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Tanvi Lal April 7, 2016

# Independent Women: Travel to Colonial India in the 19th Century
## *A Study of Travel Writing, Colonialism, and Female Authority*

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Abstract

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Throughout the late Georgian to early Victorian time periods, women in Britain faced excessive restrictions on their social, personal, and professional lives. Their personal development was limited by these restrictions and the exposure a limited circle of people provided. These people were determined by their fathers or husbands and hence pigeonholed women further into societal expectations. What were the ways in which women could bypass these restrictions and develop themselves beyond societal expectations? With the growth of the British colonial system, travel opened up as a possibility. The East India Company, specifically, needed civil servants in order to expand and women often travelled with their husbands, fathers, or brothers on this colonial mission. This thesis will analyze the travel writings of three such women, Fanny Parkes, Isabella Fane, and Emily Eden, to argue that travelling to India at this time period led to forms of personal development unavailable to these women in Britain. In addition, this thesis will track the change in British colonial attitudes towards India from the 1820s to the 1830s by analyzing these women's representations of India. By doing so, this thesis argues that the broad change in British colonial thought that took place from 1820-1840 is reflected in these narratives.

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# Table of Contents

# Introduction

Women in nineteenth-century England often faced severe social restrictions on their lives, careers, and personal development. This was evident throughout the late Georgian to early Victorian periods[1] when many notions of the Victorian ideal of womanhood arose. Since bypassing these restrictions in England could be difficult, some women sought travel as a means of escape by physically removing themselves from the situation. This thesis will study the success of such attempts. In looking at the travel writing of Fanny Parkes, Isabella Fane, and Emily Eden, this thesis will argue that their travel to India afforded them avenues of personal development unavailable to them in England. Further, this thesis will analyze their representations of India and the Indian population and fit these perceptions into the broader, pre-mutiny British view of colonial India. This thesis will start by describing the social situation of women in Britain during this time period, introduce the British colonial system in India, and then describe the genre of travel writing and its relation to women before introducing the three women.

From Coventry Palmore's "Angel in the House" to the Evangelic focus on the home as "the basis for a proper religious life" (Hall 84), a woman's place was assumed to be in the house and her focus in life to find an appropriate husband (Vicinus x). The man was associated with the head while the woman, "private and sentimental" (Shoemaker 7), was associated with the heart. Women were indoctrinated to think that men were naturally "wiser and [would] guide the woman into the new area appropriate to her" (Hall 87). Traditional traits associated with women, gleaned from conduct books, included modesty, meekness, patience, tenderness, charity, piety, devotion, and sexual fidelity (Shoemaker 23). The perfect woman sought marriage and childbirth, had little to no sexual feelings, and innately desired motherhood (Vicinus x). As social historian Martha Vinicus summarizes, "in her most perfect

[1] The Georgian Era lasted from 1714-1837 and the Victorian Era from 1837-1901.

form, the lady combined total sexual innocence…and the worship of the family hearth" (ix). Moreover, this idea was validated by an expansive "belief system which drew on social Darwinism, evolutionary anthropology, chivalry, myths, Christianity, medical and 'scientific' treatises, and the literary traditions of Empire" (Mohanty 6). Many of these expectations, however, were only possible for wealthy, upper-class British women. Indeed, most women in lower social classes had to embody traditionally masculine traits of the time by working a job and contributing to the family income. Further, they could not be "as innocent and as ignorant as a middle-class girl. They lived in cramped houses, went to work early and everywhere saw the ravaged lives of those overcome by poverty, alcoholism and prostitution" (Vicinus xii-xiii). Thus, this perfect model of the Victorian woman had "little connection with any functional and responsible role in society" (Vicinus ix).

These ideals of a perfect Victorian woman were cultivated and indoctrinated in Victorian girls from a very young age. Though Victorian girls received education, this education focused on bringing out their "'natural' submission to authority and innate maternal instinct" (Vicinus x). Boys and girls were socialized differently as they grew up, both through school and in the way their parents treated them (Shoemaker 129). From infancy, "boys were 'accustomed to a mode of treatment as much calculated to make them determined, frank, and bold, as that of girls to induce the opposite extremes of weakness, artifice, and timid helplessness'" (Shoemaker 129). These submissive ideals programmed women to be loving, emotional, lacking in sexuality, and "trained to have no opinions lest they seem too formed…for a young man's taste, and thereby unmarketable as a commodity" (Vicinus x). Vicinus's description of young ladies as commodities speaks to the lack of control they had over their own lives. As a young woman developing into a lady, a girl found her worth and economic value completely determined by her father. Once she developed and was able to attract a man, her worth then tied itself to the economic position of her husband

(Vicinus ix). Thus, throughout her life, a Victorian woman was in the custody of a man, whether it be her father or husband. Essentially, she never had the chance to determine her own worth (Vicinus ix).

After marriage a woman stopped being educated as the point of education was to attract a husband, and since she already had one, education was seen as unnecessary (Vicinus x). She had limited exposure to anyone beyond her family and friends; and all aspects of her social and intellectual growth after marriage became restricted solely to them (Vicinus ix). The husband, and not the woman, chose these family members and friends given his "authority over his wife… [and] the necessity for wives to submit to their husbands' authority" (Shoemaker 101-102). In this vein, Fanny Parkes comments "how completely *by law* [married women were]…the slaves of their husbands" (Parkes 2: 8). This patriarchal, gender-based oppression of women in the Victorian period limited their personal development, and as a result any opportunities to develop outside of the limited society a woman had access to, for example travelling, becomes important.

As marriage was seen a cornerstone of women's life, unmarried women in nineteenth-century Britain were often ridiculed both in social settings and in public venues like music halls and concerts (Vicinus xii). It was seen as a failure on the part of the woman not to have attracted a man; and as a result unmarried women were "even more marginal social figures... [who] faced considerable prejudice" (Shoemaker 142). Unmarried middle-aged women who believed they could get married faced social exclusion and derision for fooling themselves that any man would want them (Vicinus xii). The correct course of action for such women was to become a helpful aunt or companion in her brother's household (Vicinius xii). Moreover, not having a husband could in itself act as a restricting feature. It not only signaled to others that a particular woman was undesirable, and thus there must be something wrong with her, but also limited a woman's economic resources (Vicinus xii). In this way, both

economic autonomy and opportunities for personal development for unmarried women appeared bleak, just as they did for married women.

To summarize, society idealized marriage and childbearing as the ultimate objectives for women. Women who excelled at these faced a marriage where their worth was defined by their husband, and where they may or may not have had a say in the way things were run in their marriage or social life. Women who failed in marriage faced social disdain and judgment, and found themselves similarly restricted as married women in terms of their social life. Given these social representations of women, the question arises of how far they held true, and if any exceptions existed. In order to study whether women were able to further their personal development through any particular actions, this thesis will study the travel writing of early nineteenth-century British women to colonial India and evaluate any forms personal development through travel in India that they would not have received in Britain.

As British imperialism expanded, maintenance of the colonial system became a large part of the British Empire's task. Many British citizens and members of the army travelled to colonial destinations to take either leadership or administrative roles within the British government abroad. While most of these travellers were men, they usually took female companions with them, including wives, daughters, or sisters. Thus the opportunity for travel opened up simultaneously for both men and women and in order to recount their experiences abroad both sexes often chose to write letters home or keep journals.

The early 1800s in India was not demarcated by significant events but was noteworthy due to a change in colonial thought. The British did not rule India directly at this time, preferring instead to use the governmental presence of the Calcutta-headquartered East India Company (Steinbach 192). The stability in India at this time reflected the stability of the East India Company. By 1822, the start of the earliest narrative considered in this thesis,

external and internal rivals of the East India Company such as the French and Mughals had been vanquished or weakened (Chawner ix-x). Indeed, the only real power left in India was Ranjit Singh, the Lion of Punjab, who was, in addition to being the leader of a strong and unified kingdom, a powerful British ally. Thus, this time period in India was characterized by a powerful East India Company and relative peace (Chawner ix-x).

In the midst of this stability, an overhaul of colonial thought was taking place. In the late eighteenth century, there was a sudden spark of interest in what the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in Calcutta at that time Sir William Jones called "'this wonderful country'" (Dalrymple x). The British in India at the time were fascinated by India, her customs, and her way of life. In 1784 Jones founded the Asiatick Society to celebrate and research "'the History, Civil and Natural, the Antiquities, Arts, Sciences and Literature of Asia'" (Dalrymple x). Supported by Warren Hastings, the Governor-General[2] at the time, this society "became the catalyst for a sudden explosion of interest in Hinduism" (Dalrymple x). Throughout the 1820s, however, "this optimism and excitement began to wane, and senior figures in the company became openly disdainful of all things India" (Dalrymple x). The British colonial system became more and more powerful throughout the 1830s and "there was a feeling that technologically, economically and politically, the British had nothing to learn from India and much to teach…it did not take long for imperial arrogance to set in" (Dalrymple x). Ideas of racial and religious purity and a "hierarchy of civilizations" (Lal, *Domesticity* 26) began to emerge and become entrenched in the British way of thought (Dalrymple xi). The Indians were now "'poor benighted heathen,' or even 'licentious pagans,' … eagerly awaiting conversion, and…the path to Civilisation" (Dalrymple xi).

[2] The Governor-General was the head of British administration in India and supervised East India Company officials, though the specificities of the role changed throughout colonial rule (Misra 6). After the 1857 mutiny, the position was redefined as the Viceroy.

Social interactions between Indians and the British became fewer and the British began to increasingly stick to their own community and ostracize the Indians (Chawner xii).

This led to the creation of "a particular vision of Eastern reality" (Lal, *Domesticity* 25). This Eastern reality portrayed the "only acceptable [narrative]…of a strange, unfathomable society…with images of violence, religiosity, indiscipline, divisiveness, laziness, lustfulness, and strangeness" (Lal, *Domesticity* 25): a tradition both Emily Eden and Isabella Fane partake in. This new line of thinking became standardized, and relied "on accounts of specific institutions and practices that were symbolic of the 'abject slavery,' general 'barbarity,' and 'lamentably debased' condition of the East" (Lal, *Domesticity* 25-26). Thus, the early nineteenth-century up until the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny[3] was a period of "mature colonialism … [that led to] the establishment of more direct British rule" (Lal, *Coming of Age* 33). Moreover, as a result of "scathing colonial attacks on [Indian] values, traditions, and history…[Indians began to] articulate and rearticulate their vision of [a] respectable, honorable, and useful life" (Lal, *Coming of Age* 34-35).

In this time of changing thought, analyzing British women's travel writing to India provides an opportunity to study these changes through the perspective of imperial women. Travel writing as a genre is growing in its relevance and importance within literary studies. In its simplest form, "travel writing consists of predominantly factual, first-person prose accounts of travel that have been undertaken by the author-narrator" (Youngs 3). In Barbara Korte's words, "travel writing characteristically fuses various modes of presentation: in very different proportions, narration is intermingled with description, exposition, and even

[3] The mutiny of 1857, called the Indian or Sepoy Mutiny, began when Indian soldiers in the Bengal Army mutinied. This mutiny sparked a larger rebellion in north and north-eastern India. The resulting fighting consisted of looting and killing from both sides and culminated in the Kanpur Massacre and many rumors of Indian men raping British women. This event not only hardened colonial rule, but also cast "white women as helpless and passive, and… [gave] a reason for British men to exert close control over British women and over all Indians" (Steinbach 192-193). After quelling the rebellion, the British crown dissolved the East India Company and became the ruling power of India by the Government of India Act 1858.

prescription" (9). However, as a secondary summary of events that have taken place, travel literature can be seen as a form of reporting (Korte 10). This reporting takes place after the physical action or event; and travel literature recreates "the experience of the journey on which [it] is based" (Korte 10). Thus in the moment of telling, the experience of travelling is fictionalized (Korte 10). However, while travel writing has aspects of fiction and fiction writing in its structure (Youngs 4), it itself is not fiction as parts of the narrative are constructed based on the author's experience and other parts are verbatim statements of what happened. In this way, travel writing has widely come to be regarded as a "mixed form that feeds off other genres" (Youngs 6).

An implicit trust develops between the reader and the author-narrator that the journey described actually took place (Youngs 8). However, issues of subjectivity make analysis of travel writing complicated. While the "'compact between author and readers…places a responsibility on travel writers not to breach the trust in them'" (Youngs 8), issues of subjectivity arise despite an author's best intentions to depict a "neutral, direct experience of a destination" (Youngs 10). What will a person truly know about a foreign place, Tim Youngs argues, beyond what they see, don't see, and whom they meet? Does exposure to such things mean they truly understand the foreign place? Can any travel narrative convey the actuality of the foreign place? Further, a travel writer's recreation of travelling will inherently be influenced by their personal views and experiences. As a result, travel writing has room for multiple interpretations. Further lags exist between the traveller's experience and their perception, their perception and their representation of it, and then their representation of it and the reader's interpretation. At the same time, these lags provide unique opportunities for analysis and understanding cultural notions. As Korte notes, a travel writer's subjectivity "inevitably reveal[s] the culture-specific and individual patterns of knowledge" (6). Thus while subjectivity may or may not limit the reader's exposure to the place where the traveller

has gone, it does show the reader the author's culture and personality; though Korte cautions that "the subjectivity of the traveller will often be hardly discernable" (6).

The second issue that comes up, which ties into subjectivity, is the audience of the travel writing. The extent of the author's thoughts and openness will differ based on whom travellers wrote to or the degree of privacy of their journals. Additionally, methods of publication also change the text readers see. While Parkes intended her journal to be published, Fane never edited her work at all, and Eden edited her work prior to publication. As a result, the end goal of what was to be done with their writings could have influenced what they did or didn't record. The audience, too, was a crucial consideration, as the travel writer was constantly "torn between the need to be instructive and the need to be 'agreeable'" (Korte 6). The key difference between their home and the new place they explored was the concept of exoticism and deviation from the familiar, and a travel writer would want that to come across to readers (Korte 5). Travellers in India, in particular, had "much invested in maintaining standard Oriental stereotypes, to mystify the East" (Suleri 77); presumably to keep up the image most Britons had of India to avoid derision upon their return home. Thus, there was an inherent pressure on these travel writers to describe India in a particular way. Not only would their prior exposure to Indian culture inform how they viewed India, but the ways their audience viewed India would also change what they wrote.

Beyond their representations of the place they traveled to, travel writers also constructed images of themselves through their writing. Given the additional layer of self-representation, travel writers may have felt the need to present themselves as smarter or wittier than they were in reality (Korte 10). Thus, "the self of the traveller is fictionalized in discursive and often consciously literary ways" (Korte 6). These issues point to the division of the narrator into three parts: the person, the narrator, and the travelling persona (Korte 12).

This division, a making and unmaking of the self, shows in the travel account when conventional plots give way to narration (Helmers and Mazzeo 6).

While these issues and considerations exist for travel writing as a whole, additional considerations exist for women's travel writing. A literary tradition of women's travel writing was not prominent in the early 1800s (Korte 110). Thus, British women travellers in the nineteenth-century essentially began the tradition based on what they saw and thought was relevant in the country they travelled in. Women also usually travelled with a male companion, be it their husband, father, or brother (Korte 113). Thus they travelled not only as representatives of their gender, but also of their family, society, culture, and social standing (Korte 110). Women travelled for a variety of reasons including duty, new opportunities, an escape from the normal life, or even to experience freedom; however the three discussed in this essay travelled for duty. While most women did travel with male counterparts, travel was nevertheless a time for them to reflect and express their opinions and understand themselves (Korte 118). Specifically, travel as a colonizer, as the women discussed in this thesis do, placed women in a position of power and they were able to explore their identities as women in new and different ways. Travelling required them to develop traditionally masculine characteristics like strength, initiative, and assertive decision-making (Korte 118). Thus, travelling also created gender ambiguity, as travelling women were "caught between the conventional expectations of their home societies and a counter-discourse of emancipation" (Korte 118). This conflict can be seen in the narratives of Fane and Eden, where they alternate between confidently retelling their experiences and an almost shameful retraction of this masculine confidence. As Precious McKenzie notes, "women travel writers negotiated tension brought about by competing power structures…at times in the travel texts, the writer supports traditional Victorian morals and at other times, the travel writer is renegotiating competing positions" (McKenzie 7). More than that, the intersection of the narratives of these

women with their gender, race, class, and imperialism creates a "textual unease" (Mills 3) on which McKenzie, Robert Shoemaker, and Sara Mills all comment. As McKenzie further notes, "British female travel writers renegotiated social expectations for women and revisioned their place within the vast empire" (McKenzie 10). Thus women were being pulled in many directions at this time, and this comes across stylistically in the three texts studied in this thesis. As Korte and Mills both notice, these pressures feed into the subjectivity of women's travel literature as they attempt not to come across as excessively masculine to the reader (Korte 118), leading to, at times, a tentative and unsure narrative.

Another way of approaching these travel texts includes viewing women as colonizers given their active participation in maintaining the British Empire. This manifests itself both in the content of what they write and the style in which they write. Sara Suleri observed that "outside the confines of domesticity, one of the few socially responsible positions available to [Anglo-Indian women] was the role of female as amateur ethnographers" (75). Many women, and especially Parkes, chose the picturesque as a tool to describe the country around them. By doing so, women supplied "an aesthetic content to the myriad workings of imperial power" (Suleri 78). In reducing "the more shattering aspects of its difference [and] romanticizing its difficulty into the greater tolerable of mystery" (Suleri 75), the picturesque "domesticated [sub continental threats] into a less disturbing system of belonging" (Suleri 75-76). The same applied to Indian women, and especially nautch girls[4], who, Suleri argues, British women described using the picturesque to reduce the sexual threat they posed (Suleri 91-92). The picturesque thus becomes a stylistic tool associated with women and contributes to "the psychic strains of self-censorship" (Suleri 75). It fell to the women to provide a sense of beauty amidst colonialism and the Oriental 'Other' and this inherent expectation affects

[4] Nautch girls were professional courtesans who "'were not only educated but also received governmental protection. They were free from stigma, recognized as a distinct professional class, and taxed according to their incomes. No religious occasion was thought to be complete without their attendance'" (Suleri 92-93). The word nautch means 'dance' in Hindi.

their subjectivity. By using the picturesque, British women travellers also indirectly limited their freedom by describing what they thought they were supposed to describe. This becomes complicated when applied to descriptions of Indian women. In Sindhu Menon's words, while the Indian woman can be seen as colonized by both race and the patriarchy, British women were colonized by the patriarchy but uneasily identified with Indian women at the level of gender (Menon 101). Female travel writers, "as collaborators in the colonial enterprise…often had to submerge their own female identity and join in denouncing the very category of the feminine" (Menon 109). Wendy Mercer, too, concedes that due to their oppression by patriarchy, women identify more strongly with the oppressed; which in this case would be the Indian population (Mercer 147). Thus the question then arises of what role these conflicting identities play in forming the personal development of British travel writers, and how that comes across in their writing.

There can be no doubt that many of the British were stunned by certain Indian customs, curious about others, or even nonchalant about what the Indian population did. In line with their audiences, however, British women travel writers of the nineteenth century often took the time to develop the Indian as an exotic, Oriental figure. In Victor Segalen's words, exoticism refers to "the forceful and curious reaction to a shock felt by someone … in response to some object whose distance from oneself he alone can perceive and savor" (Segalen 20-21). Exoticism, then, reflects an "eternal incomprehensibility" (Segalen 21) which the viewer, unable to understand, then transforms into something fantastic and different.

The exotic manifests itself in British, and Western, constructions of what they called the Orient. Described by prominent literary intellectual and post-colonialism scholar Edward Said as "a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (Said, *Orientalism* 1), the construct of the Orient reflects Western identity more

than anything else. In more concrete terms, Said describes the Orient as "the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the focus of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other" (Said, *Orientalism* 1). While this idea of the Orient helped Europeans contextualize and bring "civilization to primitive or barbaric peoples" (Said, *C&I* xi), it also helped strengthen the Western self-identity by clearly defining its "contrasting image idea, personality, [and] experience" (Said, *Orientalism* 1-2). Thus, Said's essential argument holds that the construct of the Orient served "as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient" (Said, *Orientalism* 3), and that European, or Western (which he appears to use interchangeably) culture further identified itself and gained meaning by opposing itself to the Orient (Said, *Orientalism* 3). Throughout the travel writing of these women, they freely incorporate this idea of the Orient while constructing their image of India.

In studying these issues of subjectivity, independence, and the portrayal of the Indian population, this thesis will discuss in chronological order the travel literature of Fanny Parkes, Isabella Fane, and Emily Eden. These three women display a breadth of experiences and opinions and all travelled around similar areas of northern India. Despite the multiple issues of subjectivity that come up with travel writing, it is an apt choice for the study of this thesis. Parkes, Fane, and Eden are all able to explicitly state in their texts how their identities as women affect their actions. As participants in British imperialism, all three women provide a British viewpoint on India; whether an earlier nineteenth-century viewpoint, as Parkes does, or a later, 1830s view from Eden and Fane. Given the intimate, trusted nature of travel writing, readers are privy to the minds of these three women. Travel writing, as the account in this case of actual people, also shows the truthfulness of life at that point of time. While the texts are a representation of these women's experiences, these experiences are shaped by actual incidents that took place in these women's lives. Additionally, given that the travel

writing texts considered in this thesis required writers to physically write their thoughts down, all incidents and thoughts included in these three texts are of importance to these women. They undoubtedly screened their thoughts while writing, but the added effort required to physically write down these incidents show their importance. Each chapter will focus on one of the women and will start with a map taken from the published collection which shows the path of their travels.

