ABSTRACT

DANIELLE BERKE
Home Goes Abroad: Negotiating Empire and Power in the late British Raj
(Under the Direction of DR. STEVEN SOPER)

The present paper portrays British colonial India in the late nineteenth century at a

moment in which the anxieties inherent in ruling an empire have been maximized and

exacerbated and the demand for strategies to minimize this anxiety were at a premium; a moment

in which the contradictions of the maintenance of imperial power were finely crystallized. This

moment in the British Raj is primarily painted through an exploration of three personal diaries of

members of the official community of British men and women in India (those people affiliated

with the British army or government). The lives of these civil servants are analyzed for sources

of anxious strain and release; as, it was through the official community that the British hoped to

transplant their culture. A careful reading of a narrow selection of diaries allows for the

engagement in a type of psychological history of the lived experience of this community. The

first section of the essay locates anxiety of rule within the colony as a direct result of the memory

of the Mutiny of 1857. The next section explores the relative failures and successes of the Anglo-

Indian bungalow in addressing this anxiety. The final chapter is an exploration of the various

strategies, such as rules of etiquette and discourses informed by scientific racism, by which

Anglo-Indians attempted to moderate the lingering fears and insecurities remaining from 1857.

INDEX WORDS: British Raj, India, Colonialism, Empire, Imperialism, Home, Sepoy
                Mutiny, Scientific Racism, Hygiene, Etiquette, Anxiety, Nineteenth
                Century, Anglo-Indian

HOME GOES ABROAD: NEGOTIATING EMPIRE AND POWER IN THE LATE BRITISH

RAJ

by

DANIELLE BERKE

A Thesis Submitted to the Honors Council of the University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree

BACHELOR OF ARTS in HISTORY

with HIGHEST HONORS

Athens, Georgia

2009

HOME GOES ABROAD: NEGOTIATING EMPIRE AND POWER IN THE LATE BRITISH

RAJ

by

DANIELLE BERKE

Approved:

___Steven Soper_____   ___12/14/09_____
Dr. Steven Soper   Date
Faculty Research Mentor

Approved:

__Pamela Voekel_____   __12/14/09_____
Dr. Pamela Voekel   Date
Reader

Approved:

__David S. Williams_____   ___12/16/09_____
Dr. David S. Williams   Date
Director, Honors Program, Foundation Fellows and
Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities

Approved:

___Pamela Kleiber_____   __12/16/09_____
Dr. Pamela Kleiber   Date
Associate Director, Honors Program and
Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Empire building, as a national endeavor, is a task fraught with conflict and contradiction. Inherent in the work of any colonial project is the necessity of transplanting the culture of an imperial people to the far reaches of a foreign land. However, an empire predicated on a civilizing mission encounters a central paradox—colonized members of a subject race must be perceived as the beneficiaries of the colonizers' culture while simultaneously and perpetually remaining separate from and fundamentally unchanged by that culture. The moment that a colonized people come to possess those qualities by which an imperial power defines their superiority, the work of Empire is complete and the foreign presence is no longer legitimate. Thus, imperial actors on the global stage, and the British in particular as holders of tremendous colonial claims, were deeply invested in imagining ways in which to articulate difference between themselves and their subjects in the empire.

There is perhaps no other moment in history during which the paradox of ruling a colony was more exacerbated than British India in the late nineteenth century. The waning years of the century were a time of tremendous anxiety. Britain found itself on the precipice of the new century faced with the unenviable task of reassessing its position of dominance on the global stage while simultaneously contending with the internal pressures of modernity on cultural thought and social structure.

Contemporary historians have identified this time period as an era in which the legitimacy of British rule on the world stage found itself on particularly shaky ground. Catherine Hall speaks of the late nineteenth century as the "high noon of popular imperialism." By the

