialist strategic location: the construction of an “us” combined with inherent cultural expectations and, in turn, the perceptions about another’s deviation from these expectations. De Forest uses a preconceived expectation of difference to create tension through his narrator’s hesitant and unconvincing denial of difference.

De Forest’s hesitant denial of difference becomes more and more untenable as the novel progresses. Once readers learn of Coronado’s true character, they might quickly begin to question if there is, in fact, quite a lot about Coronado that one might describe as “Oriental.” Before the end of the chapter, the reader comes to learn that Coronado’s actual character is the opposite of his outer appearance. Coronado begins to share many of the characteristics of the Syrian people from De Forest’s travel journal *Oriental Acquaintance*. De Forest’s summation of Syrian faults as “a large spice of envy, a plentiful peppering of lies, vanity, lack of moral courage, and a particular susceptibility to ridicule” could equally apply to Coronado (*Oriental* 145). De Forest’s statement that one Syrian vice is “constant lying” finds a North American comparison in his statement that Coronado “lied so naturally” (*Oriental* 230; *Overland* 47). Furthermore, De Forest’s readers would likely connect Coronado’s character traits with various trends in Orientalist representation. Said, for instance, observes a pattern of historical stereotypes that associate Arabs “either with lechery or bloodthirsty dishonesty” (*Orientalism* 286). In De Forest’s more specific context of the early 1870s U.S., readers might have connected lying and deception with popular representations of Chinese immigrants, like those found in Bret Harte’s immensely popular poem from 1870, “The Heathen Chinees,” which I discuss in Chapter Two. Harte’s poem involves a “heathen Chinees” who out-cons a frontier conman and is consequently

beaten for it. Thus, readers of *Overland* would have likely known about a general set of Orientalist tropes that associated Orientals with dishonesty and deception. Because the narrator has doubts as to Coronado's specifically Oriental character, and because Coronado speaks about the *Arabian Nights* just pages before, readers might understand Coronado's frequent lying and consistent deceptions in relation to this general set of Orientalist tropes.

Coronado is not alone either, as De Forest also includes a Mexican coconspirator, Coronado's uncle, Señor Manuel Garcia. Streeby notes that "Mexican men within these borderland romance plots were often represented as unmanly because they were savage, as Indians and blacks were thought to be, or because they were decadent, as Spaniards and creoles" (123). "In both cases," Streeby adds, "Mexican men were outside the pale of white male civility as it was defined in the mid-nineteenth-century United States. Indeed, in this literature the civility and manliness of white U.S.-American men is defined in opposition to the incivility and unmanliness of Mexican men" (123). Coronado was both savage and decadent; his uncle Garcia was simply the former. Garcia is the cousin of Clara Van Diemen's grandfather and it is he who initially concocts the plan to kill Clara and thus secure her inheritance for himself. His initial character description is more telling than Coronado's. At the end of the second chapter when Garcia explains the inheritance situation to Coronado, the two come to their murderous realization simultaneously. In describing this moment, De Forest also describes Garcia's physical appearance:

As the two men stared at each other they were horrible. The uncle was always horrible; he was one of the very ugliest of Spaniards; he was a brutal caricature of the national type. He had a low forehead, round face, bulbous nose, shaking fat cheeks, insignificant chin, and only one eye, a black and sleepy orb, which

seemed to crawl like a snake. His exceedingly dark skin was made darker by a singular bluish tinge which resulted from heavy doses of nitrate of silver, taken as a remedy for epilepsy. His face was, moreover, mottled with dusky spots, so that he reminded the spectator of a frog or a toad. Just now he looked nothing less than poisonous; the hungriest of cannibals would not have dared eat him. (12)

De Forest's description of Garcia's ugliness is the most prominent aspect of this description.

Throughout *Overland*, De Forest suggests a connection between ugliness and moral decay. He uses a similar formula in his first description of Apaches, for instance (22).

However, three other features of this description place this passage within an imperialist rhetoric. The first is the explanation that Garcia is "a brutal caricature of national type." The nation De Forest refers to is Mexico, and although he describes Garcia as a caricature, Garcia is still of a national type. Garcia is certainly an extreme example, but he is still a primary example, for De Forest, of what it means to be Mexican. Writing Garcia as a synecdoche for his nation's people is not necessarily imperialist, but, again, U.S. readers would likely have had some idea of how the nation's newspapers and politicians had been discussing Mexico as a site for possible U.S. expansion. This initial claim of Mexican-ness sets up the more directly imperialist tropes that follow.

The second feature is Garcia's connection to animals, specifically reptiles. His eye is like a snake and he reminds one of a frog or a toad. This pattern of human-animal comparisons, which recurs throughout the entirety of De Forest's oeuvre, is all too common within the body of imperialist/Orientalist literature in general.⁸⁷ Through these comparisons, De Forest implies that Garcia is less than human. Frantz Fanon summarizes the use of zoological terms within colonialist discourse more generally when he writes that colonizers dehumanize the colonized by

making allusion “to the slithery movements of the yellow race, the odors from the native quarters, to the hordes, the stink, the swarming, the seething, and the gesticulations” (7). One might think of Mr. Payson’s comparison between Orientals, dogs, and birds in De Forest’s *Irene the Missionary* when he muses that he “would almost as lief listen to the observations of dogs about their bones, or of ducks and geese about their puddles” as the thoughts of the Oriental (*Irene* 41). In *Overland*, De Forest frequently compares Mexicans and Indigenous Americans to frogs, toads, snakes, dogs, and pigs, while natives move in hordes and swarms. These obviously have dehumanizing effects, but they also serve a rhetorical function to suggest that these groups of animal-like people must be either controlled or exterminated.

The final imperialist/Orientalist feature of De Forest’s characterization of Garcia is the suspicion that “the hungriest of cannibals would not have dared eat him.” This is a tricky phrase because of its various possible meanings. Like Coronado’s evocation of *The Arabian Nights*, De Forest does not call Garcia a cannibal, likely the most damning term that an imperialist might attach to a person in the nineteenth century. Still, De Forest evokes the idea of cannibals and cannibalism in association with Garcia and seemingly places Garcia lower on the chain of being than the ultimate persona non grata.

As the novel progresses, both Coronado and Garcia prove consistently duplicitous and evil. Coronado continually breaks pacts with each of his co-conspirators, including Garcia, and repeatedly attempts to kill several of the characters by various means. Ultimately, Garcia comes closest to killing Clara by poisoning her tea (177). In the end though, Thurstane, Clara, nature, and fate all combine to thwart the Mexicans’ plans. Garcia dies penniless and alone and Coronado buys a horse and rides off to an unknown region to escape the looming threat of arrest by American law enforcement (204-205). De Forest never explicitly calls either of these

characters “Oriental,” but he describes them within an imperialist/Orientalist discursive formation in ways that U.S. readers would likely understand as connected to the Orient.

Indigenous Americans and the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871

De Forest’s characterizations of Indigenous Americans as Oriental are more direct and explicit. He describes them as the “Tartars and Bedouin of America,” for example (51). The more direct Orientalism in this case may result from the fact that U.S. imperialism over many of the native populations of North America was already in full effect when De Forest composed *Overland*. As soon as President Grant took office in 1869, he attempted to turn affairs with Indigenous Americans in a new direction through his Peace Policy. This Peace Policy never meant a cessation of imperial activities or a recognition of full sovereignty or even shared human status, though. The stated belief was that U.S.-Indian affairs could be less violent and could eventually lead Indigenous Americans to fully assimilate into U.S. society. However, from the outset, the Peace Policy was plagued with contradictions due to rival factions within the administration that believed in different timelines and different methods to encourage assimilation.⁸⁸ Despite infighting within the administration and a host of other issues, Grant was optimistic in his third address to the nation’s lawmakers:

The policy pursued toward the Indians has resulted favorably, so far as can be judged from the limited time during which it has been in operation. Through the exertions of the various societies of Christians to whom has been entrusted the execution of the policy, and the Board of Commissioners authorized by the law of April 10, 1869, many tribes of Indians have been induced to settle upon reservations, to cultivate the soil, to perform productive labor of various kinds,

and to partially accept civilization. They are being cared for in such a way, it is hoped, as to induce those still pursuing their old habits of life to embrace the only opportunity which is left them to avoid extermination.

I recommend liberal appropriations to carry out the Indian peace policy, not only because it is humane, Christian like, and economical, but because it is right.

(Grant 3)

Grant's optimism in this passage does not match the real events in the American West where bloodshed was a daily occurrence.⁸⁹ Grant exhibits palpable cognitive dissonance in his desire to elevate the Indians and save them from "extermination." He describes this extermination like a passive, natural force, but in reality, it was people under Grant's command that were performing the extermination.⁹⁰ For example, earlier the same year, General William Tecumseh Sherman, a direct subordinate of President Grant, sought vengeance for a group of white frontiersmen allegedly killed by Indigenous Americans by ordering his troops to "follow the Indians . . . take a month's rations, and to pay no attention to reservations, but follow them anywhere, and kill them where ever [they] caught them" ("Indian Outrages"). Thus, not even Grant's proffered sanctuary of reservations could protect the Indigenous Americans.

One should also note Grant's insertion of an economic justification for his Peace Policy in the second paragraph of this section. C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa makes the interesting observation that the Board of Indian Commissioners to whom Grant refers in his third State of the Union was composed almost entirely of U.S. businessmen who had some stake in the dry-goods, mineral mining, and transportation industries (208). The members of the Board of Commissioners independently profited from the lands acquired via the federal policies that they designed. When Grant argues that his Peace Policy is "economical," we should ask, for whom?

Maybe Grant implies here that reservations are cheaper than wars, or maybe he openly acknowledges that reservations free up land for economic development. Regardless, for Grant, U.S.-Indian relations was an economic issue.

The “liberal appropriations” that Grants mentions is likely a reference to the 1871 Indian Appropriations Act which Congress debated throughout 1870 and passed into law in March of 1871. The Act appropriated funding to fulfill already existent treaty obligations with Indigenous American nations and established additional funding to support the maintenance of reservations and humanitarian efforts. It also simultaneously codified that the U.S. would no longer recognize Indigenous American nations as independent nations and thus would no longer make treaties with them. Within the act, one might easily notice the untenable, yet successful, logic of U.S. imperial policy. At the very end of a long list of appropriations that recognizes numerous treaties made with independent nations, the lawmakers tack on the key stipulation that ends the policy of treaty-making:

Provided, That hereafter no Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty: *Provided*, *further*, That nothing herein contained shall be construed to invalidate or impair the obligation of any treaty heretofore lawfully made and ratified with any such Indian nation or tribe. (United States 566)

By this paragraph, the U.S. Government agrees that it will not invalidate previous treaties but also refuses to make any future treaties. More important, though, in a moment of contradictory redefinition, the law declares that the U.S. will no longer recognize Indian nations or tribes as independent nation or tribes but that they will also continue to validate previous treaties made

with those nations or tribes. How does one make appropriations for payments to an independent nation that it no longer recognizes as existing? Or maybe the question is, how does one deny the existence of something that they still make payments to? Ultimately, the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 redefined Indigenous Americans within U.S. law as citizens of neither the U.S. nor their own nations. It also criminalized all treaties or contracts with any Indigenous American or tribe in relation to any land.

As Scott Richard Lyons observes, the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 was the culmination of a decade's worth of "rhetorical imperialism" toward Indigenous Americans. Lyons defines rhetorical imperialism as "the ability of dominant powers to assert control of others by setting the terms of the debate" (452). U.S. legal and congressional documents starting in the 1830s and culminating in the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 continually shifted EuroAmerican representations of Indigenous Americans in order to justify imperialist actions toward those peoples: "from 'sovereign' to 'ward,'" Lyons argues, "from 'nation' to 'tribe,' and from 'treaty' to 'agreement,' the erosion of Indian national sovereignty can be credited in part to a rhetorically imperialist use of writing by white powers" (453). In this landmark act of legislation in 1871, the U.S. Congress remapped North America and erased entire nations from existence, at least from the perspective of U.S.-Americans. We must not forget that the U.S. perspective is not the only perspective. Many of these nations still exist today and continue to struggle for their political sovereignty.

President Grant's belief in the Indian Appropriations Act and his summation that his Peace Policy was having favorable results suggests that the President was blind to what was happening throughout the western states. Stories of bloodshed between Indigenous Americans and U.S.-Americans filled the nation's newspapers in 1871. One particularly infamous event, the

Camp Grant Massacre, ironically happened just outside a U.S. Army fort named in honor of the peace-preferring President. Local reports surrounding the massacre demonstrate the subtle ways that Orientalism tended to occur in relation to these acts of rhetorical and physical imperialism.

During the months leading up to April 30, a large group of Apaches who had refused to live on a reservation decided to settle peacefully outside of U.S. Army Camp Grant, just outside of Tucson, Arizona. While there, the U.S. Army gave them food and supplies, and presumably protection. However, tensions between the Apaches and the white civilians in the surrounding area quickly grew, as is evident in editorials from Tucson's local newspaper, the *Arizona Citizen*. The editors of the *Citizen* reported frequent altercations between the Apaches and the white residents of Tucson and allegations of theft and murder soon arose. Sometime around April 20, 1871, four white Americans were killed near Tucson, allegedly by the Camp Grant Apaches. An editorial from *The Citizen*, reprinted in the *New York Times*, describes the events that followed a "mission of revenge and self-protection" ("Citizens of Arizona" 1). The citizens formed a mob alongside a group of Papajo Indians on the morning of April 30 and raided the Apache camp, killing "eighty-five savages," according to *The Citizen*, although other reports mark the number as higher and report that most of the casualties were women and children (see "The New Disgrace"). The event remained national news for the remainder of the year.

In an article just before the Camp Grant Massacre titled "Encouragement of Murder," *The Citizen* suggested that the U.S. Army was supporting these alleged murders by feeding and protecting the local Apaches. The editors, mostly frustrated with the U.S. Army for not retaliating wrote that "judged by results, it would have afforded as much protection, if Camp Grant during the past twelve months had been located on an obscure East India Island" ("Encouragement" 2). This editorial's introduction of an "obscure East India Island" oddly taps

into an Orientalist discourse without any real reason. The editor of *The Citizen* could have chosen almost any place in the world to make the point that the army camp might as well not be there, just outside of Tucson. Although this article does not directly cast the Indigenous Americans as Orientals, it suggests that the editors were at least aware of, and possibly thinking within, an Orientalist discursive field.

This tenuous link between the Apaches near Camp Grant and an obscure East India Island is maybe less odd if we consider that U.S.-Americans frequently made direct comparisons between Indigenous Americans and Orientals within the nation's newspapers and popular literature. These comparisons existed in novels, scholarly reports, and political speeches, but many of these comparisons were woven into common, everyday stories and events. In one 1868 book review from the *Chicago Tribune* of an adventure novel titled *Absaraka, or the Home of the Crows*, the reviewer writes that the author's "sketches of Indian life and character are life-like and trustworthy, and confirm the judgement of Palfrey and other well-informed scholars that the race is hopelessly brutal. A single passage will give a taste of this extremely readable volume" ("New Publications" 2). The quoted passage from the novel begins, "Not unlike the Arab is the Indian of the North West." This is how the author begins her chapter. If one considers the strategic formation of Orientalist texts, then one recognizes that this quick comparison primes the readers' expectation for the characterizations that will follow. They might recall, for instance, theories of ancient migrations such as those theorized by Charles Pickering which I discuss in Chapter Three.

A more commonplace comparison comes from an 1867 news story from Pulaski, Tennessee that covers an inhospitable meeting between Northern and Southern politicians just before the Reconstruction Acts of 1867. The editor characterizes the Northern politicians as

worse than “the Indian and Arab,” who “when they have broken bread and tasted salt in the tent or cabin of an enemy, will not tomahawk or stab him cruelly beneath the fifth rib” (“How Our Hospitality” 1). The Southern writer’s implication is that the Northerners were even more uncivil than those one might expect to be the most uncivilized people. Through this implication, he groups Indians and Arabs together.

Similarly, one news round-up article from Wheeling, Virginia reprints a short editorial from *The Sun* (New York City) about New Yorkers who often move from home to home. The *Sun* writes that “life, under these circumstances, is something like that of the Arabs or Indians” (“Miscellaneous”). Why the people of West Virginia wanted to know about housing trends in New York City is already beyond explanation, but the original article finds a cultural comparison between Arabs and Indigenous Americans as the most useful way to illustrate these trends.

Other authors made even more specific comparisons, comparing Indigenous Americans to specific types of Orientals. In one article from the *Chicago Tribune* about traveling in the “Washington Territory,” the correspondent for the *Tribune* writes of an Indian who visits their camp. When the Indian leaves the next morning, the correspondent describes his departure via an obscure poem which the writer does not cite: “On the following morning they ‘Folded their tents like the Arabs, / And quietly stole away’” (“Washington Territory” 5). The correspondent makes his comparison more specific in the following paragraph. “In this case,” he writes, “they had not tents and did not steal anything but a frying pan and a butcher-knife, and we thought ourselves very lucky in thus getting rid of these Bedouins of America” (5). The phrase “Bedouins of America” was common enough in the 1860s and 70s that it required little context, instead implying shared cultural characteristics that readers apparently understood without explanation.

A final example from the *New York Herald* writes of a diplomatic ceremony in the nation's capital. Amidst a round-up of the daily news out of Washington, the editors of the *Herald* include the following brief story:

Previous to the departure of General Hussein Pasha, of the Turkish army, from [Washington], he was presented with a handsome sword by General Carleton, United States Army. In presenting the sword, General Carleton said he offered it as a gift from a General of the United States who had been fighting the Bedouins of America for the past ten years, to a Turkish general who had, for a longer time, been fighting the Bedouins of Asia. General Hussein responded in becoming terms. ("Washington" 6)

General Carleton's sword presentation discursively links Indigenous Americans and Bedouins based on cultural characteristics and their respective positions within separate imperialist hierarchies. This specific ceremony also points to Orientalism's flexibility and suggests one possible area for further study. General Carleton's recognized separation between one type of Arab—the Turkish—and another—the Bedouin—indicates inter-Oriental hierarchies and may suggest that some Turkish people adopted Orientalist discourse to support their own imperial practices. Conjecture aside, this moment of diplomacy demonstrates the ever-present connection between Orientalism and imperialism in the nineteenth-century United States.

De Forest includes similar comparisons in *Overland* as he crafts a plot that justifies U.S. policies toward Indigenous Americans in 1871. The characters of *Overland* are almost exclusively driven by the impending threat of torturous and blood thirsty Indians, and almost every twist in the conflict is brought about through a broken pact or arrangement with these same Indians, who, when given the chance, will break even the smallest of agreements. Additionally,

because De Forest draws on various strands of U.S. popular culture and employs common Orientalist motifs in his representations of Indigenous Americans—his Indians are savage, haggard, dark, evil, untrustworthy, backward, ignorant, vengeful, and incredibly cruel—we might observe how the strategic formation of Orientalist texts operates to make meaning and secure authority.

De Forest employs the “Arabs of America” characterization for Indigenous Americans early in *Overland*. In the opening chapters, the Mexican villain Coronado decides to enlist the assistance of a group of Apaches to complete his murderous scheme. When Coronado initially reaches the Apache camp, De Forest writes that “the civilized imagination can hardly conceive such a tableau of savagery as that presented by these Arabs of the great American desert. Arabs! The similitude is a calumny on the descendants of Ishmael; the fiercest Bedouin are refined and mild compared with the Apaches” (22). Here, De Forest conjures the reader’s knowledge and their “civilized imagination,” and compares Indigenous Americans, Arabs, and more specifically, Bedouins, albeit within a series of shifting metaphors.

Readers would likely recognize De Forest’s characterization of Indigenous Americans as the Arabs of America from the various adventure novelists and newspaper correspondents that used the same construction, and the frequent use of this construction would certainly add to its acceptability. However, frequency alone does not explain how this comparison makes meaning happen. These comparisons not only serve a descriptive function but also a pedagogical function, acting as their own, self-reflexive primer. If a reader, perhaps an amateur Orientalist, had some previous knowledge about Arabs or Bedouins, then this sentence would already be full of meaning. De Forest need not exert any more effort in characterization because the Orientalist reader can simply recall the strategic formation of Orientalist literature and imagine Arabs, but

worse.⁹¹ If a different reader, one with perhaps no previous knowledge in respect to either Arabs or Bedouins, reads this sentence, the meaning-making process works in reverse and De Forest's novel becomes just as much a book about Arab character as it is about Indigenous American character. In this one sentence, De Forest teaches his reader that Arabs are like Apaches, just not quite as fierce and savage. This is how the strategic formation of Orientalist texts is built. This is how any one place, within the span of a single sentence, might become part of "the Orient."

De Forest engages the same rhetorical construction elsewhere in *Overland* when he refers to the Apaches as "red-skinned Tartars," and later refers to Indigenous Americans in general as "these Tartars and Bedouin of America" (22, 51). It should go without saying that the Tartars and the Bedouin are two distinct and even internally diverse cultural groups that have traditionally lived in two different geographical areas, but De Forest is operating under an Orientalist logic within which the difference between Tartars, Bedouin, and Indigenous Americans is irrelevant. All three are "Oriental." Like the references to Bedouins, De Forest never glosses the term "Tartar." Once again, if the reader has some awareness of the Tartar people, the reader might graph that onto De Forest's characterization of Indigenous Americans. If the reader has no knowledge of the Tartar people, then *Overland* serves a pedagogical function to provide that knowledge. All the reader will learn is that Tartars are like Indigenous Americans and Indigenous Americans are horrible savages; ergo, Tartars are horrible savages that exist somewhere else.⁹²

With these Orientalist references to Bedouins and Tartars, De Forest connects Indigenous Americans to "Orientals" around the globe and uses this connection to fill in gaps in characterization. This is similar to De Forest's ironic explanation that there was nothing Oriental about Coronado. In each case, De Forest employs a shorthand that requires a specific type of

knowledge from his readers while he simultaneously provides that knowledge. The reader must know what it means to be a Bedouin or a Tartar or to be “Oriental” for De Forest’s characterizations to be complete. If the reader does not have this knowledge, then *Overland* provides it through simple comparisons and continued characterizations that might then apply to any of the mentioned groups.

One minor character in particular ties De Forest’s characterizations of Indigenous Americans into the plot of the story and further connects his novel to U.S. government policies. This character is Pepita, a young half-Mexican, half-Indian woman, who is such a minor character that her inclusion in the novel can only be rhetorical. She neither speaks nor performs any action of her own agency, and her capture and ultimate torture at the hands of the Apaches never diverts and barely stalls the progression of the overland caravan. De Forest only alludes to this character twice in the first ninety-nine pages. At most, she is a foil character for the novel’s heroine, Clara Van Diemen, as both women are eighteen and both are mixed-race. However, Clara Van Diemen—read “Clear Diamond”—is outspoken, passionate, rich, and, most importantly, has a mixed Dutch and Spanish ancestry that enables her to pass for white. Pepita is silent, passive, and poor, and she has a mixed Mexican and Indian ancestry and brown skin. De Forest uses her brown body to demonstrate the potential physical threat upon the body of the mostly white Clara (102). The Mexican-Indian, brown-skin Pepita becomes a surrogate for the white Clara, and De Forest uses her torture at the hands of the Apaches to demonstrate what could have happened to Clara had Apaches captured her instead.⁹³ De Forest uses Pepita to demonstrate the absolute worst that Indians can do and, in turn, to justify the ultimate destruction of Indigenous Americans everywhere.

De Forest uses Pepita's torture, likely the most memorable and sickening passage in the novel, to reference the strategic formation of Orientalist/imperialist texts once again. More important, though, Pepita's torture marks the moment of "maturation" in the primary male character, Thurstane, a hallmark of the dime novel western genre (see Streeby 224). Pepita's torture includes the most graphic descriptions of death and the most sexualized descriptions of a body, by far, in the entire novel. But the effect on Thurstane has more to do with his understanding of the American Indian more than anything else:

Pepita, entirely stripped of her clothing, was already bound to the sapling which stood by the side of the rivulet, and twenty or thirty of the Apaches were dancing around her in a circle, each one approaching her in turn, howling in her ears and spitting in her face. The young man [Thurstane] had read and heard much of the horrors of that torture-dance, which stamps the American Indian as the most ferocious of savages; but he had not understood at all how large a part insult plays in this ceremony of deliberate cruelty; and, insulting a woman! he had not once dream'ed it. (119)

An important moment of author-reader, rhetorical interaction takes place here that involves the reader's knowledge about American Indians and "savages" more generally. De Forest includes a bait-and-switch in this passage as he replaces this group of twenty or thirty Apaches with the more general description of "the American Indian." This switch is also another moment when De Forest alludes to the strategic formation of Orientalist literature. De Forest writes, "The young man [Thurstane] had *read and heard* much of the horrors of that torture-dance, which stamps the American Indian as the most ferocious of savages" (119; emphasis added). This statement does not carry any rhetorical power without the reader's knowledge or expectation that other

narratives of American Indian torture dances exist. At the same time, if the reader does not already have this knowledge or expectation, this statement serves a pedagogical function to inform the reader that those narratives do in fact exist.

Pepita's sexualized torture challenges Thurstane's understanding of these narratives, though and forces him to reevaluate what he knows about Indigenous Americans. Streeby suggests that this specific kind of change was a common trope of the dime novel Western genre, where naïve white Easterners who had based their understanding of Indigenous Americans on the more romantic depictions by writers like Cooper and Longfellow were forced to change their beliefs based on their actual interactions with the savage heathens of the Western frontier (224-5). Although Thurstane never voices a romantic belief in "noble savages" or anything of the kind, Pepita's torture undoubtedly marks a shift in his thinking. As he observes Pepita's torture, he displays a moment of disgust that leads to a vow for brutal vengeance. Observing helplessly from a distance, Thurstane says, "By ---!. . . I never will spare an Indian as long as I live" (119). Standing beside Thurstane, Texas Smith responds, "Capm, I'm with you. . . . I seen my mother fixed like that. I seen it from the bush whar I was hidin'. I was a boy then. I've killed every Injun I could sence" (119). Thurstane's silence in a book where he so frequently serves as the outspoken moral compass marks an implicit agreement with the assassin from Texas. Thurstane never sees another Indian, so the reader is unsure if he will uphold his vow, but the message is clear: the only way to deal with Indians is to kill them. While President Grant argues in his 1871 State of the Union address that reservations are the only way to save Indigenous Americans from the ongoing process of "extermination," De Forest suggests throughout *Overland* that extermination is justifiable. For De Forest, genocide is the only option. If his main character

changes at all during the novel, it is through his realization that these inhuman savages, these Arabs of the great American desert, are untrustworthy and deserve nothing but death.

One final feature of *Overland* reveals how discursive categories like “savage,” “Oriental,” and “Indian” are created, defined, and maintained. Readers will likely recognize that most examples of Orientalist discourse in *Overland* refer directly to Apaches. Apaches are, of course, not the only nation of Indigenous Americans in the U.S., and a brief look at the 1871 Indian Appropriations Act will show that the U.S. government, and likely most U.S. readers familiar with the topic, would have understood that each nation had its own characteristics and differences. Just as important, the U.S. government dealt with most nations separately. At the same time, the U.S. government and many writers of the time used the term “Indian” to generalize all these groups together. This movement from specific to general begs a couple of questions: if Americans already recognized specific and distinct cultures spread across the West, then what did the term “Indian” mean? How does the term “Indian” operate within U.S.-American discourses of the nineteenth century and in what ways are the terms “Indian” and “Oriental” connected? De Forest’s *Overland* can help to answer these questions.