Fanny Parkes was in India with her husband, a mid-ranking civil servant, from 1822-1845. During her time in India, she travelled around the northern parts of the country, learned Hindustani, and absorbed all she could of the Indian culture. Her journal, *Wanderings of a Pilgrim, in Search of the Picturesque, During Four-and-Twenty Years in the East; with Revelations of Life in the Zenana,*[5] is filled with details of the customs and practices of Indian culture. Unlike Fane and Eden, Parkes did not have a high social status. Her husband ran an ice factory for most of his career and was relatively care-free about what his wife did. In fact he prompted her several times to travel by herself, to the astonishment of both local British individuals and the Indian population. Parkes's journal shows a degree of independence through her descriptions of travel, adventure, and the dangers she faced. She sought to create a journal that would show the true India, including descriptions of the mysterious zenana, which only admitted women. As her work spanned twenty-four years and took place in a more expansive timeframe than Fane's and Eden's narratives, this thesis will consider her narrative from 1822-1830, and from 1835-1840 to simultaneously capture the difference in colonial narrative between the 1820s and 1830s and cover the timeframe of the other two women discussed.

[5] This title is shortened to *Wanderings of a Pilgrim* in this thesis.

Isabella Fane was the only daughter of General Sir Henry Fane and accompanied him to India on his appointment as Commander-in-Chief[6] in 1835. She acted as his hostess until 1838, when she was sent back home in anticipation of military operations beyond the northwest frontier. She wrote frequent letters to her aunt Caroline Chapman, and the text used for discussion in this thesis, *Miss Fane in India*, was formed from unedited manuscripts of those letters collected by John Pemble. Fane's high social status meant that her life was restricted by what her father thought appropriate for her. Unmarried and in her thirties, Fane constantly had some sort of male chaperone around her. While her letters provide insight into the excitations and adventures that travelling to India afforded her, they also show her loneliness and feelings of worthlessness which are little assuaged by those around her. Pemble summarizes her life in India after her letters end as a "rootless existence of an unattached spinster of slender means and advancing years" (Pemble 237).

Emily Eden was the sister of Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India from 1835-1842, and accompanied him to India during his time there. In 1837, Lord Auckland and his retinue, which included Emily Eden, took a tour of the Upper Provinces to Punjab so that Auckland could familiarize himself with the territory and strengthen diplomatic relations. Eden's letters were written to her sister Mary Drummond and edited by her prior to publication. Like Fane, Eden also had a very high social status and faced many restrictions on what she could and could not do. She spent much of her time on tour meeting Indian dignitaries and strengthening diplomatic ties. Nevertheless, her letters are full of life and vigor and show inherent and unexpected freedoms, including her frank and sometimes callous language. Eden arrived in India in 1835, and a full collection of her letters to various people from 1835-1842 was published as *Letters from India* by her great-niece Eleanor Eden

[6] The Commander-in-Chief "acted as president of the Military Board" (Misra 6), and had the "voice and precedence in [the Supreme] Council next after the Governor-General" (Misra 31). The Military Board controlled all military affairs in India (Misra 1) while "the [Supreme] Council consisted of the Company's senior servants" (Misra 17).

after the publication of *Up the Country*. *Up the Country*, which contains her letters during Lord Auckland's tour, is used in this thesis for two reasons. Eden herself created the collection of *Up the Country* and all letters are addressed to the same person, her sister Mary Drummond. Thus by considering this collection we are able to see what Eden wanted her representation of India to be; and we also have consistency in her narrative as she writes to the same person. Secondly, the letters collected in *Up the Country* contain an account of Lord Auckland's tour; and as a result Eden was exposed to more of India than she was from 1835-1837 in Calcutta. Thus *Up the Country* also gives a more varied representation of India because Eden was exposed to more parts of India in that timeframe.

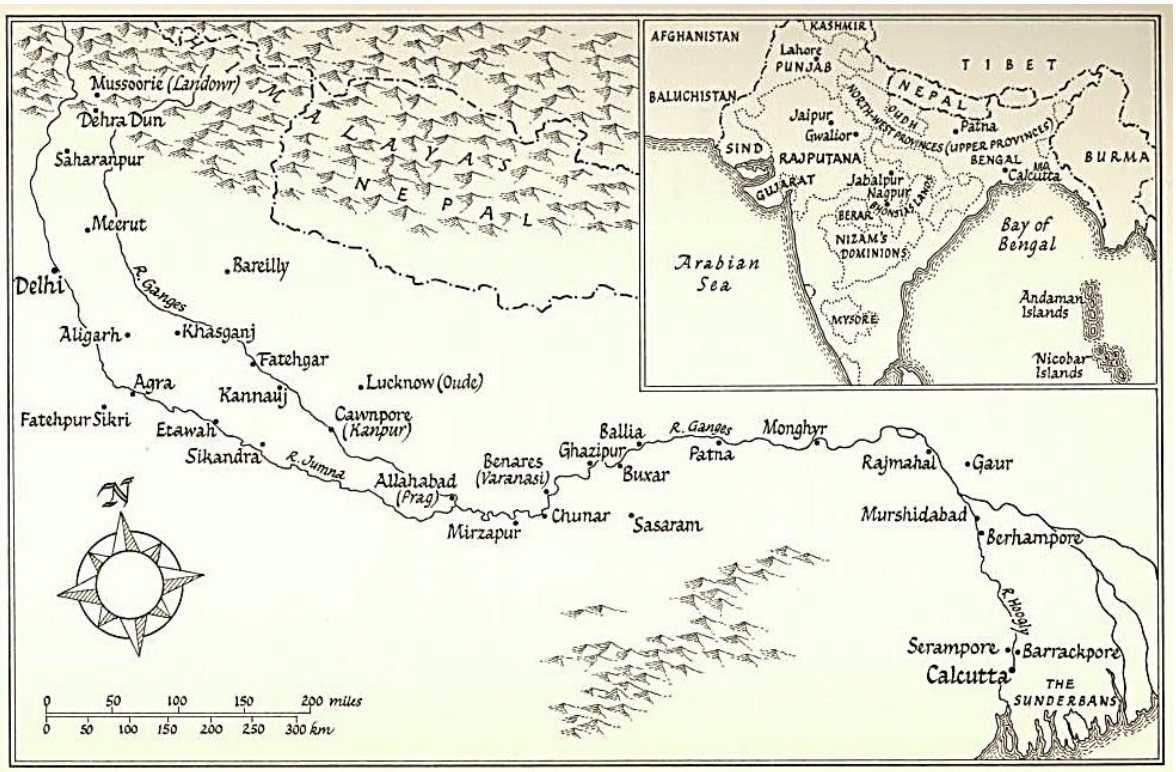
By combining the experiences of these three women, this thesis will attempt to address themes of personal development through travel to India. While travel is the main variable under consideration, the importance of aspects such as social class and publication of these texts must be considered. Further, this thesis will address how these women viewed the Indian population, and what their assessments of Indians meant with regard to the broader British population's view of Indians. Fane and Eden count themselves lucky when comparing their freedom to the freedom of the Indian women. All three women comment on their attraction towards Indian men, and in particular Sikh men. How did this play into what was expected and not expected of them? Was their sexualization a form of expressing independence? In Fane's case, restrictions to her independence frustrated her; and to curb her frustrations Fane found other ways to participate in the activity she was forbidden from doing. Can this same logic be applied to Eden and Parkes to show that, paradoxically, the imposition of regulations actually gave rise to a personal drive and independence? Both Fane and Eden were single women, and lived out their time in India as such. Parkes was the only one of the three who was married. How far did marriage play into their personal development? Was the presence of a husband significantly different from that of a father, or a

brother? What impact did the relationships these women had with their male counterparts have on their experiences in India?

In consideration of these questions, this thesis will also take into account the medium of letters and journals. Both Fane and Eden wrote letters to loved ones at home whom they trusted and who wanted to know what life in India was like. It is difficult to gauge how much of the frankness that comes through in the two women's letters can be attributed to the liberation of travel or simply the informality of the letter to a loved one. While Eden edited her own letters before publishing them and could have removed any problematic phrasing, the letters of Fane come from manuscripts and were edited by John Pemble in 1985. Parkes, on the other hand, heavily edited her journal prior to publishing. Thus her journal, intended to act as an ethnographic text, discusses Indian customs, culture, and the Indian population more as opposed to her own life and feelings. Fane and Eden more extensively detail their day-to-day life, and freely express their thoughts and emotions in tandem. As a result, Fane and Eden's' letters have relatively less insight into the Indian population, although the few instances where they do are valuable in showing a British perception of Indians; versus Parkes's relatively objective descriptions.

# Chapter 1

## Appreciating India and Describing the Zenana: Fanny Parkes and *Wanderings of a Pilgrim*




*Map showing Parkes's travels taken from* Begums, Thugs, and White Mughals, *edited by William Dalrymple*

Fanny Parkes was a British traveller in India from 1822-1846. Born in 1794, she set sail for India in 1822 when her husband Charles Parkes, who worked for the East India Company, was posted as First Assistant to the Collector of Sea Customs in Calcutta (Chawner vi). In 1826 she moved with him to Allahabad, where he ran an ice factory for the rest of his time in India. Throughout her twenty-four years in India, Parkes kept a diary which she sent to her mother in England in installments (Chawner xiii). Parkes edited her journal upon returning to England and prepared it for publication herself in 1850, adding a glossary of Hindi words she uses in her text, a list of Oriental proverbs and sayings, and appendices with additional information from her travels.

Parkes's narrative is a sprawling and expansive text split into two volumes due to its length. It wholly covers her travels from 1822-1846, including descriptions of her sea

journeys. In the early 1840s, Parkes traveled back to England due to the death of her father. She stayed away from India until 1843 due to the deaths of other loved ones and during this time traveled to France, Belgium, and Germany to pay her respects. After recovering from an onset of resulting depression she joined her husband in the Cape in South Africa, where he had relocated due to health issues. She sailed to Madras around March 1844, and left India for good in September 1844.

Her narrative starts quickly, with the time period 1822-1826 being summarized in sixty pages. Her account of 1827 consists of only seven pages. This gets longer as her time in India progresses. Her writing progresses as well, with 1828 and 1829 each consisting of twenty pages, and the 1830s generally lasting longer per year as well. Parkes divides her narrative into chapters thematically and not by time. At the beginning of each chapter, she lists the topics that will be discussed in a kind of epigraph, and then at times demarcates a particular topic by giving the text a title. Readers can also see that Parkes has edited her journals prior to publication through references Parkes makes in her text to either the future or other parts of her narrative. In one instance, Parkes comments that "on [her] return to England, a gentleman said" (Parkes 1: 105); in another she again mentions her "return to England, [where she] saw and admired a round table" (Parkes 1: 111); and in yet another she tells the reader that "a further account of this bow will be found in a subsequent chapter" (Parkes 2: 73). Thus readers can see that Parkes in fact did edit her journals prior to publication, and edited them extensively and presumably for organization, clarity, and to remove any overtly critical discourse about the East India Company.

Parkes had an unusual relationship with her husband Charles. Traditionally, a woman's focus in life was assumed to be their husband, first in finding him and then in taking care of him and their family (Vicinus ix). However, in an 1838 letter written by Fanny Eden, Emily Eden's sister, Fanny bemusedly remarks that Parkes "'informed us that she was an

Independent Woman'" (Dalrymple v). Thus Parkes did not identify herself by her husband as was the norm and effortlessly embodied the independence and self-sufficiency Fanny described. She freely traveled alone and with unnamed friends throughout the northern regions of India. Her husband seems to have supported these travels as Parkes does not mention any sort of disagreements between them, and at times states he even encourages her to travel without him. Dalrymple calls Charles a "mentally unstable junior official" (v), and through Fanny Eden's letter, we find out that Parkes told people Charles "'always goes mad in the cold season, so…it is her duty to leave him and travel about'" (Dalrymple v). However, Parkes's narrative rarely mentions or discusses Charles, and she never names him throughout her text. Whenever Charles is discussed, he comes across as a kindly and supportive husband. Esther Chawner, the writer of the introduction, describes Charles as quiet, good humored, sensible, hard-working, and not very ambitious (Chawner ix). When Parkes feels sad after selling her horse, Charles "beamed [her] for having sold a creature in which [she] took so much delight, and was not satisfied until he had replaced him by a milk-white Arab" (Parkes 1: 62). Without qualms, he leaves her alone "to discharge the Calcutta hackeries, to get others, and to continue [her] journey" at Benares because he needs to get back to Allahabad (Parkes I: 66). Parkes calls him "my kind husband" (Parkes 2: 272) and her unconventional relationship with him, in addition to their lack of children, contributes to her unusual freedom and independence.

Thus Parkes's situation differed greatly, as we will see, from Emily Eden's and Isabella Fane's. In terms of social class, Parkes was nowhere as prominent as either Eden or Fane, nor was her husband a very senior official in the East India Company. This meant her schedule was less rigid; she had fewer restrictions on what she could and could not do, and was under less scrutiny. She took full advantage of this, travelling extensively to places unknown to most other British travellers and observing Indian customs and culture with an

excited interest and understanding sympathy (Chawner v). Moreover, she displays an insatiable interest in anything she could learn, be it botany, ice making, different types of wood, or different breeds of horses. Chawner summarizes her as “a woman of boundless energy, both physical and mental, kindly, intelligent, and unprejudiced, more than usually observant and enquiring” (Chawner vii).

Parkes embodied unconventional traits for a woman of her time and had relatively progressive ideals about the position of women. Full of energy and excitement, she partook in unusual activities for a woman, including horseback riding, stone-cutting, and bird stuffing. Highly independent, self-sufficient, and “always impatient with Western notions of feminine decorum” (Dalrymple xvi), she sought out solitude and thrived in dangerous situations. In Dalrymple’s words, “she was well aware that her sex made her vulnerable and so deprived her of opportunities open to them; but she also knew that she had one distinct advantage where she could trump her male rivals: her access to Indian zenānas. No Englishman could go into the quarters of Indian women, and Fanny was determined to make the most of the opportunity and to report from beyond a frontier that her rivals could not cross” (xv). Thus, large portions of her journal are dedicated to demystifying and understanding the zenana. Her findings and opinions differed greatly from its Western reputation of being “governed by virtues such as lust, immoderation, and (in the case of the well-to-do) the obscene display of wealth” (Lal, *Coming of Age* 27). She took pleasure in reporting “on her perceptions of the reality of the lives of Indian women, and especially the restrictions which she felt women in both East and West suffered in common” (Dalrymple xvi), stretching this to critique both Eastern and Western constructions of women.

Her unconventionality and open mindedness gave her ample opportunities to interact with Indians. She had more occasions than most to attend Indian functions, and the Indians she met seemed “to have liked her, and talked freely and informally to her; when they found

she was interested and sympathetic they gave her opportunities to see more of their life and customs" (Chawner xii). Moreover, Parkes herself recognized her shortcomings as a European in India and actively tried to fix that. "An European in Calcutta sees very little of the religious ceremonies of Hindoos," (Parkes 1: 42) Parkes laments, and later goes on to notice that "long as I had lived in Calcutta, I had seen very little of native life or the forms of pooja" (Parkes 1: 66). Thus she saw the gaps in her exposure to Indian culture, and placed this into the larger picture of how she presented the country. Unlike Eden or Fane, neither of whom indicated in their writing that there could be more to India than what they saw, Parkes not only noticed and documented this, but made an effort to see those aspects.

At the same time, Chawner notes that the Indians with whom Parkes interacted most closely were the aristocracy, "for in those days there was little chance of middle-class contacts, and she was not able to see the home life of the average Indian woman" (Chawner xiii). Despite Parkes's ever-present enthusiasm for learning and truly understanding India, "she makes no mention of the friendliness and fine qualities of the peasants, whom she must have met on her journeys, and she does not comment on the social condition of the common people, except to describe famine and epidemics" (Chawner xiii). While she takes the time and effort to develop personalities of the different Indians she met, the peasants were mainly a part of "her collection of the picturesque and the curious, or as elements in a possible sketch" (Chawner xiii).

This brings us to the picturesque, another central theme in Parkes's writing. According to Suleri, women travel writers found value in ethnographically describing India around them, and in particular by using the picturesque as a way to aestheticize the country (Suleri 75). From Suleri's point of view, the picturesque thus acted as a colonizing tool by romanticizing the colonized country (Suleri 75). In Parkes's case, Suleri finds that she examines "racial and social difference as metaphoric artifacts that can be added to her

collection" (Suleri 89) and uses the picturesque as a colonial tool. Though at times Parkes uses the picturesque to trivialize and aestheticize Indians and Indian culture, in many other instances she creates unique and individualized descriptions of India and the people she meets. Thus while Suleri's theory accounts for Parkes's sometimes overly-aestheticized descriptions, it presents her picturesque narrative as wholly colonial when in fact her genuine enthusiasm for India also informs her use of the picturesque. In looking at Parkes only as a colonist, we pass over the value of her narrative by discounting her driven and determined personality and willfully ignoring her sincere appreciation for India. Dalrymple, too, finds Parkes "a passionate lover of India" (Dalrymple, xviii) and not "any sort of gung-ho colonialist" (Dalrymple, xviii). Thus while Suleri's theory holds value in discussing Parkes's narrative, it does not wholly describe *Wanderings of a Pilgrim*.

Parkes's time in India changed her. When she arrived back home, her mother did not fully recognize her. "The coloniser had been colonised," (ix) as Dalrymple states. Throughout her time in India, her viewpoints and opinions shifted, molded, and developed. "Having assumed at first that good taste was the defining characteristic of European civilization and especially that of her own people" (Dalrymple viii), Parkes increasingly finds these notions questioned by the beauty she finds in the Indian life and the "rampant philistinism of the English in India" (Dalrymple viii). By the 1830s, "she came to be increasingly critical of the East India Company her husband served. In her published work that criticism was by necessity muted, but her allegiances are clear" (Dalrymple ix). The Indian culture and way of life become so ingrained in her that when she arrives back home in England, she feels a rush of disappointment: "'it was bitterly cold walking up from the boat-rain…Everything on landing looked so wretchedly mean, especially the houses, which are built of slate stone, and also slated down the side, it was cold and gloomy…I felt a little disgusted.'" (Dalrymple ix). This 'Indianisation', in Dalrymple's words, or 'chutnification', in Salman Rushdie's

phrasing, meant she "was criticised by her contemporaries for 'going native', for her over-developed sympathies for the cultures, religions and peoples of North India" (Dalrymple xviii). Thus this section will also study in what ways Parkes, according to Dalrymple, 'went native.'

Despite her effusive enthusiasm throughout the text, Parkes displays moments of harsh sadness and acute disappointment. In her initial years, she adds an extract from a homebound letter which possesses a negative tone. Calling India a "savage place," Parkes bemoans her "lifeless life" and finds that "man remains [in India] comparatively dead to one of the noblest ends of his creation" (Parkes 1: 48). Her juxtaposition of such a sad and negative letter in the middle of an excited, almost overly-enthusiastic narrative is strange to readers, especially considering that she edited her text prior to publication. Similarly, at another point of time she questions "Why should [she] keep a journal? There is nothing to relate in the monotony of an Indian life at home" (Parkes 2: 124), but then goes on to say that her "journal is a constant source of pleasure" (Parkes 2: 147). Thus, the discrepancy she exhibits at times could reflect a need to appear happy to her readers and the receivers of her letters. In Parkes's own words, "letters from home assure [her] of the delight with which it is received, of the pleasure with which they follow [her] through [her] wanderings, and of the interest they feel in all those scenes that pass before [her]" (Parkes 2: 147). Through this, we know that the people receiving her letters were also open-minded and enthusiastic about India. They are as interested in "the religion on the Hindūs, who are perhaps the most extraordinary people on the face of the earth" (Parkes 2: 147) as Parkes herself. This type of audience first and foremost stands in stark contrast to Eden and Fane, who were writing to a more pro-imperialist audience, and shows that Parkes had a supportive friend and family network at home. However, through this description of Parkes's audience, we can better understand her subjectivity. Her audience not only made her more open and receptive to

Indian culture, but must have also put an expectation on Parkes to portray a certain image of India, and keep a jaunty, upbeat tone in her letters based on what they thought it to be. Thus, Parkes's audience affected her subjectivity in a completely opposite fashion from that of Eden and Fane, as we will see in subsequent chapters.

Another possible factor in her subjectivity could have been the change in British colonial thought that took place in the nineteenth-century as discussed earlier. While other Britons were shying away from Indian culture, Parkes was "a free spirit and an independent mind in an age of imperial conformity" (Dalrymple vi). Thus, given that Parkes published her work in 1850, after no doubt having been able to witness this change in thought, her editing of her narrative and presentation of India could be in combative response to this change in mind-set. With not only her intense enthusiasm for India, but her extensive glossary and list of Oriental proverbs, Parkes makes an effort to effectively portray a different side of India that others were not showing at that time.

Lastly, Parkes's subjectivity could have been informed by the sense of fulfillment and importance she developed through her time in India. Unlike Eden and Fane, who feel useful only in the context of their imperial role or not at all respectively, Parkes remarks that after one of her travels, "It was pleasant to be thus warmly received," (Parkes 2: 110) when her husband picks her up and others tell her they missed her. Thus we see that Parkes was missed and valued by people around her. This meaning to her presence in India and a subsequent feeling of belonging would have made Parkes happier, and this could have contributed to her positive impression of India.

With this context, this thesis will examine three main points. First, it will analyze the image of India and the Indian population that Parkes creates. Then it will study her representation of women and the zenana before examining how far Parkes 'went native.'

Throughout this section, this thesis will explain how her narrative sheds light on the kinds of personal development unavailable to British women who lived in England but available to those who travelled to India.