1850's, Hall insists that the image of colonizing as a rough-and-ready frontier practice was beginning to give way to an insistent demand for white settler areas to look more like Britain, and in particular more like a domesticated Britain. She also points to a number of events throughout the British Empire that contributed to a climate of fear and uncertainty that accompanied this shifting demand for domesticated colonizers. "Disillusionment with the conduct of freed slaves both in the Caribbean and Africa, and fears about Maori aggression in New Zealand, combined with terror provoked by the 'Indian Mutiny' of 1857 when Britain reacted to the challenge mounted to white supremacy in India." Fear, anxiety, and the subsequent raising of questions of empire and its relation to the metropole were made preeminent by those events identified by Hall as well as those at Morant Bay in Jamaica in 1865, Fenian "outrages" on the mainland in 1866/7, as well as growing competition for imperial dominance by the US, Germany, and Japan, and concerns of British economic standing in the world. Hall contends that these factors inspired fears that, "fostered a less benign view of empire, one which informed the 'scramble for Africa' and the less popular imperialism of the 1880's and 1890's."[1] Hence, the imperialism practiced at the end of the nineteenth century was a brand characterized by declining prestige, popularity, and benevolence, not just in India, but also on a global scale.

The terror provoked by the Indian Mutiny of 1857 is the most salient evidence of the challenge mounted at this time to a British sense of security as rulers of their Indian colony. However, while the events of 1857 were certainly remembered as some of the bloodiest of the century, they were but a part of a larger phenomenon of the flourishing of nationalist movements in late nineteenth-century India. For example, 1885 saw the emergence of the Indian National Congress (INC), a group primarily drawn from an urban middle-class support base, from a

---

[1] Catherine,Hall *Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century* from
    Levine, Phillipa. *Gender and Empire*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press) 2004, 47.

segment of the population who were growing increasingly frustrated with their lack of a political voice.

The fragile state of Britain's colonial project in India in this period consequently demanded the construction of what Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler call "grammars of difference.[2]" In other words, a discourse designed to impart as much distance between the rulers and the ruled as possible was mandated by the anxieties of the late Victorian period. The production of a distinction between those who were colonists and those who were colonized was an act of 'mutual construction.'[3] In the act of defining the other, the British in India had to first establish the terms of their own civilization; essentially, they had to define themselves.

The exercise of constructing a self-definition rooted in difference was challenged further by the deep hybridity of Anglo-Indian[4] life. The experience of the British in India was believed to be an intensely physical one that resulted in subtle constitutional transformations in which the appearance, manner, and habits of the European were Easternized.[5] Both culturally and racially the Anglo-Indian experience was neither fully British nor fully Indian. Simply by being "so long accustomed to measure his own humanity by the standard of a conquered and degraded race,"[6] the Anglo-Indian's conception of 'self' was inevitably colored by native contact. This hybridity acted to destabilize a colonial social order that demanded homogeneity (or at the very least the appearance of such) in a period of mounting challenges to colonial prestige and legitimacy of

---

[2] Frederick Cooper, Ann Laura Stoler *Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (Berkeley) 1997, 1-56.
[3] Hall, 50.
[4] Before the 1911 census the term Anglo-Indian referred to any British person in India. This definition will be used throughout this essay.
[5] E.M. Collingham. *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj,c.1800-1947* (Blackwell Publishers: Malden, 2001).
[6] Michael Anton Budd. *The Sculpture Machine*: *Physical culture and body politics in the age of empire.* 1997

rule. According to Ghosh Durba, "hybridity produced anxieties about the loss of various types of 'purity…'that fueled the making of racial, social, and gender classification and hierarchies"[7] Durba contends further that the uprising of Indian soldiers in 1857 was a kind of flashpoint at which the many types of partnerships between Britons and Indians came to an abrupt end. The Mutiny represented a massive challenge to the notion of Anglo-Indian superiority within the subcontinent and rendered the anxieties of hybridity wholly intolerable. If the British were to retain political authority in India, they needed to conceive of ways to weave discourses of difference into the fabric of their daily lives as well as incorporate static difference into a conception of what it meant to be white, British and civilized.