Parts of *Overland* suggest that De Forest may have intended his novel to serve a non-fictional, pedagogical purpose. For example, several extended passages provide detailed descriptions of the Western landscape, its features, landmarks, flora and fauna, and the like. These passages have little bearing on the development of the narrative and seem to be more informative and historical than fictional. Another example is De Forest’s inclusion of the Moqui people, a native civilization from the area U.S.-Americans now refer to as New Mexico. According to *Overland*, the Moquis are different from other Indigenous Americans because they are peaceful, they live in elaborate stone structures, they develop agriculture, and they have

lighter skin, speak a different language, and are all-around more “civilized” than what De Forest calls the “horse-Indians” (68-9).

De Forest makes the separation between the Moquis and the other Indigenous Americans explicit on several occasions. It is more than just a difference in minor characteristics. De Forest goes to great lengths to define the Moquis as a non-Indian civilization and scholars today should examine how and why he does so. As his characters encounter this group of natives, they recognize that the Moquis more closely fit their own definitions of civilized society. Because of this, the author and his characters cannot class them with their Indigenous American counterparts. By including the Moquis in his novel, De Forest defines the word “Indian” through reference to characteristics and genealogy rather than to geographical location.

De Forest differentiates between Moquis and Indians from the moment he introduces the Moquis. In an example of free indirect discourse, the author narrates the thoughts of Coronado as Coronado plans the desired path of the caravan. Readers might initially doubt Coronado’s judgements, but because the reader receives them via the third-person omniscient narrator, these judgements carry an authority that is buttressed as the chapters continue. Coronado muses about the “interesting race of agricultural and partially civilized Indians, perhaps the representatives of the architects of the Casas Grandes if not also descended from the mound-builders of the Mississippi valley” (50-51). He adds that they are in a region where they might soon expect to see Indians and, here, explicitly separates the Moquis from other Indian nations and their Oriental acquaintances:

They were in a region which was the raiding ground of four great tribes: the Utes on the north, the Navajos on the west, the Apaches on the south, and the Comanches on the east. The peaceful and industrious Moquis, with their gay and

warm blankets, their fields of corn and beans, and their flocks of sheep, are the quarry which attracts this ferocious cavalry of the desert, these Tartars and Bedouin of America. (51)

In this instance, one might notice a tension between the specific and the general and a certain problem with the word “Indian.” Coronado groups the Utes, Navajos, Apaches, and Comanches together as both “Indians” and as “these Tartars and Bedouin of America.” He initially includes the Moquis as Indians as well, but qualifies them as “partially civilized,” and excludes them from the Oriental comparison to Tartars and Bedouin.

Shortly thereafter, in another moment of free indirect discourse, this time via Thurstane’s thoughts, De Forest narrates the first actual appearance of the Moquis. As the caravan approaches the Moqui city, De Forest explains that Thurstane encountered,

the most cordial, cheerful, kindly-eyed people that Thurstane had seen in New Mexico. Good features, too; that is, they were handsomer than the usual Indian type; some even had physiognomies which reminded one of Italians. Their hair was fine and glossy for men of their race; and, stranger still, it bore an appearance of careful combing. Nearly all wore loose cotton trousers or drawers reaching to the knee, with a kind of blouse of woollen or cotton, and over the shoulders a gay woollen blanket tied around the waist. In view of their tidy raiment and their general air of cleanliness, *it seemed a mistake to class them as Indians*. These were the Moquis, a remnant of one of the semi-civilizations of America, perhaps a colony left behind by the Aztecs in their migrations, or possibly by the temple-builders of Yucatan. (69; emphasis mine)

Like Coronado's earlier thoughts, Thurstane adds a moment of conjecture on the genealogy of the Moquis, but more important is Thurstane's judgement that "it seemed a mistake to class them as Indians." The reasoning here is that that they were pretty, nice, and clean, three characteristics that do not fit within the definition of the word "Indian" which, according to De Forest, means ugly, mean, and dirty.

Theories of Moquis ancestry occasionally resurface while the caravan rests within the stone city. Thurstane at one point concludes that Moquis have a Welsh ancestry (70). Eventually a direct authorial voice solidifies the difference between Moquis and Indians. What the characters can only guess at, the narrator explains more directly and does so with specific reference to the strategic formation of Orientalist literature:

It is said hesitatingly, by scholars who have not yet made comparative studies of languages, *that the Moquis are not red men*, like the Algonquins, the Iroquois, the Lenni-Lenape, the Sioux, and in general those whom we know as Indians. It is said, moreover, that they are of the same generic stock with the Aztecs of Mexico, the ancient Peruvians, and all the other city-building peoples of both North and South America.

It was an evil day for the brown race of New Mexico when horses strayed from the Spanish settlements into the desert, and the savage red tribes became cavalry. This feeble civilization then received a more cruel shock than that which had been dealt it by the storming columns of the conquistadors. The horse transformed the Utes, Apaches, Comanches, and Navajos from snapping-turtles into condors. Thenceforward, instead of crawling in slow and feeble bands to tease the dense populations of the pueblos, they could come like a tornado, and come in a swarm.

At no time were the Moquis and their fellow agriculturists and herdsmen safe from robbery and slaughter. (74)

While he qualifies his statement with the word “hesitatingly,” the narrator still makes his pronouncement: “the Moquis are not red men.” Furthermore, the narrator adds more tribes—the Algonquins, the Iroquois, the Lenni-Lenape, and the Sioux—to the group of “those whom we know as Indians.” He thus uses the Moquis as a non-example to define the term “Indian.” Moquis are city-building people who develop agriculture, wear nice clothes, and have straight hair and light skin, and thus, they cannot be Indians. Indians are like Tartars and Bedouin, savage red men, animal-like, mean, ugly, and dirty, swarming tribes who rob and slaughter agriculturists. Just like the categorical term “Oriental,” the author and his characters develop these discursive categories through subjective observations of cultural practices and the perceived deviation of these cultural practices from an Occidental norm. Moreover, in referencing the strategic formation of Orientalist texts in various ways, De Forest classifies the Indian as just another type of Oriental.

Ultimately, De Forest characterizes Mexicans and Indigenous Americans in such a way that suggests that both groups are incapable of self-government. This general belief informed and supported U.S. imperial practices throughout the American West and Central America in the mid-nineteenth century. *Overland* is one more example of what Streeby recognizes as the “intense and repeated efforts made by early dime novel authors to narrate, redescribe, or otherwise justify the dispossession and violent displacement of the natives” (221). Furthermore, that De Forest relied on Orientalist discourse to craft his representations makes one question the commonly conceived boundaries of “the Orient” which, traditionally, never include the American West and Mexico. Rather than assume that “the Orient” is a stable geographic place,

we might assume instead that “the Orient” is anywhere an “Oriental” lives. An “Oriental,” as De Forest demonstrates, is a rhetorical construction. It is anyone who can be classified through Orientalist discourse. It is anyone who deviates to a certain degree from an Occidental norm.

Yet a scholarly search for common Orientalist representations is not necessarily enough to locate “the Orient.” What we can learn from De Forest’s work, through a comparison of his fiction set in various locations and with attention to the composition history of his various Orientalist texts, is that Orientalism occurs within a specific rhetorical situation. We might think of Orientalism as a mode of imperialist rhetoric with a specific audience and specific generic constraints and expectations. Orientalism is the type of imperialist rhetoric that occurs when an author holds an Orientalist strategic location and references an Orientalist strategic formation. What is special about De Forest, at least with respect to his *History of the Indians of Connecticut* (1851) and *Overland* (1871), is that he could hold this strategic location *only* through his engagement with the strategic formation. He had no first-hand experience in relation to the North American Orient that he describes. He did not need it. De Forest never required any “real” place. He did not even need the western United States to exist. The only geographical bounds to De Forest’s Orient laid somewhere in and around New Haven, Connecticut.

Finally, Streeby quotes Bill Brown who argues that the Western dime novel of the period often suppressed sectional tensions by creating a “unifying story of the West,” and Streeby herself observes that “formulations of a fictive, unifying, ‘Anglo-Saxon’ national identity were disseminated in sensational newspapers, songbooks, novelettes, story papers, and other cheap reading material. Through this popular literature, a heterogenous assortment of people imagined themselves a nation, staging their unity against the imagined disunity of Mexico” (39). These popular narratives sought to craft the boundaries of whiteness as their characters explored the

boundaries of the nation. However, while Streeby correctly argues that we should not understand the U.S.-American Western novel as “simply internal to the U.S. ‘West,’” we might look even farther than a hemispheric frame of reference. Definitions of Anglo-Saxon identity and civilization within the U.S. have always been intertwined within a teleological Columbiad vision of Western expansion (see Schueller 9, 20). One certainly cannot fully grasp the complexities of De Forest’s *Overland* without recognizing the sociopolitical tensions within North and Central America, but one also cannot fully grasp the complexities of this novel without considering popular nineteenth-century theories of global racial and social development, such as those proffered by nineteenth-century Orientalists. We might thus return to the U.S. “West,” and specifically to the U.S.-American Western genre, with the “Orient” in mind.

4 | “Like Any Other Savage”: Internal Orientalism and the U.S. South, 1852-1872

*Christian men and women of the North! still further,—
you have another power; you can pray! . . .
You pray for the heathen abroad; pray also for the heathen at home.*

- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, 415

Will the immigration from the North and from Europe, which must ere long descend upon the South, give [the Southerner] time? And when it reaches him, will it absorb and thus elevate him; or will it push him into wilds and fastnesses, there to die out like any other savage?

- John William De Forest, *A Union Officer in the Reconstruction*, 158

John William De Forest’s writing about the American West stretches the geographical boundaries of the Orient, but his writing about another North American region, the U.S. South, demonstrates that nineteenth-century Orientalism also allowed for racial flexibility. After fighting in the Civil War for the Union Army, De Forest took a position as an officer in the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands or the Freedman’s Bureau. He was charged with managing Reconstruction efforts outside of Greenville, South Carolina. While there, he completed and published one of his most famous novels, *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* (1867), collected material for another novel, *Kate Beaumont* (1872), and wrote numerous articles for various Northern periodicals to report on the situation in the South. In one of these articles that would later be collected in *A Union Officer in the*

Reconstruction (1948), De Forest describes one specific kind of white U.S. Southerner, the “cracker,” via the often-twinning Orientalist and imperialist discourses:

Quarrelsome as the cracker is, he has no self-respect and no moral courage. As in former days he was submissive to the planter, so he became subservient to the Yankee; . . . obeying the behest of every man in uniform, even though he were a drunken deserter; and always ready to declare himself an original Unionist. Indifferent to law, he revered power like an Oriental and put his mouth in the dust before whomsoever represented it. It is my belief that he sincerely admired and venerated his Northern conqueror. (152)

Character traits made the Southerner “like an Oriental” rather than either race or geography, specifically the Southerner’s subservience and desire to be conquered and controlled. De Forest’s description, then, links Orientalism with imperialism and justifies imperialism as something that “Orientals” and those like them sincerely admire. De Forest’s description also suggests that Orientalist discourse—and by extension civilizationist and imperialist discourses—were not *always* racialist discourses. The common Orientalist reliance upon transnational Orientalist comparison, which I discuss in Chapter Two, made the Orient expandable. The common Orientalist reliance on the strategic formation of Orientalist texts, which I discuss in Chapter Three, removes any need for empiricism. It is this final feature—the fact that Orientalism can sometimes float free of the racial theories at its base—that allows writers to employ Orientalism virtually anywhere.

We might read De Forest’s writing on the South, as well as that of his contemporaries, under a rubric of what David Jansson calls “internal Orientalism.”⁹⁴ Jansson defines internal Orientalism as “a discourse that operates within the boundaries of a state, a discourse that

involves the othering of a (relatively) weak region by a more powerful region (or regions) within the state” (296). Furthermore, “the internal orientalist discourse represents a subordinate section of the state in a particular (unflattering) way so as to produce a national (i.e., state-scale) identity with desirable characteristics” (297). Jansson argues that historical representations of the U.S. South as this “subordinate section,” as this internal Other, as a place where people are “violent, racist, intolerant, credulous, cruel, unjust, excessively sentimental, xenophobic, and close-minded,” have often served to create and define a national identity that is exactly the opposite. While I agree with Jansson—De Forest is certainly subordinating the South to produce a non-Southern, national identity—Jansson only relies on Orientalism as a model or metaphor for understanding writing about the South. Jansson applies his idea of “internal Orientalism” as a model to understand the “internal othering” of the South in the twentieth century, to “posit *similarities* in the spatial dynamics involved in both phenomena” (312; emphasis added). Jansson does not argue that nationalist writers actually wrote “the South” as part of “the Orient” but instead uses Orientalism as a framework to understand the particular geographical implications of Southern representations. If we look to more examples of this process, though, we might extend Jansson’s argument and recognize texts in which historical representations of the South were not just similar to Orientalism but were actually one and the same. Numerous nineteenth-century writers, several of whom had direct ties to the American Oriental Society, explicitly depicted the South as “Oriental.” Moreover, a recognition of this trend may provide a solution to one common dilemma in studies of the U.S. South as an internal other: the impossibility of describing writers’ white, Northern, imperialist logic in relation to their white, Southern, conquered countrymen.

Jamie Winders, in an article on travel writing in the U.S. South after the Civil War, recounts that “after the Civil War, northern travellers—along with northern politicians, writers, military personnel, and laypeople—envisioned the South as what D. W. Meinig calls ‘a new imperial holding’” or as a “colonial appendage” (Winders 392). However, as Winders repeatedly points out, efforts to represent the South as an imperial holding frequently came under pressure as Northern writers faced “aspects of the region that challenged a clean division between what northern travelers observed in the South and how they understood their connections to that which they saw” (403). Northern writers, Winders argues, had particular difficulty with white Southerners. Winders argues that white poverty in the South disrupted Northern imperial musings: “If nature in the postbellum South was a key thematic through which northerners successfully scripted an imperial South, they could not treat impoverished white southerners as ‘natives’ found within that natural abundance and remain within a nineteenth-century racial epistemology” (404). “Not appropriately colored to be natives and not appropriately classed to be imperial agents,” Winders continues, “poor white trash were just enough to disrupt the imperial lens through which northern travelers scripted a postbellum South and to call into question the region’s existence as a distinct colonial appendage of the nation-state” (403). However, while Northern writers may have faced some logical challenges to locating white Southerners within nineteenth-century racial epistemologies, that does not mean that they did not try. Many instead turned to the nineteenth-century Orientalist epistemology that offered, at times, more racial flexibility.⁹⁵

In the chapter that follows, I demonstrate the overlap between imperialist or civilizationist discourses with Orientalist discourse in the U.S. South. Following the work of the numerous scholars who have already examined ways that U.S. writers represented the South as

an internal other, a colonial appendage, or an imperial holding, I look to nineteenth-century writers who posit the South as specifically “Oriental.” While the presence of Orientalist discourse within northern representations of the South does not greatly alter what scholars have already established in relation to the South within the national imagination, it does greatly alter the current scholarly conceptualization of Orientalism, its spread, and its historical and rhetorical uses.

I reveal that some of the most outspoken and influential U.S. Northern writers of the nineteenth century—writers who employed imperialist or civilizationist discourse to argue for political or military control of the U.S. South—also happened to either have connections to or be members of the American Oriental Society. John William De Forest, James Russel Lowell, and Ralph Waldo Emerson were all long-time members of the AOS as well as outspoken and frequently published critics of the South. I trace how Orientalist discourse made its way into these critiques. I then demonstrate how a recognition of Orientalist discourse about the South encourages a reevaluation of one of the most prominent U.S. Northern writers, Harriet Beecher Stowe, who also had a connection to the AOS. Stowe’s husband, Calvin Ellis Stowe, was a founding member of the AOS, but Calvin’s participation aside, Harriet had her own great interest in Orientalism. While none of these writers had any great involvement with the daily happenings of the AOS aside from the occasional donation to the AOS library, each supported the work of U.S. Orientalism more generally through their own publications. Each author continued to fulfill the desires of the Directors of the AOS, who, as I discuss in Chapter One, intentionally sought to promote the work of “those members of the Society whose avocations do not permit them to engage directly in oriental studies” in order to develop a link between the Society’s academic work and the U.S.-American public. Most relevant to this current chapter, each author tapped

into their background in Orientalism to describe specifically *white* U.S. Southerners as separate from, different, and *other* than the U.S. Northerners. Because of that, scholars must continue to reexamine our definition of “Orientalist discourse” as we reevaluate the relationship both between Orientalism and geography and between Orientalism and race. We must continue to recognize what Louisa Schein describes in her study of internal Orientalism in China as the “historical multiplicity of axes of domination” (72). We must continue to search for Orientalism across and within borders.

Where is the South?

Before continuing, I should define the most central term to this chapter’s argument: “the South.”⁹⁶ Virtually every study of the South as an internal, colonized other includes, at some point, a kind of scholarly disclaimer. Jansson provides a representative example when he writes that his “analysis should not be read as suggesting that it is somehow inappropriate to criticize or agitate against injustice in the South” (312). Here, he likely means the South of the past and the South of today, however one defines it. He continues to say, though, that when we “spatialize human flaws and endow vices and undesirable traits with a geographic nature, unfortunate consequences result,” namely that in “making the assumption that the South is the exclusive location of the set of negative characteristics . . . we erase those characteristics from the national identity and thus blind ourselves to their very real presence” throughout the nation (313).⁹⁷

Jansson’s argument is not simply that the problems of South actually exist throughout the nation. Instead, he argues that the South is a rhetorical creation of nationalist writers who seek to inscribe negative values onto an essentialized, internal other in order to “incorporate the opposite, positive values into their national identity” (296). A similar argument is made by

Winders who bemoans the fact that too many assume “that the South is *something* or *somewhere* in which identities can be shaped and which itself can impact national history” and too often leave “the region’s epistemological status unexamined” (392). More to the point, Greeson writes that “this South that we hold collectively in our minds is not—could not possibly be—a fixed or real place. It both exceeds and flattens place; it is a term of the imagination, a site of national fantasy” (1). “The South,” Greeson argues, “is, first and foremost, an ideological concept rather than a place” (10).

Thus, when Lowell, Emerson, De Forest, and Stowe wrote about the South, they may have had real places and real people in mind, and their writings certainly influenced public policies that had tangible effects on the lives of real people, but their descriptions were as much about an imagined self as they were about an imagined (or real) other. In this way, we might describe discourse about the South in the same way that Edward Said describes discourse about the Orient:

Underlying all the different units of Orientalist discourse—by which I mean simply the vocabulary employed whenever the Orient is spoken or written about—is a set of representative figures, or tropes. These figures are to the actual Orient . . . as stylized costumes are to characters in a play In other words, we need not look for correspondence between the language used to depict the Orient and the Orient itself, not so much because the language is inaccurate but because it is not even trying to be accurate. What it is trying to do . . . is at one and the same time to characterize the Orient as alien and to incorporate it schematically on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are *for* Europe, and only for Europe. (71-2)

The South, like the Orient, is a self-serving, rhetorical creation. In the texts that follow, though, the South is not only like the Orient, but actually one aspect of the Orient.

Orientalism in the 1860s and Post-War Years

While most antebellum critiques of the southern U.S. certainly focused mostly on the presence and effects of slavery, a popular trend within abolitionist discourse linked the presence of slavery with failures in Southern morality, culture, politics, education, architecture and everything in between.⁹⁸ In other words, rhetorical attacks against slavery often occurred in tandem with rhetorical attacks on Southern culture. Somewhat akin to the popular eighteenth and nineteenth-century stadial theory of social development that linked modes of acquiring sustenance to specific character traits and social institutions,⁹⁹ many argued that the slave-based economy of the South had not only touched every aspect of Southern culture and Southern character but had essentially created a new civilization. For one example, in his 1860 essay titled “The Election in November,” which I discuss later in this chapter, James Russell Lowell argues that slavery inherently brings down all other aspects of a society, mostly due to the concentration of wealth in the hands of a very few combined with the tendency toward a monoculture, cash-crop economy. Lowell writes that the slaveholding states fail “by the inherent vice of their constitution and its attendant consequences, to create enlightened, powerful, and advancing communities of men” and that “the course of things in slaveholding States” is “a downward one, more or less rapid, in civilization” (32-33).

Greeson argues that many such representations of Southern civilization in decline were mostly derived directly from European civilizationalist or imperialist discourses (229), and she is certainly correct, but the similarities specifically to the stadialist model are particularly relevant

because they made possible direct comparisons between the South and other “Oriental” spaces. George Dekker recounts that the stadial model, in its early development, actually helped to counter racism and Eurocentrism, first, because it separated societies by modes of sustenance rather than by race or geographical location and, second, because early philosophers noted that each stage had specific skills and traits that were not present in other stages (75). What stadial theory enabled, in its best form, was a kind of cross-cultural comparison—hunters in one place will have a similar culture to hunters in another, manufacturers here will have a similar culture to manufacturers there, regardless of race and place. Such a theory could lead to a belief in a shared, global humanity (see Dekker 77-8). However, in its worst forms, it resulted in global cultural hierarchies that then justified colonialism and imperialism, but these hierarchies were still not necessarily racial hierarchies. Thus, comparisons between Southerners and other global “savages” or “barbarians”—“savage” was the name for the first stage of stadial development and “barbarian” was the second—fit well within the most popular social and economic theories. In short, the stadial theory allowed writers to distinguish the U.S. South from the U.S. North with reference to temporality based on objective observations of social institutions. Imperialist and Orientalist discourses, which relied upon and likely developed from similar global divisions of human civilizations, could then be used to explain the ramifications of these differences in civilizations.

Such rhetorical patterns reached their height during the Civil War. For instance, after a report from the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War in April of 1862, widespread stories circulated among the nation’s newspapers of Southern soldiers committing cannibalistic acts. The *New York Times* summarizes the report from the Committee on the Conduct of the War in an article titled “Rebel Treatment of Our Fallen Soldiers”:

The report of the Committee on the Conduct of the War, in reference to the atrocities perpetrated by the rebels upon the bodies of our soldiers who have fallen in battle shows, in its true colors, the character of the parties to the contest we are waging It is only savages that burn at the stake; tear out and devour the heart of a victim; as the highest manifestation of infernal prowess and hate; display in ferocious triumph mutilated remains; convert skulls into goblets, human jaws into spurs for calvary riders; or strip the flesh from the bones, to carve on the latter ghastly devices and mementoes of the fight. But many of these, and still greater outrages, are asserted by the present Committee to have been committed upon those of our soldiers who fell at Bull Run . . . (4).

The *Times* article continues to state that the Committee did not actually produce any evidence or testimony to support these findings, but the writers at the *Times* add that “it must still be confessed that there are many elements of Southern society and education that are calculated to give this barbarous *bent* to Southern character” (emphasis in original; 4). Other newspapers repeated similar claims and assessments. An article from the *Daily Intelligencer* in Wheeling, Virginia refers to “Southrons” as “bone-carving, skull-drinking, enemies” (Campbell and McDermot 1). Another article from Ohio describes a specific incident of rebel soldiers who “dug up our dead heroes from the graves of Manassas to tear out their skulls for drinking cups and soap-dishes, and their jaw bones for spurs” (Greeley 1). Schuyler Colfax, who would become the Speaker of the House of Representatives and then the 17th Vice President of the United States, repeated the claim in an 1862 speech in the Indiana congress (Colfax 1). In each case, the Southerner is portrayed as a “savage” or “barbarian” and each example serves to denigrate “Southern civilization” more generally.

One aspect of this specific phenomenon stands out for its starkly Orientalist discourse. In the *New York Times*' original summary of the Committee report, the writer goes on to explain why Southerners would be inclined to such barbarous acts. The *Times* writes that "the civilization of the South is a composite one, made up of Caucasian and African elements, and that it displays the very worst features in the natures of each," and "Southern character is composite like Southern society" (4). The *Times* suggests that Southern character and Southern civilization is part African. Other writers and newspapers followed similar lines of argumentation in comparing Southerners to other global barbarians.

In a different *New York Times* article from later in the same year titled "Barbarism of the Rebels—The Emancipation Proclamation," the writer warns of a new wave of further atrocities should the Emancipation Proclamation be upheld. By now, the writer claims, the North had awoken "to the knowledge that they were fighting a barbarous enemy" as "atrocities followed upon atrocities" (4). The author recounts stories of rebel soldiers throwing railroad trains full of peaceful citizens into abysses, firing upon hospitals, killing wounded men and those who had surrendered, stabbing women who offered to help the wounded, and, of course, making rings and drinking cups out of the bones and skulls of Union soldiers. The author then speculates on the effects of the Emancipation Proclamation. They write that "a storm seems likely to burst forth which will make the world stand aghast, and whose waves may overtop the Tartarean billows of the French Revolution, or the insurrection of the Sepoys" (4). While the reference to the "Tartarean billows of the French Revolution" is less clear than the reference to the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the rhetorical effect is the same. The writer compares U.S. Southerners to Tartars under French colonization and Indians under British colonization, both to portray the U.S. Southerners as barbaric and atrocious.

Such stories of widespread cannibalism and mutilation persisted throughout the war. An 1865 article from the *New York Evening Post*, reprinted in an Ohio newspaper, repeats the story of mutilation, implies cannibalism, and links Southern soldiers to “savages of Africa”:

You are even worse than these savages of middle Africa, and I'll *prove* it. These savages are fond of making trinkets from the bones of their victims. So are you. Didn't you roast the flesh from the bones of our dead soldiers at Bull Run to make finger rings and parlor ornaments for your rebel Jezebels? The savages of Africa have a fondness for drinking from the skulls of those they have slain in battle, or slaughtered for their feasts. Haven't you done the same thing? (1; emphasis in original)

In this example, the writer embeds accusations of war crimes within a civilizationalist discourse that ranks white U.S. Southerners as “worse than these savages of middle Africa.” One must remember though that Africa, for many of the nineteenth-century writers in the previous chapters, was often lumped in as part of “the Orient.” These comparisons of Southerners to Africans, Tartars, and Indians each place “the South” in an “Oriental” frame of reference. In other words, rhetorical denigrations of Southern culture and Southern society were not *just* denigrations of Southern culture and Southern society but were often connected, either implicitly or often explicitly, to denigrations of other global, “Oriental” others. Furthermore, the stadial theory of human development enabled and even encouraged such cross-cultural comparisons irrespective of racial, geographical, or historical difference.

Imperialist and Orientalist discourse about the U.S. South only heightened in the years leading up to the U.S.-American Civil War and did not abate afterward during Reconstruction. As other scholars have noted, the political and militaristic restructuring of the U.S. South after

the war, along with the numerous issues inherent with a large population of citizens recently freed from domestic slavery, quickly became a model for understanding U.S. interventions in other parts of the world (see Stecopoulos, Greeson, Winders). Greeson, for instance, begins her chapter about imperialist discourse during Reconstruction with a reading of James Russell Lowell's "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" in which, Greeson argues, Lowell "envisioned the United States emerging from its bloodiest war a 'certified' empire, forever sundered from its lowly colonial foundations" (229). Lowell suggests in his poem that the U.S. Civil War had "certif[ied] to earth a new imperial race," one much stronger than the empires of Europe (qtd. in Greeson 227). What is strangest about Lowell's commemoration to those who died in the Civil War, for Greeson, is Lowell's "wholehearted embrace of the racialist language so central to the arena of European empire he imagined the United States to be entering" (229). Greeson points out that such racialist discourse is "patently illogical in the U.S. context"; but while Greeson reads Lowell's "obsessive recourse to the language of 'blood' and 'race'" as evidence of "the utter derivativeness of the concept of empire that he triumphantly embraced," it also demonstrates the fluidity and flexibility of Western discourses of alterity such as Orientalism. What I find strangest about Lowell's poem is not so much that his racialist discourse was patently illogical, but rather that his audience found it legible. It was also not the first time Lowell had used such illogical, racialist discourse to separate the U.S. North from the U.S. South.