*Parkes's Representation of India and the Indian Population*

To put it simply, Parkes's representation of India and the Indian population is as diverse as the country itself. While at times Parkes does create generalizations, her image of the country differs based on where she travels. Her descriptions of India have an ethnographic feel, and at times they are neutral and lack any opinion at all. However, her effusive use of the picturesque, which Suleri, as mentioned before, interprets as a feminine colonial tool, counteracts her efforts to show a true depiction of India due to its inherent political significance.

Upon her arrival, Parkes excitedly proclaims that she "thought India a most delightful country," (Parkes 1: 21) and finds "India is a most interesting country" (Parkes 1: 23). This contrasts with a later description in a few years when Parkes says, "How weary and heavy life is in India, when stationary! Travelling about the country is very amusing; but during the heat of the rains, shut up in the house, one's mind and body feel equally enervated" (Parkes 2: 57). Through this contrast we see that Parkes does not have a single, constant opinion about India; rather it is informed by her situation, mood, location, or perhaps the momentum of travelling. Unlike Eden, who we will later see was consistently unimpressed and bored, Parkes finds herself simultaneously stimulated and frustrated with the country.

A large part of Parkes's depiction of India ties into its climate, her location, and their interconnection. Though on arrival in Calcutta, Parkes was "charmed with the climate" (Parkes 1: 21), she goes on to describe its intensity and finds it difficult to keep her spirits up "in a climate so oppressive as this" (Parkes 1: 59). Her narrative contains a plethora of

descriptions of the intense Indian heat; and while these descriptions convey a singular message, they are each constructed very differently. Sometimes Parkes uses hyperbolic comparisons to describe the heat, such as "where the sword kills one, the climate carries off an hundred" (Parkes 1: 56). Other times, she uses visceral and bodily descriptions to help readers feel "the heat [that] makes you as sick as if you were to shut your head up in an oven" (Parkes 1: 102). More than the heat is the pain and discomforts it causes, such as a lack of sleep, when "a hot day, without a breath of air, was followed by as hot a night, during which [Parkes] could not close [her] eyes" (Parkes 2: 30), or "intolerable pain in [the] head, [which is] brought on by exposure to the sun on the river" (Parkes 2: 43). Parkes also describes the heat as physically fatiguing, where "the weary heavy day, the hot and sleepless night, the excessive heat of the weather, the relaxation of the body, the heaviness of mind, the want of interest in everything, the necessity of a colder air and colder climate to restring nerves that are suffering from fifteen years' residence in India" (Parkes 2: 124) causes her extreme discomfort. Through the variety of ways in which Parkes describes the heat, not only does she display a certain literary flair, but she also shows her interest in India. She takes the effort to *think* about the heat and what it instigates in her, then does her best to effectively convey that to readers. Thus, her variety in descriptions of the heat simultaneously serves to create an image of India's challenging weather and show her genuine interest in the country.

In contrast to multifaceted descriptions of heat, Parkes very much enjoys the cooler weather when she goes to the Himalayas. The city of Rajpur delights Parkes, who finds it reminds her of Switzerland (Parkes 2: 225). Unlike the oppressive heat in Calcutta and other places Parkes travels to, "the delicious [mountain] air, so pure, so bracing, so unlike any air [she] had breathed for fifteen year… promise[d] health and strength and spirits" (Parkes 2: 228). Through this, we see that even after fifteen years, India still surprises and delights Parkes. Her experience in the Himalayas can be defined in her sensory descriptions of the

landscape; whether visual when she exclaims, “How fine, how beautiful are the Snowy Ranges!” (Parkes 2: 248); auditory when she describes “the wild notes of the Hill birds” (Parkes 2: 240); or gustatory such as her observation of the “delicious” (Parkes 2: 242) air. However, her most poignant description of the climate and the landscape in the Himalayas comes about when she receives news of her father’s death. Parkes finds that the hills, soothing and beautiful, help her through her grief. In her words, “[she] spent [her] time chiefly in solitude, roaming in the Hills…where is the grief that is not soothed and tranquilized by the enjoyment of such scenery?” (Parkes 2: 272). The beauty of the landscape is almost rapturous, and Parkes compels readers to

> Indulge in solemn vision and bright silver dream, while ‘every sight and sound from the vast earth and ambient air’ sends to your heart its choicest impulses: gaze on those rocks and pinnacles of snow, where never foot of common mortal trod which the departing rose-tints leave in colder grandeur, and enjoy those solemn feelings of natural piety with which the spirit of solitude imbues the soul. (Parkes 2: 273-274)

The poetry and immersive beauty of this passage show a reverential and mesmerizing image of the landscape, and of India. Parkes speaks directly to readers and invites them to experience the peaceful solidarity she cherishes. Thus, through the multiple ways in which heat is described, and its contrasting description to the peaceful serenity of the cool mountain climate, Parkes shows a huge range of climate in line with her representation and image of India as varied.

Beyond describing the Indian climate, Parkes also comments noticeably on the flora and fauna of the landscape. On her arrival in Calcutta, Parkes finds “the foliage of the trees, so luxuriously beautiful and so novel… [and] a source of constant admiration” (Parkes 1: 25).

While travelling, she relishes the "constant change of scenery… [finding] the country very beautiful in some parts" (Parkes 1: 68). Moreover, Parkes, as with her characterizations of the heat, really *describes* the landscape as opposed to merely pronouncing it positive, negative, or irrelevant. Specifically, when describing Gaur, she mentions that "the fields present one sheet of golden color in every direction; the sarson[7] was in full flower, its yellow flowers looking so gay amidst the trees, the old ruins, and the sheets of water" (Parkes 2: 88). Parkes takes the time to draw a picture of the Indian landscape for readers and doesn't attempt just to convey her opinion of it. On the other hand, as we saw with her general description of India, here too Parkes presents both sides of the coin, with her later finding parts of India "generally barren, flat, and uninteresting" (Parkes 2: 189).While in Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh, she writes explicit descriptions of the famine there, going on to wonder, "what avails it in a famine like this? [Lord Auckland's assistance] is merciful cruelty, and only adds a few more days to their sufferings; better to die at once, better to end such intolerable and hopeless misery" (Parkes 2: 144). Thus, while her depiction of India is usually positive, she adds negative elements as well to show a varied and balanced image of the country.

Throughout her depiction of India, a common thread Parkes uses is the picturesque. The name of her collection, *Wanderings of a Pilgrim in Search of the Picturesque*, itself establishes the importance of the picturesque to Parkes. Her use of the picturesque, however, at times serves as an exoticizing literary technique, as well as a colonial strategy to domesticate "[sub continental threats] into a less disturbing system of belonging" (Suleri 75-76). More than that, Parkes's use of the picturesque often trivializes India or the Indian culture as objects for her amusement. As Chawner mentions in her introduction, the peasants Parkes meets in her travels serve as a "collection of the picturesque and the curious, or as elements in a possible sketch" (Chawner xiii). Thus, when Parkes describes "the flights of

[7] "Sarson" is the Hindi word for mustard plant.

stone steps…the temples around them of such peculiar Hindoo architecture; the natives, both men and women, bathing or filling their jars with the water of the holy Gunga; the fire trees, and the brightness of the sunshine, add great beauty to the scene" (Parkes 2: 43) and finds the "one great defect is the colour of the stream, which, during the rains, is peculiarly muddy" (Parkes 2: 43), she treats each aspect of the scene as a moveable prop in a set. Her description here, while not explicitly voicing an opinion, nevertheless creates an exotic, Oriental image where everything, including the natives, plays a part in creating an image for Parkes's amusement. We see this later on as well when Parkes is delighted "with the wildness of the scenery, [because] it equalled [her] expectations" (Parkes 2: 229). The implication of the landscape or the scenery needing to fit her expectation shows a colonial sense of superiority. While at a port, Parkes describes "gay, well-trimmed American vessels, the grotesque forms of the Arab ships, the Chinese vessels with an eye on each side, the native vessels in all their fanciful and picturesque" (Parkes 2: 102). Her dignified description of the Western, American vessel versus the "grotesque" Arab ship and the "fanciful and picturesque" Indian ship create a bifurcation between the West and the East; thus helping Parkes strengthen Western self-identity by defining its "contrasting image idea, personality, [and] experience" (Said, *Orientalism* 1-2). The ships associated with the East are described in pejorative or frivolous terms, with the exception being the Chinese ship which has a neutral description; serving to strengthen the Western image of an organized, "well-trimmed" contrast to the East. While describing the Paharis, an indigenous North Indian race, Parkes calls them "animals to stare at" (Parkes 2: 227). Not only are they stripped of their human identities, but their role is reduced to one of a curious specimen to be observed. Thus while Parkes's narrative is driven by the picturesque and her search for beauty, in using it (among other situations) Parkes inherently creates a political undertone to her narrative in the context of colonialism.

Lastly, just as how Parkes describes the landscape in diverse ways, so too does she describe the Indian population. Though she establishes overarching ideas, such as their excessive idleness (Parkes 1: 26), how curious and different she finds them (Parkes 1: 31), and how superstitious they are (Parkes 2: 112), she also describes them more specifically based on where she meets them. Indeed, she finds some of them "remarkably handsome" (Parkes 1: 26), pronounces the Mahrattas "a fine bold race" (Parkes 2: 4), and also comments specifically on Muslims and Bengalis. The Muslims she dubs "sleeping, languid, opium-eating Musalmānīs" (Parkes 2: 3) and "anxious for converts; [while] the Hindūs will neither make proselytes, nor be converted themselves" (Parkes 2: 288). Thus the Muslims are shown to be lazy and drugged, and also actively looking for converts. On the other hand, Parkes has a more positive attitude towards Bengalis than we will see from Eden or Fane. Parkes initially comments that "the skin of the women in Bengal is of a better tinge than that of the up-country women; they are small, well-formed, and particularly graceful in their movements" (Parkes 2: 98) and later elaborates on a particular Bengali woman that stuck her as "remarkably well formed, [because her] attention was attracted by the beauty of her figure; [and] her skin was of a clear dark brown" (Parkes 2: 308). Her admiration for Bengali beauty, in addition to her explicit appreciation for "clear dark brown" skin stands in contrast the colonial association of blackness and inferiority that Eden and Fane create. Parkes also notices and mentions tensions between different Indian nationalities. Her crew from the northern city Haridwar, while in Calcutta, "were disgusted with the Bengalee customs, and violent in their abuse" (Parkes 2: 309). Parkes finds this important enough to add to her narrative in order to give the most possible color on Indians and their social situation.

While doing her best to give readers the most information possible, Parkes often describes cultural customs in a simple and neutral way. Take Sati, for example. The ancient custom of widow burning no doubt horrified most Westerners as it fit their image "of that

barbaric Other" (Lal, *Domesticity* 29), and yet Parkes describes it neutrally as simply a custom, and goes on to add that "the burning of the widow is not commanded by the shāstrs: to perform suttee is a proof of devotion to the husband" (Parkes 1: 94) before placing the custom in a mythological context. Similarly, when witnessing the Charak Puja where Indians were swung from hooks inserted into their backs, Parkes merely states "I was much disgusted, but greatly interested" (Parkes 1: 28) after describing the custom in neutral tones. She mentions the rationale behind it as "penance for their own sins; some for those of others, richer men" (Parkes 1: 27). Here again, Parkes does her best to educate her readers as best she can about a different culture. At a later point in her journal, when she sees Sati mounds she states that "the idea of what those wretched women must have suffered made [her] shudder" (Parkes 2: 66). While here she creates a negative aura around the custom, her method of doing so by focusing on the suffering of the women as opposed to, for example, sweeping statements about the barbarisms of Indians, shows her genuine compassion and consideration for Indians as individual people as opposed to a single, Oriental race.

Thus, Parkes creates both a general overview of the Indian people, as well as specific descriptions of the different subsets. Her first instinct, when she meets Indians, is usually positive, or at least neutral. When describing them, she avoids sweeping statements about them and has an individualized approach to understanding them, many times using an "it is customary to…" (Parkes 2: 20) approach to describe their culture.

*Parkes's Representation of Women and her Experiences in the Zenana*

A crucial aspect of Parkes's representation of the Indian population is her depiction of the zenana, which ties into her representation of women. In Parkes's own words, she is "very anxious to visit a *zenāna,* and to become acquainted with the ladies of the East… [because she has] now been nearly four years in India, and [has] never beheld any women but those in

attendance as servants in European families" (Parkes 1: 59). When she finally receives the opportunity to do so, she feels pride and excitement at knowing "no European lady but [herself], with the exception of one…has ever had an opportunity of being intimate with native ladies of rank" (Parkes 1: 379). Her findings contrast the expected "'retreat for the nobleman and his closest male relatives…of grace, beauty, and order designed to refresh the males of the household'" (Lal, *Domesticity* 2). Parkes's image of the zenana as "overheated, overcrowded, full of intrigue, which girls and women and slaves inhabit, and can never escape" (Lal, "Woman Question" 7-8) is full of mystery and hatefulness. Indeed, Parkes is dissatisfied with this discrepancy, commenting that she was "glad to have seen a *zenāna*, but much disappointed" (Parkes 1: 60).

Parkes gives readers both general information about the zenana, and more explicit information concerning its reality and how the women in it act. As previously established, the biggest covenant of the zenana was that "no other men than their husbands were permitted to enter the *zenāna*" (Parkes 1: 59), though Parkes later modifies this to specify that "only the nearest male relatives, the father and grandfather, can unrestrainedly obtain admission; the uncles and brothers only on especial occasions" (Parkes 1: 425). She recognizes her own preconceptions in shaping her perceptions of the zenana, finding that "for a woman not to be pretty when she is shut up in a zenāna appears almost a sin, so much are we ruled in our ideas by what we read in childhood of the hoorīs of the East" (Parkes 2: 40) and thus attempts to find out the reality of the zenana.

These general ideas tie into Parkes's actual experience in the zenana. "The women were not ladylike," (Parkes 1: 60) Parkes comments; and later states that "those women who are beautiful are very rare, but then their beauty is very great; the rest are generally plain" (Parkes 2: 215). Parkes shows readers what these women do all day, and how they must feel

in their situation. While visiting the Mulka Begum[8], Parkes comments multiple time on the opium-eating habits of zenana women, finding that "if a native lady wish to keep up her reputation for beauty, she should not allow herself to be seen under the effect of opium by daylight" (Parkes 1: 381). Indeed, the Begum herself is languid and sleepy in her meeting with Parkes, causing Parkes to wonder if "the languor was the effect of opium" (Parkes 1: 380). This point ties into Parkes's broader theme of boredom that occupies the zenana. In Parkes's experiences, "eating opium and sleeping appear to occupy much of [the Mulka Begum's] time" (Parkes 1: 386). More than the boredom, Parkes reports that the zenana ladies often feel confined in their four walls. The Mulka Begum remarks to Parkes that "'You English ladies, with your white faces, you run about where you will, like dolls, and are so happy!'" (Parkes 1: 381). Parkes picks up on sadness, jealousy, and bitterness the Mulka Begum feels; conjecturing that "the princess [Mulka Begum] dislikes the confinement of the four walls" (Parkes 1: 381). And yet, at the same time, zenana women have a different side to them as well. Upon seeing the Mulka Begum after she dresses up, Parkes is star struck and mystified by "how beautiful she looked! how very beautiful!" (Parkes 1: 383). Now, Parkes sees the exotic, mysterious, and expectedly Oriental woman who looks like "a dazzling apparition… [whose] movements were graceful, and the magnificence and elegance of her drapery were surprising to the eye of the European" (Parkes 1: 383). Parkes is moved, commenting that she

> felt no surprise when [she] remembered the wondrous tales told by the men of the beauty of Eastern women. Mulka walks very gracefully, and is as straight as an arrow. In Europe, how rarely-how very rarely does a woman walk gracefully! bound up in stays, the body is as stiff as a lobster in its shell; that snake-like, undulating,

[8] Mulka Begum was a member of Delhi's royal family and a descendent of Akbar Shah (Parkes 1: 379).

> movement,-the poetry of motion-is lost, destroyed by the stiffness of the waist and hip, which impedes the free movement of the limbs. A lady in European attire gives me the idea of a German manikin; An Asiatic, in her flowing drapery, recalls the statues of antiquity. (Parkes 1: 383)

Parkes's genuine awe and the image of 'the poetry of motion' bring out an intangible appeal the zenana woman possessed. The East, associated with freedom, beauty, and an "undulating…poetry of motion," stands in contrast to the rigid and inflexible West. In describing the appeal of the zenana women, Parkes judges Asiatic beauty with Western beauty as the standard. Thus while this image of Mulka is sincere in its reverence; Parkes furthers the exotic, Oriental stereotype by pitting it in comparison to Western standards. Unintentionally, she also strengthens Western identity by establishing what it is not.

However, all of Parkes's descriptions do not conform to the traditional Oriental stereotype. Parkes also describes family life in the zenana, and how the interactions between multiple wives and their one husband function. She starts by establishing that "a number of women are considered to add to a man's dignity: they add to his misery most decidedly…In native life the greatest misery is produced from a plurality of wives: they, very naturally, hate each other most cordially, and quarrel all day" (Parkes 1: 390-391). She shows readers the power these women have over their husbands through the vehicle of their children, shedding light on the power dynamic of the Indian family (Parkes 1: 391). This power dynamic is enhanced by the stubbornness of the zenana women. Parkes finds that "to induce a native woman to give way to any reasons that are contrary to her own wishes is quite out of the power of mortal man" (Parkes 1: 435). Indeed, while "a man may induce a European wife to be unselfish and make a sacrifice to comply with his wishes, or for the benefit of her children[,] a native woman would only be violent, enraged, and sulky, until the man, tired and

weary with the dispute and eternal worry, would give her her own way" (Parkes 1: 435). This novel revelation adds color not only to Parkes's representation of the zenana, but also to her representation of the Indian population and the condition of women. In summary, Parkes finds that "a zenāna is the very birth place of intrigue" (Parkes 2: 136) and later emphasizes this by saying that "a zenāna is a place of intrigue, and those who live within four walls cannot pursue a straight path: how can it be otherwise, where so many conflicting passions are called forth?" (Parkes 1: 391).

Beyond the zenana, Parkes also has progressive and critical views on the position of women both in Britain and India. Parkes notices that a woman "cannot roam in India as in Europe, or go into places crowded with natives, without a gentle man; they think it so incorrect and so marvellous, that they collect in crowds to see a beebee sāhiba who is indecent enough to appear unveiled" (Parkes 1: 115). Her humor and sarcasm show the absurdity with which she views this ideal. Later, she shares her experiences as a woman with the Baiza Bai[9] and finds more commonality than would be expected between the position of women in England and India. Parkes tells the Baiza Bai that "an English lady enjoyed all the luxury of her husband's house during his life; but, on his death, she was turned out of the family mansion" (Parkes 2: 8) and about "the severity of the laws of England with respect to married women, how completely *by law* they are the slaves of their husbands, and how little hope there is of redress" (Parkes 2: 8). The Baiza Bai smiles when Parkes tells her that men made the laws, saying that she doubted it because they only allow themselves one wife (Parkes 2: 8). She understands Parkes's point of view, and the two bond over this exchange and become fast friends. Moreover, their bonding over this issue and the similarity of their situations despite the politics of race and colonization show Parkes's identification with the

[9] The Baiza Bai was "the dowager Maratha queen of Gwalior who had been deposed by her son and sent into exile at Fatighar" (Dalrymple xv). She "struggled for power in Gwalior for many years" (Chawner x). Gwalior is a city in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh.

Indians on the level of their identity as women. Unlike Eden and Fane, who identified further with their colonial identity as opposed to their female identity, Parkes identifies more with her identity as a woman. She sympathizes with and understands the situation of women in India, seemingly because she feels the same about women in Britain. Her indignation at this comes across multiple times, and she expands on it at great length.

> A man may have as many wives as he pleases, and mistresses without number;-it only adds to his dignity! If a woman take a lover, she is murdered, and cast like a dog into a ditch. It is the same all the world over; the women, being the weaker, are the playthings, the drudges, or the victims of the man; a woman is a slave from her birth; and the more I see of life, the more I pity the condition of the woman. As for the manner in which the natives strive to keep them virtuous, it is absurd; a girl is affianced at three or four years old, married, without having seen the man, at eleven, shut up and guarded…her death generally ends the story. (Parkes 2: 56-57)

In this instance, Parkes shows her frustration with the patriarchal social structure she sees not only in India, but 'all the world over'. The double standard between the number of spouses allowed with men and women particularly irks Parkes, while the suppression of the young girl adds a macabre end to her description. Her depiction of women as playthings and slaves creates a strong image for readers not just about how women were treated at this time, but also eerily rings true in a modern context.

Moreover, Parkes's passion on this particular issue comes from her personal interaction with it. While she feels that "roaming about with a good tent and a good Arab, one might be happy forever in India" (Parkes 2: 191), she goes on to qualify this statement by

saying that “a man might possibly enjoy this sort of life more than a woman; he has his dog, his gun, and his beaters, with an open country to shoot over, and is not annoyed with-‘I’ll thank you for your name, Sir’” (Parkes 2: 191). Thus, though Parkes herself is much more independent than her peers, she feels an active sense of discrimination and bias towards her as a result and hence sympathizes more with the cause. Such events in India cause her to reflect on the social situation in Europe. When thinking about “the difference in intellect between a man and a woman brought up in a zenāna” (Parkes 2: 216), Parkes comments that “*there* they both receive the same education, and the result is similar. In Europe men have so greatly the advantage of women from receiving a superior education, and in being made to act for, and depend on themselves from childhood, that of course the superiority is on the male side; the women are kept under and have not fair play” (Parkes 2: 216). Thus Parkes uses her observations in India to reflect on her own country’s social system. In a prior entry, Parkes bemoans the English shop window models, which turn “round on poles, displaying for the laughter and criticism of the men” (Parkes 2: 113). The explicit objectification in England of the female figure particularly bothers her, as does the idea that women are systematically disadvantaged when they try to be equal with men. Her depictions of Indian women, and her identification with them, give her an ideal platform where she can voice her opinions on these issues and also show her critique of the patriarchal British society.