The notion that Anglo-Indians physically enacted cultural difference in their day-to-day activities and actions is rooted in Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus:' A set of schemas or disposititions, acquired through a process of socialization and transferred into the individual so that the social structures, values, and ideologies of a society are transformed into the patterns of behavior of each member of society.[8] The concept of habitus in turn owes its intellectual roots to Michel Foucault, who redefined the body as a site where political power is exercised.[9] Together, these ideas form the foundation of a vision of an individual representing the moral, cultural, and political values of an entire group of people simply by practicing (or refraining from practicing) a certain set of behaviors. This is what Norbert Elias describes as *The Civilizing Process*[10]. Thus, the by-product of self-restraint and a display of regulated behavior are the assertion of difference

---

[7] Durba, Ghosh. *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 2006.
[8] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge, 1990)
[9] Michel Foucault *Discipline and Punish. The birth of the prison* (Harmondsworth, 1977). *The History of Sexuality* (Harmondsworth, 1990)
[10] Norbert Elias *The Civilizing Process. The history of manners and state formation and civilization.* (Oxford, 1982).

and the articulation of distance between groups of people who possess a divergent habitus. In this way, Anglo-Indians could demarcate boundaries between themselves and the subject race in the minutia of everyday activities such as those that occur within the home.[11]

New ideas about the nature of racial difference were also relied upon to minimize the troubling hybriditity of Anglo-Indian life. Though Durba insists that "the building blocks of colonial ideologies about racial superiority and moral probity were in formation from the middle of the eighteenth century onward, prior to the development of scientific racism and claims about the genetic difference between Caucasians and others," the challenge to white supremacy posed by the events of 1857 brought racialized discourse to the forefront of colonial discussion. Durba himself acknowledges that the period following the Mutiny was characterized by a phasing out of interracial unions and miscegenation. These forms of sexual discipline were a means by which Anglo-Indians could enact their moral superiority. By frowning upon practices in which races might be mixed, the British in India demonstrated their commitment to reason over passion and aided in the process of "making empire respectable." By subscribing to the newly proliferated tenets of scientific racism, Anglo-Indians were afforded another strategy for asserting the continued legitimacy of their participation in the Imperial project in India.

The present essay attempts to offer a portrait of a very specific moment in the history of British colonial India; a moment in which the anxieties inherent in ruling an empire have been maximized and exacerbated and the demand for strategies to minimize this anxiety were at a premium; a moment in which the contradictions of the maintenance of imperial power were

---

[11] See Robin D. Jones *Interiors of Empire: Objects, Space and Identity within the Indian Subcontinent, c. 1800-1947*.(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007) for a discussion of the European home within the Indian subcontinent as a significant space intended both to constitute and to express the culture of an imperial power.

finely crystallized. Chapter One locates anxiety of rule within the colony as a direct result of the memory of the Mutiny of 1857. It describes the ways in which the events of 1857 entered into the collective memory of Anglo-Indians and the psychological cost of agreeing upon that imagined past. If the British in India hoped to soothe their frayed psyche by articulating distance in the habits of their daily life, the Anglo-Indian bungalow would seem the most logical site; for, where else do more acts of cultivated routine occur than in the home? Chapter 2, however, characterizes the home as both an inappropriate contestation space of anxiety of rule and a source of novel strain on Anglo-Indians. The final chapter is an exploration of the various strategies by which Anglo-Indians attempted to moderate the lingering fears and insecurities remaining from 1857 left unaddressed by the structure of the private sphere.

The portrait of this moment in history is primarily painted through an exploration of three personal diaries of members of the official community of British men and women in India (those people affiliated with the British army or government). The lives of these civil servants are analyzed for sources of anxious strain and release because it was through the official community that the British hoped to transplant their culture. Members of the army and government were part of a community explicitly assigned the civilizing mission of empire. Therefore, it is through their consciousness and customs that a sense of legitimacy of rule in India can be measured.

The three diaries also offer a comprehensive vision of this period and community. Chronologically, the texts span the entire half-century following the Mutiny, from the first written in 1862 to the last in 1908. Each voice also provides a distinctive perspective. These sources allow both men and women to speak. They also comment on the phenomenon of Empire from those living within India and those observing it as travelers. Other journals and diaries written at this time tell valuable and interesting stories about the imperial experience; however,

what is remarkable about all three of these sources is that, regardless of their diverging origins,

the same patterns of thought and action run throughout. The themes of Mutiny remembered and

legitimacy of rule questioned are intoned time and time again in these texts, and they are

consequently teeming with instances of strategic efforts to alleviate anxiety. Thus, a careful,

thorough analysis of this succinct set of sources presents an opportunity to trace a kind of

psychological history of the British in colonial India—an elusive story that could easily be lost or

overlooked in a sea of loosely bound sources.