James Russell Lowell joined the American Oriental Society two years before his 1865 commemoration to the Union soldiers,¹⁰⁰ but he was conversant in Orientalist discourse even earlier, as is evidenced in his aforementioned 1860 essay titled "The Election in November." Originally published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, a journal that Lowell himself edited, the essay

makes the case that the upcoming presidential election would mark a turning point in U.S.-American history and culture. The choice, Lowell argues, was a simple one: voters simply had to choose between the Northern way of life or the Southern. Lowell was not incorrect either—this was the election that made Abraham Lincoln the President—but Lowell injects an Orientalist discourse into his essay that is as seemingly as illogical as the racialist discourse he employs in his Harvard ode:

Whatever its results, [the 1860 presidential election] is to settle, for many years to come, the question whether the American idea is to govern this continent, whether the Occidental or the Oriental theory of society is to mold our future, whether we are to recede from principles which eighteen Christian centuries have been slowly establishing at the cost of so many saintly lives at the stake and so many heroic ones on the scaffold and the battle-field, in favor of some fancied assimilation to the household arrangements of Abraham, of which all that can be said with certainty is that they did not add to his domestic happiness. (22)

Lowell's overall argument is that concessions to slave-holdings states have proceeded so far that no room was left for compromise. The 1860 election, for Lowell, quite simply is about whether "to say *Yes* or *No*" to slavery as the future of the United States (21). Lowell is explicit that one could either vote for the North or the South, or in this case for "the Occidental or the Oriental theory of society." In his essay, the North is the Occident and the South is the Orient, but he never explains why or what he means by this analogy. This analogy is furthered in Lowell's reference to "the household arrangements of Abraham" which likely suggests a house with an unhappy mix of Judeo-Christian and Arab influence. The South, presumably, represents the Arab influence in this example.¹⁰¹

Later in the essay, Lowell connects the Oriental nature of “Southern” society to a quasi-stadialist theory of social development. Lowell follows a popular line of argumentation in anti-slavery arguments of the period when he suggests that the economic, agricultural, and political systems that slavery engendered had caused the degradation of the U.S. South and its people. He argues that,

Every man who has dispassionately endeavored to enlighten himself in the matter cannot but see, that, for many, the course of things in the slave-holding States is substantially what we have described, a downward one, more or less rapid, in civilization and in all those results of material prosperity which in a free country show themselves in the general advancement for the good of all. (33)

In Lowell’s stadialist representations of U.S. geography, the South is not only at a different stage of development than the U.S. North with its material prosperity—a trait of the highest stage of stadial development—but Southern society is moving in the wrong direction. Lowell uses a civilizationalist discourse in tandem with a specifically Orientalist discourse to portray the South as a lesser civilization than the North. Lowell argues that a vote against Abraham Lincoln was a vote to expand the Southern style of civilization and, further, that “[to] multiply such communities [was] to multiply weakness” (33). Southern society was thus a potentially damaging internal element of the national body that Lowell hoped to either contain or excise altogether. We might think of Lowell’s construction of the North-South dichotomy as an example of what Jansson describes as “internal Orientalism,” or “a discourse that operates within the boundaries of a state, a discourse that involves the othering of a (relatively) weak region by a more powerful region (or regions) within the state” (296). Extending this definition, Jansson observes that “the people of the subordinate region might even be characterized as a different

‘race,’ with distinct physical characteristics. This region would certainly be construed as different, so as to set it apart from the rest of the state and allow it to serve as an other against which a positive national identity may be derived” (297). Lowell’s representation of the South as the Orient can only make sense within such a framework, and it demonstrates the fluidity and flexibility of Orientalism more generally. Similar representations are found in the work of Lowell’s close literary companion and fellow AOS member, Ralph Waldo Emerson.¹⁰²

Ralph Waldo Emerson made similar civilizationist arguments about the U.S. South throughout the 1850s and into the 1860s. More important, though, is the fact that, as Malini Johar Schueller observes, Emerson’s civilizationist ideologies were deeply informed by his studies in Orientalism. Still, Emerson’s relationship to Orientalism is one of the more hotly contested topics within studies on the author. More has been written about Emerson and Orientalism than maybe any other writer in this dissertation, partly because his influential Unitarian and transcendental beliefs were openly inspired by Asian philosophical texts and also because he played such a prominent role in translating, commenting upon, and bringing Asian literature to the U.S.-American public.¹⁰³ Much tension exists, however, among scholars about the links between Emerson’s Orientalism and his outspoken late-career celebration of Western imperialism.¹⁰⁴ Some—like Schueller—see Emerson’s Orientalism as part and parcel of Western ideologies of domination, while others—like David Weir or Herwig Friedl—separate the two ideologies to varying degrees. While the goal of this chapter is not necessarily to settle debates on Emerson, we might better understand the relationship between Emerson’s Orientalism and Emerson’s imperialism if we consider alternate conceptualizations of “the Orient” in his work, such as the U.S. South. In understanding one, we might better understand the other, and vice versa.

The key to understanding both lies in the common chain of rhetorical reference between the Orient, the South, and Africa. As Greeson observes, Emerson was one of the many writers of the U.S. North who imagined the U.S. South as a domestic Africa in the lead-up to the Civil War and into Reconstruction. While Africa may not seem, to some, to be part of “the Orient,” we must remember a few things: first, the relationship between “Africa” and “the Orient” largely depends upon how one defines “the Orient”—not to mention how one defines “Africa”—and, as I demonstrate in the previous chapters, “the Orient” has never been and never will be a stable signifier; second, Orientalism relies on a worldview that separates the globe into two parts, the Occident and the Orient, and nineteenth-century Orientalists only ever placed Africa on the “Oriental” side of the dichotomy. In other words, when a nineteenth-century Orientalist like Emerson speaks about Africa, he *is* speaking about “the Orient.” This becomes more apparent when we look to Emerson’s commentary on the U.S. South as Africa and, especially, to Emerson’s belief in climatic determinism. Emerson most often expresses the separation of the world into two parts via climatic denominations.

Greeson makes the compelling claim that “as U.S. writers confronted the transformed relationship of the nation to its South after secession, the contemporaneous European imperial focus on Africa became their predominant analogy” (237). One reason for this analogy lies in the anxiety that U.S. Northerners felt over the future of Black people after emancipation. This anxiety manifested itself in numerous newspaper and journal articles which included some form of the question, “What shall we do with them?”¹⁰⁵ For example, Greeson points to the editor of the *North American Review*, Charles Eliot Norton—also a member of the American Oriental Society—who describes the U.S. South as “this new Africa” and fears “the ultimate and not distant ascendancy of the black race” (qtd. in Greeson 238). A second, and more complicated,

reason for the U.S. South as Africa analogy lies in the belief by writers, intellectuals, and politicians in the northern states—and even some in the southern states—that the U.S. South was a separate country, a separate civilization, and one that would soon require a dependent relationship to the U.S. North. Greeson cites William H. Holcombe, who first coined the phrase “Africanization of the South” in 1861, and argues that the U.S. North was becoming an imperial despot. “Holcombe equated emancipation,” Greeson explains, “with a ‘reduction’ in political stature, from independent state to the ‘condition’ of a colony like Jamaica, or an entity like Haiti that the United States refused to recognize as sovereign” (238). Thus, the African analogy “doubly placed the Reconstruction South in the global hierarchy of modern empire” (237). The U.S. South became doubly marked as a potential site where the “African race” would someday reign and also as a place that EuroAmericans could aspire to intervene, colonize, and dominate. To understand the Emersonian chain of reference between the Orient, Africa, the South, and imperial domination we might look to how he connects these four ideas across several texts, from his pre-war “Fugitive Slave Law” address at Concord in 1851 to his post-war dedication at a soldiers’ monument in 1867.

Much of Emerson’s 1851 address on the Fugitive Slave Law is a critique of U.S.-American law and governance. Emerson’s overall argument is, essentially, that the United States is not living up to its ideals, that slavery must end, and that the Fugitive Slave Law will mark the end of the Union. Mixed in, Emerson creates a number of rhetorical dichotomies,¹⁰⁶ two that separate the South from the North, another that separates Asia and Africa from Europe, and a third that connects the U.S. South to Africa and Asia and other colonized spaces.

The first dichotomy occurs when Emerson briefly postulates the difference between the two regions of the United States. Late in his address, Emerson states that, “under the Union, I

suppose the fact to be that there are really two nations, the north and the south. It is not slavery that severs them, it is climate and temperament” (*Complete Works* 206). Emerson’s explanation is significant here because he explicitly argues that the North and South would still be two separate civilizations whether slavery existed or not. He is also explicit that the North is the higher of the two civilizations. By using the word “climate,” he taps into the nineteenth-century belief in climatic determinism that would allow his audience to separate the North and South and rank the hotter of the two places as lesser.¹⁰⁷

Shortly thereafter, Emerson encourages his Massachusetts audience to lead the country despite their small population. He creates a second dichotomy between Europe on one side and Asia and Africa on the other to prove his point. He states, “Massachusetts is a little state: Countries have been great by ideas. Europe is little compared with Asia and Africa; yet Asia and Africa are its ox and its ass. Europe, the least of all the continents, has almost monopolized for twenty centuries the genius and power of them all” (211). In this instance, Emerson groups Asia and Africa together as the counterpart to Europe and, further, places them in a subservient position. Europe represents power and genius while Asia and Africa represent labor. The metaphor of the ox and the ass also suggest colonization or, at least, resource extraction as oxen and asses are typically labor-saving farm-animals that aid in the process of agricultural production.

Finally, Emerson connects the U.S. South to Asia and Africa and makes his imperialist motivation explicit. In continuing to encourage Massachusetts to serve as an example and act as a leader for the entire country, Emerson tells his audience that “every Englishman in Australia, in South Africa, in India, or in whatever barbarous country their forts and factories have been set up,—represents London, represents the art, power, and law of Europe. Every man educated at the

Northern school carries the like advantages into the South” (213). The comparison is explicit: the North is like England, the South is like Australia, South Africa, India, or “whatever barbarous country.” To make certain that the South is grouped with these different colonized spaces, Emerson’s very next sentence states that “it is confounding distinctions to speak of the geographic sections of this country as of equal civilization” (213). For Emerson, at least, the U.S. South was a completely separate place. Furthermore, we must recognize a grouping of places—the South, Africa, India, Australia—that all represent the foil to the temperate, EuroAmerican North, whether that North be in London or in Concord, Massachusetts. Emerson does not explicitly call Africa or the U.S. South “the Orient,” but he groups them together and, furthermore, uses terms and ideas that are interchangeable with the Occident-Orient dichotomy: colonizing countries-colonized countries; civilized countries-barbarous countries; temperate zones-hot zones; places of genius-places of labor.

Moving into the war years, Emerson’s rhetoric became even more explicit as he continued to group the U.S. South along with other colonized spaces and assert the ethical and moral imperative of imperialism. In an 1862 essay titled “American Civilization,” originally printed in Lowell’s *Atlantic Monthly*, Emerson goes to great lengths to explain the foundations of civilization before directly asserting that the South lacks all required traits of a civilized society. The South, in Emerson’s estimation, thus deserves colonization from the North. He begins his definition of civilization by describing its opposite: “A nation that has no clothing, no alphabet, no iron, no marriage, no arts of peace, no abstract thought, we call barbarous” (502). After ascribing this negative description to “the brutes” and “savage tribes” of Native Americans and Africans, he explains the purpose of colonization by claiming that “there is . . . at the beginning of each improvement [in civilization], some superior foreigner importing new and wonderful

arts, and teaching them” (502). He essentially describes the “white man’s burden” before purveying other common justifications for the spread of temperate empires.

Once Emerson sufficiently defines barbarity, he names requirements for civilization that include a capitalist system of free labor, good and honorable women, a dependence on morality, and, of course, the correct climate (503-04). Like Lowell, Emerson’s rhetoric suggests that he at least somewhat prescribed to the stadial theory of social development as Emerson’s highest civilization is marked first by its economy and then distinguished by the morality that follows. Emerson also adds climate as a distinguishing agent of change. Climatic determinism, once again, infiltrates Emerson’s reasoning when he argues that “the highest civility has never loved the hot zones. Wherever snow falls, there is usually civil freedom. Where the banana grows, the animal system is indolent and pampered at the cost of higher qualities: the man is grasping, sensual, and cruel” (504). Climate takes the place of mode of sustenance in Emerson’s theory of social development, and while his statements remain general at first and apply to any civilization in the tropical regions of the world, Emerson soon reveals that the true target of his essay is the U.S. South.

After outlining his definition of civility, Emerson claims that he “[sees] the vast advantages of [the U.S.], spanning the breadth of the temperate zone” (506). If his exclusionary qualifier of “the temperate zone” is not clear enough, he then begins a litany of negative descriptions that many Northern readers would associate with the South:

But if there be a country which cannot stand any one of these test,—a country where knowledge cannot be diffused without perils of mob-law . . . where speech is not free . . . where liberty is attacked in the primary institution of their social life,—where the position of the white woman is injuriously affected by the

outlawry of the black woman,—where the arts, such as they have, are all imported . . . where the laborer is not secured in the earnings of his own hands . . . that country is, in all these respects, not civil, but barbarous, and no advantages of soil, climate, or coast can resist these suicidal mischiefs. (506)

Emerson attacks many aspects of Southern culture rather than only the practice of slavery because his ultimate goal is the cultural subjugation and colonization of a region that he viewed as effectively a different country, existing in a different temporal rather than simply geographical realm. He makes his colonial aspirations clear when he asks, “Why cannot the best civilization be extended over the whole country, since the disorder of the less civilized portion menaces the existence of the country?” (507). Again, for Emerson, slavery is not necessarily the practice or idea that separates the North from the South. The South is a different civilization as a result of its climate and economy, one that deserves to be colonized.

One final example demonstrates that Emerson’s dream of colonizing the South as his connection between the South and Africa continued into the post-war years. In his 1867 dedication to the soldiers’ monument in Concord, Emerson imagines the Northern people as missionaries of civilization to the U.S. South. He states that Northern soldiers “were as much missionaries to the mind of the country as they were carriers of material force, and had the vast advantage of carrying whither they marched a higher civilization” (*Complete Works* 355).¹⁰⁸ He continues to say that, while a few noble people exist in the South, “the common people, rich or poor, were the narrowest and most conceited of mankind, as arrogant as the negroes on the Gambia River” (355). Similar to the previous examples, this comparison to “negroes on the Gambia River” connects the U.S. South to some part of Africa. He then adds, in particularly imperialist language, that “the invasion of Northern farmers, mechanics, engineers, tradesmen,

lawyers and students did more than forty years of peace had done to educate the South” (355). For Emerson, and for many writers, intellectuals, and politicians in the U.S. North before and after the Civil War, the war and subsequent Reconstruction was not one part of the country fighting to improve another part of the same country but rather a civilizing force invading a different, lesser, African-like place. To notice the real effects of this type of rhetoric we might again return to the work of John William De Forest who actually acted as one of the imperial agents that Emerson envisioned.

The South as Satrapy in the Reconstruction

Likely the most explicit connection between Orientalist discourse and actual structures of political, economic, and cultural domination in the U.S. South comes from the Reconstruction texts of John William De Forest. The same John William De Forest whom I discuss in Chapter Three as the writer who began his career as an Orientalist travel writer and amateur historian of Indigenous Americans and who later published *Overland* (1871)—in which he portrays Mexicans and Indigenous Americans as Oriental—is more commonly known today for his writing about the U.S. South. With his writing career floundering in the late 1850s, De Forest attempted a transition to journalism in the 1860s and used his familial connections in South Carolina to travel to the epicenter of the rebellion and write about conditions there.¹⁰⁹ In 1861 he published an article in *The Atlantic* titled “Charleston under Arms,” and this pattern of reporting about the South for Northern readers would follow him throughout the war and into Reconstruction.

Shortly after the opening Civil War battles of 1861, De Forest decided to raise his own company and join the Union army as a captain. He went on to lead his small outfit in battle in

Louisiana and remained in the army until mustering out in 1864. He returned in 1865 as a member of the short-lived Veteran Reserve Corps before transferring in 1866 to the Bureau of Refugees, Freedman, and Abandoned Lands—more commonly called the Freedman’s Bureau—where he became the district commander in the area outside Greenville, South Carolina. During the war years, De Forest wrote numerous articles for the literary journals *Harpers* and *Galaxy* alongside personal letters that would later be compiled and published as *A Volunteer’s Adventures: A Union Captain’s Record of the Civil War* (1946). These articles—combined with his own complicated relationship with his wife and her South-Carolina-loving father—inspired one of the more popular novels of the Civil War, *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* (1867). As a Major in the Freedman’s Bureau, he would again publish numerous articles for various periodicals and journals about his time in South Carolina. He had the intention of publishing a book similar to *A Volunteer’s Adventures* or his earlier travel journal, *Oriental Acquaintance*, but he never did so. He was able, however, to use these articles and letters to inspire another successful novel, *Kate Beaumont* (1872); this source material would later be compiled and published posthumously as *A Union Officer in the Reconstruction* (1948). In each of these texts, De Forest portrays the South via Orientalist and imperialist discourse following similar rhetorical strategies to those of Lowell and Emerson. Moreover, as a military commander during and after the Civil War, De Forest’s texts had a direct impact on the lived experiences of the real people that he had “conquered.” De Forest describes the South via the most common traits of Orientalist discourse in order to imagine a future in which both Black and white U.S. Southerners are driven to extinction by immigration from the North and from Europe.

To easily capture De Forest’s own view of the U.S. South we might first look to his non-fiction travel journal, *A Volunteer’s Adventures*, and specifically to a passage early in the text in

which he enters the South for the first time. Similar to his passage in *Oriental Acquaintance* in which he describes his entrance into the “ruinous wooden quay” in Beirut that represents the “rottenness” of the people and government of Turkey, De Forest’s entrance into New Orleans through the Mississippi river represents his general impression of the entire South. Additionally, this passage is replete with the same characterizations and climatic determinism that one finds in other writers of the period. Upon entering New Orleans, De Forest writes a letter to his wife describing his entrance to the city and, specifically, the scenery around the river. He recounts the scenery which “is not inferior to that of the Hudson, though quite different in character” (17). He describes “the mighty river, the endless cypress forests in the background, the vast fields of cane and corn, the abundant magnolias and orange groves and bananas” (17). Bananas and oranges are capable of growing in Louisiana, but given Emerson’s argument that “where the banana grows, the animal system is indolent and pampered at the cost of higher qualities,” and considering popular use of the orange as a symbolic marker of tropical differentiation which I discuss later in this chapter, De Forest’s focus on oranges and bananas should stand out as something more than *just* oranges and bananas. While he first describes these plants among other types of vegetation in his letter to his wife, these oranges and bananas also find their way into his literary representations of the same experience.

De Forest translates his experience of entering New Orleans into two other texts. First, in a poem published in *Harper’s Magazine* titled “Louisiana,” he describes a battle scene which ends with the victorious Union army looking around on a half-deserted “savannah,” “with here and there plantations rolled in flowers, bananas, orange groves” (791). Later, in his novel *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion*, De Forest returns to this Louisiana setting on the Mississippi River and adds more explicit details of tropical differentiation. In a letter from the hero of the novel,

Captain Colburne, to the heroine's father, Dr. Ravenel, Colburne describes Louisiana as how "the world must have looked in the marsupial period" (122). While the "marsupial period" is not an actual scientific classification of time, Colburne means, in this case, that Louisiana appears ancient and, apparently, somehow related to marsupials. He revises this assessment shortly thereafter in the same letter as he sails closer toward New Orleans:

We have sailed out of the marsupial period into the comparatively modern era of fluvial deposits and luxuriant vegetation On either side the land is a living emerald. The plantation houses are embowered in orange groves—in a glossy mass of brilliant, fragrant verdure. I do not know the names of a quarter of the plants and trees which I see; but I pass the livelong day in admiring and almost adoring their tropical beauty. (124)

Regardless of the passage's veracity—De Forest may have actually seen oranges and bananas—he exoticizes the scenery of Louisiana by emphasizing its tropical characteristics. Moreover, his observations provide a kind of time travel back to the "marsupial period" or "the comparatively modern era of fluvial deposits and luxuriant vegetation." In either case, these images connote an ancientness before civilization. Finally, if we return to his original non-fiction letter to his wife, these images mostly serve to separate North from South. He explains these images as a "fascinating novelty to men who came . . . from the snows of New England" (*Volunteer* 17). Readers familiar with the climatic strands of imperialist discourse would understand that these observations carried with them specific, negative implications about the people who lived in the area.

De Forest makes these connections explicit when he describes his first meeting with the people of New Orleans. He describes the people of New Orleans as if he is in some distant

country. As a “mob” descends upon the troops and shows signs of unruliness, “a ragged Irishman emerges from the crowd with a shillelah [*sic*] four feet long, which he holds by the middle and whirls around his wolfish head, meanwhile damning and God-damning and God-damning-to-hell [a] red-nosed man” who was previously accosting De Forest (*Volunteer* 19). The appearance of a “ragged Irishman” with a wolfish head and a shillelagh links the South to Ireland, one of England’s colonies, and the terms “ragged” and “wolfish” ascribe an animalistic quality to the character. Later, De Forest notes that, other than a few rich planters, “the population consists of poor Germans, poorer French Creoles and ragged slaves” (21). Here, also, De Forest uses the people of New Orleans as a synecdoche for the entire South. He looks to these people and postulates, “if the South should be corked up and left to itself, it would very soon turn savage and go naked. Already it is verging on the barefooted stage” (21). This hypothesis is rife with imperialist ideology. When De Forest presents the idea of the South being “left to itself,” he implies and justifies the need for outside intervention; when he writes the terms “savage,” “naked,” and “barefooted,” he implies a degree of incivility; and most important, his use of the word “stage” connotes a hierarchy or a chain of being in which the South is vacillating somewhere near the bottom. Thus, De Forest suggests that the state of Louisiana is a beautiful tropical paradise virtually void of inhabitants and that New Orleans is filled with dirty, poor, ragged foreigners. Occupying such an area would hardly be colonizing but rather filling a space that real Americans have not yet utilized. Language such as this connects De Forest’s writing to an imperialist ideology that supports a hierarchy of civilizations within which the nations on the highest rung are called to pacify and raise the nations on the lowest.

De Forest’s target for most of his Orientalist and imperialist discourse is white, U.S.-Americans. Somewhat ironically, as Greeson observes, De Forest continually “reveals his

interest in white rather than black southerners as the key subjects of the conquering United States” and unhesitatingly applies “the African analogy to white—and indeed, white-supremacist—Confederates” (240). De Forest’s use of Orientalist and imperialist discourse against fellow white supremacists within his own country demonstrates, again, the flexibility and fluidity of these discourses. De Forest develops his Orientalist and imperialist discourse further in his fictional treatment of the Civil War, *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion*.

De Forest published *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion* in 1867, the same year as the first Reconstruction Acts. At first glance, the novel reads like a reunification plot that looks forward to a healed country after the war. The eponymous main character, Lillie Ravenel, is a passionate, Louisiana-loving, Confederate Southern belle who has relocated to New England with her father, Dr. Ravenel, shortly before the Civil War. The novel spans the period of the war, during which Lillie marries a Virginia-born Union officer, moves back to the South where she is no longer welcome, becomes a mother, loses her husband, returns to the North, and marries another, more truly Northern man who assumes the role of her child’s father. During this long process she grows to love the North and despise New Orleans. The symbolism is thinly veiled. Like other reconciliation literature of the period, bonds of family or love transcend sectional differences and lead the nation forward into a unified future. More specifically for *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion*, a resilient Northern man of virtuous character wins the war of attrition for a passionate Southern woman’s love and, together, they raise a child who represents the birth of a new, unified nation. Such a plot seems conciliatory to white U.S. Southerners, but De Forest’s most prominent theme is the idea that the South will only ever survive if they accept the guidance of modest, calm, sober, white, male, U.S. Northerners.

His most direct passages of Southern characterization come through the voice of Dr. Ravenel, a unionist who fled from Louisiana at the start of the war. In explaining why he left the South, Dr. Ravenel explains, “I had to take sides. Those unhappy Chinese allow no neutrals—nothing but themselves, the central flowery people, and outside barbarians. They have fed on the poor blacks until they can’t abide a man who isn’t a cannibal. He is a reproach to them, and they must make away with him” (14). Any unionist would likely have found it difficult to live in Louisiana during the Civil War. Also, the U.S. South—as well as all other parts of the United States—did “feed” on Black labor, metaphorically. Yet De Forest’s description of Southerners as “those unhappy Chinese” and, maybe less so, his metaphor of Southerners as cannibals demands interpretation. Why De Forest felt the need to bring Chinese people into this description is unexplainable aside from the fact that such a comparison places Southerners into a global hierarchy that De Forest and his readers would likely understand. Nor is this his only connection between the South and global others. Greeson observes that “in the first chapter alone, Dr. Ravenel informs readers that white southerners are ‘ill-informed as Hottentots’; ‘they are barbarians, and that all barbarians are obstinate and reckless’; that their war for secession is a ‘stupid, barbarous Ashantee rebellion’; and that, given the infallible civilizationist hierarchy, these ‘Ashantee secessionists’ are ‘doomed to perish by their own ignorance and madness’” (Greeson 240; see *Ravenel* 10). Greeson is correct that De Forest’s “denomination of Southerners as ‘Ashantees’ and ‘Hottentots’ . . . references both the colonial wars being prosecuted by Britain at the time he wrote and the racialist pseudoscience underwriting them” (240). These characterizations also place the U.S. South within a specifically Orientalist frame of reference, especially when combined with De Forest’s characterization of Southerners as “unhappy Chinese” (240). In other words, De Forest’s rhetoric was not only imperialist but also

specifically Orientalist. Such a recognition changes the way we understand the geographical spread of “the Orient” and the rhetorical uses of Orientalism. This reveals that Orientalism could possibly encompass within one group Chinese, Ashanti, Hottentots, and white U.S. Southerners.

The spread of De Forest’s “Orient” also includes a colonized group much closer to home. On the same page as his reference to the “unhappy Chinese,” “Ashantees” and “Hottentots,” Dr. Ravenel also explains to Captain Colburne:

You must understand that [Southerners] are barbarians, and that all barbarians are obstinate and reckless. They will hold out like the Florida Seminoles. They will resist like jackasses and heroes. They won't know any better. They will be an honor to the fortitude and a sarcasm on the intelligence of human nature. They will become an example in history of much that is great, and all that is foolish.

(10)

We should read this passage in relation to De Forest’s belief that Indigenous Americans were of Asian ancestry which I discuss earlier in Chapter Three. Such a belief was bolstered by Charles Pickering’s scientific text “proving” this belief true as well as common, popular comparisons between Florida Seminoles and the Bedouin of Turkey throughout the nation’s newspapers. With these other texts in mind, we might conclude that De Forest included white U.S. Southerners in the same group as Seminoles, Ashanti, Hottentots, Chinese, barbarians, and cannibals. His descriptions of Southerners and their actions throughout the text support such a conclusion as they include many of the most common characteristics of Orientalist and imperialist writing.

Dr. Ravenel alone is a seeming mine of imperialist discourse and could serve as a representative of the most passionate Northern imperial voices. He provides one memorable summation of Southern men as “whiskey-soaked, negro-whipping, man-slaughtering ruffians,

with a bottle of Louisiana rum in one hand and a cat-o'-nine-tails in the other, a revolver in one pocket and a bowie-knife in the other, drunken, swearing, gambling, depraved as Satan, with their black wives and mulatto children” (49). Although Ravenel may not directly voice De Forest’s personal beliefs, the fact that Ravenel is a Southerner only lends credibility to his statements and makes the Northern Colburne appear more magnanimous by comparison.

Dr. Ravenel is not the only Southern character that De Forest employs to portray the South as deserving of reprobation and possibly colonization, either. Colonel John Carter of the Union army, graduate of West Point and first love of Lillie Ravenel, is a Virginian by birth. In fact, “no family in Virginia boasted a purer strain of old colonial blue blood than the Carters” (22). In effect, Carter becomes a symbol for the best the South has to offer. Still, no amount of Northern influence can counteract his Southern blood. Carter operates a brothel in New Orleans, is often drunk, has an affair with Lillie’s aunt, Mrs. Larue, and repudiates Christianity in his final dying moments (120; 323; 351; 424). De Forest seems to suggest that even the best Southerners are still brutes no matter which side they fight for.