*Parkes and ‘Going Native’*

Due to her effusive enthusiasm for India, Parkes was often accused by her contemporaries of ‘going native’, or sympathizing too much with the Indian population (Dalrymple xviii). Indeed, Parkes displays this enthusiasm from the very beginning of her narrative, which is prefaced by a holy Hindu Sri symbol at top of the page and an invocation to Ganesh, the Patron of Literature (Parkes 1: xxi). Her consistent enthusiasm reflects both her embodiment of Indian characteristics and an understanding of their points of view. As she

herself states, those around her are surprised because they think her "a Pakka Hindostani" (Parkes 2: 23). Indeed, she learns "Hindostanee" (Parkes 1: 11) on the boat ride to India and translates between English and Urdu (Parkes 2: 45) throughout the course of her stay in India.

Parkes frequently adds Hindi words into her writing and interweaves them with her narrative as casually as though her primary audience was Indian. Examples include her statement of "we went to a nāch[10]" (Parkes 1: 43) and "I wish you had seen the tamāshā[11]" (Parkes 2: 50). In other instances she picks up on local metaphors, such as "anything remarkably bitter is compared to the neem-tree; yeh duwa kŭrwee hy jyse neem: 'this medicine is bitter as neem'" (Parkes 1: 72). She first says the phrase in Hindi, showing a primary identification with it over English, before going on to translate it into English. Her poetic language in wishing that "the intermediate years would pass by as quickly as the river Jamna [Yamuna] before our house, which is in such a furious hurry" (Parkes 1: 85) shows her embrace of India and Indian culture through her use of literary techniques celebrating Indian landscape. Thus in her language itself, and literary devices she uses, Parkes incorporates aspects of India that she finds around her. Her adoption of Hindi portrays her as an Indian, thus advancing her process of 'going native.'

Beyond language, Parkes embodies Indian culture through her appreciation, acceptance, and worship of Hindu religion. She holds the names of the gods close to her heart, with "the names of the three hundred gods…interwoven in silk and gold on the janéo I wear around my neck, to which is appended the key of my cabinet…janéos are thick strong ribbons made of red, black, yellow, and white silk, interwoven in which are the names of the gods" (Parkes 2: 147- 148). Later, she constructs a "pedigree" of Hindu deities "to assist [her] own memory" as opposed to "a dry catalogue of the three hundred and thirty millions of

[10] According to Parkes's glossary a nāch is "an Indian dance" (Parkes 1: xlvi).
[11] According to Parkes's glossary, a tamāshā is "fun, sport" (Parkes 1: xlviii).

Hindū deities" (Parkes 2: 148). Through this, readers see her excitement at Hindu religion. Parkes also displays an intricate knowledge of religion in India by "judging from the exterior ornaments on the stones, they would be pronounced Muhamudan; but, on taking out the stones, the other side presents Hindoo images" (Parkes 2: 85) at an architectural landmark.

This knowledge of architecture and Indian designs stretches to a deep, almost reverential appreciation of the Taj Mahal and Delhi. But her indignation at British maltreatment of iconic Indian landmarks is what makes Parkes stand out as becoming 'chutnified.' Her effusive reverence for the Taj Mahal renders her unable to feel that she does justice to its beauty. "I have seen the Tāj Mahul," Parkes says, "but how shall I describe its loveliness? its unearthly style of beauty! It is not its magnitude; but its elegance, its proportions, its exquisite delicacy of the whole, that render it the admiration of the world" (Parkes 1: 348). Her enthusiasm stretches to the extent where she states that "with the Neapolitan saying, 'Vedi Napoli, e poi mori,' I beg to differ entirely, and would rather offer *this* advice,-'See the Tājmahal, and then-see the ruins of Delhi'" (Parkes 2: 191). More than that, however, the Taj Mahal's true charm over Parkes is "the sacredness of the place, and remembrance of the fallen grandeur of the family of the Emperor" (Parkes 1: 356). Parkes's furious reaction when the British hire a band to play at the Taj Mahal so officials could dance on the marble platform in front of the tomb shows the process of her 'going native.' She fumes, "Can you imagine anything so detestable? European ladies and gentlemen have the band to play on the marble terrace, and dance quadrilles in front of the tomb!" (Parkes 1: 353). As Dalrymple notes, "She is even more angry when she hears that the Turkish 'baths in the apartments below the palace, which most probably belonged to the *zenāna*, were broken up by the Marquis of Hastings: he committed this sacrilege of the past'" (Dalrymple viii). Finally, "she…recoils in horror when she sees what the English have done to the beautifully inlaid Mughal *zenāna*, in the Agra Fort: 'Some wretches of European officers-to their

disgrace be it said-made this beautiful room a cook room!'" (Dalrymple viii). Her anger, frustration, and exclamatory sentences show the strength of her feelings regarding the preservation of Indian landmarks, and this contributes to her identification with Indian culture.

While Parkes initially starts off as defending Indian landmarks, she later becomes "increasingly critical of the East India Company" (Dalrymple ix) and this manifests itself in her criticism of British society, both in Britain and in India. She starts by advocating for Indian and trying to persuade her British friends to admire the sitar (Parkes 2: 1). Later, she begs Sir Charles Metcalfe[12] not to cut down a grove of trees, "assuring him that the air around nīm trees was reckoned wholesome by the natives" (Parkes 2: 50). Thus, at times she acts as a voice for Indians, which then turns into a criticism of the British ways of doing things as she becomes more and more in-tuned with the Indian way of things. After learning to ride a saddle Mahratta style, she thinks disparagingly "of Queen Elizabeth, and her stupidity in changing the style of riding for women" (Parkes 2: 6). Her continued criticisms of the British way of doing things span from the most humble things like the best ways to do laundry to higher level discussions of the way women dress. "It appears to me a most extraordinary thing that the English have never adopted the Asiatic method of *steaming* the clothes in lieu of boiling them…what a saving of expense, time, and trouble it would be if this method were to be adopted in the public washing-houses in England!" (Parkes 2: 201) Parkes comments, showing not only the value she sees in the Indian way of things but also that nothing is really below her; she notices, learns, and writes about everything. With regard to the female form of dressing, Parkes wonders "What can be more ugly than the dress of the English? [Because she has] not seen a graceful girl in…[England]: girls who would otherwise

[12] Sir Charles Theophilus, Baron Metcalfe was the provisional Governor-General of India in 1836 before Lord Auckland took over. After 1836, he served as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. He held this position until 1838, when he resigned (Pemble 32).

be graceful are so pinched and lashed up in corsets, they have all and every one the same stiff dollish appearance; and that dollish form and gait is what is considered beautiful! Look at the outline of a figure; the corset is ever before you" (Parkes 2: 332). Here, Parkes's prioritization of the Eastern form of dressing over Western shows her further identification with India as opposed to Britain.

The last way Parkes displays her 'Indianisation' is through her meaningful and significant relationships with Indians, and especially the Baiza Bai. Throughout her time in India, Parkes pays visits to a variety of Indian aristocrats, including Nawab[13] Hakim Mendhi and the Princess of Delhi Hyat-ool-Nissa Begum. They invite her to visit them, and then make her promise to visit them again if she passes through their city due to the amount they enjoyed their interactions with her. Parkes follows Indian customs and treats them respectfully, showing that she considers her and them as equals, unlike Eden and Fane who, as we will see, found the Indian population beneath them. Certainly her relationship with the Baiza Bai stands out as Parkes's most prominent relationship with an Indian. Finding her cultured, intelligent, and beautiful, Parkes sees "a freedom and independence in her air that [she] greatly admires" (Parkes 2: 3). Indeed, Parkes feels so strongly about the Baiza Bai that she dubs her "better than any native lady [she] ever met with" (Parkes 2: 7). The liking is mutual, with the Baiza Bai giving her the rank of "Great-aunt of [her] Grand-daughter" (Parkes 2: 7). Given Parkes's sadness at the mutiny that takes place at the Baiza Bai's camp and her subsequent sympathy, readers can see that Parkes truly cared about the Baiza Bai.

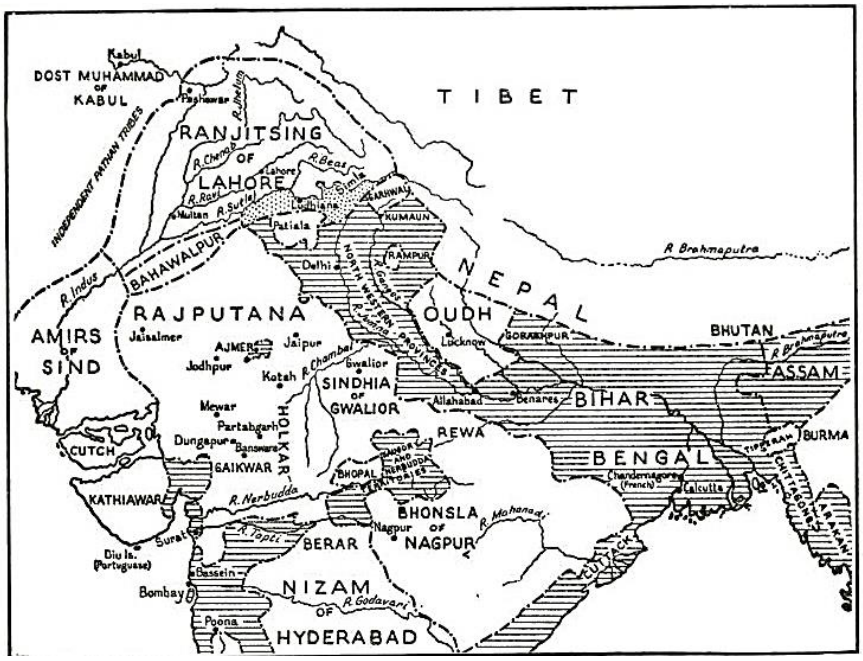
In this way, and more, Parkes began to embody the Indian way of life. Whether it be "boldly [dipping her] fingers into the dish, and [contriving] to appease [her] hunger very comfortably, much to the amusement of the Asiatic ladies" (Parkes 1: 433) or wearing Indian clothes, Parkes displayed an open-mindedness not seen in Fane or Eden. When discussing her

[13] "Nawab" was an honorific title relating to the Mughal Empire signifying aristocratic power.

actions of eating with hands, Parkes recognizes her own preconceived notions when commenting that “the mode is ungraceful, but this may be prejudice” (Parkes 1: 433-434). With regard to Indian attire, in Chawner’s words, “Fanny…was unconventional enough to wear what was comfortable” (Chawner xi) and this recognition that Indian attire was more comfortable also speaks to her ‘Indianisation’. Thus Parkes shows an unexpected identification with the Indian population, way of thinking, and culture. Her assimilation of the Hindi language into her narrative in casual, almost offhand ways, her reverential appreciation and defense of Indian monuments, and the meaningful relationships she develops with Indians all contribute to her process of ‘going native’.

# Chapter 2

## Exoticising Asian Men: Isabella Fane and *Miss Fane in India*




Northern India in 1836.

Areas under British rule and protection are shaded.

*Map taken from* Miss Fane in India, *edited by John Pemble*

Isabella Fane travelled in India from 1835 to 1838 following her father General Sir Henry Fane's appointment as Commander-in-Chief. She accompanied Sir Henry on a tour of military inspection and left India in late 1838 due to anticipated military operations beyond the northwest frontier (Pemble 5). Her father submitted his resignation around the same time, citing fatigue due to his old age (Pemble 11) as he was roughly sixty at the time of his service as Commander-in-Chief (Pemble 28). He died in 1840 while at sea on his return to England (Pemble 11). While in India, Isabella Fane sent monthly letters home to her paternal aunt Caroline Chaplain (Pemble 5).

Though these letters end in April 1837, Fane kept a journal as well which the editor John Pemble uses to supplement the collection. Pemble cites a H.W.N. Fane as owner of the Fane records and thanks her for permission to print these letters, which were deposited in the Lincolnshire Records Office (Pemble vii). After his initial interest in the letters, Pemble collected, edited, and published Isabella Fane's letters as *Miss Fane in India*. Pemble states

that “the selections are printed as written, save that punctuation has been modified, the occasional solecism corrected, and the spelling standardized” (Pemble 5). As Fane herself never adjusted her letters or edited them prior to publication, her letters offer a rare, unedited view into a British woman’s experience in India. As the daughter of a high-ranking government official, Fane enjoyed many material comforts and interacts with Indian and British dignitaries alike. More than her descriptions of interactions, though, Fane’s tone and frank comments are the hidden gems. “Miss Fane wrote as she talked,” (Pemble 6) Pemble notes, going on to specify that “her letters are free from the usual trappings of Victorian travel memoirs-stilted description, sententious moralizing, and hidebound discretion” (Pemble 6).

As the title of Pemble’s collection implies, *Miss* Fane’s experiences in India were very much influenced by her status as an unmarried woman. Fane finds her position as an unmarried woman extremely limiting, not only in hindering her actions, but also in affecting her perceptions of self-worth. Pemble comments that Fane’s position was that of “a single woman in a man’s world, forced to come to terms with the prospect of a lonely and rootless future as…the chances of marriages elude her one by one” (Pemble 6). Most of Fane’s preoccupation with marriage and loneliness can be attributed to the general Victorian mind-set at that time, as well as human nature. However, it is worth noting that Fane grew up with an unconventional family situation. Her parents never officially married due to legal obstacles in the way of annulling her mother’s first marriage (Pemble 5). Thus Fane, and her siblings, were all considered illegitimate children. Though Fane does not overtly or subtly mention her parents’ marital situation in her narrative, it could be another reason why she placed importance in the institution of marriage.

In general, Fane’s letters are “rich in historical and human interest” (Pemble 5). Throughout her letters, she demonstrates a plucky independence and drive to create her own

experience despite what social constructs might tell her to do. Though at times subdued by her aunt Mrs. Chaplin, Fane gains a more definitive sense of meaning and importance through her presence in India. She comments on her limitations as a woman though, unlike Parkes, she cites Indian social codes as the main limiting factors. Thus her letters bring up the intersection of Indian and British values, the question of whether an independent Indian set of values existed given British cultural imperialism, and what Ruby Lal refers to as a re-articulation of Indian values after "scathing [British] colonial attacks" (Lal, *Coming of Age* 34). Fane also bands with the other women in her retinue in solidarity due to their limitations as women to find ways around those limitations.

Fane's construction of India and the Indian population lacks consistency; at times Fane raves about the beauty of the Shimla countryside, and at other times she disparagingly curses the barbarity of the Indians around her. Her narrative starts in Calcutta, and then shifts to tour as her father inspects the army around the country, and finally goes north as her retinue attends the wedding of Ranjit Singh's grandson in March 1837. When she goes on tour and up north to Punjab, Fane's letters become longer and more expansive as she describes day-to-day events and the various peculiarities she sees. She structures her letters like essays, always wrapping up the packet she plans to send to Mrs. Chaplin with a brief conclusion, unlike both Parkes and Eden. Most of her letters are dominated by descriptions of mundane, day-to-day activities; however they are also heavily peppered with gossip, explicit descriptions of bodily discomfort, her unfiltered attraction towards Indian men and at times explicit objectification of them, and frequent, crude comments about those around her or Indians. In his introduction, Pemble attributes Fane's explicit attraction to the Sikh men in part to the difference in demeanor between the defeated, conquered Bengalis Fane was used to seeing in Calcutta and the independent, war-like Sikhs (Pemble 8). The Sikhs were a ruling elite class and not under the rule of the British, and this would have undoubtedly trickled

down to their demeanor and attitude, which Fane found more attractive (Pemble 8). All in all, these descriptions shock readers as "even if ladies [of that time] talked like that, they were not supposed to write like it" (Pemble 6).

From October 9th to November 7th 1836, there is a lapse in Fane's letters. Pemble inserts Fane's journal entries to continue the narrative, and by studying both we can see any differences Fane exhibits in order to study the subjectivity of her letters. In her journal, Fane's writing abruptly changes. As opposed to any sort of description, Fane writes in curt, mechanical, and short sentences. Her journal entries lack the previous embellishment Fane uses when writing to Mrs. Chaplin. Though this shows Fane's boredom with the monotony of her activities, it also points to Fane's creation of a narrative persona. At various times in her letters, Fane explicitly describes herself in surprisingly masculine terms. "I am not naturally a coward" (Fane 51), Fane proudly states when describing her experiences riding an elephant. Her prior assertion that "the sight of them made [her] consider whether [she] would go or not" (Fane 51) makes her decision to ride the elephant and assert her bravado a response to an internal challenge. At the same time Fane tries to not come across as excessively masculine by downplaying the difficulty of the feat in line with Korte's theory. Despite the shaking of the elephant, Fane claims to have "*walked* on many a horse that has shaken [her] more" (Fane 51). Fane from this point on begins to create an image of herself as a brave, inquiring, and unfeminine traveller who fearlessly reports what she finds. In comparing herself to the screaming Mrs. Beresford when the elephant they are both riding bolts, Fane mentions that she is "not so easily alarmed" (Fane 52). Beyond her bravery, Fane also comments that she "felt ashamed of [her] unfeminine curiosity" (Fane 73). This sentence's strange dynamic gives readers the sense that, though Fane feels proud of her curiosity, she also feels the need to subdue this pride due to her audience or due to social norms which looked down on female embodiment of traditionally masculine characteristics. In an earlier statement, Fane labels her

curiosity as “laudable!!” (Fane 53), showing that she needed to convince herself of its positivity.

In response to one of Mrs. Chaplin’s letters, Fane states that “in this you talk of my grandeur and the airs I shall give myself when I return” (Fane 146). Readers can assume that Mrs. Chaplin had a negative reaction to the aforementioned narrative persona Fane creates. Not only does this reaction confirm Fane’s either conscious or unconscious effort to do so, but also gives Fane an opportunity to voice her resulting sadness and feelings of uselessness that may have in the first place caused her to create such an image in order to overcompensate. “Indeed, dear Mrs. Chaplin,” Fane replies, “this will not do me any harm; I don’t dislike my position, but I shall feel my utter insignificance again on my return to my native land, and act as before” (Fane 146). Further, despite whatever social codes Fane breaks by creating this image of herself, this incident also shows the lack of support Fane had from her family. Though Fane chooses to write her letter to Mrs. Chaplin, who clearly was important to her, Mrs. Chaplin shuts down any sense of pride or accomplishment Fane may have been feeling. Conversely, given the context of the social atmosphere at the time of these letters, Mrs. Chaplin’s attitude can also be seen as a caring gesture, where she warns Fane against harboring such socially-unacceptable sentiments.

Throughout her letters Fane also worries about her success as a narrator and lacks confidence in her writing. Despite receiving letters from Mrs. Chaplin, Fane wonders “whether so much trash bores [Mrs. Chaplin] to death” (Fane 55); showing an inherent discomfort with the content of her writing. As we will see in the next chapter, Eden too mentions similar emotions, while Parkes never does. Fane’s apprehension points to a lack of confidence in her writing, as we see throughout the narrative. Fane’s “only fear is [Mrs. Chaplin] will receive too many and too much, and…will be bored to death with the trumpery [Fane writes]” (Fane 85) or that her letters “now will be both longer and more frequent than

[Mrs. Chaplin] approve[s] of" (Fane 130). Indeed, when Fane does not receive letters from Mrs. Chaplin for a while, she does not "repine, for [Mrs. Chaplin] behave[s] nobly to [her]" (Fane 91) in a sort of cathartic punishment for writing the way she has and for creating a certain persona of herself. Fane also displays frustration with her role as a narrator, telling Mrs. Chaplin, "I am so disappointed at all the questions you ask me about our establishment…I thought I had told you all this at first" (Fane 101). Thus the feelings induced in Fane by social codes also trickle into Fane's creation of her narrative persona. Through her guilt at writing too much or being perceived as overly gossipy, readers gain an understanding of the inherent expectations and pressures British society placed on Fane. The presence of this narrative persona, however, does complicate an analysis of these letters and these issues of subjectivity will be considered throughout the analysis of Fane's representation of India and the Indian population, her interaction with the colonial system, and her representation of the position of women.

*Fane's Representation of India and the Indian Population*

Unlike Parkes, Fane's experience in India was heavily influenced by her boredom. Pemble notes that, for British women, "leisure was a problem in India" (Pemble 3). Fane's narrative gives his statement much support as she expresses her tedium, boredom, and frustration consistently throughout her narrative. Whether she was "never more bored than during the meal" (Fane 46) at dinner parties, "sat at home as usual" (Fane 47), or found either time or a dinner "most tedious" (Fane 176), Fane constantly longs for action and events. Despite her high social standing, any balls she attended were "duller than dull" (Fane 56); and at times Fane finds them to be so dreary she tells Mrs. Chaplin that "it is impossible for anyone who has not been present at one to conceive anything like their tediousness, or anything to be compared with their suffocation" (Fane 212). At other times, Fane simply states that "news is so scarce now, so are anecdotes" (Fane 99), or that "nothing occurred

worth putting on paper during this day" (Fane 112). As previously mentioned, from October 9th to November 7th 1836, Fane's letters are missing and Pemble inserted excerpts from Fane's journal entries. Her journal entries perhaps best display her incredible boredom. In consecutively one-line entries, Fane describes "a station ball, which proved a great nuisance to us all" (Fane 133), "the usual routine" (Fane 134), and an "amateur play, very stupid" (Fane 134) over the course of almost a month. In a rare instance of excitement, Fane finds at the ball at Meerut "was a pleasant ball. I danced all night like an old fool" (Fane 178). Thus Fane's perception of India is very much framed in the context of this boredom, which in turn was highly affected by her father's limitations on her and her social standing. She does not hint whether her life in England was any different.