CHAPTER 1
AN ANXIOUS EMPIRE: MEMORIES OF MUTINY

Under the control of the East India Company, the subcontinent of India had been

conquered by the middle of the nineteenth century. However, the conquest and control of such a

vast territory was made possible only through the British army's heavy reliance on Indian troops

who were trusted to perform the physical, military work of carving out the empire. Thus, in

effect, it was an empire of sepoys that enabled a British Trading Company to dominate a

subcontinent nearly half a world away. Mutinies within these sepoy ranks, as well as among

European officers, were not terribly uncommon. Over the course of the eighteenth and early

nineteenth centuries unrest was occasionally sparked by some real or perceived grievance over

issues such as pay, allowances, or overseas postings. However, throughout 1857 and 1858, the

sepoys of the East India Company's Bengal Army lead the most serious revolt against British

rule India had ever seen.

The significance of the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857 (also referred to as the 'Mutiny' or the

'Uprising') as an unprecedented historical marker rests on a number of factors. First, the speed at

which the revolt traveled from the military to the general Indian population tremendously

shocked the British, who became targets of violence from both sepoys as well as civilian rebels.

Furthermore, the targets of this violence extended beyond European officers who had mistreated

their men. Instead the rebellion focused its rage on all Europeans, many of whom bore no

conceivable association with the official community apart from their white skin. The rebellion

drew civilians on both sides of the racial divide into bloody conflict. Most shocking to the British

were the large numbers of white women and children who were directly targeted by Indian

violence. The fact that the Bengal Army had mutinied was far less shocking than the death of

innocent white civilians that followed. Under these circumstances, the uprising could be more accurately characterized as a mutiny against the broader European colonial presence than an act of rebellion against a narrowly defined institution of that culture—the British army. In fact, rightly or wrongly, many Indians will always remember the events of 1857 and 1858 as the origin of a nationalist struggle culminating with the final termination of British control in 1947.[12] Aimed at the larger colonial project, and conceptualized as a part of a nationalist movement, the rebellion presented the British Government in India with its first major challenge in dealing with widespread unrest, forcing the British to re-imagine their position in India in the light of a future now tainted by the challenges imparted by unrest and uncertainty. The dramatic restructuring of Indian rule in the wake of the uprising marked this shift. After 258 years, the world of the East India Company abruptly ended with the assumption of Indian rule by the British crown on November 1, 1858[13].

Erecting Memories

The ways in which the events of the Sepoy Mutiny entered into the British imagination and came to be memorialized imparted them with further significance, insuring that their legacy would remain imprinted on the empire decades after the tangible reminders of struggle had dissipated. The overt violence of resistance paired with the brutal methods of the British to crush the rebellion required the cultivation of a set of stories about the Mutiny in order to rouse the British army as well as legitimize the use of unrestrained force. These sensational memories often centered on the theme of a defilement of innocence. Reports of the rape of white women

---

[12] Rosie Llwellyn-Jones. *The Great Uprising in India, 1857-58: Untold Stories, Indian and British* (The Boydell Press: Woodbridge) xv.
[13] Ibid, xiv.

and children being roasted alive and eaten circulated widely in media and literature during and immediately after the rebellion, generating a degree of political hysteria and racism that imparted a deep emotional incentive for the British army to restore order. Keeping memories of mutiny alive also inspired a recommitment of the British to the 'civilizing mission' of colonial rule and helped them to reimagine their role in the colonial project.

The erection of monuments and memorials at the site of some of the bloodiest scenes of the Mutiny was one way in which its memory was allowed to live on into the second half of the century. Thus, erecting monuments to the mutiny in Indian cities, paired with the dramatic stories fermenting in the British imagination served a further, perhaps unintentional function above and beyond the inspiration and legitimization of counter-insurgent violence. The legacy of the uprising provided Anglo-Indians with an uncommonly salient theme around which to reconceptualize their position as rulers and solidify a set of collective memories that could be incorporated into their identity. Assimilatory cultural and historical memories of the mutiny were incorporated in a kind of Anglo-Indian folk-consciousness that informed a fundamentally new way of conceiving of and relating to the British Raj after 1857. However, because 1857 served as constant reminder of the tenuous nature of imperialism, its memory fostered a self-concept deeply grounded in an anxiety of rule that Anglo-Indians came to bare as a physical scar of war. Much like the biblical curse of Cain, Anglo-Indians paid a dear price for the sensational memories of mutiny—an imperial environment riddled with a deep, permeating anxiety that demanded constant attention and care.