De Forest develops two Southern women characters in his novel to similar effect. The book is named for Lillie Ravenel, a sympathetic character whose best attribute is that she slowly becomes a unionist. Additionally, despite her strong words, she is passive and her character development is completely driven by the men around her. If De Forest created Lillie Ravenel to show that Southern women can meet an antiquated and sexist standard of female submissiveness, then he also apparently suggests that the only route to this goal is through control by Northern men. Lillie is a symbol and a tool in De Forest’s reconciliation plot, but she is little more.

He uses other Southern women to illustrate womanhood without Northern influence. Madame Larue, a name that almost literally translates to “lady of the street,” provides the novel’s

most salient example of Southern womanhood. She is “coquettish” and “unprincipled”; she has an ongoing affair with the heroine’s husband while visiting with the family each day; her loyalty depends on lucrativeness; and she uses the War to find men she can seduce into providing money-making opportunities (346; 404; 412). Most telling of Southern womanhood is a passage in which Larue and other women “discuss affairs political; metaphorically tying Beast Butler to a flaming stake and performing a scalp dance around it, making a drinking cup of his skull, quaffing from it refreshing draughts of Yankee blood” (131). Within one passage, De Forest simultaneously dismisses Southern politics and equates Southern womanhood to torture, brutality, and cannibalism. Of course, the image of using a skull as a drinking cup for Yankee blood calls back to the 1862 report from the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War that charged Confederate soldiers with cannibalistic acts.

These same characterizations are carried over into De Forest’s Reconstruction literature that he composed while acting as a district commander in the Freedman’s Bureau in South Carolina. Similar to *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion*, De Forest’s second novel set in the South, *Kate Beaumont* (1872), is meant to explain Southern society for a Northern audience. The plot is episodic. A similar intrusive narrator also repeatedly summarizes various aspects of Southern society with an ethnographic tone using the differentiating first-person pronoun “we” to represent an assumed Northern audience.

Kate Beaumont follows two young South Carolinians, a male and a female, who are returning from their studies in Europe; they have been gone so long that they can barely remember how to behave as South Carolinians. On the way back to Charleston, they meet on a boat, which happens to be the first steamship out of a Charleston port. The boat sinks because the Southern crew is drunk and incompetent. Everyone survives despite the drunken sailors’ stealing

the best lifeboats from the women and children. The two young people, Kate Beaumont and Frank McAlister, eventually fall in love, but they are prevented from expressing this love due to a major complication: their families have a feud and have been shooting each other for the past three generations. Thus, these children of the South, educated in Europe, come home to South Carolina to educate their families in matters of civility. In order to fulfill their love, they have to dismantle the Southern code of honor. After several duels and a few important deaths, the families eventually give up the feud and the two young adults are married.

The majority of the plot centers on what De Forest calls the “Chivalrous Southron,” or the elite demographic of Southern society. Despite gracing the Beaumonts and the McAlisters, the two wealthy families in the text, with the appearance of gentility, De Forest goes to great lengths to suggest that they are uncivilized savages. The book’s major theme is that dueling and the code duello has ruined Southern society, corrupted Southern politics, and hampered Southern development. The code duello, in the case of this novel, also prevents Southern love. The love story provides the main plot, but it is merely a pretext that De Forest uses to access and mock various aspects of Southern culture. A secondary but related theme in the text is that alcohol has also hindered the development of Southern civilization.

As the author explores these two themes through the love story of Kate Beaumont and Frank McAlister, he includes his characteristic authorial intrusions and his even more characteristic imperialist descriptions of U.S. Southerners. Most of the Southern characters are drinking constantly and several of them are almost always drunk; none of them seem to have jobs; the only marriage that readers actually encounter in the book is plagued with infidelity; the politics are corrupt and inept; the ground is teeming with natural resources that no one cares to harvest; and the entire conflict revolves around two families with a history of killing each other.

Thus, De Forest suggests that the upper class of Southern society is drunk, lazy, dishonest, improvident, wasteful, and violent. Each of these traits resurfaces multiple times throughout the text. Most importantly, the intrusive narrative voice consistently reminds the readers that these traits are simply part of Southern culture.

De Forest portrays Southerners—and this is a book about the best of the South, in the author’s opinion—as drunken animals on virtually every single page of the short novel. The word “whiskey” appears over thirty times; “liquor” nineteen; “brandy” ten; “wine” eight; “beer” three; “champagne” twice; and the word “drink” thirty-five times, each time referring to drinking alcohol. In fact, all of his characters drink alcohol; they drink neither water, coffee, nor tea. In total, De Forest includes at least one hundred and seven references to alcohol in a book that is only one hundred and sixty-five pages long.

The word “pugnacious” is used more than twenty times and the word “savage” more than thirty, but what stands out more is De Forest’s use of animal terms. De Forest uses the word “growl” to describe different characters’ speech twenty-nine times; “swing,” “prowl,” and “amble” to describe movement; “tiger” to describe Southern character or demeanor nine times; likewise, “lion” and “panther” four and two times, respectively; “monkey” is used five times; “fox,” “hyena,” “elephant,” and “baboon” are all used at least once. For example, Peyton Beaumont’s temperament is first described in such a way: “In fact, he had all sorts of a temper. It was as sublime as a tiger's and as ridiculous as a monkey's. His body was marked by the scars of duels and rencontres, and the life-blood of more than one human being was crusted on his soul” (37). When the drunken minor character, Brently Armitage, arrives to confront the Beaumont family about his missing wife, De Forest writes that he “merely stared at [Beaumont] with an indescribably stupid leer, not unlike the stolid, savage grin of an angry baboon” (132). Beaumont

is a tiger, the Beaumont sons are catamounts, Brentley is a baboon, Mrs. Chester is a chicken, Judge McAlister and Major Lawson are both elephants, and the Beaumont sisters flutter like birds. Baboons, elephants, hyenas, and jungle cats fill this text as if one were reading about a tropical jungle or savannah. These descriptions both create a Southern space that is wild and dangerous, connecting this Southern space to other colonized areas around the world. De Forest likely never encountered a baboon, elephant, or tiger, but he uses these animals as complex symbols with specific connotations. These animals, his readers might assume, are tropical and exotic; they live outside “the West”; they are untamable and have no place in civil society unless they are in cages for display.

One final feature of *Kate Beaumont* is worth noting because it links De Forest’s work with a larger tradition in Southern representation that I discuss later in this chapter in relation to Harriet Beecher Stowe. De Forest simultaneously characterizes the U.S. South through descriptions of architecture, specifically through the symbol of the plantation house. As William Gleason observes, by the mid-nineteenth century, “most American commentators understood built forms to have explicitly racial origins and connotations” (3). Gleason continues to note that “[m]any of the very earliest American builders’ guides, for example, dating from the late eighteenth century, included ‘Oriental’ home designs—where ‘Oriental’ could mean anything from Asian to East Indian to Middle Eastern—and even such imports as Italian and Gothic architecture were considered not merely national or regional styles but expressions of racial character” (3). Ideas of architecture were often explicitly intertwined with racial and geopolitical hierarchies and many U.S.-American architects, commentators, and fiction writers treated the outward appearance of a home as a direct representation of the character of those who lived inside that home.¹¹⁰ Moreover, Gleason notes that by the 1850s “representations of built space

had become indispensable features of the literature of slavery in both the North and the South, as each side deployed architectural imagery to buttress sectional claims” (54).

De Forest uses the symbol of the house to imply that the South lacks cultural and moral development. None of the Southern homes in *Kate Beaumont* are well-built and De Forest provides three extended descriptions. Of the McAlister mansion, he writes:

Speaking with severe truthfulness, and without regard to the proud illusions of Hartland District, it had no claim to be styled a mansion, except on account of its size alone. It was a plain, wide spreading mass of wood-work, in two stories, with plenty of veranda and more than enough square pillars, the white paint of the building itself rather rusty, and the green blinds not altogether free from fractures and palsy. (52)

The McAlister mansion is a mansion in name only. De Forest imagines it more as an amalgamation of various parts. It is a “mass of wood-work” rather than a home. The Armitage mansion, the ancestral home of another well-to-do Southern family in the text, is similar in these respects:

It was a strange-looking residence, which had obviously not been created all at once, but in successive parts, as the means of the owner increased, and without regard to aught but interior convenience. Two stories in height here and one story there, with one front facing the south and another the southwest, it appeared less like a single building than like an accidental collection of buildings. If three or four small dwellings should be swept away by a flood, and beached together without further disposition than that of the random waters, the inchoate result would resemble this singular mansion. (95)

Both homes suggest a lack of foresight, ability, and culture in the South. Architecture, for De Forest, is both an art and skill that is closely connected with the development of civilization.

As he does in his other depictions of negative aspects of Southern culture, De Forest eventually makes his symbolism explicit. Shortly after describing the Armitage “mansion,” De Forest includes a glimpse at the living situation of the “low-down whites” of Hartland. He only provides a brief cameo for a demographic that occupies so much space in his nonfiction Reconstruction text, *A Union Officer*, but the reader of both texts will quickly recognize the resemblances. De Forest creates a log cabin in the middle of an old field, “the clay fallen from its chinks, the boards on its roof warped and awry, its windows without glass, and closed by rude shutters, the chimney a ruinous, unshapely mass of stones and mud, the outer air free to enter at numberless crannies” (97). Right after this description, he writes, “The reader can guess at the kind of morality that adorned the household existence” (97). For De Forest, the structure of the home is a symbol for the morality of the people within that home. The low-down house is hardly a house and the people within it are drunk, animalistic, and staring “with vacant eyes and mouth” (98). The chivalrous Southrons of *Kate Beaumont* are like their mansions: civilized only in name, but far from it in practice. This society, from top to bottom, is too drunk, too pugnacious, too lazy, too ignorant, too animalistic, and too uncivilized to build a proper house.

De Forest’s fiction plays an important role in the imperial project of Reconstruction and represents what Adrian Fielder calls the “scriptural economy of imperialism” (Fielder 31). This describes the act “by which that irretrievable historical ‘real’ comes to be mythified as a comforting and self-justifying fiction” (31-2). In other words, imperialism involves the act of creating textual accounts, of narrativizing historical events, in order to exclude the narratives of the other and to construct a history that supports the imperial project. De Forest’s *Kate Beaumont*

epitomizes this process. The novel is essentially an extended narrative depiction of everything that De Forest discusses in his nonfiction travel journal, *A Union Officer*. The novel has long been considered De Forest's best work, and he himself stated later in his life, in an interview with the *New York Times*, that it was the best he had written (Gargano 61; Oviatt 856). He also states in this same interview that while writing *Kate Beaumont*, he "wrote from real life" (Oviatt 856). Even his harshest reviewers recognized his attempt and praised the "truthfulness" in his depictions of Southern society (Hagemann 72). Because he had crafted an identity as a realist, because he framed his writing as journalism and his novels as realistic fiction based on his journalism, and because editors, critics, and reviewers supported De Forest's claims, De Forest's depiction of the South had the power to displace other depictions.

De Forest became a trusted source on Southern life even though he had little claim to such a position.¹¹¹ He spent little time in the antebellum South and he spent little time there during and after the war, and yet readers have treated his historical fiction as anthropological literature. Finally, he bases his character descriptions in *Kate Beaumont* almost directly on his descriptions in *A Union Officer*, a text that is already a personal account of conversations and events that only De Forest can verify. This relationship between author and source is not necessarily problematic, but it becomes problematic when the author makes claims to realism that are obviously untenable and when critics fail to recognize the author's bias and lack of credentials. This highlights a key characteristic of Orientalist and imperialist discourse. In writing *Kate Beaumont*, De Forest taps into the Western "cultural repertoire" of "half-imagined, half-known" representations of the Oriental that the EuroAmerican imagination continuously invokes and builds upon (Said 63). With the transition from historical event to the nonfiction text

and then again to the “realist” fictional text, De Forest makes the historical “real” more and more inaccessible and irretrievable and establishes himself as the authority and mediator of reality.

Beyond his powers of literary representation, De Forest wielded considerable power in the U.S. South during Reconstruction. His writing is not separated from the lives of the people whom he describes in the way that Emerson’s or Lowell’s writing is. As a district commander in the Freedman’s Bureau, De Forest actually held real authority over the people of Greenville, South Carolina and the surrounding area for at least one year and he wrote numerous articles about the things he saw and the decisions he made during this period. His Orientalist-imperialist discourse had a tangible effect on the people living under his authority. The articles that he wrote during this period greatly inspired *Kate Beaumont* and were later collected in book form under the title *A Union Officer in the Reconstruction* (1948).

In this collection, De Forest dedicates ten loosely connected chapters to explaining either some aspect of his job as a Bureau officer or some aspect of Southern culture. Each chapter is subdivided into various vignettes that work to illustrate a broader generalization about Southern culture and the process of Reconstruction. Each subsection follows a similar plot: the author makes a generalization about Southern culture; he follows the generalization with a story that typifies this generalization in which a poor person usually begs for assistance; the author makes a decision that carries more weight than any local statutes; and then the author returns to the broader generalization and explains how it will affect the future of the Southern people.

De Forest devotes most of his book to explaining the various aspects of Southern culture, but in his attempt, he rehearses some of the most prominent motifs of Orientalist and imperialist literature. He depicts Southerners as lazy, improvident, stupid, and violent; he mocks Southern morality, education, and religion; he suggests inherent Northern superiority; he explains that the

South is full of natural resources to which the locals seem oblivious; and he explicitly urges Northern and European immigration in order to replace the locals and make better use of the land. All the while, he narrativizes the history and culture of the Southern people and posits himself as the expert on all things Southern.

Combined with his position as expert of Southern culture, De Forest also places himself at the top of the social hierarchy and begins his text in a distinctly Orientalist fashion. In the author's preface to *A Union Officer*, De Forest calls his post his "satrapy," thus connecting the U.S. South to ancient Persia and positing himself as the local ruler. Throughout the text, he acts as such. This dynamic is most evident in De Forest's descriptions of "draw days" and his distribution of Bureau rations. Beginning in the preface and continuing throughout, he notes that the most common feature of the South is its poverty. De Forest explains that in order to deal with "this mass of destitution," the Confederate government "had been forced to feed the families of its dead or unpaid soldiers." The locals began to call the first Monday of each month a "draw day" because that is when people were allowed to draw rations. De Forest continues to explain that "when the Union resumed dominion," the Southerners were accustomed to this practice and so the practice was revived under Union control after "the first shock of conquest" (54). De Forest takes it upon himself, though, to deny such a practice within his district in order to combat laziness and encourage independence. He does not have any orders to do so other than the advice of his predecessor and the support of one "respectable citizen" (58). His logic for canceling "draw days" demonstrates his views of the people:

Thus I remained in general principle, merciless toward the few for the good of the many, refusing to feed the suffering for I should encourage the lazy. If I had drawn rations for thirty old Negroes whose decrepitude could not be questioned,

three hundred other old Negroes, whose claims were almost equally good, would have presented themselves It would have been “lay down the shovel and the hoe,” shoulder the begging-bag, and “try to git.” To one who asked for corn because he was near starvation, three would demand it, “seein’ ‘twas a-gwine.” (60-1)

De Forest repeats such logic on multiple occasions and writes that he was “perseveringly pestered” as a result (67). His willingness to refuse aid to people that he readily admits are impoverished illustrates his devaluation of Southern humanity. As a leader within, and a representative of, the federal agency designed to provide aid and assistance to formerly enslaved people and refugees, De Forest devotes most of his journal to refusing to fulfill that duty based on his own personal judgements of character, judgements deeply informed by Orientalist and imperialist ideologies.

His racism toward Black Southerners is overt and carries imperialist overtones with implications of inherent global and racial hierarchies. When speaking of education for formerly enslaved people, he writes that he is impressed with their desire for education but concedes that he is “convinced that the Negro as he is, no matter how educated, is not the mental equal of the European” (117). Later, in a subsection titled “Prospects of the Race,” De Forest predicts that:

The low-down Negro will of course follow the low-down white into sure and deserved oblivion. His more virtuous and vital brother will struggle longer with the law of natural selection; and he may eventually hold a portion of this continent against the vigorous and terrible Caucasian race; that portion being probably those lowlands where the white can not [*sic*] or will not labor. . . . What better could be expected of a serf so lately manumitted? (131)

Here, De Forest rehearses theories of social Darwinism, connects geography to inherent racial potential, and compares and connects the poor white and poor Black Southerner to lower-class people around the world more generally.¹¹² This connection between low-down Negro and low-down white, as well as the seeming disconnect between the low-down white and the “terrible Caucasian race,” is significant because it demonstrates another instance in which the various discourses operating within this passage—Orientalist, imperialist, stadialist—can sometimes transcend racial ideologies.

Further evidence of this is found in De Forest’s sections regarding the “low-down whites” which are equally filled with Orientalist and imperialist discourse. Like the rest of his travel journal, his chapter on the “low-down people” provides generalizations about a demographic within Southern culture through a series of stories and conversations recounted by the narrator. One can easily discern De Forest’s opinion of Southern character by reading the section titles alone: “Morality,” “Drunkenness,” “Idleness and Improvidence,” “Beggary,” “Vagrancy,” “Social Degradation,” “Pugnacity,” “Ferocity,” “History of a Family,” and “Future Possibilities.” Each section focuses on a negative attribute and provides a generalization for poor Southern society. Over the course of these sections, he describes poor Southerners as incapable of “industry and forethought” (140). They are “mere squatters on the land of others, destitute of character to inspire respect, prostitutes, beggars, and perhaps thieves” (144). They are savage gamecocks, “indifferent to human life,” who “butcher” each other “in the exercise of their ordinary pugnacity” (147, 150, 152, 153). They are lawless parasites with an “aversion to regular work” and they are “miserably poor,” “ignorant,” “vicious,” “lazy” and “untamed” (156-7). In every description he employs the mark of the plural: the Southerner *is*; all Southerners *are*. The only positive break in De Forest’s descriptions is in the section titled “Drunkenness,” in which he

admits that drunkenness was uncommon among the poor whites. However, he explains that “they had no sentimental or moral objections to it.” Instead, “they were so lazy that they would rather go without liquor than work for it” (139). The most common representations of the Oriental or colonized subject are present in De Forest’s descriptions of the poor Southerner.

De Forest ends the chapter on the low-down people by pondering the future possibilities of the demographic. He recognizes that, with enough time and encouragement, “the low-downer may acquire settled habits, industry and civilization” but he asks, “Will the immigration from the North and from Europe, which must ere long descend upon the South, give him time? And when it reaches him, will it absorb and thus elevate him; or will it push him into wilds and fastnesses, there to die out like any other savage?” (158). De Forest imagines the colonization to come and recognizes that he is just the beginning, a reconnaissance mission for future economic development. The North, like Europe, descends upon southern spaces to civilize and cultivate. The Southerner is “like any other savage”: he either attempts to assimilate or dies out. For De Forest, the poor white Southerner, the cracker who “revered power like an Oriental and put his mouth in the dust before whomsoever represented it,” will surely fade away before the approach of Northern progress. This is an example of internal Orientalism like no other because De Forest, a white U.S.-American, is writing about other *white*—and as Greeson reminds us, “indeed, white supremacist”—U.S.-Americans. Orientalism, a discourse so often grounded in racist ideologies, was, at least at one specific moment in one specific context, employed by white supremacists against other white supremacists.

Stowe and the Southern Orient

To understand the frequency, development, and popularity of these Orientalist representations of the U.S. South, we might briefly reevaluate the work of Harriet Beecher Stowe. Stowe created what was likely the single most influential representation of the U.S. South in the nineteenth century with her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. She also had her own connections to the American Oriental Society and Orientalism in general. Her husband, Calvin Ellis Stowe, was a founding member of the AOS, so Stowe likely had access to *The Journal of the AOS* and likely knew the general happenings of the Society. Calvin did not publish in the *Journal of the AOS* himself, but he did independently publish books on Biblical history and, at least once, helped to translate sacred Hebrew poetry (see Haak 437, note 2). While Stowe herself was not part of the AOS—the Society did not have any women members until 1873 and seems to have had only two women members before 1900¹¹³—Stowe still had her own fascination with Orientalism.

As Holly Edwards points out, “armchair Orientalism” had become widely popular before the nineteenth century, especially through the reproduction and rapid consumption of *The Arabian Nights*.¹¹⁴ The stories were so popular and Stowe appreciated them so much that, later in her life, she included *The Arabian Nights* in her collection of *Library of Famous Fiction Embracing the Nine Standard Masterpieces of Imaginative Literature* (1873) (see Edwards 172).¹¹⁵ In her introduction to the volume, Stowe paints the picture of the New England child who used *The Arabian Nights* to escape the winds and snows of winter. When the child picked up the book, “[t]hen did time and place vanish,” as they “walked among genii and fairies, enchanted palaces, jeweled trees, and valleys of diamonds” and “became intimate friends with Sinbad the Sailor,” and “became adepts in the arts of enchanting and disenchanting” (“Introduction” viii). Stowe adds that “[w]e pity the child who has passed through the

impressible, believing age of childhood, and never had the full experience of these transports” (viii). Within her introduction, Stowe also praises the inclusion of William Beckford’s *Vathek*, which Stowe, citing a literary critic named only as North, describes as “the finest of Oriental romances, as ‘Lalla Rookh’ is the finest of Oriental poems” (x). Oddly enough, the “finest” pieces of Oriental literature, according to North and Stowe, were written by the English William Beckford and the Irish Thomas Moore. Stowe certainly knew about Orientalism and heartily endorsed the enjoyment of literature about “the Orient.”

Her Orientalism also influenced her characterizations of the U.S. South in her most famous text, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and these characterizations have gone on to influence most writing about the South since. In this novel, Stowe frequently uses descriptions of Southern homes, Southern nature, and Southern people to first define and isolate the U.S. South as a distinct location and then to separate the South from the U.S. North. One key aspect of this strategy is Stowe’s description of the plantation home. Schueller, in an endnote to her study of U.S. Orientalisms, looks to *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* to argue that “Oriental luxury as a trope for plantation splendor and benign slavery began to be well circulated [in the nineteenth century]” (221). Schueller observes that “[i]n *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, for instance, Harriet Beecher Stowe describes St. Clare’s plantation as follows: ‘Wide galleries ran all around the four sides, whose Moorish arches, slender pillars, and arabesque ornaments, carried the mind back, as in a dream, to the reign of oriental romance in Spain’” (Schueller 221; Stowe 158). Like Bayard Taylor in Chapter Two of this dissertation, when Stowe sees the South, or in this case *imagines* the South, she sees “the Orient.” Stowe describes the St. Clare house as an “ancient mansion . . . built in the Moorish fashion” (158). The courtyard “had evidently been arranged to gratify a picturesque and voluptuous ideality” (158). Not only does Stowe include phrases taken directly from Orientalist

discourse, but she also implies ideas of ancientness, other-worldliness, and sensuality, common features of “the Orient” within Orientalist discourse. While this is the only passage in the text in which Stowe uses the words “arabesque,” “Moorish,” or “Oriental,” the rest of this passage continues to separate the U.S. South from the U.S. North through the use of tropical imagery that connects the South to still other southern spaces around the globe.

St. Clare’s mansion is at once from ancient, Moorish Spain during the age of Oriental romance and simultaneously a tropical paradise. After Stowe describes the Moorish arches and the luxurious courtyard, she notes the presence of “[t]wo large orange-trees, now fragrant with blossoms” next to a circle of “marble vases of arabesque sculpture, containing the choicest flowering plants of the tropics” (158). Beside these are “pomegranate trees, with their glossy leaves and flame-colored flowers, dark-leaved Arabian jessamines, with their silvery stars, geraniums, luxuriant roses . . . golden jessamines, lemon-scented verbenum” alongside “here and there a mystic old aloe” (158). While each of these plants might possibly survive in New Orleans, the site of the St. Clare plantation, the use of these specific plants, combined with Stowe’s description of these plants as the “choicest flowering plants of the tropics,” transforms New Orleans into a generalized tropical location. Moreover, many readers would have been aware of common nineteenth-century beliefs in climatic determinism, or as Greeson explains, “the notion, imported from Europe, that warm climates not only produce coveted commodities but also cause the degeneration of the life forms that inhabit them” (6). Readers would have likely read these “choicest flowering plants of the tropics” and understood a range of cultural connotations of the U.S. South as tropical, lazy, and degenerate.

Stowe’s architectural descriptions have racialist overtones as well. As in the later writing of *De Forest*, most American architects and commentators “understood built forms to have

explicitly racial origins and connotations” and these architectural ideas made their way into popular culture and literature (Gleason 3). These ideas were so prevalent that readers of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* would likely have read the “Moorish arches” and “arabesque ornaments” on St. Clare’s house and would have made range of assumptions about the character of the inhabitants inside. Stowe uses the various structures present within U.S. South—from Uncle Tom’s cabin to St. Clare’s mansion—to deliver cultural critiques based on the connection between race and architecture. While Stowe is not the first writer to link the plantation house to the culture that surrounds it, *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is likely, as Gleason notes, “the catalytic text in this development” (54-5). Most pro-slavery responses to Stowe’s text even included, specifically, a “socio-architectural rebuttal of Stowe’s depictions” (55).¹¹⁶ We might thus understand Stowe’s descriptions of plantation houses in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as purposeful, rhetorical depictions of contested symbolic sites. Stowe uses these architectural descriptions to project cultural difference.

Aside from the St. Clare plantation, the other most prominent example of “Oriental” architecture is Stowe’s description of Simon Legree’s plantation home. Simon Legree is the final and, by far, most brutal slave holder of Uncle Tom, and his property matches his character. His house had a “ragged, forlorn appearance” as he had let it “go to utter decay” (324). It “was built in a manner common at the South But the place looked desolate and uncomfortable; some windows stopped up with boards, some with shattered panes, and shutters hanging by a single hinge,—all telling of coarse neglect and discomfort” (324). While the decrepit and decaying nature of the house suggests the decrepit and decaying nature of its inhabitants, and possibly of the entire region, the landscape around the house elicits a similar conclusion but with a minor Orientalist twist.

Describing the yard around the house, Stowe writes that the landscape that once was “smooth-shaven lawn . . . dotted here and there with ornamental shrubs, was now covered with frowsy tangled grass” and littered with trash and “slovenly remains.” She notes that “[h]ere and there, a mildewed jessamine or honeysuckle hung raggedly from some ornamental support” and that “here and there, some solitary exotic reared its forsaken head” (324). The repetitions of the word “ornamental” suggest a superfluousness that is often attributed, within Orientalist discourse, to Oriental architecture. The introduction of “some solitary exotic” alongside jessamine, a plant that Stowe earlier defines as tropical, suggests a tropical otherness to Legree’s plantation. Stowe adds to this in the next paragraph in which she writes that “the wagon rolled up a weedy gravel walk, under a noble avenue of China trees” (324). By choosing a chinaberry tree and by calling it a “China tree,” Stowe connects the landscape of Legree’s plantation to other places where chinaberry trees grow, namely Central America and Asia. Chinaberry trees and jessamine are not necessarily hallmark images of tropicality or of “the Orient,” and both plants are certainly capable of surviving in the southern United States, but we must recognize that Stowe thought of these plants as tropical and chose these plants specifically when other options were available for her fictional landscape.