A source of respite from this boredom to Fane is her interactions with the Edens, namely Emily Eden and her sister Fanny Eden. Fane becomes very excited while describing how they "got on famously. They are both great talkers…!" (Fane 63). Though Fane tires after a point of Fanny Eden (Fane 83), she effuses praise for Emily Eden, describing her as "a very particularly nice person, so sensible, clever, well-informed, religious, and good in every possible way" (Fane 77) in one instance. In another, she describes Eden as "charming, and indeed…a great acquisition to society, more particularly the society here, which is so dull" (Fane 83). Whenever Fane goes to Barrackpore with the Edens and spends time with them, she abandons her narrative of boredom to Mrs. Chaplin.

Beyond her boredom, Fane describes a more visceral image of India than Parkes does. Fane's narrative contains many more descriptions of India's weather and bugs and the resulting effect they have on her. She finds the heat very oppressive, and yearns for "wonderful coldness" (Fane 41). The heat "made [her] legs and feet swell" (Fane 54), and at times she can barely walk. Equally to blame for preventing her mobility were the mosquitoes, which constantly bothered Fane. "The musquitoes  were so numerous and wearing that even

had the entertainment been better it would have been scarcely worthwhile to have endured their torture on any terms," (Fane 49) Fane laments, going on to provide vivid bodily descriptions of "the melancholy condition of [her] legs and feet" (Fane 66) as a result of their bites. The pain from these bites causes Fane to be "completely laid up, with both [her] legs disabled again from the tormenting musquitoes" (Fane 69). While Parkes took the time to craft varied and objective descriptions of the heat she faced, Fane is less creative, subjective, and very direct about her misery as a result of the heat and mosquitoes. Thus the heat and mosquitoes act as crippling agents for Fane and very much color her image and experience of India.

The country itself and its landscape do not impress Fane, unlike the delight they produced in Parkes. "The country is frightful and the dust indescribable. I am so disappointed in it, for I had made up my mind to find it a town, with plenty of streets and three-storied houses, instead of which it consists of detached bungalows," (Fane 141) Fane laments. She later explains to Mrs. Chaplin that "there is nothing to mention. You cannot conceive anything so flat and hideous as every particle we have up to this time travelled through" (Fane 155). The Indian landscape thoroughly disappointed Fane, who undoubtedly expected a more picturesque experience as opposed to villages which were "worthy of mention, but consist[ed] of the most wretched-looking mud huts; …all huddled together and most unpicturesque" (Fane 155). Fane disgustedly states that "every native city is dirty to a degree" (Fane 214). While exploring a new area to which her retinue travels, Fane and her companions adventure out "to see what was to be seen, which amounted to nothing but some mosques" (Fane 139). Her disappointment is mirrored by her inability to appreciate the mosques, which she finds "so much alike that…having seen one you have seen them all" (Fane 140). This discontent with the landscape continues when she travels north to Lahore and comments that "some people talk of the face of the country about here as having

improved, but I think their imaginations very lively who say so, for to me it is the same dead flat" (Fane 202). Fane expects the Indian landscape to bedazzle and surprise her and to see beauty everywhere she goes. Her projection of this expectation to the country leads to her resounding disenchantment with the exotic, Oriental country she must have pictured before travelling. In a sense, her attitude also represents a typical imperialist attitude by expecting the country to entertain, surprise her, and almost serve her, as opposed to simply accepting the country as it is. The only two times when her descriptions turn positive are when she visits the Taj and finds that she doesn't "possess language that would able me to give [Mrs. Chaplin] the least idea of what [she] thought of its sublime beauty" (Fane 159) and when she ascends to Shimla at the end of her narrative amongst "very beautiful" (Fane 225) scenery.

Beyond Fane's image of the broad country of India, she creates rather conflicting images of the Indian people and their customs. She found most of the Indian population to be unimportant and was surprised when they exhibited any kind of intelligence. However this image becomes more positive as she journeys to Punjab and becomes genuinely interested in Indians towards the latter end of her narrative. At the same time, Fane doesn't form any meaningful connections with any Indians as Parkes did, but instead finds value in their subservience.

In Calcutta, Fane is "generally indifferent and dismissive" (Pemble 7) towards the Indian population. She records few of her interactions with the "Blackee[s]" (Fane 42), as she calls the native Bengalis, and does not even bother to name any dignitaries she meets, calling them the Nepaul General, Rajah some-body, and the Mahratta Chief (Pemble 7-8). Indians exist as vague figures to her; as "creatures [that] make the bed, dust the rooms and perform all such offices" (Fane 38) who hold no more importance to her than a colonized servant object. She disparagingly remarks that in "this country none of the servants is either victualled or slept" (Fane 39-40), failing to take into consideration her own role in the

servant's lack of food and sleep. Fane explicitly discriminates based on the darker skin tone of Indians, telling Mrs. Chaplin that "if you could see the pilot you would not be much surprised at his making the mistake, that is if we judge from outward appearance only" (Fane 124) before going on to describe the pilot as a "black man with a turban" (Fane 124). She also expresses her surprise that the Indian girl who reads to her "reads astonishingly well and no word, hardly, puzzles her" (Fane 76), thus revealing her perception of the Indian population as stupid. Unlike Parkes, she does not explicitly delve into descriptions of the 'Oriental woman,' or indeed into too many descriptions of Indian women, but does comment that a particular Indian woman who was seen as beautiful in India would not be considered so "in our sweet country, where beauty is a more common commodity" (Fane 127). Overall, Fane broadly stereotypes Indians as "poor benighted creatures" (Fane 74) who "can never work without so much talking and screaming" (Fane 125), possess an "innate love for *lying*" (Fane 144), and have "little regard…for their neighbours' property" (Fane 202) Moreover, the ultimate immorality to Fane regarding Indians is "the barefaced manner in which they [lie and steal]…they look upon it as a feather in their caps instead of a sin" (Fane 144). Finally, she does not seem to even hold them in the esteem of actual people. While ascending the Himalayas to Shimla, Fane explains her fright at parts of the path, lamenting that she had "no spectator to [her] tears" (Fane 224). However, Fane travelled by palanquin, and her bearers, who were assumedly Indian men, would have most definitely borne witness to her tears. Thus, Fane did not view Indians as actual people but rather as caricatured images of whatever use they were to her. Even some of the positive comments she mentions, such as the picturesque "style of dress worn by servants in this country" (Fane 102) or "how pretty a crowd is, for the colour in the dress of the natives…forms a beautiful *coup d'oeil*[14]" (Fane 162), relate only to superficial objectifications of Indians due to the exoticism of their clothes.

[14] *Coup d'oeil* is a French phrase literally meaning "stroke of [the] eye" and is used to convey the idea of a

Even when it comes to dignitaries, specifically the Nepali General Martabar Singh Thapa[15], Fane still broadly stereotypes and assumes. She comments with astonishment at "his behaviour during the opera; if he had been brought up at the Court of St. James's his manners could not have been better" (Fane 45), but going on to assume that "he could not understand the least, of course, of what was going on" (Fane 45). At a production of *The Taming of the Shrew*, Fane reacts with cool condescension at Singh Thapa's enjoyment of the morale of the play, stating that "perhaps for the future he will act upon it, instead of chopping off heads, which I suppose is what he does" (Fane 58). Her assumption of his barbarity, with no previously described evidence, strikes readers as a clear prejudice. At a dinner with Singh Thapa, Fane narrates how a certain Mr. James Prinsep exercises "what he considers his wit upon [Singh Thapa] to what [Fane] should consider a provoking degree" (Fane 57) by lying in answer to Singh Thapa's questions. Fane finds that "it is a shame to act so towards those who…wish to learn" (Fane 57). Here, Fane displays an uncharacteristic support for an Asian man; though her depiction of him as innocent needing to be saved by others does not necessarily make it the most compelling support. This anecdote also serves to show the attitude other British nationals had towards Indians as entertainment, even if it they were dignitaries.

Thus in Calcutta, Fane did not form a very positive image of the Indian population. Upon journeying to Punjab, she starts to add some more appealing aspects to them due to the aforementioned differences in the cultures. Fane begins naming the dignitaries she meets, and even paints a very positive, admiring picture of Ranjit Singh (Fane 193-194). She starts to show an interest in politics as it relates to the Punjabis, and even explains certain Indian customs she sees. Her description of Holi (Fane 213-214) has a neutral and narrative tone to

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glimpse or glance.

[15] Martabar Singh Thapa, a nephew of the prime minister of Nepal, was sent to India on a complimentary visit by his uncle. Fane consistently refers to him as the 'Nepaul General" throughout her letters (Pemble 43).

it. She explains to Mrs. Chaplin the rationale behind the festival as a celebration of the coming of spring and seems genuinely interested by it. Fane finds "the Seik [Sikh] dress…exceedingly graceful" (Fane 189) and the Sikhs "perfectly respectful and well-behaved" (Fane 192). Thus here, as we will see with Eden, Fane associates positive images of Indians with subservience and an "earnest desire to please" (Fane 192).

Overall, Fane's depictions of India and the Indian population contain very few positive qualities. Bored and frustrated most of her time in India, Fane reflects her feelings in her uninspired descriptions of the landscape and scathing impressions of the Indians. Many of these descriptions contain imperialist undertones, and though Fane does not explicitly describe the way she participates in the colonial system, her perpetuation of these stereotypes cements a dominant/submissive relationship between the British and Indians in consolidation of Said's theory that the imperialist must block the native's narrative and definition of self (Said, *C&I* xiii).

*Fane's Position as a Woman in India*

As previously mentioned, Fane's experience in India very much hinged on her identity as a woman, its resulting limitations to her actions, and interactions between Indian and British senses of womanly conduct. This section will first establish the various ways Fane's identity as a woman limited her, before delving into the ways she broke the traditional image of a woman. Finally it will establish her travels to India as a causal point in developing her drive and determination before discussing the intersection of British and Indian morals.

A big limitation for Fane was "the retinue each person is obliged to have about him" (Fane 52), which she explicitly complains about because she "could not go [anywhere] with less than two women and one man" (Fane 52). No matter where she went, she had to have

some sort of male chaperone; whether that be Marc Beresford[16], Major Henry Fane[17], or Lieutenant Henry Fane[18]. Moreover, Fane was wholly dependent on her father, given that she was unmarried and travelling in his retinue as his representative. Unlike the relationship between Fanny Parkes and her husband, the relationship between Isabella Fane and her father is not shown to be intimate, trusting, or enjoyable. Fane mentions her father frequently, but only when commenting on his health, actions, and what he forbids her from doing. Her impersonal tone when discussing her father hints to readers that she was not very close to him. Not only that, but readers also see that her father doesn't feel particularly close to his daughter either. When Fane is put into a "towering passion" (Fane 145) when "that nasty girl Miss Dickie had written a great pack of *lies* from hence about [her]" (Fane 145-146), she realizes that "both Mr. and Mrs. Fane are determined to love [Miss Dickie] on and believe what she says, even though it be to the prejudice of their child" (Fane 149). Through this, we see that her father did not support her. Fane later vocalizes her sense of betrayal, hurt, and anger as "the indignation [she] feel[s] at one's relations listening to a beast of that sort makes [her] blood boil" (Fane 149). Readers see here that there was not a great love or affection in their relationship.

This was no doubt induced, at least on Fane's end, by the extent of limitations he placed on her and her actions. In countless occasions throughout her letters, Fane comments that "both Christine[19] and I could willingly have remained longer, but my father wished to go and we did not like to keep him" (Fane 50); or that "my father did not approve the plan and would not let us" (Fane 120); and even that "my father sent a message to my tent to say I was

[16] Marc Beresford was Sir Henry's military secretary (Pemble 30).
[17] Major Henry Fane was Isabella Fane's eldest brother (Pemble 31).
[18] Lieutenant Henry Fane was Isabella Fane's cousin (Pemble 32).
[19] Christine was Major Henry's wife and Isabella Fane's sister-in-law (Pemble 31)

not to come to our feeding tent until Shere [Singh][20] was gone" (Fane 222). In some of these occasions, Fane cannot understand why he acts in such a way, or feels downright angry at being forbidden from doing something. When her father sends a message to Fane not to come out of her tent until Shere Singh leaves, Fane questions "why H.E. took this whim into his head…because twice [she has] dined in Shere's presence and lots of times have been out riding with him" (Fane 223). A few times, Fane tries to argue, such as when she and Christine are invited to dine with the Rajah of Bhutpore. Her father "got angry at [her] urging it" (Fane 153) and does not allow for it. "Modesty is a pretty thing," Fane comments, "but I think in a case like this one might be allowed to overstep the mark" (Fane 200).

These limitations from her father create an imbalance in their relationship, and Fane frequently feels like a burden to him. The traditional Victorian father was expected to provide discipline, using a "variety of disciplinary strategies, ranging from the permissive to the authoritarian… [because] they always retained ultimate authority over their children" (Shoemaker 124). Thus, while the portrayed father-daughter relationship was nothing out of the ordinary, it had an adverse effect on Fane. She exhibits self-doubt and a loss of confidence, which indirectly becomes a limitation to her experience in India. The worth and economic value of Victorian women, as Vicinus notes, was solely determined by her father, brother, or husband (Vicinus ix). As Fane was an unmarried woman travelling with her prominent father, her worth was determined by him and did not necessarily present a problem in the sense of its prestige. Where it did present a problem was in the sense of ownership. Fane realizes that she is "nobody's property but [her] father's" (Fane 137) and as a result cannot ask anything of anyone else. Given the presence of her father, her brother Henry did not feel a sense of responsibility as we see through Fane's complaint that "Henry ought to have looked after [her], but he thinks of no one but his wife, dog, and child" (Fane 137). Thus

[20] Shere Singh was the putative son of Ranjit Singh who succeeded the throne in 1840 after Ranjit's death and the death of Ranjit's successor Kharak Singh (Pemble 188).

Fane's situation embodies the issue of an unmarried Victorian woman forced to fend for herself as "a single woman in a man's world" (Pemble 6) and finding that her position as a single woman strongly inhibits her. She sadly remarks that she "could not help thinking all the time how annoying it must be to be [her] father to be doing his soldiering with two women and a squalling brat in his train and at his elbow" (Fane 122), referencing herself, Christine, and Christine's baby as chief burdens.

The limitations to her perceptions of self-worth as a result of her constraining position as a woman cause Fane to have pangs of self-doubt, often expressed casually and without her awareness of them. For example, at a formal dinner with the Governor-General, Fane narrates that "it was arranged that *I* was nobody at all and need never trouble myself as to when and where I was to be…I was perfectly satisfied with the decision…conceive then my horror and amazement when Lord Auckland stepped forward upon this occasion and walked me out under his wing before *three* other *married* ladies…it was totally wrong" (Fane 81). Here, not only does Fane accept the statement that she is nobody, but further becomes surprised when Lord Auckland treats her differently, calling it "totally wrong". At another ball, Fane expresses her surprise when "it was agreed that *I* was out and out the belle of the room" (Fane 160) by exclaiming, "Ye Gods and all the Goddesses what ye think of this?" (Fane 160). Similarly, at another dinner party, when she hears the toast to "'Miss Fane and the ladies who had attended the ball'" (Fane 178), Fane feels as though she will faint. Thus situations where others show Fane a higher regard than Fane does herself made her uncomfortable; she shied away from public display and felt ashamed by it.

Despite her embodiment of certain female Victorian stereotypes, Fane also shows through her narrative clear ways she breaks the mold of the traditional Victorian woman. One of the first ways this comes across to readers is through her striking desire to create her own experience in India, despite the limitations put in place by her father or those around her.

During the arrival of a dignitary in Calcutta, Fane is determined to get a good view of his retinue and “arrived at the house of an acquaintance whose verandah we intended to invade, where we knew we should have a beautiful view” (Fane 43). Similarly, when Fane is not allowed to watch animal sports like hunting, she gets up early the next day and arrives at the predetermined spot earlier than her father and the other men do so as to ensure she can watch it (Fane 166). Her adventuring spirit can be summarized by her efforts “to see what was to be seen” (Fane 138).

Throughout her narrative, Fane taps into this desire to make her own experience by banding with the other women in her retinue. Many evenings involved gender-denominated gatherings, such as the “large man party” (Fane 57) that Fane and the other ladies are not allowed to attend. This bond they form via exclusion develops into companionship and Fane proudly begins to use the term “we females” (Fane 152). In her search to find things to do and make her own experiences, Fane groups with these other women and states that “we females always go wherever we can” (Fane 51). This shows the limitations of her position as a woman, boredom with her life, and also an unfeminine drive to create her own experience. More than simply a desire to do what they could, Fane and her lady friends find a way around their exclusion from important meetings between the men of their camp and visiting dignitaries by establishing “a lovely peeping place for these occasions, where we can see all that is going on without being seen” (Fane 185). This becomes a continuous phenomenon, with them “as usual… [arranging] a peeping place” (Fane 202) to see Ranjit Singh’s visit to her father. Thus not only does Fane create a bond with her female companions through their exclusion, which inherently acknowledges and creates a discontentment regarding it, but also actively finds a way to sneak around the restrictions placed on her. Moreover, the power of seeing without being seen makes this action far more meaningful. By observing her father and those he meets in “a state of conscious … [with] visibility that assures the automatic

functioning of power" (Foucault 201), Fane finds "a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance" (Foucault 203). Thus here we see that, through the restrictions placed on her, Fane in fact increases her power as a woman.

The next clear way in which Fane breaks the mold of the traditional Victorian woman is through her sarcasm and humor. While sitting next to Sir Charles Metcalfe, Fane remarks that, "although he is good humour personified…he is not a pleasant neighbour at a dinner for he has no small talk. I have no doubt his mind is too great for *my* mind" (Fane 47). Her scathing tone and italicization of the word 'my' show her frustration and anger that he does not take her seriously enough to speak to her. Fane's criticism of him points not only to her intelligence through sarcasm, but also to her traditionally unfeminine characteristic of finding fault with the world around her, and specifically with a man who is in an authority figure, as opposed to suffering through it. She criticizes Lord Auckland as well, saying that his manners "are particularly against his holding so high a situation. He seems so painfully shy and frightened" (Fane 66) and that she was "so very amused at him inwardly…he looked so sheepish and foolish" (Fane 95). Her criticism and lack of fear in discussing the Governor-General in this way contrast with her actions on a former occasion when she meets Sir Charles Metcalfe. "I am getting bolder I suppose, for I did not feel so frightened as I did when I sat next to Sir C. Metcalfe," (Fane 64) Fane explains, showing her growth in a traditionally masculine area.

More than her criticism, Fane also at times creates fairly coarse, at times crude, descriptions. Victorian women were hardly supposed to notice things such as bodily discomforts or sexual appeal, much less describe them in such explicit terms. Pemble, too, notes that "no Victorian publisher would have allowed her intimate revelations about mosquito bites and boils, let alone her caustic comments on notabilities" (Pemble 6), but

these descriptions serve to show us "Miss Fane as she really was-derisive, indignant, ironic, and more than a little vulnerable behind her uncouth sense of fun" (Pemble 6). Her style of writing, in its coarse vocabulary and content, deviates from the traditional Victorian narrative. When Singh Thapa visits Calcutta, Fane narrates that he "fixed his eyes most intently on Mrs. Beresford-we have not yet ascertained whether in admiration or disgust. She has a beautiful bust which she generally displays more than she need, and on this occasion it was most conspicuous. So we think he might have been turning over in his mind that she would make him a capital *nautch* girl!" (Fane 46). In this instance, Fane not only laughs about what could be seen as a rather scandalous incident, but overtly refers to Mrs. Beresford's figure and teases her for displaying it "more than she need". She makes no attempt to beat around the bush, but explicitly describes the situation in a decidedly un-Victorian way.

This continues in further incidents, whether it be Fane's descriptions of painful sores from mosquito bites (Fane 71) or her poking fun at other people around her. When visiting the Rajah of Bhurtpore, Fane describes his considerable girth, and goes on to tell Mrs. Chaplin "that [his bosom] was an object never to be forgotten… this machine of his hung down more than the biggest of the ladies! *I* should have been proud to have *half* as much, but *very* sorry to have possessed the whole! I beg pardon for my vulgarity!" (Fane 165). Her humor here in commenting and laughing at the Rajah's body clearly shows deviations from the Victorian norm of politeness that was encouraged from girlhood (Shoemakers 131). Despite her relative crudeness here, Fane still exhibits some shyness, calling his bosom "his machine" (Fane 165). Her explicit humor here, in addition to her action of physically writing it and sending it to Mrs. Chaplin, completely breaks the stereotype of the polite and naturally submissive Victorian female ideal as described by Vicinus earlier. Fane continues to do this, especially when she accidently shows her legs to two men who sit behind her in church. She responds

by saying that "if they were good, [she] should not care for this; but they are so *calfless*, so [her] troubles are great...today!" (Fane 170). Her lack of chasteness here strongly opposes the Victorian need to cover up the female body (Steinbach 105). Moreover, her response of being more annoyed by the non-shapeliness of her calves as opposed to showing them in the first place shows a comfort with displaying her body rarely seen in other Victorian women.