Diaries and journals of British men and women living and traveling in India in the decades following the mutiny are heavily punctuated with reminders of 1857. The invocation of the theme of the uprising in these accounts demonstrates both the resiliency of the mutiny's

legacy as an aspect of Anglo-Indian identity as well as the anxiety-inducing effects of these memories. Mrs. John B. Speid, the wife of an English official, comments in her journal, *Our Last Years in India*, on the weight the Mutiny bears on the consciousness of its victims. She states:

> I was glad to meet again at Ahmed-nugger the kind friends, a clergyman and his wife, who sheltered us for two months, while the mutinies were at their height. They were very well, but looked, as I fancied everyone looked, a shade paler than when I left them. Time has not moved far since then, but I see he has touched the heads of many with his wing, as he swept slowly and heavily over them in those few terrible months of uncertainty and fear.[14]

Though writing a few months after the reconsolidation of power in India under the control of the British government, Speid and her companions are still reeling from the psychological blow of their experience in 1857. The heavy hand of time that bears on Speid's mind encourages her to observe the possibility of mutiny and conspiracy all around. Early in her journal she discusses the ominous warnings that have reached her home. She claims, "a gentleman writes to my husband that 'things look *hairy*,' another characterizes the state of the political atmospheres as '*fishy*,' and a newspaper now pronounces it to be '*dusty*. Pray put these ominous figures together, and help me conjecture the nature of the 'grisly terror' which looms on our horizon—a monster at once 'fishy,' 'hairy,' and 'dusty!'"[15] She also speaks about a conspiracy plot in Bombay to murder all the Europeans there, and she explains the discontent there "by supposing that they have caught mutiny, taken it from the natives as an epidemic as people take influenza or cholera."[16] Later she discusses constant rumors that Bombay is "on the

---

[14] Mrs. John B. Speid. *Our Last Years in India* (London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1862), 42.
[15] Ibid, 76.
[16] Ibid, 147.

eve of a second rebellion."[17] For Speid, daily life is punctuated by an anxious sense that the next

eruption of violence could lie waiting just over the horizon, and the stories she hears in letters

and from friends only act to bolster this feeling.

Though not always directly acknowledged as such, the resurfacing of memories of the

rebellion deep into the later decades of the century is suggestive of the overall uneasiness of the

British role in India, as the very theme of 1857 drips with evidence of the fragility of the Empire

and the Anglo-Indian's place within it.   Writing in 1898, Violet Jacobs, the wife of a British

Army officer, offers a number of descriptions of visits she and here husband made to the site of

Mutiny memorials. Describing the Angel of the Resurrection over the Bibighar Well at

Cawnpore, Jacobs writes:

> The memorial church impressed us, as it must impress anyone, with its walls covered
>
> with tablets and the marks of 1857, rows and rows of names of those who had died of
>
> their sufferings at the hands of the mutineers. Going through the scene of these horrors
>
> nothing short of ferocity was in one. The *Suttee Chowra Ghât,* where the sand stretches
>
> for miles on the further side of the Ganges bed and where those who had escaped to the
>
> boats were shot down, seemed to reek of blood and terror and death. We had much time
>
> to spend but we went to the garden where the well is into which the corpses and those
>
> who were not yet corpses were thrown. It is railed in and no Indian is allowed to
>
> approach it. I thought it rather spoilt by the large white angel standing over it; it needs
>
> nothing but itself to speak of the solemnity that is round it. The house where so many
>
> women and children died horribly made one shudder, with its bare, sinister walls
>
> crowding upon one, kept spotlessly clean and all the more suggestive for that; every

---

[17] Ibid, 156

angle and corner was revealed round which the murderers must have chased the

defenseless creatures. It is unforgettable.[18]