Stowe’s reliance upon symbolic flora becomes more apparent in the reoccurrence of oranges in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. Oranges, orange blossoms, or orange trees appear twelve times in Stowe’s novel (16, 22, 143, 156-8, 212, 213, 218, 246, 277, 341). In all twelve instances, these oranges are merely parts of the scenery: one character happens to be eating an orange during a conversation, two characters happen to be walking under an orange tree, a basket of oranges happens to be sitting on a nearby table. Kathryn Cornell Dolan underscores the oranges’ symbolic importance in arguing that Stowe “pairs foods in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* in much the same

way as she doubles character names throughout the novel” (112). Stowe associates oranges with the South and peaches and apples with the North. Stowe only places apples, Dolan observes, in abolitionist spaces or, once, in relation to the pure and innocent Southern child, Eva (115). While Dolan argues that Stowe’s later writing after the Civil War employed regional food products such as oranges in an effort to “reunit[e] the South with the North culturally and economically in part through regional agriculture,” in *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, oranges only operate as a marker of tropicality and difference (see Dolan 103). In other words, when Stowe wants to build a representation of a place as uncivilized, decrepit, and morally backward, Orientalism provides her with a framework.

In characterizing the South through Orientalist discourse, Stowe actually fits into a long tradition, still alive today, that relates the southern United States to “southern” spaces globally for a range of rhetorical purposes. We might look, as Greeson does, to Crèvecoeur’s eighteenth-century comparison between Charlestown, South Carolina and “[t]he fertile plains of Asia, the rich low lands of Egypt and of Diarbeck, the fruitful fields bordering on the Tigris and the Euphrates, the extensive country of the East-Indies in all its separate districts” (qtd. in Greeson 27). We might look ahead to the twentieth century, as Harilaos Stecopoulos does, to W. E. B. Du Bois’s identification of the South for very different rhetorical purposes as “the straight path to Africa, the Indies, China, and the South Seas” (qtd. in Stecopoulos 79). While Crèvecoeur used such a comparison to position South Carolina within a dichotomy between a global North and a global South, Du Bois, Stecopoulos argues, sought to portray the U.S. South “as much a part of an insurgent tropical world as it is a part of a white supremacist nation” (87). Between Crèvecoeur and Du Bois, Stowe is but one of many U.S. writers who portrayed the U.S. South in such global terms, and, more specifically, who portrayed the U.S. South as an internal other, as a

“geographic mirror image with the mythical American national identity,” or as “a domestic site upon which the racialist, civilizing power of U.S. continental expansion and empire abroad may be rehearsed and projected” (Jansson 307; Greeson 4; see also Winders).

However, Orientalism directed toward the U.S.-American South is still different in many ways than Orientalism directed toward Chinese immigrants, Mexicans, or Indigenous Americans. While these types of representations likely fueled the angry political rhetoric of nineteenth-century Southern Democrats who decried the oppressive and tyrannical rule of a foreign power (the U.S. North), these specific representations informed but one of several rhetorical strategies that U.S.-Americans employed to describe the ever-changing sociopolitical landscape of the nation (See Blight 102). Moreover, as David W. Blight so thoroughly examines, by the 1880s, a culture of reconciliation had become the dominant mode of U.S.-American thought in relation to the U.S. South and a corresponding literature of reunion romance became the dominant mode of artistic expression: “The reality of war itself, much less its causes and consequences, remained hidden away in packaged sentiment. Real hatreds and real politics fell by the way, displaced in a flood of marriage metaphors that transformed them into romance” (217).¹¹⁷ One might add that notions of perceived cultural, climatic, and *racial* difference characterizing the regions fell by the way as the political parties of the nation reunited in the years after the American Civil War under the politically expedient ideologies of white supremacy (see Blight 135-9). In other words, although Orientalism toward the U.S. South certainly existed in the nineteenth-century and persists in various forms today, this ideology based in a specific, regional form of white supremacy has always faced competition from more general, national forms of white supremacy that have often served to unify the different regions of the nation against internal and external racialized Others.¹¹⁸

In a more general sense, this brand of what Jansson calls “internal Orientalism” did not have the full support of the scientific community and it, arguably, did not support the same sociopolitical actions as other types of Orientalism. Internal Orientalism projected onto the U.S. South had real, negative consequences for the people living there (wherever one assumes “there” to be), and it certainly supported the quasi-imperial structure of the military occupation and government restructuring that took place during Reconstruction, but scientists and historians did not theorize ancient links between U.S. Southerners and migrants from Asia. De Forest, Emerson, and Lowell were all members of the American Oriental Society, as was Stowe’s husband, but the *Journal of the AOS* never published any articles about language or culture in the U.S. South. The journal did publish numerous articles about the indigenous languages and cultures of North and Central America. Furthermore, and most important, these specific Orientalist representations—while they did support some truly horrible treatment of some people in localized situations—never supported the large-scale, government-sanctioned, systemic racism, exclusion, and genocide of white U.S. Southerners.

Still, the fact that Stowe, De Forest, Emerson, and Lowell all used Orientalist discourse to describe fellow white U.S.-Americans demonstrates that Orientalism is a discourse of alterity that operates across various sociocultural axes. The geographical aspects of this specific Orientalism were intranational. The racial aspects were confusing and, at times, illogical as Northern writers used Orientalism to racialize white U.S. Southerners or depict them as Other for cultural purposes. The numerous examples of this internal Orientalism presented in this chapter provided these writers with a useful foil, an unvirtuous, evil opposite, against which they could imagine and define the rest of the nation (see Jansson 297). Ultimately, these examples suggest that Orientalism, as with most discourses of alterity, is a socially and politically

expedient rhetorical device that might be deployed in any number of rhetorical situations in any number of real places regardless of race or location.

Conclusion | Horatio Hale and the Six Nations



“Chiefs of the Six Nations at Brantford, Canada, explaining their wampum belts to Horatio Hale September 14, 1871”

Image shows (Left to Right) Joseph Snow (Hahriron), Onondaga Chief; George H. M. Johnson (Deyonhehgon), Mohawk chief, Government interpreter and son of John Smoke Johnson; John Buck (Skanawatih), Onondaga chief, hereditary keeper of the wampum; John Smoke Johnson (Sakayenkwaraton), Mohawk chief, speaker of the council; Isaac Hill (Kawenenseronton), Onondaga chief, fire keeper; John Seneca Johnson (Kanonkeredawih), Seneca chief.

Photo by James Newbury Edy. <https://vitacollections.ca/sixnationsarchive/2688456/data?n=15>

The chapters of this dissertation thus far have established several facts that might encourage a revision of past studies of Orientalism and might also encourage new avenues of research for future studies of Orientalism. First, the study of Orientalism was a transnational practice. This fact in itself is nothing new, but if we recognize this fact within the U.S.-American context, then we should question Edward Said’s original separation between U.S. and European Orientalisms and we should, in turn, be more circumspect when adding nationalist adjectives before the term “Orientalism” altogether. Second, just as “the Occident” is a transnational

concept, so is “the Orient.” “The Orient” not only transcends nationality, but it exceeds and evades geography itself. It is defined, by Orientalists, more by subjective judgements of character rather than by any connection to any real place. Thus, “the Orient” might be found anywhere in the world. Third, Orientalism can—and often does—work in conjunction with racialized theories of alterity, but Orientalism can also operate in the absence of racial categories. EuroAmericans might Orientalize other EuroAmericans, sometimes within their own nation; Orientalized people might also Orientalize others. Overall, I hope this dissertation has revealed new ways in which Orientalism is multifaceted and complex, and I hope it encourages scholars to search for Orientalism in places where they may not expect to find it. This dissertation has not, thus far, offered any account of how these facets of Orientalism came to be questioned. To that end, the life of one AOS member reveals that even as Orientalism developed into a dominant ideological system that encompassed a literally global worldview, at least some of its adherents were able to question its premises.

Horatio Hale, whom I discuss in Chapter One, was nineteen years old and still a student at Harvard when John Pickering recommended him to the U.S. Exploring Expedition. Pickering and Peter Duponceau, two stalwarts in the field of philology who would go on to found the American Oriental Society, had been urging the Secretary of the Navy, Mahlon Dickerson, to include a philological department on board the expedition. In his letters to Dickerson, Pickering made appeals to national pride, spoke to the advancement of international sciences, and explained how the study of languages could foster rapid economic development and expansion for the United States. When Dickerson relented, he asked Pickering himself to take up the position, given that Pickering was one of the most respected philologists in the nation. Pickering, however, was growing old and had no desire to spend his elderly years at sea. “If it

were practicable,” he wrote to Dickerson, “nothing would give me greater satisfaction than to take a part in it,” but Pickering was simply unable to join the expedition (qtd. in Mackert 5).

Instead, Pickering wrote back shortly thereafter with a suggestion for a replacement:

His name is Horatio Hale, now of the University of Cambridge; and from the acquaintance I have had with him, I have formed high expectations of the results of his studies as they shall be extended and matured by experience, under the guidance of talents which have given him a high rank at the University. I beg leave, therefore, to recommend him to your notice on this occasion accordingly.

(qtd. in Mackert 6)

Hale soon joined the U.S. Exploring Expedition. In the lead-up, he exchanged numerous letters with Pickering, who loaned him books on grammars and vocabularies, and with Duponceau, who wrote the official instructions for the Expedition’s ethnographers and philologists. As mentioned in Chapter One, Hale used the Expedition to jumpstart his career, a career that would ultimately shape the history of ethnography and anthropology forever. He used the Expedition to write and publish *Ethnography and Philology*, a book that received international acclaim among scholars and was reviewed and reprinted, in part, within the journal of the American Ethnological Society (Fenton ix, see also Gallatin).

His role in the expedition would also have profoundly negative effects on the lives of Pacific Islanders and Indigenous North Americans. The Orientalist ideas he put forth in *Ethnography and Philology* justified U.S. imperial expansion throughout the Pacific and the Pacific Northwest and would be used to deny Indigenous land claims for another hundred years. As I discussed in Chapter One, Hale’s ethnographic work directly contributed to the slaughter of between fifty-seven and eighty-two Fijian people, the burning of three Fijian villages, and the

destruction of vast stretches of Fijian farm land. As the lead ethnographer on the Expedition, Hale's opinion that "the Feejeeans [*sic*] are by nature and inclination a bloodthirsty, treacherous, and rapacious people. Their evil qualities do not lie merely on the surface of the character, but have their roots deep in their moral organization" certainly shaped the way Naval Commander Charles Wilkes and his crew approached their dealings with the people of Fiji (50). Wilkes states in his own narrative that he had obtained sufficient knowledge of Fijian manners and customs to understand how to "succeed in overcoming them" and Horatio Hale was the most likely source for that information (Wilkes 280).

When the expedition reached the Pacific coast of North America, Hale wrote of the Indigenous people of Oregon that the "people of this division are among the ugliest of their race" and that the "intellectual and moral characteristics of these natives are not more pleasing than the physical" (198). "They are," he adds, "of moderate intelligence, coarse and dirty in their habits, indolent, deceitful, and passionate" (198). Of the people of northern California, Hale wrote that "they are the lowest in intellect of all the North American tribes, approaching the stupidity of the Australians" (199). Yet, comparatively, they are more susceptible to colonization: "The experiment, which was successfully tried, of collecting them, like a herd of cattle, into large enclosures called missions, and there setting them to work, would probably never have been undertaken with the Indians of Oregon,—and, if undertaken, would assuredly have failed" (199). Later, Hale remarks on the eventual failure of direct colonization. While "this plan, of confinement under constant superintendence, was the only one which could have been adopted for their improvement," it ultimately failed because their "natural disposition" was too much at odds with civilized life (223).

Hale goes on to describe multiple groups of Indigenous people of the Northwest, but his representations of these people are interchangeable, and they touch on virtually every aspect of Orientalist discourse. They are “excessively indolent and filthy, and, as a natural concomitant, base and depraved in character”; they are “prone to sensuality, and chastity among the women is unknown”; and “in bodily strength they are inferior to the whites” (203, 206). Any aid to these people, according to Hale, would ultimately prove futile, and soon these people would disappear. Their “rapid diminution will render nugatory the efforts of the American missionaries to improve their condition,” and “the progress of disease . . . and the influx of foreign population will soon supersede the necessity of any future labors for their benefit” (217). In short, Hale suggests that the people of the Pacific Islands and North America are so inferior and depraved that they will surely die off no matter how U.S.-Americans treat them. These were the published words of the foremost U.S.-American expert on the people of the Pacific Islands and the Pacific Northwest, written within a government-funded text as part of a congressionally sanctioned expedition of the U.S. Navy.

Yet, much later in life, something changed for Horatio Hale. Something changed so greatly in his mind and in his work that this man was enabled to become close friends with leaders of the Haudenosaunee, or the Iroquois Federation. Something changed for him that inspired him to speak out against his own past and against the whole field of ethnography. As seen in the photograph at the beginning of this conclusion, he sat with the people he had been writing about and listened to their stories. Horatio Hale, *finally*, listened to Indigenous voices.

Hale’s new way of thinking resulted in the creation of texts that were remarkably different from his earlier work. While these texts would still be unacceptable by today’s standards, and while these texts could never reverse the damage done by Hale’s *Ethnography*

and Philology, they still opened up new methodologies for research and demonstrated a divergence from the Orientalist logic of their day. Hale still operated within an Orientalist framework, but a new way of thinking enabled him to offer at least the foundation for a cogent challenge to Orientalism.

In 1856, almost twenty years after his involvement with the U.S. Exploring Expedition, Hale married Margaret Pugh and moved to her hometown of Clinton, Ontario where the Pugh family owned a large tract of land. He set up a law practice, attended to local affairs, and continued his ethnological and philological studies only part-time.¹¹⁹ Clinton also happened to be in close proximity to the Six Nations Reserve, a reserve for Indigenous Americans who had fled from the United States in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The reserve had a population of over 3,000 people of the Haudenosaunee, including, as one of Hale's biographers points out, "speakers of all the dialects of the six confederated Iroquoian tribes . . . besides speakers of Algonquian Delaware and one or two speakers of a strange language called 'Tutelo'" (xii). In fact, the Six Nations Reserve was home to what Hale would later consider the only surviving speaker of the Tutelo language, Nikonha (Fenton xii). Hale had virtually given up his ethnological work for over two decades and had even left most of his books in Philadelphia, but his proximity to the Reserve combined with a felicitous encounter in Canton revived Hale's interests and sparked a second phase in his career (see Gruber 12).

Sometime around 1870, Hale befriended a man named John Fraser, who would eventually become a chief of the Mohawk nation. Fraser introduced Hale to the people of the Six Nations Reserve and Hale, in turn, met numerous individuals who had preserved the history of their people and their languages. For Hale, the Six Nations Reserve obviously held a wealth of

valuable information, but this encounter was much different than earlier encounters with the Indigenous people of the western coast. First, Hale was only a part-time, independent scholar at this point in his life, rather than a scholar for the U.S. Navy. He also spent many years getting to know the people of the Six Nation's Reserve opposed to the few days he spent at each location during the U.S. Exploring Expedition. What was most different about Hale's experience in Canada was likely that Hale came to the Reserve as an invited guest and he acted like it. The work that evolved from these encounters was collaborative in a way that his earlier work certainly was not. Hale spent years hearing these peoples' histories and stories and it changed not only the content and form of his work but also his entire perspective on the study of culture. The most important of these collaborative encounters occurred in 1879, when the people of the Reserve introduced Hale to the *Iroquois Book of Rites* (xiii). This text and its history changed everything that Hale had previously thought about ethnography and philology. It sparked in him a drastic change in his scholarship and transformed him into an advocate for Indigenous literature.

Two years after learning of the *Iroquois Book of Rites*, Hale delivered a speech at the Cincinnati meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, titled "A Lawgiver of the Stone Age." Hale's speech, likely delivered to an audience of mostly white, U.S.-American ethnographers like himself, begins mostly as a challenge to what he calls the "development theory," or the prevailing notion within the scientific community that "primitive man . . . had a feeble and narrow intellect, which in the progress of civilization has been gradually strengthened and enlarged" (3). Contrary to this belief, Hale's central thesis is essentially that a race of people could have existed long ago that had a much greater mental capacity than any race of people that exist today, and further, that civilization and cultural

development does not necessarily correspond to mental, philosophical and political development. In other words, Hale seemingly pushed against late-nineteenth-century versions of the stadialist theory as a hierarchical ordering of civilizations in preference for the much earlier versions of the stadialist theory which recognized in each stage of civilization noteworthy and positive skills and traits that were absent in other “stages” (see Dekker 76-80). What sparked this change in thought, Hale informs the audience, was his introduction to the Book of Rites and the history of Hiawatha, the great Onondaga diplomat. Hale spends the remainder of his speech drawing from Indigenous histories to detail the life of Hiawatha and his efforts to unite the various nations of North America under a single representative democratic government. For Hale, Hiawatha’s political brilliance suggests that ethnographers should essentially rethink all of their foundational theories about “primitive man.”

As important, the history of Hiawatha and the literature recorded in the Book of Rites suggest that U.S.-Americans should rethink popular representations of Indigenous Americans. Of the Book of Rites, Hale argues,

It is a genuine Indian composition, and must be accepted as disclosing the true character of its authors. The result is remarkable enough. Instead of a race of rude and ferocious warriors, we find in this book a kindly and affectionate people, full of sympathy for their friends in distress, considerate to their women, tender to their children, anxious for peace, imbued with a profound reverence for their constitution and its authors. We become conscious of the fact that the aspect in which these Indians have presented themselves to the outside world has been in a large measure deceptive and factitious. The ferocity, craft, and cruelty, which have been deemed their leading traits, have been merely the natural

accompaniments of wars of self-preservation, and no more indicated their genuine character than the war-paint, plume, and tomahawk of the warrior displayed the customary guise in which he appeared among his own people. (19-20)

In other words, these people are actually the opposite of how Hale himself had previously described them. Moreover, he adds that “the sentiment of universal brotherhood, which directed their polity, has never been so fully developed in any branch of the Aryan race, unless it may be found incorporated in the religious quietism of Buddha and his followers” (20). Ultimately, Hale offers his fellow ethnographers a simple message: we’ve been terribly wrong this whole time.

These findings demand, in Hale’s mind, a revision of scientific thought. In a truly remarkable moment for a nineteenth-century Orientalist who initially built his career by creating racial and cultural hierarchies, Hale argues that those hierarchies should actually be reversed. “What we know of them,” he concludes, “entitles us to affirm that the makers of the earliest flint implements may have been equal, if not superior, in natural powers to the members of any existing race” (20). And he aims his critique directly at his audience of scholars in one scathing and memorable passage. He compares the contemporary study of ethnology to the study of astronomy during the time when people thought the earth was the center of the universe. Like astronomy before Copernicus, Hale argues that any theory of human development is equally flawed under any notion that the people of the Stone Age were lacking in knowledge and intelligence. He concludes with a message that remains true today: “we can hope for no complete and satisfying science of man and of human speech until our minds are disabused of those other delusions of self-esteem which would persuade us that the superior culture implies superior capacity, and that the particular race and language which we happen to claim as our own are the best of all races and languages” (20). Hale insightfully recognizes that the history of philology

and ethnography, the entire edifice of Orientalism, is built on a foundation of arrogance and “delusions of self-esteem.”

Hale’s work with the chiefs of the Six Nations Reserve culminated when he published a copy of the Iroquois Book of Rites in 1883, presented in Canienga and translated into English on alternating pages by Chief George H. M. Johnson. Hale also included ten chapters of introductory material which, at first glance, seem to fit the all-too-common Orientalist style, but which actually push against the most common Orientalist tropes found in ethnological texts of this type. In fact, the text itself serves as an important guide for culturally responsive anthropology and points toward promising strategies for challenging the imperialist-Orientalist representations that this dissertation examines. In recognizing the discrepancies that arise between Indigenous self-representations and “popular” imperialist-Orientalist representations, Hale directly challenges the very foundations of what Edward Said calls the “strategic formation” of Orientalist literature. In privileging Indigenous sources and in foregrounding Indigenous self-representations, Hale shifts what Stuart Hall calls the “relations of representation,” and begins to recognize and encourage what Scott Richard Lyons calls the “rhetorical sovereignty” of Indigenous people. Hale’s introductory chapters still bear traces of Orientalism but they simultaneously point toward a possible subversion to Orientalism primarily by challenging the process of representation and pushing toward what would later be called cultural relativism.

One prominent strategy in challenging negative representations is changing the source of representation. Stuart Hall, in discussing Black, anti-racist politics in Britain in the 1980s, identifies two principal objects for those who seek to change the “relations of representation”: first, black artists and cultural workers must gain access to the rights to self-representation; and,

second, these artist must facilitate “the *contestation* of the marginality, the stereotypical quality, and the fetishized nature of images of blacks, by the counterposition of a ‘positive’ black imagery” (164). Hale, writing one hundred years earlier, makes efforts toward these two goals—albeit in a different context and, we cannot forget, within a text created and edited by himself. Hale is still a white, U.S.-American scholar writing a book about Indigenous people, but he makes every effort to quote, cite, and privilege Indigenous voices while simultaneously challenging the validity of previous white, U.S.-American representations. His ultimate goal is to present to his white, EuroAmerican audience Indigenous literature and Indigenous political thought in its original form. He accomplishes this mostly through his reprinting of the Book of Rites in the Canienga language, but also in his own introductory chapters in the frequent moments where he renounces the assumed authority so common to the nineteenth-century ethnographer and attempts to *re-present* Indigenous voices rather than representing them himself.

His efforts to foreground Indigenous voices begin on the first page and persist throughout the text. For instance, Hale begins his introduction by describing migrations of five Indigenous nations spread across North America. He describes these nations as “the allied nations, members of the far-famed Kanonsionni, or League of United Households, who were destined to become for a time the most notable and powerful community among the native tribes of North America” (10). Of note here, and indicative of his study as a whole, is the way Hale frames his information and also where he draws his information from. In this description of the allied nations, he privileges Indigenous naming: the name “Kanonsionni” [typically spelled “Haudenosaunee” today] comes first and is then glossed with an appositive in English, “League of United Households.” He also closes this sentence with a footnote that points to an appended passage on Indigenous naming. There he writes that “some account should be given of the names, often

inappropriate and generally much corrupted, by which [the people of the Kanonsionni] were known by their white neighbors” (171). He begins with the name “Iroquois” by first casting aside the French explanation for the origin of the word and then explains the word’s origin by tracing similar words in the Huron and Iroquois language. He proceeds to do the same with each nation within the Haudenosaunee.

Hale continues to privilege Indigenous voices over white, EuroAmerican voices later in his introduction when he explains the history of the Haudenosaunee. In outlining one point on the timeline on which most scholars agree, Hale includes another footnote with several supportive citations. At the beginning of this list is “Cusick, *History of the Six Nations*, p. 16” referring to the Tuscarora historian David Cusick. Hale cites Cusick first, before the British historian, Cadwallader Colden, and before the U.S.-American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan. Hale also cites another Indigenous historian, Peter D. Clarke. These scholars exist, for Hale, on equal footing, and he frequently cites all four together throughout his work in the 1870s and 80s. For instance, in a later essay on the role of mythology in the retelling of Indigenous history, Hale points to these same scholars. He writes that “Colden and Morgan ascribe the expulsion of the Iroquois to the Adirondacks, a branch of the Algonkin race; but the native writers, Cusick and Clarke, *better informed* (though naturally uncertain in their chronology), describe particularly this beginning of the disastrous rupture and feud between the two great divisions of the Huron-Iroquois people” (“Above”¹⁸⁰; emphasis added). Here, Hale directly states that the Indigenous sources are better informed than EuroAmerican sources and he points readers toward Indigenous texts.

In a similar example related to naming, Hale allows for competing but equal naming of geographic features. In describing migrations of one part of the Haudenosaunee, he writes that

they “came to the Allegheny river,” but he notes that Cusick would describe it otherwise. He then precedes to defend Cusick’s description:

Cusick, however, does not know it by this name. He calls it the Ohio,—in his uncouth orthography and with a locative particle added, the Ouau-we-yo-ka,—which, he says, means ‘a principal stream, of the Mississippi.’ This statement, unintelligible as at the first glance it seems, is strictly accurate. The word Ohio undoubtedly signified, in the ancient Iroquois speech, as it still means in modern Tuscarora, not ‘beautiful river,’ but ‘great river.’ . . . In the view of the Iroquois, this ‘main stream’ commences with what we call the Allegheny river, continues in what we term the Ohio, and then flows on in what we style the Mississippi,—of which, their view, the upper Mississippi is merely an affluent. In Iroquois hydrography, the Ohio—the great river of the ancient Alligewi domain—is the central stream to which all the rivers of the West converge. (14)

Hale allows for competing but equal hydrographies based on linguistic perspective, and he understands Cusick’s *History of the Six Nations* as an authoritative historical document, which few of Hale’s U.S.-American counterparts had done. Furthermore, he puts the blame of misunderstanding on his EuroAmerican audience. One would recognize that Cusick is correct if one understood Cusick’s language.

As Hale’s multi-chapter introduction to the *Book of Rites* continues, he cites other Indigenous historians, affirms their credentials, and often adds that linguistic data from his own field supports their historical accuracy. He writes in a footnote that his “informants were the most experienced councillors, and especially the ‘wampum-keepers,’ the official annalists of their people,” and he provides brief footnotes on each annalist (19). This privileging of

Indigenous voices is indicative of the structure of the text as well. When readers finally encounter the “Ancient Rites of the Condoling Council,” they first encounter the text in the Canienga language before finding an English translation on each alternating page (see Figure 2). Even the English translation comes from an Indigenous source. Hale heard the original text from Chief J. S. Johnson in “modern Canienga speech.” Johnson’s son, Chief George H. M. Johnson, then translated the text into English for Hale (43). Rev. Isaac Bearfoot, “Ondondaga by birth, but a Canienga by adoption,” helped revise and edit the final text (44).

*Figure 2:
The first
page of the
Book of
Rites;
Canienga on
the left,
English on
the right.*

OKAYONDONGHSERA YONDENNASE.

OGHENTONH KARIGHWATEGHKWENH:

DEVUGHNYONKWARAKTA, RATIVATS.

1. Onenh weghniserade wakatyerenkowa desawenna-
wenrate ne kenteyurhoton. Desahahishonne donwen-
ghratstanyonne ne kentekaghronghwanyon. Tesatkagh-
toghserontye ronatennessendonghke yonkwankongh-
taghkwenne, konyennetaghkwen. Ne katykenh nayoy-
yaneratye ne sanikonra? Daghstakaghtoghseronne
ratiyanarenyon onkwagsotsherashonkenhha; neok det-
kanoron ne shekonh ayuyenkwaroghthake jiratighro-
tonghkwakwe. Ne katykenh nayuyaneratye ne sani-
konra desakaghsere-tonyonne?

2. Niyawehkowa katy nonwa onenh skennenji thisaya-
tirhehon. Onenh nonwa oghseronnih denighroghkwayen.
Hasekenh thiwakwekonh deyunnayatenyon nene kon-
nerhonyon, “Ie henskerighwaghtonte.” Kenyutnyonk-
waratonnyon, neony kenyotdakarahan, neony kenkonti-
faghsoton. Nedens aesayatyenenghdon, konyennedagh-
kwen, neony kenkaghnekonyon nedens aesayatyenengh-
don, konyennethaghkwen, neony kenwaseraketotanese
kentewagsatayenha kanonghsakdatye. Niyateweghnise-
rakeh yonkwakarony; onidatkon yaghdekakonghsonde
oghsonteraghkowa nedens aesayatyenenghdon, konyenne-
thaghkwen.

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ANCIENT RITES OF THE CONDOLING COUNCIL.

THE PRELIMINARY CEREMONY:

CALLED, “AT THE WOOD’S EDGE.”

1. Now¹ to-day I have been greatly startled by your
voice coming through the forest to this opening. You
have come with troubled mind through all obstacles.
You kept seeing the places where they met on whom
we depended, my offspring. How then can your mind
be at ease? You kept seeing the footmarks of our fore-
fathers; and all but perceptible is the smoke where they
used to smoke the pipe together. Can then your mind
be at ease when you are weeping on your way?