Beyond her unexpectedly crude descriptions of certain events, Fane also makes apt use of dark humor, showing her untraditional, near-appreciation for death and pain as humorous concepts. While on a boat on the Ganges River, Fane amuses herself "by watching for pieces of dead bodies floating by…throwing their dead into it is the native means of disposing of them, either burnt to ashes or whole and entire" (Fane 53)[21], then going on to describe that her curiosity "was satisfied, for [she] saw many good specimens…one fine whole man floated past the window of the cabin at which [she] was standing" (Fane 53). Her use of death and dead bodies as a distraction from her boredom creates a strangely humorous situation, where she counts dead bodies as a morbidly amusing game. Her description of a carcass as "one fine whole man" (Fane 53) shows her excitement at seeing a whole dead body. She displays no disgust or discomfort at seeing corpses, or indeed parts of corpses, and this comfort with dead bodies bodes as decidedly unfeminine. Later in her narrative, Fane finds excitement when "great events happened in camp" (Fane 150); namely that "an unfortunate servant injured himself so much from gunpowder our doctor was obliged to cut off his arm. A widow woman's only child was carried off by a wolf, and a camel tumbled down and broke its leg and was obliged to be shot" (Fane 159). Fane describes these incidents without emotion, almost mechanically, and in consecutive sentences. She abruptly ends her narrative for the day right after the last sentence, and does not expand on any of her

[21] These would have presumably come from Indians who disposed of their dead along the holy Ganges River. While the religious custom was to cremate bodies and release the body's ashes in the Ganges, some may have been too poor to afford such a ceremony.

feelings regarding any of these incidents. This style of writing, in addition to her branding of these incidents as "great events," comes across as darkly humorous, and Fane's consistent use of dark humor shows her personality to be more satirical and tougher than would be traditionally expected of a woman.

Lastly, Fane breaks Victorian womanly conduct by vocalizing her attraction towards different types of Asian men, and by expressing her disagreement with traditionally agreed upon female Victorian values. Readers' first indication at Fane's attraction towards Indian men occurs at a race, when Fane notices that one of Tipu Sultan's[22] sons "speaks English very well and has very nice manners" (Fane 42) and is dressed "just the same as our gentlemen wear" (Fane 42). Her description of their interaction ends in a coy hope that "in consequence of this civility he may send [her] a present of a something" (Fane 42). Though in this case she does not explicitly express her attraction towards him, her description of him points towards it. This changes later on, when she comments that an Indian general "looks remarkably well on horseback…[and] his son…understands so very little English that beyond staring at him he afforded little amusement" (Fane 49). Here, not only does Fane explicitly state her attraction towards these men, but also objectifies the son.

In her early letters, Fane has many interactions with "The Nepaul General," Martabar Singh Thapa. Despite never taking the time to name him in her letters, Fane expresses a strange attraction towards him, coupled with many underhanded jabs which were discussed earlier in this chapter. Singh Thapa is almost fetishized by Fane, who comments multiple times on what she finds to be his exotic clothing and enjoys continuously watching and observing him. On her first sight of him, Fane gushes that "you never saw such a beautiful man, or anything so magnificent as his dress" (Fane 44), going on to limit her description as

[22] Tipu Sultan was the ruler of Mysore who was killed by the British in 1799. His sons and family became state pensioners (Pemble 42).

"no doubt [she shall] have much more to tell [Mrs. Chaplin] in the course of [her] journal" (Fane 45). While at the Opera, Fane is favorably impressed by his conduct, stating her surprise that "he did not seem the least at a loss what to do, but sat on his chair like a gentleman and between the acts stood up and talked to those who could enter into conversation with him" (Fane 45). Her attraction towards him in the context of Western norms contrasts starkly with her later description of him "looking very beautiful, for he was dressed in his own style with no mixture of English" (Fane 54). The implication here that a traditional Nepali dress suits him better than English, or Western, clothing and Fane's resulting attraction to an "exceedingly polished and well-bred…man" (Fane 59) who engages all her senses, including smell as "he was so delightfully perfumed with sandalwood" (Fane 59) clearly paints him as an exotic object. Fane does not explicitly state her attraction, and yet her language and actions point towards it. In this case, Fane almost unconsciously breaks not only the feminine, but also the colonial ideology of not expressing sexual interest in men, let alone Asian men. As a Nepali, Singh Thapa does not totally fall under the category of Indian men; and yet he embodies the image of an Oriental man given his residence in the mythical East that Said describes. Hence, Fane's unconventional attraction towards non-Europeans stretches beyond the Indian man to include Asian men.

Her attraction towards Asian men becomes more pronounced when she travels to Punjab with her father to attend the wedding of Ranjit Singh's grandson. Her descriptions become explicit and contain no shyness or shame. While in Punjab, she finds the Sikhs as "a fine handsome race of men, very fair, with a great deal of very black beard (Fane 184) and specifically Shere Singh "a fine-looking man" (Fane 189). Her attraction to the Sikh men culminates in her description to Mrs. Chaplin of "*thousands* of very handsome Seik men…drest in their very gay and picturesque costume" (Fane 197). Her excitement not only

at their exotic dresses but also at their sheer number again points to Fane's fetishism of Asian men.

Fane further acts outside the realm of a traditional Victorian woman by identifying unexpected values as the ones most important to her. While discussing a certain Miss Pattle[23], Fane describes her as "a little, ugly, underbred-looking thing" (Fane 61) but then goes on to say that "she has a reputation of being very clever, which is better than beauty" (Fane 61). Thus Fane valued intelligence over beauty, an un-Victorian ideology for a woman. Later, Fane expresses her admiration for a Lady D'Oyly, who "looks about forty, is unmarried, and dances and waltzes at the balls!!!" (Fane 74). Given that older, unmarried women in British society at this time were seen as failures for not attracting a husband and were "even more marginal social figures...[who] faced considerable prejudice" (Shoemaker 142), Fane admiringly notices how Lady D'Oyly does not let such prejudices bring her down and instead dances as she pleases in her older, unmarried age. Fane is inspired by her and this admiration shows Fane valued independence and self-worth over a desire to be married. Lastly, and most shockingly for a Victorian woman, Fane is explicitly against the self-sacrificing aspect of motherhood. While interacting with her sister-in-law Christine's baby, whom she does not care for enough to name or even note its gender, she states, "I am afraid I should make a shocking mama, for I confess I cannot understand how having a fat maggot by one's side can compensate for the loss of one's comfortable rest" (Fane 90). Far from the expected role of women as loving and maternal caregivers, Fane casually calls the baby a "fat maggot" (Fane 90) and goes on to describe it as "disgustingly naughty" (Fane 122). She expresses ironic derision towards Christine, who thinks finds "her baby better worth attending to than anything else" (Fane 128). Thus Fane does not appear to care at all about being a mother, and much less about children in general; indeed describing them as parasitic. Unlike Eden, who

[23] Julia Margaret Pattle was a famous photographer (Pemble 61).

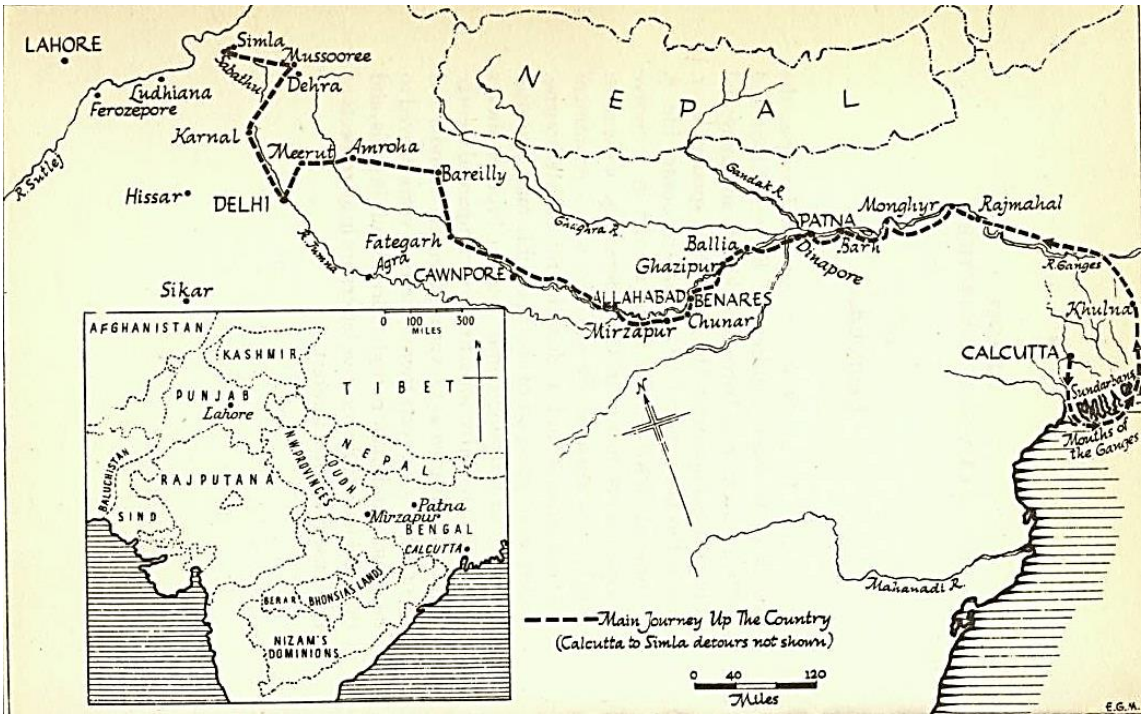
we shall see later adopted children here and there throughout her time in India and exhibited a type of maternal care, Fane makes no mention of caring at all for children. While Parkes does not show maternal love in her narrative, she is not explicitly against the idea of being a mother like Fane. In this way, Fane's values as a person and as a woman place independence, intelligence, and self-worth above the socially expected ones of familial care and being polite, beautiful, and docile.

Finally, in our discussion of Fane's un-Victorian personality, and in particular her values, we come to the question of whether her travels in India, in fact, induced these changes; and further how far the British sense of morals and values influenced the Indian system. Throughout her narrative, Fane displays untraditional characteristics for a Victorian woman, though also expresses pangs of self-doubt and has moments where she lacks confidence in herself. Yet, Fane expresses such untraditional characteristics very early in her narrative, and continues to do so consistently throughout her narrative. Thus, her experiences of travelling in India did not necessarily change her, but rather gave her a platform and opportunity to voice her drastic difference from the ideal Victorian woman. At the same time, travelling in India did give her a higher sense of self-worth, as evidenced by her creation of her narrative persona and statement that she "shall feel [her] utter insignificance again on my return to my native land" (Fane 146). The implication is that Fane felt more significant in India, and thus returning to her relative anonymity in England has a negative connotation. Further, being in India and exposure to Asian men gives her the opportunity for noticing and expressing in writing her attraction towards them. Her narrative lacks such descriptions of attractions towards any British men, making them all the more scandalous and untraditional. Thus travel provided platforms for personal development that would have been unavailable to Fane in Britain.

Lastly, Fane's narrative raises the question of how much the British imposed their culture and values on Indian society. Using Edward Said's theory that cultural suppression was a requirement of imperialism, readers assume that Indian culture in a way reflected British culture. Thus Fane's critiques of Indian culture do not critique Indian culture but rather British culture. Fane does not follow such a line of thought; and explicitly blames India for many of her limitations as a woman, explaining to Mrs. Chaplin that she can only relay the particularities of an event in Punjab to her through "hearsay and questioning" (Fane 193) as "in this nasty country, as I have before told you, it is incorrect for females to take part or lot in a show" (Fane 193). Later, while in Punjab, Fane narrates "an anecdote, in order to show [Mrs. Chaplin] the estimation in which our sex is held in this country" (Fane 220). While marching, the Sikh guards around them observe that she should not be ahead of the "lords Sahibs" (Fane 220), her father and Shere Singh, to which a Captain Campbell replies that "'in our country it was the custom for *ladies* to go before everyone'-a light which astonished them very much and made them laugh excessively" (Fane 220). Fane's expression of indignation and anger at the social limitations placed on her as a woman in India are sharply ironic given the extraordinary amount of social limitations she faced as a woman affected by British social codes. Though Fane laments the backwardness of Indian culture in the context of her as a woman, she fails to take into account the British role and responsibility in creating such a culture. If we are to take Said's theory into consideration, either this treatment of women in Indian society results from British imperialism, or British imperialism has failed to suppress the Indian culture and assert its own. In the first instance, we can interpret Fane's narrative as saying British culture suppresses women as opposed to Indian culture. If we take the second option as true, Fane's narrative becomes an exposé of the failure of British imperialism. Either way, Fane's narrative has a powerful message to readers.

# Chapter 3

## Imperialism and Power: Emily Eden and *Up the Country*




*Map showing Eden's travels taken from* Up the Country *by Emily Eden*

The letters in Emily Eden's *Up the Country* begin in October 1837, after she had been in Calcutta for almost two years. She compiled and edited the letters herself in 1866 to form the volume (Claridge v). Thus she consciously chose this particular selection of letters to show a narrative of her brother George Eden's, the first Earl of Auckland and Governor-General of India from 1836-1842 (Claridge v), two and a half year tour of the upper provinces of India[24]. The goals of Lord Auckland's tour were to familiarize himself with the East India Trading Company territory from Calcutta to Northern India, impress the Indians, and consolidate British friendship with the Lion of Punjab, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, who was one of Britain's most powerful allies in India at the time (Claridge xii). The tour itself, in the words of Parkes, was quite the production: 11,000 people in retinue, innumerable elephants and camels, formal camp rules, and a price tag of 70,000 rupees a month (Parkes 2: 183-184).

[24] The upper provinces consisted of the Gangetic Plain between Benares and Delhi, excluding Oudh (Chawner, *Notes* 484).

In a letter to her nephew William Osborne in 1866, with whom she toured in addition to her brother George and sister Fanny Eden, Eden testifies that though she has removed passages of her diary "written solely for the amusement of [her] own family" (Eden xxi), she has ensured that "not a word has been added to descriptions…they are true and…they were written on the spot" (Eden xxi). Thus her letters, uninhibited by hindsight, reflect Eden's initial thoughts and reactions to the events around her. Readers can expect an honest and accurate depiction of Eden's thoughts and actions as Eden acts as a first-person narrator in these letters. While the primary purposes of her letters were to catalogue her adventures and narrate her journey, readers also gain insight into her well-being and inner thoughts. Through her personal testimony, we are ensured of the validity and authenticity of these documents. As she herself edited and compiled these letters, we can assume that her voice and the things she describes accurately reflect her experience. However, while this may be the case, the exact publication of this collection poses some confusion. In her 1866 letter to William Osborne, Eden states that she knows "no one but [William Osborne] who can now take any interest in these Letters" (Eden xxi), thus implying that she is sending her letters and diary to him for him to publish the collection. Given that she feels the need to specify that they were edited to remove personal amusements, we can safely assume that what she sends to William Osborne is in fact the edited manuscript of what she wants to be published as *Up the Country*. However, there is no testimonial from William Osborne regarding what he may or may not have changed, and it is unspecified who was the individual to publish Eden's letters as a book. Thus there is a slight grey area around the actual publication of the *Up the Country* collection.

While Eden wrote letters to a variety of people, she chose to collect the letters that she wrote to her favorite sister, Mary Drummond (Claridge v). Mary Drummond was one of Eden's seven sisters as Eden came from a large family of fourteen children where she was

one of the younger ones (Prior 6). Drummond was four years older than Eden and was Eden's nearest older sister in age (Prior 6). Though Eden was fond of her sister, she despised her marriage to banker Charles Drummond (Prior 21), with whom Drummond had seven children (Prior 33). Eden herself states their closeness, calling herself and Drummond "the greatest friends of the family" (Prior 381). The content of her letters, then, was based on what she thought her sister might be interested in; and hence informs some levels of subjectivity.

Eden wrote her letters like a journal, and refers to them interchangeably as letters and her journal. In August 1838, the collection of letters abruptly changes audiences with the explanation that "a portion of the Journal being lost, these letters of the same dates are here inserted, to carry on the narrative" (Thompson 153). While this provides a pertinent opportunity to analyze whether Eden's content differs based on the audience, it also raises questions as to who added these letters. The edition used for this paper does not specify whether these letters were selected by Eden, William Osborne, the writer of the introduction, Elizabeth Claridge, or the writer of the notes, Edward Thompson. Neither does the edition specify who wrote the explanatory note, though this paper assumes it to be Edward Thompson as it is "reprinted from the unabridged one-volume edition prepared by Edward Thompson" (Publisher's Note v). The same letters come up in another edition of *Up the Country* that was not prepared by Edward Thompson, consulted for reference, though without the explanatory note. Thus is appears that the letters were put in the text by Eden or perhaps William Osborne, and not by an editor, to continue the narrative.

Nevertheless, despite this confusion, the insertion of letters to the Countess of Buckinghamshire, an un-described woman, and James Colville, another nephew of Eden, provide a brief respite from Mary Drummond as Eden's audience. Through these letters we can wholly see how Eden's writing changed based on who received her letter. In comparing these letters to those Eden writes to Drummond, we do not see a substantial difference; not

even when Eden writes to a male audience. Their similarity to Eden's letters to Drummond signals that Eden had a particular image of her time in India that she wanted to project.

Despite the fact that James Colville was a man, Eden's letter to him does not substantially differ in tone or content from her letters to Drummond. Eden begins her letter by saying that she has sent so many letters that she has "not the fraction of a new idea left" (Eden 156). This declaration of her fatigue could be what leads to the lack of new ideas in her letters. Eden also adds that she writes "to encourage [James Colville] in his excellent habit of writing" (Eden 156). Given that James Colville was Eden's nephew, her parental tone and desire to encourage her nephew in what was considered good habits could also have influenced her writing.

Eden employs a more formal tone with the Countess of Buckinghamshire. Her letters to Drummond contain exclamations and short and quick sentences. Conversely, her letter to the Countess consists of longer sentences that do not have exclamatory statements, signaling an increased formality and lack of excitement on Eden's part. Its substantially longer length compared to letters to Drummond suggests that Eden didn't write as often to the Countess. When Eden comments that it had recently been raining "without ceasing" (Eden 154), she corrects her hyperbole in an awkward new paragraph where she explains that when she says "without ceasing," she means that "it very often stops raining for half an hour in the afternoon, and then the drop and the fog do not count" (Eden 154). Her correction of her statement not only detracts from her humor but also further formalizes her tone. Nevertheless, that is the main difference we see between the letters to Drummond and those to the Countess. The content and subject matter closely resemble what Eden writes to Drummond about; including the weather and various activities in which Eden partook to keep herself occupied, like sketching and reading. Eden does, however, write a few sentences to the Countess relating to "this war" (Eden 154). Readers assume Eden is referring to the First

Anglo-Afghan war, as this letter was written in 1838 and the war took place from 1837-1842 (Claridge xv). While Eden only fleetingly mentions the war, and does so only to make the point that the war delays them from moving from Shimla and hence she can enjoy cooler weather for another few weeks, her mention of the war makes her letter to the Countess slightly more political. Eden, as a committed politician involved in the Whig party (Claridge vii) and "interested in Indian politics just now" (Eden 145) does not discuss this interest with Drummond but does mention it to the Countess. As a result, readers can deduce that Eden was subjective in the content of these letters based on her audience; though in this particular case her discussion of the First Anglo-Afghan war doesn't add substantial subject matter to the discussion.

This varied again, however, based on Eden's audience. Mary Ann Prior, who wrote a historical narrative about Emily Eden, comments that Eden changed her narrative based on her addressee (Prior 226). While writing to her friend Charles Greville, who was connected with Westminster, in 1838[25] Eden expands on Anglo-Indian foreign policy as opposed to general descriptions of her day; showing how her subjectivity differed based on the interests of her readers (Prior 226-227). This particular instance is important as it shows Eden to be much more politically inclined than her letters to Drummond do. Nevertheless, while Eden did at times change her narrative based on her readership, looking closely at the letters to the Countess and James Colville, as parts of the narrative of *Up the Country*, provides further insight into how Eden presented herself and her life in a published context.

In general, Eden's letters can be characterized by her spunky and energetic personality, which shines through in moments of excitement, sadness, and frustration. A loyal and patriotic Englishwoman (Claridge vii), Eden frequently misses her home and family.

[25] This letter can be found on page 229 of *Miss Eden's Letters*, compiled and edited by her great-niece Violet Dickinson.

Indeed, she comments that she "should not mind India if [Drummond] and three or four others were [there]" (Eden 107). At the same time, Eden freely and without abandon criticizes her own home country, sarcastically commenting that a "murderer [getting] off with six months' imprisonment because his lawyer chooses to make a pert attack on the Lord… [is] so like English justice" (Eden 348). Ironically, her criticisms of the English justice system are complemented by her parallel criticisms of the Indian justice system, in which she disparagingly finds that "nobody is ever hanged" (Eden 102). She acknowledges that the English have shaped India as a country by specifically detailing that, in Delhi, the "horrid English have just 'gone and done it', merchandised it, revenued it, and spoiled it all" (Eden 98). This brings out an inherent and consistent contradiction that manifests itself throughout Eden's letters. Eden criticizes both the British and Indian people and governments and yet, except for this particular instance, does not admit or recognize the connection between British-imposed systems and her discontent with Indian governance. Thus, her criticisms of Indian society and culture indirectly condemn British systems through the pipeline of colonialism.

In this context, this chapter will discuss first Eden's depiction of India and the Indian population, how these depictions play into her role as a colonial advocate, and finally analyze how far her experiences in India aided any personal development that she would not have been able to receive in Britain. In these three considerations, Eden's social position becomes crucial. As the sister of the Governor-General, Eden enjoyed a high social stature, and as a result "escaped the most restrictive gender bonds by which her middle-class compatriots were bound" (Ghose 72). Further, Eden had a very close relationship with her brother, and this brings up the question of how far she influenced his judgment. Intelligent and actively interested in politics, Eden was in a prime position to advise her brother. Indeed, she admits

in a letter to her friend Greville that "'if [George] ever felt himself in any doubt, he might feel that he has my superior sense and remarkable abilities to refer to'" (Prior 227).

These considerations make Eden's narrative particularly poignant as they place her in a prime position of power with regard to the colonial system, and this indirectly informs her level of personal development and her image of India. Though the motif of the generous colonial advocate feeling the need to "improve the country and to bring the fruits of progress and modernity to the subject people" (Mann 5) can certainly be applied to Eden's writing, it can also be contested. As the sister of the Governor-General, Eden saw India and the Indian population in a very different light than other travellers did. She viewed them as a ruler would look at her subjects due to her high governmental position, and not totally as a colonized population. Her desire to help the local population stemmed potentially from her prerogative and role as a ruler. This, too, arises as a result of her high social stature, and thus her social stature becomes a critical aspect when considering these research questions.

Despite this prerogative, in some acts of kindness Eden displays a sense of exasperation, disgust, or self-serving excitement. After helping a "miserable little [Indian] baby" (Eden 66) she finds on the brink of death and deciding to "mean to try what can be done for it" (Eden 66) despite the doctor's strongly negative assertions, Eden dubs the baby "an old monkey, but with glazed, stupid eyes" (Eden 66). Her act of kindness juxtaposed with her tone of disgust suggests an impersonal interaction wherein Eden acts out of a sense of resigned obligation. In another instance, Eden chronicles a "nice little purchase... [of] two little girls of seven years old, rather ugly, and one of them dumb… [where she] gave three pounds for the pair-dirt cheap" (Eden 275). Though she goes on to explain that she saved them from an abusive family, her primary representation of these girls and her act of helping them is in fact a purchase, and a bargain at that. Here Eden uses the situation to boost her self-perception; however the act of helping the girls is not what boosts her self-perception but

rather the cheapness of the bargain. This instance too shows that while Eden acted out of kindness, her kindness was very much influenced by both her social and colonial positions.

*Eden's Representation of India and the Indian Population*

As Indira Ghose, author of *Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze*, notes, "From the very start, Eden assumes the stance of a reluctant traveller" (Ghose 73). Eden's depiction of India is colored by her unhappiness and reluctance to be there. As a result, most of her perceptions of India are negative. Indeed, early on in her narrative she states that India "is pretty to see…it is the most picturesque population, with the ugliest scenery, that was ever put together" (Eden 12). This distaste for the scenery continues throughout her letters, with Eden noting that she "never did see so hideous a country" (Eden 46). Some of her negativity can be attributed to her general discomfort in India as a result of the heat and insects. When she travels to Shimla, for example, Eden becomes more positive and happier; realizing that "If [she is] to be in India [she] had rather be [in Shimla] than anywhere" (Eden 181). Nevertheless, throughout the majority of her narrative, Eden paints the country of India as culturally lacking and boring, and its people as strange, lazy, submissive, meek, and very sickly. Further, her representation of women, and particularly the nautch girl, contains similarities to the exotic, Oriental image of women described by Edward Said.

Eden continuously feels bored in India, like Fane, and attributes this boredom to the lack of culture she finds there. As "a country where there is little society and few topics" (Eden 3), India holds little to no excitement for Eden. She missed "the stimulation of the London society she moved in, the polished wit, the discussion of new books, plays, operas, political scandals" (Ghose 72) and was bored with the "triviality, gossip, and philistinism" (Ghose 72) of the Anglo-Indian society in India. Thus her representation of India as culturally

lacking and boring also stems from her genuine distaste for "Englishmen out of their own country" (Eden 98). Most entertainment in India bored Eden, and she comments that "all native fêtes are much alike" (Eden 26). Her writing suggests that entertainment in India was subpar and that the country lacked sophistication. Her boredom and dissatisfaction make her see India as a blur, where "all these places are so exactly like each other…that [she] never can make out why they have any names" (Eden 34).

Eden's bland view of the landscape and the culture seeps through to descriptions of the Indian locals as well. Without the "polished wit" (Ghose 72) she found so stimulating, Eden writes that "*people* in India are uncommonly dull, [and] the surplus share of sense is 'served out' to the beasts, who are therefore uncommonly clever" (Eden 313). More than that, she stretches the image of the dull and idiotic native to one of vulgarity, "[imagining] that half these people must be a sort of vulgar Adams and Eves-not so refined, but nearly as innocent" (Eden 162). She condescendingly pities them, and wonders at the "melancholy…notion of life as they must have" (Eden 95). Not only does an Indian lead a melancholy life according to Eden, but they do not even have the capacity or ability to comprehend the idea of a life. Their lives are so dull and boring that Eden questions whether they know what life could potentially be through her use of the word "notion." She scathingly "[wishes she] could make out how these women fill up their lives" (Eden 233), painting the image of a lazy and idle Indian woman. Even at dinners and formal occasions "natives at table are always a great *gêne*[26]" (Eden 212).

Further, Eden also creates certain images of Hindus versus Muslims, though these images are lacking in volume compared to her general comments on India. Through Eden's writing, Hindus are shown to be lazy and silly, as she "must do the Hindus the justice to say that they make as many holidays out of one year as most people do out of ten" (Eden 11). At

[26] *Gêne* means 'bother', coming from the noun form of French verb *gêner*, meaning 'to bother'.

the same time, she prefers Hindus over Muslims as Hindus "consider trees sacred, and that makes their country so much prettier" (Eden 351). She goes on to mock religious symbols and deities including "horrid-looking idols" (Eden 29) and "Krishna (who seems to have been a larking sort of Apollo)" (Eden 380). These instances display a trivialization of the religions Eden encounters in India, and show Eden's perceived superiority over India and the Indian population. Throughout her letters, Eden makes it a point to state that she has no idea how to spell or pronounce certain names of people or places and Hindi words, implying it is beneath her to learn about such things. In line with this representation of the Indian population, Eden is also constantly confused by Indian customs and practices. She makes no effort to try to understand the rationale or mythology behind their actions, but instead describes them with a mocking and bewildered tone.

Eden's representation of Indian women contains elements of the stereotypical Oriental woman described by Edward Said. Said's theory details that, in addition to being an exotic object, "the Oriental woman never spoke of herself, never represented her emotions, presence, or history" (Said, *Orientalism* 6). Eden's depiction of Indian women does present her as an exotic and strange object; however does not show her to be quiet. In her first description of Hindu women, Eden refers to a group of "Hindu *ladies.*.. [who] flung themselves on the ground, and laid hold of G [George], and screamed and sobbed in a horrid way, but without showing their faces, and absolutely howled at last, before they would be carried off" (Eden 19) in order to try to receive pardons for one of their husbands who allegedly murdered multiple people. This event is bizarre to Eden, who remarks to her audience that "these little traits are to give you an insight into the manners and customs of the East, and to open and improve your mind" (Eden 19). Her use of italics when saying 'ladies' shows that she questions whether they even are ladies as a result of their actions. Her

disparaging surprise at this incident, without fair consideration of why these women are acting so, creates a one-dimensional image of the strange and uncultured Hindu woman.

Specifically, Eden's representation of the nautch girl adds an exotic edge to the existing image of the bizarre and uncultured Indian woman. While those around Eden do not enjoy nautching, or even find it boring, she enjoys it. Despite the fact that "most… [nautch girls] are ugly," (Eden 28) Eden finds that their "graceful Eastern genuflexions… [are] curious and unnatural" (Eden 8). Moreover, Eden sees their graceful movements and clothes as enchanting and amusing. Ultimately the nautch girl to Eden represents amusement, whether it be amusement in watching the dancing, or in critiquing "their singing [which] is dreadful, and very noisy" (Eden 124). Further, Eden specifies that she likes "to look at the *nautching*" (Eden 356). Her effort in specifying that she likes to *look* and watch them as opposed to saying that she likes nautching creates an objectified image of the exotic Oriental Eastern woman. Eden's objectification of nautching, "which bores most people" (Eden 356), also points to Menon's consideration of the female-to-female relationship of the colonizer and colonized. In disparaging and objectifying Indian women, Eden submerges her female identity "and join[s] in denouncing the very category of the feminine" (Menon 109).

Oriental and Eastern images in Eden's writing stretch beyond Indian women. Through a few phrases Eden uses in her writing, she applies the image of the East to the landscape around her. While visiting Benares, for example, Eden comments that it "looks…like the 'land of the east'" (Eden 22) after describing its minarets, mosques, temples, and the presence of elephants, camels, and bullock carts. At the Palace of Lucknow, Eden comments that it "was quite…*Arabian-Nights*" (Eden 61). Thus not only does Eden use the trope of the Oriental East to describe Indian women, but also different landscapes around her, portraying India, at times, as what Said dubbed "a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (Said, *Orientalism* 1).

Beyond an Oriental image, Eden portrays India as a famished and impoverished place and often associates India with sickliness. In her narrative, Eden periodically describes scenes of starvation and poverty as and when the tour passes through such areas. In Uttar Pradesh, Eden is horrified by the "horrible sights [she] see[s], particularly children; perfect skeletons in many cases, their bones through their skin, without a rag of clothing, and utterly unlike human creatures" (Eden 65). As a result, when she later describes her journal as "such fine fat children," she feels the need to specify "not wholesome fat, only Indian" (Eden 78). Through this Eden implies that Indians are not wholesome, thus painting an image of a malnourished population and country. At times Eden uses India as an adjective to describe sickness; whether it be someone whose "constitution is dreadfully Indianised" (Eden 119) or if they "died of abscess of the liver-of India in fact" (Eden 122). In line with this image, Eden also stresses the country's poverty, mentioning when she comes to the Delhi palace that it is "a melancholy sight-so magnificent originally, and so poverty-stricken now" (Eden 97). Not only are the people poverty-stricken, but the whole palace itself reeks of poverty and as a result has been attributed that title. Thus the buildings and cities themselves are dubbed poverty-stricken.

In contrast to the negative images of India and the Indian population as boring, strange, and fantastic, Eden also injects positive images, albeit relatively few, of both the country and the Indian population. Eden's letters evince wonder at the scenery while in the Himalayas to the extent where she finds it "impossible to imagine more beautiful scenery" (Eden 116). Delhi's Kutub Minar, which she visits twice, strikes Eden as "the most magnificent pillar, [she] suppose[s], in the world" (Eden 346). Despite her excited and enthusiastic tone as she describes the monument, Eden cannot accept that she finds the monument better than any other pillar and adds "I suppose". This phrase undermines the beauty and wonder she attributes to the Kutub Minar; she throws the country of India a bone

with this positive description and must make that clear. Eden's other positive images of India, too, involve a similar back-handed compliment style.

In a similar back-handed compliment style, Eden's positive tone while describing the Indian population comes from her depiction of them as submissive and meek. While the image she creates of them is positive, it hinges on a colonial need for the colonized to follow their rule unquestionably. Eden consistently comments on the civility, mellowness, and subservience of the Indians in her letters. She is at one point surprised at the extent of their subservience, commenting that "in [her] life [she] never saw such a civil, submissive set of people" (Eden 18). Readers can assume that Eden compares them to British servants, as in a later letter she admires the Indians' subservience in contrast to "the row English servants would have made" (Eden 130). The civility of Indians makes Eden fond of them (Eden 18), and through this Eden creates a direct connection between her approval and their subservience. Thus the positivity she attributes to the Indian population stems solely from their role as colonial objects. Moreover, Eden presents them as helpless and childlike, but again keeping with her affirmative tone to associate those qualities with positivity. While talking about the servants in her retinue, Eden comments that "there is something so very imploring in these people" (Eden 32). This statement portrays the "'Oriental' picture of a weak and primitive people" (Mann 6) and associates a lack of independence and weakness in the colonial population as desirable traits. In Delhi, Eden notes that India's "eastern cities are so…thickly inhabited…and the people look so defenceless" (Eden 95), thus portraying the country as overpopulated, exposed, and powerless. Eden's description in Punjab of the Sikhs as "quiet and well-behaved" (Eden 130) infantilizes the Sikhs through its use of "well-behaved".

Thus Eden's construction both of the country India and the Indian population contains many intersecting parts. On the one hand, she portrays India as drab and boring and the

Indian population as dumb and uncultured. This highly negative image contrasts with the positivity she attributes to the meekness and civility of the Indians, though both play into the politics associated with colonial representation as will be discussed in this next section.

*Eden's Role as a Colonial Advocate*

In analyzing Eden's role as a colonial advocate, numerous considerations must be taken into account. As previously discussed, Eden's social position came with certain baggage in relation to the colonial system. Throughout her letters, it is hard to distinguish between her genuine kindness, her colonial desire to help Indian natives, and her role as the ruler whose job is to help their constituents. Ghose notices the same confusion, and observes that "notions of gender were bound up with hegemonic ideologies, and…women were both made an instrument of, and were complicitous with, the politics of imperialism," (Ghose 4) before going on to explain how issues of oppression have shaped hegemonic stereotypes of women. Through her text, we also get a glimpse into how Indians viewed and stereotyped the British in a kind of reverse generalization. In the context of this section, the phrase 'colonial advocate' refers to an embodiment or supporter of the colonial system.

Eden represents the British to the Indians she meets. During George's tour through the Upper Provinces, she frequently meets and entertains various members of Indian royalty. At times, she meets these dignitaries alone and thus serves as a representation of Britain, the British government, and the Governor-General. Eden quickly tired of these interactions and describes "this state of life" (Eden 21) as "endless" (Eden 19). Her letters contain multiple descriptions of balls, dinners, and "smirking and smiling" (Eden 21). These descriptions are characterized by a bored, mechanical tone as Eden transcribes her interactions to produce a banal image of her lifestyle. This banality, however, directly links her to the colonial system and is in fact the embodiment of her role as a colonial advocate. By participating in these

interactions and strengthening British ties with Indian dignitaries, Eden perpetuates and assists in the maintenance of the colonial system. Eden was afforded this power due to her high social position, and thus her social stature again becomes a crucial focal point.

Eden and her brother George shared a trusting and amicable relationship. Readers see this closeness in their relationship not just the dependence Eden has on George, discussed in the next paragraph, but also through the humor they share and his actions towards Eden. While discussing how much they both dislike their tents during the tour, Eden names her tent "Misery Hall" (Eden 37) while George retaliates by naming his tent "Foully Palace" (Eden 37) and they both laugh over their shared dislike of their lifestyle. Later on, George lets Eden "go on half a mile in advance, in order to avoid the dust, which must have shocked General R, who never lets even a little dog precede him in the march" (Eden 195). Through Eden's gleeful tone and humor, we see that George allows his sister certain concessions due to a mutual trust and liking. Throughout her text, Eden does not mention a single disagreement with George. More common are descriptions of Eden's suggestions and her influence over George. Though Eden never specifies any political advice to her brother, hints of her ability to shape his decisions become clear in her text. After a challenging few weeks on the road, Eden notes that the Indian soldiers "have all conducted themselves most irreproachably during this long march, and they are a class of men who ought to be encouraged" (Eden 123). As a result, she subtly mentions the idea of a monetary gift through an administrator who then tells George. The idea goes over very well, with the soldiers noting that "our lordship was the first that had ever been so good to natives" (Eden 123). Excited, Eden confides to Drummond that she is "glad it went off so well, for the idea, between [them], was [hers]" (Eden 123). This secretive influence she could have over George's decisions make her not only a more powerful colonial advocate, but a colonial advocate in a way that does not diminish her Victorian femininity. Thus we see that the Victorian female and imperialist do

not have to exist inversely. Eden's actions here and in other places portray Eden "as [a] strong individual whilst still retaining femininity" (Mills 29-34). Her initiative and leadership in recognizing that the soldiers need a morale boost manifests itself in later incidents, such as when she notices their servants looking sad and realizing they don't have a shelter and so makes arrangements for them (Eden 130), and when Captain J wants to increase the wages of his favorite servants. Eden predicts that this action "would raise a host of malcontents and petitioners, and suggested that a reward for length of service…would be a popular and useful measure" (Eden 173). Her intelligence here, especially over a male Captain, furthers the strength of the female colonizer image she creates of herself.

As a result of the trust between Eden and George, Eden possessed further power in relation to the colonial system by advising him. Eden essentially comes with her brother to India to run his household and manage his domestic affairs. Whether this consisted simply of setting up the curtains in the new Shimla house or settling disputes between servants, Eden aided her brother. Indeed, Eden finds this personally fulfilling, commenting that she feels "of use to him, and that [she is] in [her] right place when [she is] by his side" (Eden 337). She extends this when she separates from George, confessing that "the [days] are all so alike and so more than ever tiresome now G. is gone; I cannot get on at all without him" (Eden 388). Eden values herself as George's sister and adviser not necessarily as herself, thus essentially mitigating her identity as a female in place of her identity as a colonizer. Her self-perception places a higher importance to her role and power as an imperialist, and that impression comes through to the readers, who as a result see strongly her role as a colonial advocate. While a self-sacrificing mind-set towards their "family hearth" (Vicinus ix) can be associated with the traditional, female, Victorian role at this point in history, Eden's involvement with the colonial system makes her method of self-valuation political and decidedly un-Victorian given her resulting power.

At the same time, an amount of sympathy colors her power and raises questions over how exactly she uses her power. When some Indian servants steal from the British and are ordered to leave, their resulting regret and panic pulls at Eden's heartstrings, and they "plagued [her] heart all day" (Eden 32). Swayed by their sadness, she gives them money to travel to Calcutta. Her actions here point simultaneously to the inherent colonial desire to help and save the natives and also her genuine kindness. The same issue comes up with regard to George's Muslim nazir[27], whom Eden states that she can never refuse because "he looks so timid and gentlemanlike" (Eden 109). At his request, Eden convinces George to halt the retinue for a day in observation of a Muslim holiday. The nazir recognizes Eden's power over George as he chooses to ask for her help after having been refused by George. This observation from a servant shows that Eden's power to sway George's decision was clear enough for those around to notice. Thus though Eden possesses power as a colonial advocate, she does not detail specific ways she exercises this power beyond small-scale events. Her silence on this matter, however, could point to situations where she potentially advised George. The First Anglo-Afghan War, which was executed on George's orders, does not make an appearance in these letters except for descriptions of celebrations as the war initially went well. Remembering that Eden also edited her letters before sending them for publication, readers then can extrapolate that any advising Eden did could have been removed, as well as anything else overtly political. At the same time, Eden clearly states that she didn't edit out anything beyond what only her family would find entertaining. Given that Eden's audience was her sister, the lack of mention of the war and any advising could be attributed to her sister's indifference to such topics. As we saw earlier, she did discuss Anglo-Indian foreign policy in an 1838 letter to Charles Greville (Prior 226-227).

[27] The nazir was the head of the Governor-General's Indian servants (Thompson 11).

Thus Eden's role as a colonial advocate with respect to political advising remains a murky and unclear topic. Ghose, too, comes to this conclusion, saying that "it remains a matter of speculation as to what extent she influenced her brother, who valued her advice on political matters" (Ghose 85). This silence could also be "an evasion of colonial realities or loyalty to her brother" (Ghose 85) given her brother's responsibility for "the catastrophe in Afghanistan" (Claridge xix). Eden's writing tended to "gloss over historical realities and take refuge in the folds of the picturesque" (Ghose 85). Nevertheless, Eden's narrative clearly paints a very strong image of her as a colonial advocate, though what Eden did and did not use this power for remains unclear.

Beyond questions of Eden's political influence and relationship with George, Eden also acts as a colonial advocate in the previously described representation of India. Her writing and voice perpetuate colonial stereotypes, and this makes her more clearly a colonial advocate. Eden's interactions with the Nahun Rajah[28] underline this point. The Rajah had light blue eyes, and Eden feels closer to him "after three years of those enormous black beads the natives habitually see with" (Eden 245). Dubbed "mild and refreshing" (Eden 245), the blue eyes become an instrument of power as he "made Mr. A bring him across the tent to shake hands with F and [Eden], all owing to his blue eyes. Nobody with black eyes would have dreamed so European an idea" (Eden 247). Through this, Eden associates personality traits with physical appearance, and thus acts as a colonial advocate by associating beauty and intelligence with physical European features. While visiting Ranjit Singh's five wives, Eden comments that "four of them were very handsome; two would have been beautiful anywhere. I suppose they were Cashmerees [Kashmiris], they were so fair" (Eden 232). By establishing a bifurcation between being beautiful anywhere and being simply beautiful, Eden implies two types of beauty: a universal, European beauty associated with fair skin, and an

[28] The Nahun Rajah was a Chief in the Rajput clan. The Rajput clan was prominent in central and northern India during this time, presumably in the area Eden dubs 'Rajputana' in her map.

Indian beauty, which works solely in the confines of the country of India. Thus, Eden's correlation between European physical features and beauty makes her a stronger colonial advocate.

More than Eden painting herself as a colonial advocate, reactions from Indians also paint her as a colonial advocate. While Eden objectifies certain aspects of India and the Indian population, Indians in turn do the same thing to her. In Calcutta, Eden disparagingly remarks that, "we are an amusement to them. They liked our balls and parties, and whatever we did or said was the subject of an anecdote" (Eden 2-3). Her condescending tone stands in stark irony to her actions in doing the same thing to the Indian population. When Eden tries to speak Hindi, the Indians around her "burst out laughing [;] and every time [she] said it, they laughed all the more" (Eden 383). In Lahore, when the crowd sees Eden, they laugh and wonder "'what an odd thing [it is] to be so white'" (Eden 229). Through these reactions from Indians, Eden stands out as a representation of Britain and a white woman, thus magnifying her role as a colonial advocate.