2. Great thanks now, therefore, that you have safely
arrived. Now, then, let us smoke the pipe together.
Because all around are hostile agencies which are each
thinking, “I will frustrate their purpose.” Here thorny
ways, and here falling trees, and here wild beasts lying
in ambush. Either by these you might have perished,
my offspring, or, here by floods you might have been
destroyed, my offspring, or by the uplifted hatchet in the
dark outside the house. Every day these are wasting us;
or deadly invisible disease might have destroyed you,
my offspring.

¹ The paragraphs are not numbered in the original text. The numbers
are prefixed in this work merely for convenience of reference.

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Citing and quoting non-white, non-Occidental people is not necessarily enough to challenge Orientalism on its own. Countless Orientalists quoted “Oriental” writers and even translated “Oriental” literature in ways that supported Orientalism and imperialism around the world. Sometimes this meant “knowing the Oriental” better in order to better control the “Orient,” or sometimes this meant appreciating the “ancient Orient” and, in turn, comparing it to the modern, debased “Orient,” or any other number of possibilities. Hale’s later work can and

should still be implicated in these processes, but Hale also does something different. Almost every time Hale cites an Indigenous source, he simultaneously contradicts and revises a white, EuroAmerican source. In doing so, Hale challenges the strategic formation of Orientalist literature, or the body of Orientalist knowledge that continually grows in reference to itself (*Orientalism* 20). Orientalism built and in fact depended upon what Said calls an “almost unconscious (and certainly an untouchable) positivity” and an “internal, repetitious consistency”: Occidental scholars citing other Occidental scholars (206, 222). We cannot escape the caveat that Hale packages his challenge to ethnography, broadly speaking, within an ethnographic genre, or that he puts his own name on the cover, or that he certainly writes for the purpose of expanding Occidental knowledge about a group of non-Occidental people, but his work still points toward other histories, other languages, and other ways of knowing and understanding the world. These frequent examples place the fissures within the strategic formation of Orientalist literature on full display.

In addition to privileging Indigenous historical texts, Hale also directly challenges EuroAmerican representations of Indigenous people and provides counter-representations. In his penultimate introductory chapter, titled “The Iroquois Policy,” Hale begins by directly countering “popular opinion” about Indigenous Americans. “Few popular notions,” he writes, “it may be affirmed, are so far from the truth as that which makes the Iroquois a band of treacherous and ferocious ravagers, whose career was marked everywhere with cruelty and devastation” (88). He immediately counters that “the clear and positive evidence of historical facts leads to a widely different conclusion” (88). Hale flips the comparative relations within the typical Orientalist binaries frequently when he describes Hiawatha and the people of the Haudenosaunee. For example, earlier, when Hale concludes his retelling of Hiawatha’s efforts to

create the Iroquois Confederacy, he writes in awe of the final product: “[Hiawatha’s] conceptions were beyond his time, *and beyond ours*; but their effect, within a limited sphere, was very great. For more than three centuries the bond which he devised held together the Iroquois nations in perfect amity” (32; emphasis added). He places the birthplace of a modern peaceful, democratic republic in the founding of the Haudenosaunee rather than in the founding of the United States and even suggests that Hiawatha’s sociopolitical theories were more advanced than any developed by present-day EuroAmericans.

He is more direct in the following paragraph when he adds that “the regard of the Englishmen for their Magna Charta and Bill of Rights, and that of Americans for their national Constitution, seem weak in comparison with the intense gratitude and reverence of the Five Nations for the ‘Great Peace’ [the *kayánerenh*, or the constitution of the Haudenosaunee]” (33-4). The sociopolitical ideals of the Haudenosaunee, according to Hale, are not only comparable to those of U.S.-Americans and British people but moreover superior to them, and the reverence that the Haudenosaunee people show for these ideals is even stronger. Hale then repeats his summary of Indigenous character from his speech “Lawgiver of the Stone Age” when he again writes that “instead of a race of rude and ferocious warriors, we find in this book a kindly and affectionate people, full of sympathy for their friends in distress, considerate to their women, tender to their children, anxious for peace, and imbued with a profound reverence for their constitution and its authors” (37). He provides no qualification and writes with neither irony nor sarcasm.

However, as Stuart Hall frequently reminds us, replacing negative representation with positive representation or even with self-representation does not necessarily make representations any better (see Hall 166). Representation is “politically and culturally

constructed” and as a result “the central issues of race always appear historically in articulation,” with other issues and concepts: race articulated to issues of class, or issues of gender (166). In order to disrupt any one negative representation, one must challenge the very notion of any category as somehow ontological or essential. Hale never pushes as far as far as Hall does, and he still leaves the validity of some essentialized categories unexamined, but he presents representation in his introductory chapters in a way that disrupts a simple oppositional dichotomy.

Hale includes one introductory chapter titled in classic ethnological fashion, “The Iroquois Character,” which seems to imply an essential Iroquois character. However, he begins this chapter by first subverting similar passages from other texts within this genre. Rather than beginning with sweeping, general observations, he begins by outlining “popular opinion” and puts forth a hypothesis on why this opinion has developed as it has:

The popular opinion of the Indian, and more especially of the Iroquois, who, as Mr. Parkman well observes, is an “Indian of the Indians,” represents him as a sanguinary, treacherous and vindictive being, somewhat cold in his affections, haughty and reserved toward his friends, merciless to his enemies, fond of strife, and averse to industry and the pursuits of peace. . . . The truth is that *the circumstances under which* the red and white races have encountered in North America have been such as necessarily to give rise to a wholly false impression in regard to the character of the aborigines. The European colonists, superior in civilization and in the arts of war, landed on the coast with the deliberate intention of taking possession of the country and displacing the natives. The Indians were at once thrown on the defensive. From the very beginning they fought, not merely

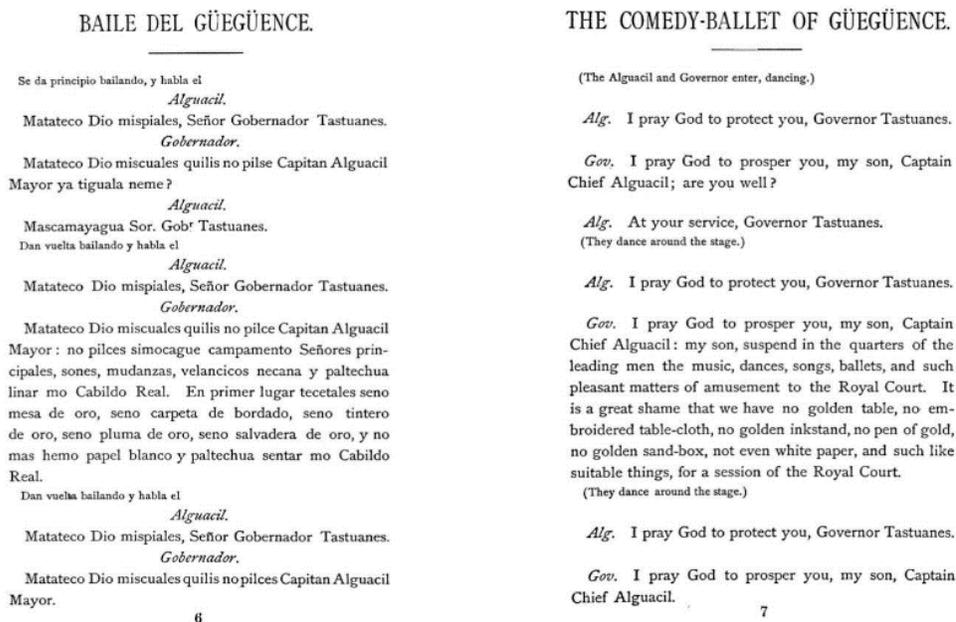
for their land, but for their lives; for it was from their land that they drew the means of living. All wars between the whites and the Indians, whatever the color or pretense on either side, have been on both sides wars of extermination. . . . It is not surprising that under such circumstances the character of each party has been presented to the other in the most forbidding light. (83-4)

While Hale does use the words “truth” and “false,” he does not directly argue that the “popular opinion of the Indian” is *incorrect*. Instead, he argues that historical circumstances have necessarily shaped representations of the Other on both sides of the dichotomy and, because of this, these representations are contingent and historically and politically constructed. Again, Hale does not push as far as Hall; he slips too easily into generalization from Iroquois to Indian; and he often reaffirms the categories of “Indian” and “whites”; but he still provides a cogent challenge to the very foundations of Orientalism. If Orientalism is dependent on a fundamental belief in the ontological difference between the Occidental and Oriental subject, Hale argues that representations of this difference are contextual and contingent and, therefore, never stable nor fixed. Hale never makes this argument directly, but his later work leads in that direction. More important, his frequent foregrounding of Indigenous voices and his work as a translator of Indigenous literature urged readers to consider alternate representations, and especially self-representations of Indigenous people.

This final aspect of Hale’s later work—the way he created space for Indigenous writing in Indigenous languages—is likely the most relevant to scholars today as it points toward real opportunities to subvert Orientalism. Hale originally published *The Iroquois Book for Rites* in conjunction with another scholar, Daniel G. Brinton, as part of an ongoing series titled *Brinton’s Library of Aboriginal American Literature*. The library consisted of eight volumes of Indigenous

literature from North and Central America printed in original languages and translated into English. The Library included a Mayan history, ancient Nahuatl poetry, legends of the Creek and Lenape people, a history of the Cakchiquels, and even a Nicaraguan ballet (see figure 3). Hale, and others, supported Brinton in the collection of materials and the translation of texts and Hale, of course, lent and edited his own volume of the Book of Rites for Brinton's Library. Combined with Hale's championing of Indigenous historians like Cusick and Clarke, and his promotion of Indigenous literature written in Indigenous languages, Hale's later work provides a significant challenge to the imperialist-Orientalist discourse of the time, not because of what Hale himself writes, but because it creates space—albeit within the already existent strategic formation of Orientalist literature—for what Scott Richard Lyons terms “rhetorical sovereignty.”

Figure 3:
The opening
page of
Baile Del
Güegüence.



Rhetorical sovereignty, according to Lyons, “is the inherent right and ability of *peoples* to determine their own communicative needs and desires in this pursuit, to decide for themselves

the goals, modes, styles, and languages of public discourse” (449-50). Lisa King glosses Lyon’s term more simply as “the right to claim self-representation” (46). This is no small issue either, especially in the years leading up to Brinton’s publication of *The Library of Aboriginal American Literature* in the 1880s. As Lyons recounts, the 1830s marked a drastic change in the way Indigenous people were written about and thus how they were treated politically. Lyons calls this “rhetorical imperialism” or “the ability of dominant powers to assert control of others by setting the terms of the debate” (452). Lyons implies what Hall argues directly, that these terms and representations are constitutive, that they create reality, that they are “definitional—that is, they *identify* the parties discussed by describing them in certain ways” (Lyons 452). U.S. legal and congressional documents starting in the 1830s and culminating in the Indian Appropriations Act of 1871 continually shifted EuroAmerican representations of Indigenous Americans in order to justify imperialist actions toward those peoples: “from ‘sovereign’ to ‘ward,’ from ‘nation’ to ‘tribe,’ and from ‘treaty’ to ‘agreement,’ the erosion of Indian national sovereignty can be credited in part to a rhetorically imperialist use of writing by white powers” (Lyons 453).

Lyons asks, “What do American Indians want from Writing?” The answer is simple: control of the terms by which they are represented, or at least “some say about the nature of their textual representations” (458). Such rhetorical sovereignty “requires above all the presence of an Indian voice, speaking or writing in an ongoing contest of colonization and setting at least some of the terms of the debate.” Lyons adds that, “ideally, the voice would often employ a Native language” (462). We should be clear, *Hale’s texts are not what Lyons asks for*, and we certainly should not place Hale’s work in the genre of Indigenous literature, but Hale’s texts at least demonstrate that Indigenous sovereignty exists and that alone is a divergence from most Orientalist texts of his time. He recognized that Indigenous people had their own languages,

literatures, and histories, and he used his final years to learn from these people and promote their work.

I am not suggesting that the nineteenth century would have benefited from more texts like those from Horatio Hale or that we need more texts like that today—i.e. anthologies of Indigenous literature edited by white men with ethnographic introductions. We need more anthologies of Indigenous literature written and edited by Indigenous people and we need them in classrooms. Hale's later work still bears traces of Orientalism. He still generalizes Indigenous Americans; he still, at times, maintains a very traditional Orientalist, authoritative, authorial position; and he sometimes qualifies his praise of Haudenosaunee people by saying that they are the best "among all *uncivilized* races" (88). Hale walks an odd tight rope at times. While he frequently questions EuroAmerican representations of Indigenous Americans and frequently compares favorably Indigenous character, government, and social thought with their EuroAmerican counterparts, he never fully challenges his foundation in a stadialist theory of social development. As already noted, he contends in his speech, "Lawgiver of the Stone Age," that higher order linguistic patterns exist and have existed in "uncivilized" societies. Yet, this information never encourages him to question his own categories of social development. Instead, he pushes for an ill-fitting equality across stadialist stages. Hale continually challenges the foundations of various binaries—us/them, civilized/uncivilized, Occident/Orient—but also eventually reaffirms these same binaries. He sometimes reinstates difference after debunking the evidence on which that difference is based.

Hale's later work also had a very limited effect on either government policy or popular perception toward Indigenous Americans in the U.S. or in Canada. As Said reminds us, even "new" or contradictory information about "the Orient" was still often presented as just that,

knowledge about the Orient, and it was still presented by an “expert” Orientalist (222-223). While Hale’s later work may challenge some of the foundational assumptions of Orientalism more broadly, he is still “the expert” in this situation. Scholars of anthropology, for instance, have since praised Hale for preserving the Book of Rites along with various languages of Indigenous people rather than praising the numerous Indigenous people who preserved their own languages and histories despite years of genocide and forced displacement. One of Hale’s biographers, William Fenton, earnestly writes that “[Hale] had the wit in 1870 to seek out ‘Ninkonha,’ the lone centurion surviving fullblood of the tribe, and rescue the vocabulary of the Tutelo language” (xii). Despite Hale’s active participation in the near extinction of these people and languages, Hale is still remembered as the “rescuer.” Moreover, some of the most heinous acts of legislation against Indigenous Americans in the United States and Canada were still yet to come when Hale published his later work.

The field of Orientalism was so great and so engrained in so many aspects of “Western” culture that any one scholar or any one text could hardly make any meaningful alteration to the discourse as it was (*Orientalism* 202). Said estimates that around 60,000 books were written about the “Near Orient” between 1800 and 1950 alone, which does not account for all the other books written about other “Oriental” spaces, including North America (204). More specifically to Hale, Hale had been largely forgotten by the field for twenty-five years. He was absent from scholarship for so long that the field of ethnology became the field of anthropology during his absence (see Gruber 12). He was an independent scholar in the 1870s and 80s, and his work was supported by neither the U.S. government—the Bureau of Ethnology rejected his request for funding—nor by any scholarly organization until after the publication of *The Book of Rites* (Fenton xvii). He was lucky enough to publish *The Book of Rites* with D. G. Brinton in Brinton’s

Library of Aboriginal American Literature, but this library gained only a limited readership. Hale earned several positive reviews within a few scholarly journals, but received little attention within the nation's newspapers, and the book did not receive a second edition until 1963 when, according to Fenton, the Iroquois "demanded" its reissue (xxv).

Hale's later work did not even have the power to disrupt his own earlier contributions to the field. As Jon Daehnke discusses in his book *Chinook Resilience*, the maps of the Pacific Northwest that Hale produced in his twenties continued to aid U.S. imperial agents as they made possible U.S.-American reconstructions of Indigenous identities in the region (100-2). Hale would never know that the violence he enacted through his ethnography and especially through his maps would continue to inform U.S. imperial policies well into the twentieth century. The Indian Claims Commission used his maps, and maps based on his work, to deny claims of "exclusive use and occupancy" to the Cowlitz people as late as 1969 (see Daehnke 103-5). In other words, Hale's later contributions were far too little and far too late.

Still, a man who created some of the vilest representations of Pacific Islanders and Indigenous Americans did suddenly become a champion of Indigenous literature. In identifying the catalyst of this change we might identify replicable strategies for dismantling Orientalism today. Hale's change did not happen because he began living near and among Indigenous Americans—many Orientalists lived near the people they studied—or because he simply read and listened to Indigenous voices—much of the field of Orientalism was dedicated to uncovering, translating, and reading "Oriental" texts. Horatio Hale did not necessarily change *what* he was reading, but he changed *how* he was reading. He began to recognize alternate histories and he began to view representation as socially, politically, historically, and culturally contingent. More important, Hale finally listened to Indigenous self-representations and reflected

on how these other, contradictory representations altered his understanding of his own field. He turned the anthropological gaze upon himself, if only for a few brief moments, and decided that the entire “Western” study of the “science of man” must be “disabused of those other delusions of self-esteem.” Hale’s later work made no significant impact on the plight of Indigenous Americans or on government policy or even on the field of Orientalism, but it does mark a significant change in the mind of a single individual, one brought about by critical reflection on the process of representation. It also created a spark of inspiration that one of Hale’s students would eventually develop.

In 1884, the British Committee for the Advancement of Science created a subcommittee to study the aboriginal tribes of Canada. Horatio Hale became a part of this subcommittee and he was quickly designated as the member who would design the course of study and carry out the field work (Gruber 23). Much to Hale’s disappointment he was never able to complete his duties. His age and health prevented him from ever beginning his studies and it became apparent that a replacement would have to be found. As John Pickering had done for the nineteen-year-old Hale, Hale suggested another up-and-coming scholar to undertake the work.

In December of 1887, Hale wrote a letter to a young Franz Boas (Zumwalt 174; Gruber 24). Boas had recently completed an ethnological expedition in the Arctic to great acclaim but was, at the time, in a desperate need of funding for further studies and a permanent research position. He readily accepted Hale’s offer and spent the next few years under Hale’s direct guidance and tutelage. As Gruber contends, “These years of involvement in the anthropology of the Northwest Coast were those upon which all the rest of [Boas’s] later work and thought were built” (31). Gruber attributes several characteristics of “Boasian anthropology” directly to Hale’s influence: “The emphasis upon native tradition as a source for the realization of prehistory and

the recovery of ethnographic data, the clear distinction between biological race and language with the assumption of the irrelevance of the former in matters of human behavior, the distrust of the concept of progressive evolution applied to man and a distaste for the qualitative distinctions between cultures to which it led” (18). For Gruber, these were all aspects of Hale’s work that deeply informed the work of Franz Boas. I would add that these were aspects specifically of Hale’s *later* work, aspects that were themselves developed mostly during Hale’s time with the Haudenosaunee. Of course, Boas is credited for creating the anthropological concept of cultural relativism and is also remembered as one of the leading opponents of scientific racism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Hale never realized the full implications of his later arguments about anthropological representation, and Boas still had some way to go, but in tracing a scholarly genealogy from Hale to Boas we might recognize that Orientalism always contained within itself the possibility of its own subversion.

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Notes

¹ Three hundred and sixty members to be exact, across four categories: 26 honorary members, or members who were not U.S. citizens; 273 corporate members, who were members living within the U.S.; 23 “members of the section for the historical study of religions”; and 38 corresponding members, who were U.S.-Americans living outside the U.S. (see “List of Members, 1899”).

² This certainly does not discount their work, though. Their work paved the way for my own and they likely missed this connection because the information was unavailable. It is quite possible that the *Journal of the AOS* was not digitized until after these scholars did their research, and thus, the membership rolls from the mid-nineteenth century may not have been readily available as they are now. Weir writes a wonderful chapter about Edward Morse, William Bigelow, Ernest Fenollosa, and Percival Lowell among other artists who lived in Japan and influenced U.S.-American Modernism. All four were members of the AOS. He writes another chapter on Ralph Waldo Emerson’s Orientalism; Emerson was also a member of the AOS. Schueller likewise overlooks Emerson’s membership along with Samuel Morton, George Gliddon, John William De Forest, Bayard Taylor, and James Russel Lowell.

³ The *Journal of the AOS* is digitized and available on JSTOR from its earliest volumes up until the early 2000s. The AOS and its journal is still active today.

⁴ Historians debate exactly why Pickering was impeached. He apparently suffered from mental illness along with severe alcoholism. Both contributed to various profanities while on the bench, but Pickering also happened to be aligned with the Federalist Party under a Jefferson administration that was actively attempting to undermine the judiciary branch of government by removing as many Federalist judges as possible. See Lynn Turner’s article, “The Impeachment

of John Pickering,” and Charles Geyh’s chapter, “The Decline and Fall of Impeachment as a Means to Control Judicial Decision Making.”

⁵ This is one moment when one might question the ethics and motives behind something as seemingly innocuous as linguistics. To anyone who studies imperialism, the connection between linguistics and religious conversion will readily appear to be just one aspect of cultural conversion and, eventually, domination. As we will see later in this chapter, linguists played a prominent role in the success of U.S. Naval expeditions of the period.

⁶ That is not to say that these various theories were few. As one will find in the *Journal of the AOS* and as Pickering speaks to in his address, many linguists attempted to trace the history of civilization through linguistic similarities. As one will see in the writing of John William De Forest, which I analyze in Chapter Three, many others created wild genealogical theories based on subjective observations of character or physical appearance. De Forest, for instance, in his novel *Overland*, repeats a theory that the Hopi Indians were descendants from the Welsh primarily because of their physical features.

⁷ The mobility of the “Orient” is something I analyze further in Chapter Two as I look to John Pickering’s nephew, Charles Pickering, and his ethnological text *The Races of Man: and their Geographical Distribution* (1848). Charles Pickering used his time as part of the 1838 U.S. Exploring Expedition under the U.S. Navy to compile “data” that would help him “trace” ancient migrations from Asia across the world. He ultimately argues that Indigenous Americans, Mexicans, and most Central and South Americans originally migrated to North and South American from Asia. His “evidence” for these arguments is a hodge-podge of linguistic and literary comparisons and mostly subjective, personal observations of facial features. He bases some of his theories on U.S.-American paintings of Indigenous Americans. Most interesting is

the fact that the term “Oriental” only appears in *Races of Man* halfway through the book and only after the white European is suddenly introduced.

⁸ Following Malini Johar Schueller, I use the term “EuroAmerican” to refer to people who identify culturally and racially as of “European” ancestry and who simultaneously hold positions of dominance or power within European or U.S.-American societies. Synonymous terms might be “Western” or “white.” However, “Western” and “white,” in my opinion, have been so commonly used that their nature as strategically constructed signifiers is often left unquestioned. The term “EuroAmerican” points toward a transnational, transatlantic identity constructed in the way that “Western” operates and also points toward a racially exclusionary identity in the way that “white” operates. At any rate, we should assume this category to be strategically constructed, always in flux, and always troubled, and I hope that readers will always assume implied quotation marks around this and most other identity categories described within this work.

⁹ Said does not seem to have read Pickering’s actual first address. When he references the address he cites Nathaniel Schmidt’s 1923 article, “Early Oriental Studies in Europe and the Work of the American Oriental Society, 1842-1922” from the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, volume 43 (see *Orientalism* 372, note 109). Said may not have had access to the first volume of the *Journal of the AOS*. If he had read Pickering’s actual speech, his reading of Orientalism in the U.S. may have been much different.

¹⁰ One can find Edward Robinson’s certificate of membership for the American Oriental Society from September 4, 1842 in the Edward Robinson Collection of the Hamilton College Library Digital Collections.

¹¹ Woolsey published frequently on topics ranging from Greek literature and philosophy to divorce and divorce legislation, to the study of international law, to communism and socialism, and to general life tips for young men (“Woolsey” 610-11). The biographers of *Appletons’* write that “his opinions are regarded as of great weight on questions of international law” (610).

¹² After Everett’s denial, President Tyler appointed Caleb Cushing, another member of the AOS whom I discuss later in this section. The appointments of both Everett and Cushing were not without controversy. These specific appointments were wrapped up in a heated legal battle between President Tyler and Congress who had previously made a law stating that no one would be appointed as Minister to China without approval from the Senate. The Senate had already rejected Cushing as the Secretary of State earlier in 1843, and some viewed Cushing’s appointment to China as a conciliation prize from a political ally.

¹³ Another future president of Harvard, Charles William Eliot joined the membership roster in 1860, as did the first president of Johns Hopkins University, Daniel Coit Gilman. Just underneath Eliot’s name is one Ralph W. Emerson of Concord, Massachusetts. See “List of Members, May, 1860” in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 6: 608. See also Sinha’s discussion of Eliot and Gilman as transnational scholars and “pioneering figures in the development of the modern American university system” (81).

¹⁴ See Cushing’s 1838 speech to the U.S. House of Representatives titled “The Continuation of the Cumberland Road” in which he rejoices in “the spectacle of the Anglo-American stock extending itself” and displays a general genocidal desire to replace the “roaming savages of the far West.”

¹⁵ Schueller discusses Morton and Gliddon in depth in *Cultures of U.S. Imperialisms* and suggests that “Gliddon’s career illustrates the convergence of diplomacy, Egyptology, and

scientific racism in the nineteenth century” (36). Schueller does not note that Morton and Gliddon were members of the AOS.

¹⁶ Another example is that of Dwight Foster. In 1864, when the U.S. Senate was considering funding an expedition to Eastern Asia, Dwight Foster of the American Oriental Society “presented a memorial” in favor of the expedition which was then referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations (“Proceedings of Congress”). Foster was also the Massachusetts Attorney General at the time. He would later serve as a justice on the Massachusetts Supreme Court.

¹⁷ The other being Charles Pickering, the nephew of John Pickering and future Director of the AOS. I discuss Charles Pickering at greater length in Chapter Two.

¹⁸ William Weeks puts the number at eighty-two (75). Within Wilkes’s *Narrative*, a Fijian leader tells Wilkes that fifty-seven warriors were killed during battle but Wilkes is unsure if the chief includes twenty-five that were killed during a sea battle on the other side of the island.

¹⁹ Early in *Ethnography and Philology*, Hale includes a footnote that decries the common practice of generalization among Orientalists. He writes,

Nothing is more common in the writings of many voyagers than such phrases as the following:—“These natives, like all savages, are cruel and treacherous;”—“The levity and fickleness of the savage character;”—“The tendency to superstition, which is found among all uncivilized tribes;”—“The parental affections which warm the most savage heart,” &c. These expressions are evidently founded on a loose idea that a certain sameness of character prevails among barbarous races, and especially that some passions and feelings are found

strongly developed in all. A little consideration will show that this view must be erroneous. (4)

If the footnote had stopped here—it does not—Hale would anticipate the arguments of numerous anti-imperialist thinkers, as he contradicts a central feature of imperialist/Orientalist discourse, what Albert Memmi names in *The Colonizer and the Colonized* as the “mark of the plural.”

Memmi explains that the colonizer depersonalizes the colonized and characterizes them never as an individual but as part of an “anonymous collectivity” (85). Edward Said describes this same feature when he writes about the common “strategic location”—or authorial position—within imperialist/Orientalist literature that can often be consolidated in the generalizing copula *is*—the Oriental *is*, all Orientals *are* (*Orientalism* 72).

However, Hale’s footnote continues in a way that ultimately but oddly redeems the separation of the world into two parts. After he denounces statements that suggest a uniformity among “barbarous races,” he adds,

It is civilization which produces uniformity. The yellow and black races of the Pacific, inhabiting contiguous islands, differ more widely from each other than do any two nations of Europe. The points of resemblance between the negroes of Africa and the Indians of America, even under the same latitudes, are very few. In delineating the characters of the different races of the Pacific, an attempt will be made, by contrasting them with one another, to show more clearly the distinguishing characteristics of each. (4)

Here, Hale explains that “it is *civilization* which produces uniformity” (4). Thus, the nations of Europe and, implicitly, any other nation that fits into his category of “civilized society” are all relatively similar. Hale allows for much more diversity among “barbarous” nations, but he

implies, and his reader would probably assume, that all the savage societies within his study fall short of “civilized” expectations.