On the other hand, Eden breaks her "imperialist hubris" (Ghose 85) at a few points in her text, such as her aforementioned criticism of the British justice system. Given how clearly she represents herself as a colonial advocate, as do the Indians around her, these passages stand in blatant contrast to Eden's love for her country. Most prominent is when Eden surveys Delhi and notes its "stupendous remains of power and wealth passed and passing away" (Eden 98) before going on to surprisingly say that "somehow…we horrid English have just 'gone and done it', merchandised it, revenued it, and spoiled it all" (Eden 98). Eden's mournfulness, not hidden by irony or humor, adds an unhappy and reluctant aspect to her colonial advocate identity. Ghose calls George a "'reluctant imperialist; if ever there was one'" (Ghose 84) and some of this reluctance may have rubbed off on his sister and manifested itself in this sentiment. This reluctance, however, also fulfills the image of the weary, jaded colonizer

whose self-inflicted ‘duty’ derives from “the permanent atonement for original sin as well as from the sympathetic attitude of the philanthropic Enlightenment” (Mann 5). Thus her reluctance only serves to further her identity as a colonial advocate, which is undoubtedly a prominent aspect to this text.

*Changes in Eden as a Result of Travelling in India*

Throughout the narrative, Eden both undergoes changes and exhibits some surprising characteristics that traditional Victorian women were not supposed to embody. Whether or not the cause of these changes was India cannot conclusively be stated, but there can be no doubt that being in India brought out these different parts of Eden’s personality as she was exposed to things in India that she would not have been exposed to in Britain. In this discussion, as before, Eden’s social stature holds special significance. As a result of her distinguished social standing, in addition to the amount her brother trusted her, Eden already broke many traditional Victorian stereotypes just by having her amount of power. Her identity as a colonial advocate, which inherently gave her power over the Indian population, gave her more power than an average Victorian woman. Further, being in India and the medium of travel writing gave her an ideal platform to voice her opinion and feelings. The personalized form of address and the trusted audience of her sister Drummond give readers an insight into Eden’s mind in a way that fiction would not. On the other hand, the personalized form of address has its drawbacks; Eden may or may not have held back or remained silent about certain things that would have painted a more or less traditional Victorian female image. As McKenzie states, “although far from Britain, [women travellers] were never completely free from British moral codes and British commercial interests” (McKenzie 2).

Nevertheless, the medium of personal letters to a trusted and loved one brought out Eden's loneliness and sadness. In multiple times throughout her text she unloads miserable quips that are brought about as a result of her loneliness in a country where "there was nobody except G. with whom [she] felt any real communion of heart and feelings" (Eden 54). Eden constantly longs for her family's letters which are often delayed due to the weather, with Eden receiving Drummond's July letters in September. Writing was a way for Eden to stay connected to England and a way to release her feelings as though she "hate[s] writing in general…these long letters to [Drummond] are the comfort of [her] existence" (Eden 67). Eden's discomfort arises from her "want of the old familial friends" (Eden 107-108). When she separates from George, especially, Eden truly begins to feel the loneliness because "there is nobody else in this country who understands [her]; and [Drummond is] not of the least use when [Eden] want[s] [her] most" (Eden 388). It gets so bad for Eden that she wishes that "the Sikhs, or the Russians, or anybody, would come and take us all…it would be one way out of the country" (Eden 363). The essence of her feelings distils down to her intense loneliness and boredom. Time drags for her, and it takes her "forty English years to do these two Indian ones" (Eden 108).

Eden's expression of these feelings, and her assertion that "life is passing away and we are in the wrong place" (Eden 211-212), are highly unusual sentiments for a Victorian woman to vocalize, much less commit to paper. Victorian women were expected "'to make a home something like a bright serene, restful, joyful nook of heaven in an unheavenly world'" (McKenzie 1). They were certainly not supposed to wallow in their self-pity and pine for time to pass quickly so they could leave. The ultimate Victorian woman was supposed to "suffer and be still" (Vicinus x), and Eden did only the former. Thus travelling in India put Eden in this lonely position, and her medium of travel writing gave her the platform to show this change and break with the traditional female Victorian woman figure.

However, a similar story could have been told if Eden had travelled to a different country. It was more the act of travelling that changed Eden in the above way, and not specifically India. The differentiating feature of India, then, was how much it pushed Eden physically. As McKenzie notes, Victorian women were also "taught to avoid overexerting themselves… [and] live quietly so that they could bear and tend to the offspring" (McKenzie 1). However, British women travellers like Eden "challenged themselves physically in order to participate in the chronicling of the British Empire" (McKenzie 10). This physical fitness and exertion chipped away at the traditional image of a sedentary and dainty Victorian woman. The natural landscape of India pushed Eden and those around her whether they wanted to be pushed or not. India's climate differed substantially from Britain, especially in its heat. The tour, in particular, was fatiguing for Eden. Her "hard-working life" (Eden 21) consisted of "getting up early when [they] are marching, and sitting up late at the stations" (Eden 92). Drastic changes in the temperature over the course of the day, from cold mornings to sweltering days, and her unfamiliarity with the monsoon season wreaked havoc on Eden's immune system and she was frequently ill. In February 1839, Eden had three fevers in the space of ten days. In particular, one of the fevers, which she dubbed the 'Gugga fever' as she caught it near the Gugga River, was so unpleasant that she "did not know that one head and one set of bones could hold so much pain as [hers] did for forty-eight hours" (Eden 254). Using her characteristic humor, Eden laughs at the fact that "every inch of the plains in India has its fever in it, only there is not time to catch them all" (Eden 254) and jokes with her fellow travellers about the differences between the Delhi, Agra, Hansi, and Gugga fevers (Eden 254). More than that, however, the sicknesses physically pain Eden, and she "can't impress…the pain in [her]…bones" (Eden 255). These various sicknesses, as well as Eden's exposure to pain, mark her as more resilient and stronger than what was expected of the Victorian woman.

Beyond sickness, Eden and her compatriots also had to move around physically. Eden surprises herself by learning that she "could have walked a mile and a half without dropping dead" (Eden 83) and complains about being stiff as she had not "walked so much for three years" (Eden 163). Thus, through India, Eden finds her physical fitness challenged and pushed. She claims to return to Britain "a worn-out woman" (Eden 83) as her travel in India "has been essentially an artificial life; and, moreover, from my bad health it is physically fatiguing" (Eden 337). At the same time, she recognizes her privileged position and style of living as "nobody…is in fact more spoiled, as far as worldly prosperity goes" (Eden 337). As a result of travelling in India, Eden becomes tougher both physically and mentally.

While there were times of great physical exertion, there were also times when Eden and her retinue merely sat at camp and did nothing. To pass the time, Eden worked on her hobbies. Being in India gave her a chance to explore and develop her artwork and sketching. As an amateur artist, Eden was fond of sketching and frequently made little trips while on tour to sketch. As it turns out, Eden was a gifted artist and mentions this a few times in her narrative. While many wealthy young women were encouraged to sketch and paint as a "badge of wealth and rank" (Marsh 37), in Eden's case, sketching goes beyond an accomplishment to something which gives her pride. During preparation for a fair, Eden proudly states, "I have made such a collection of drawings for the fancy sale-*really* very good. I am sorry to say it, for it may sound vain, perhaps it is vain" (Eden 161). On the one hand, Eden clearly was proud of her work. On the other hand, her pride was decidedly un-Victorian and un-feminine, as Victorian women were taught "to sketch…but not to boast of their accomplishments" (Marsh 37). She feels the need to justify and defend herself from the negative whiplash that such a statement might produce. The very fact that she felt the need to perform damage-control before the damage is, in fact, inflicted shows that pride was not an acceptable emotion for a lady to have at that time. Thus, Eden's action of having that pride

itself, and being able to express it, points to a change in her through travel. This increase, however, was limited as Eden still feels the pressure of British society and withdraws her confidence of how *really* very good her artwork is.

The last change readers see in Eden through the act of travel deals with Eden's perception of the Indian population and her sexualization of certain Indian men. When meeting the aforementioned Nahun Rajah for the first time, Eden is struck by his physicality and commends that "he is one of the best-looking people [she has] seen" (Eden 119). Eden then goes on to detail her attraction to him. As a Rajput Chief who frequently hunts, rides, and shoots, he fits Eden's expectation for social stature and active manliness. Indeed, Eden most scandalously muses that "if the rajah fancied an English ranee, [she] know[s] someone who would be very happy to listen to his proposals" (Eden 119). While in Punjab, she casually remarks that she tries to "flirt a little with Kurruck Singh, the heir-apparent" (Eden 225). British women were not expected to have any form of sexual attraction (Vicinus x), much less to an Indian man, and Eden's actions here assert her independence from social codes of conduct. These two instances show a change in Eden after having been in India for almost three years. She not only begins to vocalize her attraction, but does so without reprimanding herself; thus showing that she accepts her feelings of attraction. At the same time, Eden also bemoans "how eastern we had become" (Eden 208); thus implying that these changes and attraction towards Indian men take root in her process of becoming eastern. This phrase nevertheless serves as Eden's personal testament that India changed her.

# Conclusion

Through this study of Fanny Parkes, Isabella Fane, and Emily Eden, we see that their travel to colonial India did in fact have an impact on their personal development in ways that would not have been available to them in Britain. Further, their representations of India portray the change in British thought and attitude towards India from the early 1800s, as shown by Parkes's narrative, to the later 1830s and early 1840s, as shown by Fane's and Eden's narratives. Moreover, studying these three narratives shows more than ever the profound effect of social class, marital status, and familial relations on the independence, self-perception, self-representation, and personal development of Victorian women. Through this thesis, I also hope to have shown the value of travel writing. While it poses problems in its subjectivity and the creativity an author exhibits in retelling their experiences, it nevertheless provides invaluable insight into real incidents in the lives of real people. In the context of this thesis, travel writing was an ideal platform from which to study both avenues of personal development unavailable to these women in Britain and their perceptions of India as these narratives reflect the personal voice of these three women. Through these narratives, readers receive a rare and uninhibited personal account of the thoughts, opinions, and feelings of these three women as and when they feel them. Further, the necessity for these authors to take the effort to actually write these incidents down shows the importance of these incidents to them. Their subjectivity, both in what they want to write and in what they think their reader wants to read, present valuable opportunities for analyzing Victorian culture and expectations and their personalities.

These narratives each provide different themes of discussion. Parkes's narrative holds special value in its focus on the condition of women, both in India and Britain, and her representation of the zenana. Fane's letters contain explicit descriptions of her sad loneliness and most unexpectedly exotic and erotic descriptions of her attraction to Asian men. Her

uncouth language and sense of humor are striking. Eden's collection offers particular insight into the role women played in maintaining the colonial system, and especially questions whether the Victorian female and imperialist can co-exist. All three women consistently break the mold of the traditional Victorian woman in different ways. Parkes was incredibly independent and acted on her whim, constantly fending for herself and creating her own experiences. Her taste for danger, appreciation for India, criticisms of Britain, and progressively feminist views were not at all what social codes in England dictated for women. Fane doesn't even try to suffer and be still, preferring instead explicit descriptions of her bodily discomforts and emotional turmoil. Her clear attraction to Asian men shows that not only was she aware of her sexual feelings, but was comfortable expressing them, even if it was towards a colonized race on which English people were supposed to look down. While plenty of literature exists about male exoticization of the Oriental female 'Other,' Fane provides an opportunity to see the flip side: female exoticization of the male 'Other.' The idea of desire for colonized populations, while prominent in the literary community, does not manifest itself in female desire for the exotic 'Other.' Fane's fetishization and eroticization of Asian men stand out not only in how un-Victorian they were, but also how generally unusual they were. Lastly, Eden, as an imperial advocate, defies Victorian feminine ideals through her political savvy and intelligence. She too, like Fane, refuses to suffer and be still; and constantly expresses how she feels, whether negative or positive.

Overall, these three narratives provide a diverse insight into the research questions this thesis explores. Let us begin with the importance of social class. The social class hierarchy among these three women is as follows: Emily Eden, as the sister of the Governor-General; Isabella Fane, as the daughter of the Commander-in-Chief, in close second; and Fanny Parkes, as the wife of a mid-ranking civil servant, as the lowest in social class. Emily Eden, possessing a positive relationship with her brother and resulting imperial power,

inherently had many more avenues through which to express her opinions and, moreover, feel valued. While her perceptions of self-worth were largely tied to her brother and, as a result, the maintenance of the colonial system, she nevertheless exhibited higher perception of self-worth than Fane. Her interest in politics, as shown by her active participation in the Whig Party in England, and her intelligence were put to good use in India. Thus her travel to India gave her an opportunity to exercise and develop her political savvy, intelligence, and diplomatic skills. Further, her imperial position boosted her perception of self-worth by solidifying her identity in opposition to her scathing representation of the Indian population. The loneliness and boredom she felt in her solitude also developed her introspection, thought process, and taught her how to entertain herself and be content in her solitude. Thus being in India, and in situations which needed such skills, made Eden develop in new ways she would not have in Britain.

Though Fane had a similar social position, her narrative in India panned out differently. While Fane did not arrive in India with the extent of power Eden had, her high social position meant that she had prime access to many of the dignitaries of the East India Company. Unlike Eden, however, Fane frankly did not care about and was rather bored by politics. She was more excited by the sense of importance brought about by coming to India as the daughter of the Commander-in-Chief that she does not appear to have felt in Britain. Despite the similarity in social standing to Eden, Fane faced many more restrictions. Ironically, these restrictions were what provided her with avenues of personal development. Forbidden from sitting in on meetings between her father and Indian dignitaries, Fane banded with the other ladies in her camp to discreetly spy on these meetings. Further, if we apply a Foucauldian reading to this action, Fane's being able to see without being seen creates a power dynamic very much in her favor as she exacts "a perpetual victory that avoids any physical confrontation and which is always decided in advance" (Foucault 203). This created

a lively spark that runs through the whole narrative, where Fane's travel to India and her resulting restrictions cause Fane to take ownership of her experience. Her ownership to see what she could, and be exposed to what she could be regardless of what those around her thought was a clear sign of personal development she would not have received in Britain. Part of the reason for this carefree attitude is no doubt her disparaging view of Indian society. Like Eden, Fane creates mostly a negative image of India, and as a result does not appear to care what the Indians around her think. Being in a situation where, unlike aristocratic society in England, she did not need to worry about what those around her thought was liberating to Fane, who humorously comments on such situations. Further, Fane voices her attraction to Asian men multiple times throughout her text, showing a "suppressed libido awakening" (Pemble 4) as a result of her travel to India. Fane's narrative, out of the three, voices the clearest sexualization of Asian men. Thus her travel to India paved the way for new types of personal development, including new types of power, the ability to create her own experiences, and a realization of her sexual feelings.

Boredom and unhappiness are common and recurrent themes in Eden's and Fane's narratives. Much of their boredom arises as a result of the restrictions placed on them, either in terms of their social position or familial relations, respectively. However, the omnipresent black cloud of boredom that hangs over them throughout their narratives holds more meaning. Elizabeth Goodstein calls melancholy and boredom the "sociological counterpart of the frustrated anthropological need to do something meaningful" (Goodstein 80). If we keep with Goodstein's interpretation that "melancholy and ennui are a consequence of a lack of meaningful connection to the collective world of human endeavor" (Goodstein 80), the recurrence of the theme of boredom in the works of Eden and Fane become another way in which they show their feelings of meaninglessness and worthlessness. In Eden's work, this is salvaged in her colonial role, whereas we see no redemption in Fane's work. More than a

feeling of meaninglessness, however, this boredom signifies the systematic oppression British women faced at that time. Goodstein notes that German sociologist "[Wolf] Lepenies' interpretation of the discourse on interiority of a function of the malaise [is] that [it] arises when individuals are systematically marginalized by the social systems in which they must act…[ennui] expresses an implicit critique of the world that occasioned it" (Goodstein 86). Thus, by being bored, and indeed expressing their boredom, Fane and Eden not only act in an un-Victorian way, but are inherently showing and critiquing the systematic marginalization of the social system in which they act, which would be British attitudes towards women.

Fanny Parkes's narrative is as different from Eden's and Fane's as possible, and serves almost as the antithesis of their boredom. From a lower social class and with a husband she describes as mentally unstable, Parkes had much more flexibility than the other two women. One benefit of her lower social status was that she had freedom and flexibility in her schedule. While Eden and Fane were restricted to serving in the aristocratic duties and niceties for which they had travelled to India, Parkes only had to answer to herself. Parkes rarely mentions her husband throughout her narrative, though when she does he acts as an enabling factor for most of her solitary travels. While for Eden the restricting factors were her responsibilities due to her social class and for Fane it was her father, Parkes did not have any restricting factors beyond what she could not do. Unlike the other two women, Parkes also enjoyed the expat community in India, frequently travelling and adventuring with them. She also formed meaningful relationships with Indians, particularly the Baiza Bai. As a result, she was much less lonely and presents herself as happier. She receives fulfillment, excitement, and waves of personal development as a result of her travel to India. Her admiration, efforts to understand, and eventual embodiment of Indian culture are obvious ways in which her travel to India afforded her avenues of personal development unavailable to her in England. She learns new languages, new skills, new hobbies, and learns how to dress in a different

way. In India, she is exposed to danger, relishes it, and finds herself responding well and fearlessly to it. Without the opportunity to be in danger, Parkes would have never realized how well she copes with it. Her representation of Indians, and particularly the zenana women, starkly contrasts with that of both Eden and Fane. While Eden and Fane rarely mention the zenana, much less explore and detail their experiences there, Parkes seeks out opportunities to understand this part of India.

In this way, comparing these narratives show the change in British colonial attitude from the early to mid-1800s. Through Parkes's narrative, we see the excited, effusive, and interested British attitude towards India that persisted from the late eighteenth century to the 1830s. Even in her narrative from 1835-1840, Parkes continues her positive, admiring, and eager description of India. Part of this comes from the general way of thinking about India in the 1820s, Parkes's personality, the positive experiences she had in India, and the increase in her sense of self-worth India gives her. Nevertheless, when we compare Parkes's narrative to those of Eden and Fane, we see a huge change in thought. Everything Indian is suddenly degraded and becomes a symbol of inferiority. Representations of Indians change from friendly, interesting, and novel people to weak, strange, and unpleasant savages. Indian culture begins to be suppressed as opposed to celebrated; and British culture becomes the ultimate ideal. Social interactions with Indians become next to nothing. The stark difference between these narratives substantiates the accepted idea that there was a change in British approaches to colonial India between the 1820s and 1830s. These three narratives, set before the Sepoy Mutiny, provide a depiction of India and the position of both British and Indian women before the crackdown on colonialism and before women in India were further restricted in order to protect their safety.

Another point of interest in this thesis is the difference in how three different types of male-female relationships in late Georgian and early Victorian functioned. As the only

married woman, Parkes in her narrative shows readers a husband-wife relationship. As unmarried women, Fane shows the father-daughter relationship, while Eden shows the brother-sister relationship. Parkes and Eden did not find their relationships with the men they came to India with restricting, while Fane did. The nature of these relationships heavily colored each narrative. The quintessential brother-sister relationship with "all the emotional intensity of marriage, but at the same time [without] the issue of sexuality…invested with sacred overtones" (Gorham 44) Eden has with her brother gives her happiness throughout her time in India. Eden and George are presented as partners, and Eden feels meaningful as a result. Parkes's relationship with her husband, as mentioned earlier, is positive, fond, and non-oppressive. In contrast to the supporting and loving relationships Parkes and Eden have with their male companions, Sir Henry, through Fane's narrative, is rather cold, aloof, and uninterested in his daughter. Fane feels like a burden, and this lack of meaning also leads to personal development as she has to learn to find meaning in herself beyond her father. This emotional distress comes across in her narrative, which is more emotionally colored than either Parkes's or Eden's. In this vein, it is worth noting that Fane's narrative was not edited by herself prior to publication, while both Parkes and Eden edited theirs before publishing them. Fane's narrative contains passages of heart-rending loneliness and feelings of worthlessness, most un-Victorian of her, as does Eden's in parts as well. Parkes sometimes expresses frustration and boredom, but nowhere does she present herself as lonely or unhappy as Fane, or Eden. This again in part depended on the audience to whom they were writing. Both Eden and Fane were writing to trusted and loved family members; while Parkes edited her journal for the public. Moreover, Fane and Eden genuinely seem to have been unhappy throughout their sojourn in India while Parkes appears to have fully enjoyed it. Nevertheless, all three of these narratives have a unique place in showing that travel to colonial India in the first half of the nineteenth-century provided avenues of personal development to women

unavailable to them in Britain, and also show the change in British colonial thought between the 1820s and 1830s.

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Bibliography Key:

Domesticity: *Domesticity and Power in the Early Mughal World* by Ruby Lal
Coming of Age: *Coming of Age in Nineteenth-Century India* by Ruby Lal
Woman Question: "Recasting the Women's Question" by Ruby Lal
Orientalism: *Orientalism* by Edward Said
C&I: *Culture and Imperialism* by Edward Said
Notes: *Notes* by Esther Chawner* in *Wanderings of a Pilgrim*

*Chawner's notes are only cited once, as (Chawner, *Notes* 'page number'). In all other instances, her introduction is simply cited as (Chawner 'page number').