Further study of Hale should also look to his later works in which he helped to collect the literature of Indigenous Americans and published some of this literature in a series titled *Brinton’s Library of Aboriginal American Literature*. One should especially look at Hale’s edition of *The Iroquois Book of Rites*, published in 1883 by D. G. Brinton. Like his note in relation to Polynesian character in *Ethnography and Philology*, Hale speaks directly to discursive practices in respect to Indigenous Americans, but here Hale provides a more comprehensive and quasi-anti-imperialist explanation:

The popular opinion of the Indian, and more especially of the Iroquois, who, as Mr. Parkman well observes, is an “Indian of the Indians,” represents him as a sanguinary, treacherous and vindictive being, somewhat cold in his affections, haughty and reserved toward his friends, merciless to his enemies, fond of strife, and averse to industry and the pursuits of peace. Some magnanimous traits are occasionally allowed to him; and poetry and romance have sometimes thrown a glamour about his character, which popular opinion, not without reason, energetically repudiates and resents. The Truth is that the circumstances under which the red and white races have encountered in North America have been such as necessarily to give rise to a wholly false impression in regard to the character of the aborigines. The European colonists, superior in civilization and in the arts of war, landed on the coast with the deliberate intention of taking possession of the country and displacing the natives. The Indians were at once thrown on the defensive. From the very beginning they fought, not merely for their land, but for

their lives; for it was from their land that they drew the means of living. All wars between the whites and the Indians, whatever the color or pretense on either side, have been on both sides wars of extermination. . . . It is not surprising that under such circumstances the character of each party has been presented to the other in the most forbidding light. (83-4).

This is not to say that Hale was an anti-imperialist, but rather that he seemed to be cognizant of both his genre and his sociopolitical situation in a way that is somewhat unusual for many imperialist writers.

²⁰ Lynch donated a copy of this extended report to the Library of the AOS sometime between 1851 and 1852 (See “Additions . . . March 1851-April 1852”). He also sent a letter to the President of the AOS while on his Expedition. The President at the time, Edward Robinson, read this letter from Captain Lynch at an AOS meeting on October 19, 1848 (see “Proceedings of the American Oriental Society, 1851”).

²¹ Gilman was the first president of Johns Hopkins University. See Sinha’s article, “Orienting America” for more about how Gilman and other members of the AOS brought Sanskrit studies into U.S. universities and paved the way for professional Orientalism within the U.S.

²² Bryant sent the first letter, listed as letter #1114 by Voss, on October 31, 1859. He presumably sent the same message each year, but Voss only discovered three others on October 18, 1866; May 17, 1869; and May 16, 1870 (*Letters*, Volume V 122, 318, 372). Bryant was last on the AOS membership roll in 1869, but the AOS did not print another membership list until 1878, the year of Bryant’s death.

²³ Muller devotes a chapter to Bryant's travels in the "Orient" in his *William Cullen Bryant: Author of America*, but he does not mention the American Oriental Society.

²⁴ Henry DeForest is the brother of John William DeForest, the U.S. novelist known mostly for his realism and for his coining of the phrase "The Great American Novel." John was also a member of the AOS. I discuss John's work in length in Chapter Three.

²⁵ Incidentally, while visiting Dr. King in Greece, Bryant met another member of the AOS, professor Asahel C. Kendrick. He does not mention Kendrick in *Letters* but does mention Kendrick in a letter to his wife on April 24, 1854 (see letter 831, *The Letters*, Volume III 285).

²⁶ Bryant paraphrases from Edward William Lane's *Description of Egypt*. Lane writes in a paragraph that various pests are "extremely numerous in Egypt" and that "the lice are not always to be avoided even by the most cleanly persons; but they do not attach themselves to the hair or skin; being generally found on the clothes; and are therefore easily removed as soon as their piercing bit is felt" (43).

²⁷ Bryant uses the copula *is* in three instances. He writes that "the Mussulman is tender of the lives of animals"; he writes that "it is a mistake to speak of the Oriental as grave, solemn, and quiet; the Egyptian, at least, is the liveliest and noisiest of slaves"; and he writes, in a section titled "Arab Women," that "in an Arab household, it is the goodwife whose business it is to provide the fuel" (72, 116, 146).

²⁸ Bryant does still include headings within his chapters such as "Character of the Bedouins" (83). The author still certainly aims at comprehensiveness and certainly falls into the usual authorial position of the Orientalist travel writer. However, more common are subheadings like "Bustle in the Roads" that only point to isolated events that happened while Bryant was traveling (48).

²⁹ Voss shares an interesting anecdote about Bryant's return from his eastern voyage in his collection of Bryant's personal letters. According to Voss, Bryant stepped ashore in New York in 1853 with a six-month old beard and tanned face, wearing a Turkish turban and gown and speaking "broken English" (*The Letters*, Volume IV 309). Muller also closes Chapter 12 of his text with the anecdote. According to Bryant's journals and letters, he enjoyed playing this trick on multiple neighbors.

³⁰ In reflecting on the leader of the Turkish empire, Bryant writes,

The different parts of the Turkish empire are now held together by the pressure applied to them from without. There are many who think it better that this should be so, than that its different provinces should be distributed among the powers of Christendom. For the interests of religious liberty it is most certainly better. The Mussulman government interferes less with the liberty of public worship than most of the governments of Christian empires. To what degree civil and political liberty may yet be developed from amidst the elements now in effervescence in the Turkish empire, I will not undertake to conjecture, but I would as soon take my chance of freedom in Turkey as in most of the countries east of the British Channel. (214)

This is not necessarily an anti-imperialist argument, but it is actually more of an argument for a kind of indirect imperialism in which the U.S. excelled during the nineteenth and twentieth century, and still does today. "Pressure" from without; "freedom" within.

³¹ One will likely find it somewhat shocking that Bryant publishes this message of national unity through global expansion at the height of the American Civil War. Part of the poem does

discuss wartime, but it speaks of nations being destroyed by war and only realizing the destruction after its completion.

³² Amy Kaplan similarly notes, although not in relation to Orientalism, that “United States continental expansion is often treated as an entirely separate phenomenon from European colonialism of the nineteenth century, rather than as an interrelated form of imperial expansion” (17).

³³ Weir himself recognizes that the *Journal of the AOS* included articles about Indigenous American and Alaskan languages and theorized a possible explanation: “How Alaskan and other Native American languages qualify as Oriental is not clear, unless 'Oriental' is understood to mean something like 'unconverted.' That meaning would seem to cover people on the eastern coast of Africa as well” (77). As I demonstrate in Chapters Two and Three, nineteenth-century Orientalists and ethnographers believed Indigenous Americans to have descended from Asians.

³⁴ Mishka Sinha, in her chapter “Orienting America: Sanskrit and Modern Scholarship in the United States, 1836-94” from *Debating Orientalism*, also observes that “American Orientalism, in an academic sense, began more than a century before the Second World War” (74). She writes that “Orientalism in America existed as a scholarly subject and a rudimentary disciplinary formation, as well as a means of organizing ideas, from as early as the 1830s” and, similar to my own argument, she recognizes that scholars have paid little attention to these practices.

³⁵ While thinking of the diffusion of Orientalism into multiple business endeavors within the U.S., we might also think of Edward Said’s explanation that Orientalism is “a *distribution* of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philological texts; it is an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is

made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also a whole series of interests which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains . . . It is, above all, a discourse” (*Orientalism* 12). If we can establish the point at which Orientalism reaches this moment of “distribution” within a culture, then we must conclude that such a culture has reached the moment when professional Orientalism—however we define the term—is not only possible but already prevalent.

³⁶ This is one part of Said’s dismissal of U.S. Orientalism that scholars have yet to grapple with. Certainly, scholars like William Weeks, William Appleman Williams, and Amy Kaplan have challenged what Kaplan calls the “central geographic bifurcation between continental expansion and overseas empire, and the related, yet not identical, division between territorial annexation and reterritorialized forms of global domination” within the study of U.S. imperialism (*Anarchy* 17). These scholars are correct that continental expansion across North America is inseparable from conquests into the Pacific and throughout the world. Few would argue against an understanding of U.S. westward expansion as a manifestation of U.S. imperialism, and most would readily grant an articulation between nineteenth-century EuroAmerican imperialisms and EuroAmerican Orientalism, but we have yet to recognize a connection between U.S. continental imperialism and U.S. Orientalism.

³⁷ “Jealousy and aversion” is putting it far too lightly. Not long after Bryant’s preface, on October 21, 1871, following a string of unfortunate events—clashes between two rival groups of immigrants, intervention by police, and the death of a young man named Robert Thompson—a mob of 500 Californians hanged fifteen Chinese immigrants and burned most of a Chinese immigrant neighborhood in Los Angeles. Bryant’s newspaper covered the story in numerous

articles throughout October and November. One article is of particular interest. At the end of a reprinting from the Associated Press on October 25, the editors of the *Evening Post* add a final paragraph of commentary that mentions a poem by Bret Harte titled “Plain Language from Truthful James” but commonly referred to as “the Heathen Chinee” (see “Terrible Riot in California”). I discuss this poem in greater detail in Chapter Three, but this article demonstrates both the poem’s popularity and the extent of the “jealousy and aversion” the white U.S. public felt toward Chinese immigrants. The *Evening Post* certainly writes in opposition to the riot in Los Angeles, but at the same time, they can allude to a xenophobic and racist poem like Harte’s and assume that their readers know what they are referring to.

³⁸ Chinese immigration had been on the mind of the U.S. public for a long time before Bryant’s preface. One specific topic that occurs frequently within the pages of Bryant’s *Evening Post* is the use of Chinese indentured labor as a replacement for slave labor. This was already occurring in Cuba, and Cuba was frequently on the mind of U.S.-Americans throughout the nineteenth century as one possible location for U.S. expansion. Two articles from 1852 capture much of the conversation. In one, “A Southern View of Cuban Annexation,” the editors at the *Post* review an article from the *Charleston Mercury* in which the writer summarizes the changing stance on Cuban annexation in the southern states. The author from the *Mercury* argues that the U.S. should no longer consider annexation for several reasons, but mainly because it would not be admitted as a slave state. The commentary from the *Post* suggests that this was a topic for repeated public and political debate. A second article published a day earlier is titled “Chinese in Cuba: Extract from a Private Letter from Cuba.” The *Post* does not reveal who wrote the letter or to whom it was addressed. In the letter, the writer expresses their extreme aversion to the African slaves in Cuba with their “wild, uncivilized look” and “teeth filed like those of a saw” (2). The

writer continues to state that they have “strong hopes” that “the Chinese emigration may act as a check upon this infernal business [slavery].” The writer describes the business arrangements for acquiring Chinese labor and then states, “Perhaps Providence may make use of the surplus population to drive out the curse of slavery from among us. Who knows where the Chinamen will appear next, now that the whole world is becoming as one country?” Due to the frequency of stories about Chinese labor in Cuba within the pages of the *Evening Post*, it seems that the editors of the *Post* at least considered that the place “where the Chinamen will appear next” might be the southern U.S.

³⁹ With these texts in mind, combined with Bryant’s involvement with the AOS, we might rethink Bryant’s oeuvre. For example, we might read Bryant’s poem “The Ages”—a poem that traces the development of human civilization from Asia, to Greece, to Rome, through Europe, and then to its ultimate perfection in the U.S.—juxtaposed to Schueller’s argument that at the heart of U.S. Orientalism was the belief that civilization began in the East, progressed to the West, and has reached its culmination in the U.S. and, further, that this belief has justified U.S. cultural and economic expansion since the period of the founding fathers and well into the nineteenth century (28).

⁴⁰ Willis’s report, sadly, eerily resembles many of the arguments over immigration during the Donald Trump presidency. For instance, Willis recounts a decade’s worth of legislative attempts to address this growing evil before concluding that “the character, source, and extent of immigration should be regulated and controlled with reference to our own wants and welfare” (793). One of Willis’s most prominent arguments is that the U.S. is not bound to admit any and all immigrants but should instead only admit those immigrants that bring some kind of benefit to the U.S.-American people. In a speech in the White House Rose Garden in May of 2019,

President Trump touts his proposal for a merit-based overhaul of the immigration system. He posits that most immigrants come to the U.S. “on the basis of random chance,” and suggests a change to immigration rules that will allow preference to doctors, researchers, or a student “who graduated number one in his class from the finest colleges in the world” (see “Remarks by President Trump”).

⁴¹ Harte’s poem was originally pushed in *The Overland Monthly*, a magazine that he edited. *The Arizona Citizen* reprinted Harte’s poem with the following preface:

The following is the production of Mr. Francis Bret Harte, editor of *The Overland Monthly*. This “plain language” was put forth about four months ago, and has done more to immortalize the author than any or all of his previous literary creations. In short, “the heathen Chinee” is already an imperishable saying with all wherever the English language is spoken, and lately we see that a Chicago house has had this “peculiarly” quaint gem set to music. Having heard the words frequently called for, we take occasion now to put them permanently on file in *The Citizen* office. (“Plain Language”)

Thus, by the time *Overland* was published, U.S. readers would already be well-aware of connections between heathen Orientals and deception.

⁴² Harte was never actually pleased with the way people understood his poem, as many used its lines to support racism against Chinese people, but he would likely have agreed with Townsend’s use. See Tara Penry’s “The Chinese in Bret Harte’s *Overland*: A Context for Truthful James,” in which Penry argues that Harte “felt disgusted by his poem and its reception” although “he bears some responsibility for accepting the celebrity that came with its fame” (81). See also Gary Scharnhorst’s “‘Ways That Are Dark’: Appropriations of Bret Harte’s ‘Plain

Language from Truthful James” in which Scharnhorst concludes that “however well intentioned Harte’s original poem may have been, the comic stereotype appropriated from ‘Plain Language from Truthful James’ has historically been invoked to justify racial discrimination” (398-399).

⁴³ Townsend’s argument mainly focuses on the fact that U.S.-Americans have portrayed certain racial groups as “wicked” in the past, only to eventually accept them into the societal fold. He gives the example of Germans, Irish, and Catholics. He also provides a few anti-Semitic examples of Jewish people in Europe who were once hated but now finance most of the governments. He believes that Chinese people are wicked, but he believes that all people are wicked and that all people can eventually assimilate. The debate that day in 1879 was shockingly similar to Congressional debates today.

⁴⁴ Liam Corley describes Taylor as a “one-man multimedia campaign” and a “cultural interlocuter between the people of the United States and numerous foreign places and peoples” (48). “His letters from foreign places,” Corley continues, “were widely printed and reprinted in the newspapers and magazines that were the principal reading materials of a vast number of everyday Americans. His extraordinarily popular travel books expanded on these letters and established him as an authority on international topics, a position that he parlayed into twenty years of successful lecturing on the lyceum circuit” (48).

⁴⁵ Irmischer suggests that Taylor may have had repressed homosexual urges that he was able fulfill in “the Orient” without feeling the shame that he would have felt in the U.S. This is all speculation on Irmischer’s part based on inferences drawn from Taylor’s poetry. Aside from the fact that such speculation is already problematic in itself for a number of reasons, it also recasts “the Orient” as the dichotomous opposite of the U.S., the exact formulation that Irmischer sets out to avoid by casting Taylor as a figure of “world literature” to begin with.

⁴⁶ Still, one might possibly question, as Irscher and Schueller do, if one can travel via the support of imperialism without being an imperialist oneself. For one particularly insightful answer to this debate, one should read Albert Memmi's section "Does the Colonial Exist?" from *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Memmi's answer, in short, is simply no, a EuroAmerican cannot simply travel via imperialism without themselves being an imperialist. In other words, regardless of how inactive a person from an imperialist country might be in the process of imperialism, that person still enjoys the benefits of that imperialism no matter how resistant one might be to it in word or action. To be specific, every where Taylor went, the U.S. Navy was not far away. A U.S. Consul or some U.S. ally was always within reach. At any moment he chose, Taylor had the opportunity to obtain the best living conditions possible either via his own personal resources or via the resources readily at hand through the already existent imperial structures.

⁴⁷ Carter Harrison later became a U.S. Congressmen and the Mayor of Chicago.

⁴⁸ Taylor never published "The Orient." These are just his personal views presented in a letter to a close friend. This fact is maybe only relevant if one considers Irscher's argument that the worst parts of Taylor's Orientalism were shaped by his rhetorical situations, or, in other words, that he occasionally tempered his subversive sentiments to please pro-imperial audiences (see Irscher 97). "The Orient" exhibits the most typical, mainstream Orientalist tropes, and it appears in the most intimate of settings, a letter between two close friends.

⁴⁹ The book was also very popular among U.S. readers. Corley notes that Taylor's *A Visit to India, China, and Japan in the Year 1853* went through eighteen editions between 1855 and 1899 (7).

⁵⁰ For example, Taylor writes that the “nobler religion” of Christianity has rarely every inspired architecture that could rival the beauty of the Motee Musjeed, the Pearl Mosque (109-10), and he describes the Taj Mahal as “a poem” (137).

⁵¹ Taylor’s praise of Indian imitative talent is ironic considering that he spent part of his time in the region living with the Wadia family who were some of the most famous shipbuilders in the world at the time and had been for over a hundred years. See Amitav Ghosh’s *The Great Derangement* for a brief section on the Wadia family and their connection to the British Navy and U.S. and British industrialization globally (106-8).

⁵² The *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan* came out in 1856. Taylor published his *A Visit* a year before in 1855. This is partly due to the fact that the U.S. Senate first published its official reports before a narrative account could be compiled. Then, on top of this delay, Commodore Perry did not write the narrative himself. Instead, Francis Hawks of the AOS compiled the narrative from the notes and journals of Perry and other officials.

⁵³ For more on Chinese immigration, the Page Act of 1875, and Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882 and 1888, see Erika Lee’s *At America’s Gates: Chinese Immigration during the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943*, Beth Lew-William’s “Before Restriction Became Exclusion: America’s Experiment in Diplomatic Immigration control,” and George Anthony Peffer’s article “Forbidden Families: Emigration Experiences of Chinese Women under the Page Law, 1875-1882.”

⁵⁴ The equivalent today would be a U.S. lawmaker crafting an immigration policy and citing an online *Yelp* review by some random tourist in the year 2000.

⁵⁵ Taylor often suggests that this expansion is already happening despite the lack of direct military or government intervention, and he encourages further expansion through independent enterprise. At the end of his trip across the Isthmus, for instance, he essentially provides an advertisement to would-be travellers, writing, “Thus terminated my five days’ journey across the Isthmus—decidedly more novel, grotesque and adventurous than any trip of similar length in the world. It was rough enough, but had nothing that I could exactly call hardship, so much was the fatigue balanced by the enjoyment of unsurpassed scenery and a continual sensation of novelty. In spite of the many dolorous accounts which have been sent from the Isthmus, there is nothing, at the worst season, to deter any one from the journey” (25). On reaching Panama, Taylor adds that “the city was already half American. The native boys whistled Yankee Doodle through the streets, and Senioritas of the pure Castilian blood sang the Ethiopian melodies of Virginia to their guitars. Nearly half the faces seen were American, and the signs on shops of all kinds appeared in our language” (26-7).

He then goes on to frequently praise the greatness of the harbors already created on the Pacific and dream of the potential of the ports that will be created in the future. The port of San Diego, for example, will some day become the best harbor on the Pacific for both commerce and defense (45). At nearby Point Lobo, he learns that a U.S.-American has bought the island and, Taylor speculates, that the U.S. government will someday put a lighthouse there (46). When he reaches the Golden Gate he calls it the “magnificent portal to the commerce of the Pacific” (52). Everywhere he goes during the entire first leg of his journey from New York to San Francisco, he observes evidence of an expanding U.S. economy that will someday have the support of the U.S. military.

⁵⁶ One of the most interesting features of Taylor's representation of Mexicans is that they often lack patriotism. In one passage, Taylor learns that some Mexicans were allowed to vote in the California elections. He meets these people and records their excitement about voting and remaining in the U.S. (253). The reader learns that the Mexican Army is often corrupt and fails to care for its soldiers, with the added implication that the U.S. Army would care for these people, but what is more, Taylor recounts stories of Mexicans who gave secrets to the U.S. Army during the Mexican-American War because of this mistreatment and elsewhere observes a Mexican commander with engravings of U.S.-American victories displayed around his office (374, 438-9, 442).

These representations of Mexicans who want to be U.S.-Americans work in unison with Taylor's propensity to observe in the Mexican landscape the history of U.S.-American war victories. Virtually everywhere Taylor travels in Mexico, he sees something that reminds him of General Scott's achievements during the war. Taylor thus suggests that Mexico is already a part of U.S.-American history.

⁵⁷ If one needs proof that Taylor himself subscribes to a belief in climatic determinism, or if one wants to know which traits were assigned to which climate, one should look to Taylor's poem "The Palm and the Pine," published in the February 1859 edition of *The Atlantic*. The poem follows a "Norseman" who "wood an Arab maid" during the First Crusade. Despite having exactly opposite characters, the two fall in love and create a family, and one distant progeny of this family ends up being the speaker of the poem who has a "double pulse" and characteristics from both ancestors.

⁵⁸ Taylor writes that "[grizzly bears] are rarely known to attack a man when unprovoked, but when wounded no Indian tiger is more formidable" (196).

⁵⁹ Taylor recounts, “Polo, it was rumored had been shot; but I gave no credit to the report. He was much too cautious and cunning, to be entrapped. To the miners about that region, he was as much of a will-o’-the-wisp as Abdel Kader was to the French” (240). This specific comparison also interestingly equates the U.S.-American miners to French colonizers.

⁶⁰ Pickering provides an interesting but somewhat random note that may be of interest to literary scholars when he recognizes that “the literature of the Malay Nation, contains a translation of the Fables of Aesop: who, according to the unsatisfactory accounts we have of him, was one of the earliest of the Greek writers. And further, the fact may be noted, that the Aesopian style of composition, is still in vogue at Madagascar” (282). When did “World Literature” become a thing?

⁶¹ I only write “non-Black” because Pickering never seems to include “Australians” or “Negroes” under the “Oriental” race. These are the two races included under Pickering’s initial “Black” category. Pickering’s text grows increasingly confusing, especially after his introduction of the term “Oriental.” After “Oriental” is introduced, Pickering seems to lose the “Brown” and “Blackish-Brown” color categories from the first chapter.

⁶² If one is questioning why such a confusing and poorly written text deserves serious scholarly attention, one should remember that this text was created in conjunction with the U.S. Navy and published as part of the official documentation of U.S. Exploring Expedition. The writer of this text also became a Director of the American Oriental Society. Despite its complete lack of cohesion and logical progression, it helped Charles Pickering gain professional success.

⁶³ Pickering was not alone in this endeavor to discover the origin of the North American people. Popular interest in the history and origins of the original people of North America is evident in the almost two thousand newspaper articles about various theories. The three most

common theories were that indigenous Americans were autochthonic, that they migrated from ancient Welsh explorers, and that they migrated from Asia (“Who First Peopled America!”). At times, these theories intertwined as in an article from *The Anti-Monopolist* of Saint Paul, Minnesota, that suggests that certain Indigenous Americans came from Japan while the “Mound Builders” came from Finnic races. The writer of the article deduces that “Asia and Europe once fought for the possession of this continent and Asia won” (“Where Did Our Indians Come From!” 4). Fascination with ancient monuments, the Mound Builders, and the history of the various peoples of North America inspired many aspects of the U.S. Geological Survey and culminated in the creation of the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology in 1879 (see Woodbury and Woodbury).

⁶⁴ See James Hijiya for a discussion of De Forest as an author who wrote for the “great herd of young people” as a way to make money from his writing (98, 104, 106). Although De Forest coined the phrase “the Great American Novel,” and although William Dean Howells once called him “really the only American novelist,” the author was what one today would call a pop culture writer. This is not to say that pop culture literature cannot equate to greatness, but rather that—judging by the composition histories of most of his novels—De Forest’s desires to make a living from his fiction often trumped his desire to produce great works of art.

⁶⁵ As Said observes, “Empirical data about the Orient or about any of its parts count for very little; what matters and is decisive is . . . the Orientalist vision, a vision by no means confined to the professional scholar, but rather the common possession of all who have thought about the Orient in the West” (69).

⁶⁶ A material example of this strategic formation is the Library and Cabinet of the American Oriental Society where the Society, to this day, keeps a collection of Orientalists texts and

artifacts that they can study and reference as needed. One can find everything one needs to know about the Orient by visiting New Haven, Connecticut.

⁶⁷ A “corresponding member” of the AOS is a U.S. citizen who lives outside the country. Corporate members are members who live within the U.S. and honorary members are members who are not U.S. citizens.

⁶⁸ For more on common characteristics of Orientalist representations of “the Oriental,” see my discussion in Chapter One. Edward Said’s *Orientalism* is, of course, the most cited text for a discussion of these characteristics (see 38-40, 72). One might also look to Albert Memmi’s “Portrait of the Colonized” in *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (82-85). I address these common characteristics again later in this chapter.

⁶⁹ The belief that various groups of people made inadequate use of their local landscape is a central, if often unexamined, belief within imperialist thought. See Konkle’s *Writing Indian Nations* for a discussion on links between land ownership, agriculture, and civilization. Konkle writes that the Native’s,

lack of European-style agriculture is considered [by Europeans] a moral failing . . . and a product of [Natives’] incapacity to perceive the tenets of natural law. The fact that Europeans own property that they desire to improve is a matter of moral superiority; it propels them into the future and determines their government, domestic relations, art, and industry. According to this view, without the desire to improve themselves, Indians have no interest in anything other than satisfying their immediate needs, refuse to labor, do not understand time, have no abstract ideas, have tenuous domestic relationships, and, most important in view of the

economic and political interests of EuroAmericans, do not form real governments.

(11)

For more on land ownership, Indigenous Americans, U.S. law, and literature, see Cheyfitz's essay "Savage Law" in Kaplan and Pease's *Cultures of United States Imperialism*. Cheyfitz's reads a moment in U.S. history, 1823, when "the genre of the Western (the drama of cowboys and Indians) and the edifice of federal Indian law first appear as distinct yet . . . interlocking and inseparable institutions" (110). He reads this moment through two primary texts: Chief Justice John Marshall's ruling in *Johnson and Graham's Lessee v. M'Intosh* and James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers*. Cheyfitz examines how "Western imperialism . . . founds its program on the disappearance of the 'other'" (109). Both texts, published the same year, create and depend upon fictions which justify the acquisition of Indigenous American land by asserting that the land is already vacant while at the same time contradictorily asserting that the land was freely given by the Indigenous Americans. The novel's primary importance is that it reinterprets the Supreme Court's decision for a popular audience, thus making the law more accessible to a wider amount of people while also connecting law, economics, and culture. I make a similar argument in this chapter that De Forest's *Overland* reinterprets the Indian Appropriation Act of 1871 for a popular audience.

⁷⁰ Said continues to explain the "strategic location" by writing that "everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient: translated into his text, this location includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text—all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking in its behalf" (20).

One should not conflate strategic location, or what I call the authorial position, with something like authorial intent or desire. Said explains that he uses the notion of strategy “to identify the problem every writer on the Orient has faced: how to get hold of it, how to approach it, how not to be defeated or overwhelmed by its sublimity, its scope, its awful dimensions” (20).

However, one might read Said’s term “strategic” as relying too heavily on, or at least implying, authorial intention. To understand how Said develops and uses “strategic location,” one might look to the study of rhetoric. Lloyd Bitzer’s exploration of the rhetorical situation, I think, is a particularly helpful model for understanding rhetoric as a practice shaped more so by social conventions, audience expectations, discursive formations, and linguistic constraints than by authorial intention. What De Forest *could* write about “the Orient” was already largely constrained by his rhetorical situation before De Forest began writing, and this is also Said’s argument in various places in *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, even if he uses the term “strategic.”

⁷¹ Irene’s rival in the love for De Vries is Saada, a fourteen-year-old Syrian girl educated by the mission school. De Forest informs the reader in an aside that though she is only fourteen, “that is eighteen in Syria” (289). He does not explain what this means. Saada acts as a foil for Irene. De Forest juxtaposes Saada’s “Oriental fervor” to Irene’s “Occidental staidness” (270). For De Vries, Saada is only an object, a “plaything,” an irresistible “brimming vase of Oriental beauty” (270, 288). Irene is the woman that he ultimately marries. See Schueller for a reading of Saada as an imperialist commodity (96). Russ Castronovo discusses Saada and Syrian women in general within De Forest’s novel in relation to the ways that “white male sexuality imperils the gendered and racial distinctions crucial to the civilizing mission that justified both cultural and military imperialism” (543).

⁷² Russ Castronovo in “Imperialism, Orientalism, and Empire” and Malini Johar Schueller in *U.S. Orientalisms* both separately make the argument that nineteenth-century U.S. writers wrote Orientalist texts as a way to explore various tensions within the United States. Castronovo writes, “Although Edward Said states that nineteenth-century discourse about the Orient, its fading grandeur, its despotism, its otherness was mainly a product of European colonialism, American writers also discovered the usefulness of the East, especially as a screen for understanding as well as obscuring race relations at home” (542). Schueller echoes this idea when writing about Bayard Taylor’s *A Visit to India, China, and Japan*. She writes that “Oriental travel writing often contested the raced imperial ideologies of nineteenth-century USAmerica” (33). Schueller also addresses this relationship in terms of gender. Specifically in relation to De Forest’s *Irene the Missionary*, Schueller argues that missionary work in the Orient allowed American women a level of power and responsibility that they were not allowed at home (78-9). My own argument is similar in that I agree that writing about the Orient, wherever that is, is always also writing about home, wherever that is, but I want to probe this connection further to understand why this is the case. Part of the answer is because, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the East is a creation of the West and, therefore, already always inside the West to begin with. The separation is an imagined separation.

⁷³ Schueller reads this moment in *Irene the Missionary* as “a critique so certain and scathing that there is no doubt about [De Forest’s] position [on imperialism]” as the author satirizes “the absurd cultural chauvinism” behind feelings like Irene’s that “only the Anglo-Saxon knows fully what he is about” (92-3). While Schueller demonstrates various moments in *Irene the Missionary* and *Oriental Acquaintance* in which De Forest satirizes certain hypocrisies of the U.S. imperial subject, I would challenge the idea that De Forest is being satirical in this moment. Irene is the

moral compass of this novel and, directly after Irene voices these culturally chauvinistic views, her mentor and fellow saintly missionary confirms them. I return to this belief in my reading of *Overland* later in this chapter and in my reading of *A Union Officer* in Chapter Four. De Forest sincerely voices this explicit cultural chauvinism throughout his oeuvre.

⁷⁴ For a summary of common racial stereotypes of African Americans, see Sterling A. Brown's "Negro Character as Seen by White Authors." Brown, writing in 1933, lists seven types of "Negro Character": the contented slave, the wretched freeman, the comic negro, the brute negro, the tragic mulatto, the local color negro, and the exotic primitive. The "gigantic negro" of De Forest's *Overland* mirrors Brown's description of the brute negro. The brute negro is a savage, violent beast full of vice and prone to rape and is best exemplified, according to Brown in the writings of U.S.-Americans Thomas Nelson Page and Thomas Dixon (see Brown 191-2).

⁷⁵ The theme of unification at the expense of a non-white Other is not uncommon to U.S. literature of the period. In fact, it is a trademark of the western genre from the 1860s and 70s, but instead of Arabs, the brown Others were often Indigenous Americans. Shelley Streeby speaks to this in *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture* and observes that "dime novel authors often try to unify their white audience by constructing demonized representations of Indians" (216). As we will see, later in *Overland*, De Forest's main character, Thurstane, bonds with the white, low-life, Texan mercenary who is trying to assassinate him over their shared hatred of Indigenous Americans.

⁷⁶ Here, he likely draws on theories of ancient Oriental migrations like those of Charles Pickering—fellow AOS member and Director—from Chapter One. Pickering was a member of the 1838 United States Exploring Expedition, or the Wilke's Expedition. Pickering used his travels to observe the people of the world and create a theory that divided them into various

categories. It was Pickering's belief that all of the Americas were originally populated by ancient migrations from Asia. See Chapter One of this book for more detail.

⁷⁷ For De Forest's world vision, see pages 348-349 in *History*. In a passage about the disappearance of Indian populations and the disintegration of Indian cultures, De Forest explains this phenomenon as something so common throughout the world that it need not "demand from us any great degree of astonishment" (348). His argument is not that white, EuroAmerican Christians should actively decimate global populations of non-Christians, but rather that this process is simply part of the natural progression of things. He writes, "These [disappearance and disintegration of cultures] seem to be the inevitable results to barbarians in the intercourse with Europeans; and from these results spring those seeds of decay which are infecting the races of barbarous men in every part of the world" (349). De Forest never considers that these cultural interactions need not happen or that they might happen in a different way, and he is never overtly malicious about it either. This is simply the way of the world.

⁷⁸ See Maureen Konkle's *Writing Indian Nations* for extensive discussion of each of these figures among other Indigenous American writers who wrote native histories as a way to posit native sovereignty and reject EuroAmerican political domination. I choose these three writers specifically because they lived and published in a similar geographical area to De Forest.

⁷⁹ For more on Eurocentric historiography, see Arif Dirlik's chapter "History without a Center?" from *Across Cultural Borders: Historiography in Global Perspective*, and his essay "Is There History after Eurocentrism?: Globalism, Postcolonialism, and the Disavowal of History." Both Sutherland and Konkle draw on Dirlik's arguments in these two texts.

⁸⁰ De Forest was born in Connecticut in 1826 where he remained for the first twenty years of his life. When he was twenty-one, De Forest left on a boat to visit his brother, Henry, in Syria.

Upon returning in 1847, De Forest bought property in Connecticut and began working on his first major publication, the *History of the Indians of Connecticut: From the Earliest Known Period to 1850*. Once published, he left again to travel through Europe for five years from 1850 to 1855. When he returned to the States, he spent the rest of the 1850s between Connecticut and South Carolina, courting his soon to be wife, Harriet Shepherd. The two had a child in 1857 and De Forest made his first attempt at being a professional writer, publishing *Witching Times* (1856), *Oriental Acquaintance* (1856), *European Acquaintance* (1858), and *Seacliff* (1859). Shortly thereafter, the Civil War began. De Forest served in the Union Army until quitting in 1864, whereupon he began writing *Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty*. He rejoined the Army as part of the Veteran Reserves Corp and traveled to Washington D.C. in 1865 until the Corp disbanded in 1866, whereupon he took a position as a Major in the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands. He lived in Greenville, South Carolina, working on *Miss Ravenel's Conversion* all the while, until he moved back to Connecticut in 1868 and decided to give professional writing another chance. He likely began writing *Overland* in late 1870 because he published the novel early in 1871.

⁸¹ My estimation of over twenty dime novels in 1871 only includes the “Dime Novel” series from Beadle & Company. Beadle & Company published numerous other series of cheap paperbacks at different times throughout the nineteenth century, some overlapping with the “Dime Novel” series. These series titled “Half Dime Novelettes,” “15 Cent Novels,” “Twenty-Five Cent Novels,” “American Tales,” “Beadle’s Dime Fiction,” etc. all ran at different times throughout the last half of the century and all included their own entries into the Western adventure genre. By 1870, other publishers had also entered the dime novel market. So, while De

Forest's *Overland* was not technically a dime novel, it did speak to an immense public interest in adventure literature about the American West.

See Albert Johannsen's *The House of Beadle and Adams and Its Dime and Nickel Novels Online* for a history of dime novels and the Beadle and Adams Company and an index of dime novels from the mid-nineteenth century. For more on general themes of the dime novel, see Nova Alderson's article "Frontier Literature; Or, A Fast Draw On Navajo Nick, Tombstone Tom, and Arizona Charlie." For a more critical look at the dime novel and its relation to American popular culture and imperial ideologies, see Shelley Streeby's chapter "The Dime Novel, the Civil War, and Empire," from her book *American Sensations: Class, Empire, and the Production of Popular Culture*.

⁸² See Streeby's chapter on the international romance novel for a summary of these debates in the 1840s and 50s and how these debates influenced the popular literature of the day.

⁸³ For a history of the ways that imperialist ideologies shaped the U.S. Constitution, U.S. government policy, and U.S. culture, see William Appleman Williams's *Empire as a Way of Life*. Williams suggests the U.S. government was meant to be an extension of its British predecessor, but that the Founding Fathers, especially Jefferson and Madison, made one crucial differentiation: in a reversal of Montesquieu's belief that liberty required a small state, Madison wrote to Jefferson that, "this form of government, in order to effect its purpose, must operate not within a small but an extensive sphere" (qtd in Williams 45). Madison argued that "empire was essential for freedom" (45). He argued that "surplus social space and surplus resources were necessary to maintain economic welfare, social stability, freedom, and representative government" (45). Thus, Williams summarizes, "Not only was the Constitution grounded in an imperial logic, but it created a government armed with typically mercantilist powers over the

political economy” (45). Moreover, the idea that surplus land equated to liberty and safety would come to justify on a national political level the acquisition of more land as a matter of national security.

⁸⁴ Africa might seem ill-fitting on this list as well, depending on one’s conception of the parameters of the Orient. Edward Said, for example, includes Northern Africa in his study of Orientalism because of the area’s large Muslim population. His Orient is mostly delineated by the presence of Islam rather than any firm geographical boundaries. He also pays extensive attention to literature about Egypt in both *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*. This seems to be common practice within the field of Orientalist studies. Malini Johar Schueller, for example, focuses much of her attention in chapters two and three of *U.S. Orientalisms* on writing in and about Northern Africa.

However, Said’s own examples of historical Orientalism evade his quasi-geographical parameters. For instance, Said quotes the English Lord Cromer to establish certain key features of Orientalism. In the quoted material, Cromer speaks to “Indians or Egyptians, or Shilluks, or Zulus” and later to the “Central African savage” (*Orientalism* 35). The Shilluk and Zulu people are not traditionally Muslims and do not traditionally live in the geographical area commonly referred to as “the Orient,” yet Cromer’s characterization of the Shilluks and the Zulus form part of the foundation for his ideological separation of the world and for Said’s later definition of Orientalism as an imperialist discourse.

⁸⁵ In this example, the U.S. South may seem like the odd location within the group. For more on the U.S. South as an Orientalized location, see chapter four of this project. One might also look to Jennifer Rae Greeson’s *Our South: Geographic Fantasy and the Rise of National*

Literature where she posits the U.S. South as an internally colonized space within which the U.S. developed its imperial practices and ideologies that would later expand across the globe.

⁸⁶ Aimé Césaire best describes the trend of climatic determinism in *Discourse on Colonialism* when he writes about Pierre Gourou, a French geologist: “From Gourou, his book *Les Pays tropicaux*, in which, amid certain correct observations, there is expressed the fundamental thesis, biased and unacceptable, that there has never been a great tropical civilization, that great civilizations have existed only in temperate climates, that in every tropical country the germ of civilization comes, and can only come, from some other place outside the tropics, and that if the tropical countries are not under the biological curse of the racists, there at least hangs over them, with the same consequences, a no less effective geographical curse” (55). Such a belief is widespread within the strategic formation of imperialist/Orientalist texts.

⁸⁷ See Frantz Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth* for a description of this general phenomenon and a list of common discursive patterns (7-8). Fanon writes that the colonized subject is dehumanized to the point that he is “reduced to the state of an animal. And, consequently, when the colonist speaks of the colonized he uses zoological terms” (7).

Similarly, Aimé Césaire explains in *Discourse on Colonialism* that colonialism is “based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt” and that ultimately colonization dehumanizes both the colonized and the colonizer. However, first, “the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal” (41).

Likewise, in *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, Albert Memmi explains the effect of such dehumanization: “[the colonized] is hardly a human being. He tends rapidly toward becoming an object” (86). In the case of De Forest, the colonized becomes an animal. Each of these theorists

writes specifically about colonization in their specific locations but also about colonization and imperialism globally.

One example of this discursive trait within U.S. popular culture of the 1870s appears in an article from the *San Francisco Tribune*, reprinted in the *Elko Independent*, titled “Landing of a Chinese Steamer.” The author describes a stink that “exploded” in the city before noticing the source in a “horde” of “copper-colored-cut-throats” of “all the Celestial clans in the city.” He describes the men as a “countless horde of yellow savages,” the women as a group of sheep, and later, the entire group as “creatures” (“Landing” 1). Each of these descriptions has a dehumanizing effect but might also serve a rhetorical function to portray the Oriental as either passive and in need of leadership or dangerous and in need of control.

A similar example, also from the *Elko Independent* describes Chinese immigration to the U.S. as “the Tartar hordes who are swarming to America” (“Republican State Platform” 2).

⁸⁸ See C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa’s article “Ely Parker and the Contentious Peace Policy” for an explanation for the various factions who influenced the Peace Policy within the Grant administration and the ways that the Bureau of Indian Affairs rivaled the Bureau of Indian Commissioners. Genetin-Pilawa argues that this rivalry is what ultimately led to the House of Representatives 1871 investigation into the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Ely S. Parker.

⁸⁹ An 1871 report from a Texas Ranger published in the *Nashville Union and American* begins, “I am once more called upon to communicate the sad intelligence of another one of the many Indian massacres that are daily occurring on the Texas frontier” (“Texas Frontier”). The ranger was likely not exaggerating. A brief search in the nation’s newspapers from 1871 for the words “Indian” and “massacre” will produce many results.

⁹⁰ Maureen Konkle in *Writing Indian Nations* observes that scholars of Indigenous American history and literature often assume that the two choices that Grant provides—assimilation or extermination—were the only two options available. In other words, many scholars believe that U.S. imperialism was not only successful, but complete. Such a belief denies the possibility that Native political struggles are still ongoing today (30). Grant’s speech omits two other options, among many others: one, the U.S. military could stop killing natives; and two, natives might resist (they did and still do).

⁹¹ This kind of ranking of various peoples on a scale of civilization is common within the body of imperialist and Orientalist literature. De Forest, in *Oriental Acquaintance*, actually compares Indigenous Americans to the dogs in Syria. He writes, “The dogs yelled, and leaped, and snapped at us, very much after the fashion of our Indians, who enjoy themselves gymnastically around a prisoner before disemboweling him or knocking out his brains” (10). What he means to be a cruel joke contributes to a comparison across cultures and also to a ranking of civilizations and species.

⁹² As discussed in Chapter One, numerous nineteenth-century Western anthropologists believed that Indigenous Americans had originated in Asia and migrated to North America some time in the distant past. For an example of this belief from around when De Forest was writing *Overland*, see the newspaper article “Asia and Africa: A Lecture by Dr. W. J. Davis” from the *New Orleans Republican* on April 26, 1870. The correspondent from the *Republican* recounts a lecture given to the local Young Men’s Christian Association by Dr. W. J. Davis, a former professor and travel companion with Robert Livingstone during Livingstone’s Zambezi expedition. The correspondent writes that midway through the lecture, Dr. Davis “made a sudden leap to America, and said the North American Indians came from Asia. . . . The skulls [*sic*] of the

North American Indians are precisely like those of the Tartars, and they have many words of Tartar origin” (“Asia and Africa” 6).

⁹³ Torture at the hands of the Apaches is the one possibility the white characters in *Overland* fear most. The reader receives the first hint of this fear early in the text when the caravan faces an attack from a roving band of Apaches. Thurstane looks to Texas Smith, a hardened mercenary secretly hired to kill Thurstane, and, thinking of Clara, tells Texas Smith, “Not one of us must fall into their hands” (67). Smith replies, “Cap, that’s so. . . . When I fight Injuns, I never empty my revolver. I keep one barl for myself. You’d better do the same. Furthermore, thar oughter be somebody detailed to shute the women folks when it comes to the last pinch. I say this as a friend” (67). Smith’s implication is that suicide is better than capture. Thurstane echoes this belief later when he thinks about the possibility of Clara’s capture: “Thurstane remembered that it would be his terrible duty in the last extremity to send a bullet through the heart of the woman he worshipped, rather than let her fall into the hands of brutes who would only grant her a death of torture and dishonor” (95). In this instance, De Forest adds the possibility of “dishonor” to the act of torture possibly alluding to sexual assault or rape, a fear which Pepita’s ultimate torture validates.

⁹⁴ Jansson follows the work of several others. He observes that “recently scholars have moved from applying an international scale of analysis to examining the operation of Orientalist discourse within states” (296). He provides a brief summary of Piterberg who discusses “domestic Orientalism” in Israel, Gladney who examines “Oriental Orientalism” in China, Bakić-Hayden who looks to “nesting Orientalisms” in Yugoslavia, and Schein who describes “internal Orientalism” in China.

⁹⁵ See especially Charles Pickering's *The Races of Man*, which I discuss at length in Chapter Two. Pickering divides the world into eleven distinct races, but he groups these races into four categories of skin color. The "white" category could include both white Europeans and white Arabs.

⁹⁶ For the remainder of the chapter, I will omit the quotation marks around "the South," but one should assume that they are always present.

⁹⁷ As I demonstrate later in this chapter, Jansson's argument in this case essentially echoes arguments of prominent Black nineteenth-century intellectuals such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs.

⁹⁸ For one example, see James Russell Lowell's essay, "The Election in November," which I discuss at greater length later in this chapter. Lowell argues that slavery inherently brings down all other aspects of a society, mostly due to the concentration of wealth in the hands of a very few combined with the tendency toward monoculture, cash-crop agriculture. Lowell writes that the slaveholding states fail "by the inherent vice of their constitution and its attendant consequences, to create enlightened, powerful, and advancing communities of men" and that "the course of things in slaveholding States" is "a downward one, more or less rapid, in civilization" (32-33).

⁹⁹ See George Dekker's *The American Historical Romance* for a discussion of stadial theory and its effect on the nineteenth-century U.S.-American romance novel. See Nathaniel Wolloch's article "The Civilizing Process, Nature, and Stadial Theory," for a concise summary of stadial theory more generally and its development by mostly Scottish Enlightenment philosophers.

¹⁰⁰ See "Proceedings, 1863," xvi. Lowell joined the AOS in October of 1863.

¹⁰¹ Abraham, in the biblical book of Genesis, is told by God that he will have a son although he is very old and he and his wife, Sarah, have not been able to conceive. At the insistence of Sarah, Abraham has a son with their Egyptian servant, Hagar. The son is Ishmael, who becomes the father of the Ishmaelites and is commonly thought of as the father of the Arabs. Lowell's sarcastic statement is correct that the arrangement does not equate to "domestic happiness" within the Biblical story. Sarah eventually gives birth to her own son, Isaac. Isaac is considered the grandfather of the twelve tribes of Israel, and is thus more connected, in the popular imagination, with what would become Christianity.

¹⁰² Emerson first appeared on the membership roll of the AOS in May of 1860. See "List of Members, 1860."

¹⁰³ Most disagree on exactly how to describe Emerson's Orientalism. Schueller and Weir both discuss Emerson's Orientalism and how his love for Indic texts informed his political and religious beliefs and both observe a complicated relationship between Emerson's Orientalism and ideologies of Western supremacy. Herwig Friedl provides a most thorough and insightful reading of Emersonian Orientalism as something insulated from ideologies of domination.

¹⁰⁴ For an exploration of Emerson's love of Western imperialism, one should look to Ken Egan Jr.'s "Imperial Strains." Egan points to several "strains"—Egan plays with multiple meanings of the word—in the practice of U.S.-American poetry in combination with strains in U.S.-American ideologies of empire "emerging from 'America' as a contested term, a site of desire, anxiety, and confusion" (500). Egan grounds his study in Emerson's idealization of poetry as the one thing that could describe and unify the expansion of the U.S. across the continent. For an exploration of Emerson's imperialist ideologies in connection with his Orientalism, see Chapter Six of Schueller's *U.S. Orientalisms*.

¹⁰⁵ One of the main answers to this question involved colonizing Liberia and sending all of the emancipated people there. Stowe, for instance, supports this plan in the final chapter of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. However, this plan faced some obvious flaws, one of them being the immense amount of people and the immense amount of time, effort, and money that it would take to ship all of these people across the ocean. This is, of course, aside from the basis of this plan in unabashed racism. The question also received a range of answers from comical to serious. Two articles, both from American journalist and humorist Charles Godfrey Leland, demonstrate this range. The first from January of 1862, "What To Do With The Darkies," suggests colonizing South Carolina and putting all emancipated people in that state and letting them run it for themselves. While this article is satire, the underlying anxiety that the Black race will somehow eradicate the white race is ever present. An article from Leland in May of 1862 takes a more serious and mathematical approach. Leland argues essentially that Black people reproduce faster and that, if emancipated and allowed to stay in the U.S., they will eventually outnumber and take over the entire country. While he is for emancipation, Leland argues that the Black race cannot be allowed to stay in the United States.

The "What Shall We Do With Them" question was not only limited to formerly enslaved people, though. W. Mitchell provides his solution in the same April 1862 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* that Emerson published "American Civilization," which I discuss later in this chapter. His answer entails a specifically imperialist discourse. In "What Shall We Do With Them?," Mitchell charges the South with cultural backwardness and anticipates Reconstruction in his explanation of a solution. He first compares the U.S. South to English colonies and recounts failed revolts in Scotland, Ireland, and India for historical precedence and then explicitly maps English imperial control onto the American landscape. He argues that the North deserves

“original and final jurisdiction” and suggests that each individual of the South is *ipso facto* a rebel and, as such, has forfeited “a measure of his privileges,” should be “constrained to the same responsibility of obedience [as other colonized subjects],” should not be allowed to bear arms, should be forced to labor compulsorily, and should “attend such worship as the State provides” (471). To complete the imperial model, Mitchell adds, “[The rebel’s] inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness were inalienable only so long as he remained obedient and true to the sovereign” (471). In “What Shall We Do With Them?,” Mitchell directly and intentionally identifies the American North as the imperial sovereign and the American South as a colony to be resolved to subjugation.

¹⁰⁶ See Herwig Friedl’s essay about Emerson’s Orientalism for a detailed explanation for Emerson’s frequent use of rhetorical dichotomies.

¹⁰⁷ Greeson describes this as the “climatological discourse of empire” (327). By the mid-nineteenth century, Orientalist and imperialist writers had already developed a strong tradition of climatic determinism which Greeson explains as “the notion, imported from Europe, that warm climates not only produce coveted commodities but also cause the degeneration of the life forms that inhabit them” (6).

¹⁰⁸ Emerson’s words are not very different from David Livingstone’s oft-quoted explanation of England’s role in Africa: “We come among them as members of a superior race, and servants of a Government that desires to elevate the more degraded portions of the human family” (qtd. Blaikie 243).

¹⁰⁹ De Forest’s father in-law, Dr. Charles Shepard, was the cousin of Ralph Waldo Emerson, an Ivy-League educated scientist, and an internationally known mineralogist who was a founder of the phosphate industry in South Carolina (see Hijiya 27). Shepard is, quite obviously, the

inspiration for Dr. Ravenel in *Miss Ravenel's Conversion* as De Forest's wife, Harriet Shepard, is quite obviously the inspiration for Lillie Ravenel.

¹¹⁰ Gleason gives the example of “architectural innovator” Orson Squire Fowler who wrote in 1848 that “[t]hroughout all nature the abodes of all animals correspond perfectly with their characters, so that the latter can be safely predicated from the former” (qtd. in Gleason 7). Fowler gives the example of the orang-outang, the “Bushman” and then the “Hottentot, Carib, Indian, Malay, and Caucasian” who “build houses better, and still better, the higher the order of their mentality” (Gleason 7). Certain architectural features, within this mode of thought, corresponded to higher levels of civilization. Gleason points to Oliver P. Smith who, in his 1852 book *The Domestic Architect*, describes a number of architectural styles but purposefully excludes certain “different forms or fashions of building prevailing in various countries” because they do not possess “sufficient merit to take rank in the schools of architectural science” (Gleason 7). As Gleason argues, Smith needed not add explanation, but he does: “The Chinese, the Turks, and people of other distinct political divisions of the earth, have each their fashions of building; yet they are possessed of little in the line of Architecture worthy of imitation in a country of common civilization” (8).

¹¹¹ This point cannot be stressed enough. The back cover of *A Union Officer* includes reviews that praise De Forest's “sharply etched pictures of people” and state that “De Forest's articles will prove invaluable for their rich portrayal of southern society.” Scholars sometimes quote De Forest as an authoritative figure in texts about Reconstruction. For one example see Michael Fitzgerald's *Splendid Failure: Postwar Reconstruction in the American South*. See also Donna Campbell's webpage about Realism in American Literature, 1860-1890 and her description of De Forest as a Southern author.

¹¹² His condescending paternalism and complete detachment from Black people as fellow humans is evidenced in one particularly heart-wrenching passage, although De Forest does not recognize it as such. He describes a “ragged freedwoman” who comes to beg assistance to get her daughter back from a white man who has had the child live and work with him for a few months. When De Forest learns that the man will not send the daughter back, his first reply is, “Perhaps she is very well off with Mr. Bascom; I understand that he is a man of property. What do you want her back for?” (112). When the woman continues to plead that she just wants to see her daughter, De Forest resorts to philosophical trickery: “‘But you must have faith,’ I said, attacking her on the religious side, always an open one with the Negroes. However sinful their lives may chance to be in practice, they feel bound to admit the authority of certain doctrines” (113). When she still continues to plead for help in retrieving her daughter, De Forest attacks her personal character: “Ah, aunty! I see through you now All you want of her is to wait on you while you sit and tattle. You just want her to go for water and to put a chunk of fire on your pipe” (113). The woman ultimately leaves without any assistance and De Forest provides yet one more example where he had to outwit the local population in order to improve their station in life. This is what happens when imperialist ideologies are put into practice. A woman can be separated from her daughter because those in authority view her entire race as sinful, superstitious, and lazy.

¹¹³ The first woman member of the AOS seems to have been Annie K. Humphrey of Washington, D.C. (see “Proceedings 1873”). The second woman member of the AOS came ten years later in 1883. Her name was Eva Channing of Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts (“Proceedings 1883”).

¹¹⁴ Susan Nance observes that U.S. fascination with *The Arabian Nights* started as soon as the Revolutionary War was over as the text became the single most popular work of fiction sold by one Virginian bookseller (19). Nance argues that U.S.-Americans looked to *The Arabian Nights* for “prototypes of luxurious consumption and transformation that served as metaphors for democratic capitalism” (20).

¹¹⁵ Whether Stowe selected the stories herself is unclear from the original publication. Edwards attributes the selection to Stowe, but the editors may have chosen which texts to include. Stowe wrote the introduction for the volume.

¹¹⁶ The image of the plantation house still exists today in popular media—and in the form of modern-day plantation tours—as a hotly contested symbol, as what Guy Cardwell calls a “transempirical image” that “may be at once image, metaphor, sign, allegorical equation, and symbol” and what Jessica Adams identifies as still “synecdochic of an entire region” (Cardwell 14, 21; Adams 170).

¹¹⁷ De Forest himself even participated in such a trend with his previously mentioned romance novel *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion from Secession to Loyalty* which ends with the marriage of a Union soldier and a Southern belle.

¹¹⁸ For examples on how such characterizations of the U.S. South persist in media today, see my article “A Funny Black Man and His Southern Friend: *30 Rock*’s Troubling (of) Representations” in *The Journal of Popular Culture*. The article looks to representations of Blackness and of Southernness in the NBC sitcom *30 Rock*.

¹¹⁹ After moving to Canada, Hale jokes in a letter to Lewis Morgan that he keeps attempting to return to ethnological studies but never finds the time. He even admits to leaving most of his books in Philadelphia. As Gruber observes, the gap in Hale’s ethnological studies was such that

during the twenty-five years between publications, the field of ethnology itself transformed into the field of anthropology (12).