Jacob's visit to Cawnpore is almost like a pilgrimage, and her choice of this site is telling

of the place it holds in the collective memory of Anglo-Indians. The besieged garrison at

Cawnpore was the location of an infamous slaughter that epitomized Indian brutality and the

defilement of British innocence. After almost all the men of the garrison were killed, the women

and children at Cawnpore were imprisoned for fifteen days in disease ridden conditions only to

be massacred and unceremoniously dumped in a well just hours before rescuing British troops

arrived.[19] The "ferocity" Jacob feels at the site, as well as the fact the she can nearly smell the

reek of the corpses fifty years after the massacre is an indication of the powerful permanence of

the Mutiny's legacy. The official community chose to erect a monument to memorialize an

episode within the Mutiny that tore deep wounds into their sense of stability, security, and

authority in India. But by keeping such memories alive, these anxiety-inducing emotions were

permitted to remain a integral part of life in the Empire.

Jacob's account of the death of her friend Arthur Napier further bolsters the idea that

memories of mutiny imparted a pervasive sense of anxiety on Anglo-Indians. Delirious with

sickness, Napier would not accept medicine from the Eurasian nurse hired to tend to him

claiming that, "there was a mutiny beginning and that she was a German spy." Jacob claims,

"The thought of the mutiny obsessed his brain and he was troubled because there were no British

troops at Indore."[20] Indore, the residency in which Napier lived, had been attacked by troops of

---

[18] Violet Jacob. *Diaries and Letters from India 1895-1900* (Edinburgh: Canongate
      Publishing,1990), 152.
[19] Mary A. Procida. *Married to the Empire; Gender, Politics and Imperialism in India, 1883-*
1947 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 113.
[20] Jacob, 133.

the local Indian Prince in 1857, and the legacy of that event left such an indelible mark on the man's psyche that it plagued him on his very deathbed.

An outside observer traveling throughout the subcontinent also easily identifies the scars of Mutiny borne by the Anglo-Indian memory. Writing in the first decade of the twentieth century, Henry Craik makes a pilgrimage similar to Jacob's to the various memorials and historical sites remembered for their role in the events of 1857. In Delhi, he claims, "I am certain of my own impression, that the Mutiny is still a living memory there. It comes across at every turn. Each spot has its story of heroism and of tragedy, or rescue and death, or worse."[21] Later, in Cawnpore and Lucknow he notes, "the lesson of the Mutiny is here more fresh in the memory of men."[22] Also in Lucknow he muses:

As one is subdued to the spirit of the place, one wonders if, far off and amid all our distractions, we have fully grasped what our fellow-countrymen and countrywomen suffered during these long months of heroic struggle. If the lesson has faded from our memories, here at least it becomes irresistibly real, and sinks into our hearts with overwhelming force.[23]

Though memories of the Mutiny can be ignored or even forgotten back in Britain, it is clear to Craik that the way in which they have been monumentalized on the subcontinent makes this an impossible task for Anglo-Indians who are permanently confronted with emotionally powerful physical reminders of their susceptibility to violence. Craik speaks more to this idea of the difference in the way in which the Mutiny is remembered in India versus Britain. "Unrest in the provinces is a real and ever-present menace—and by so much the less is it apt to be talked of.

---

[21] Henry Craik, *Impressions of India* (London: Macmillam and Co., Limited, 1908), 110
[22] Ibid, 171.
[23] Ibid, 178

You *feel* that it is there, rather than hear of it. Those at home do not hear of it, and for that reason do not sufficiently realize the feeling. But it is there all the same…as a summons to unremitting watchfulness."[24] For Craik, Mutiny monuments not only reminded Anglo-Indians of the events of 1857, they also encouraged a kind of watchfulness in the present society to protect the British from a present or future threat to their rule over the Empire.

According to diary and journal accounts spanning a half-century after the Sepoy Rebellion, the legacy of the Mutiny undeniably bore on outsiders and Anglo-Indians alike up to five decades after the bloody uprising. This memory was not only a palpable component of Anglo-Indian society and consciousness, it was also a memory that fostered a pervasive anxiety grounded in the menacing sense that conspiracy and violence were ever-present threats to British rule in India. Thus, the legacy of the Mutiny demanded Anglo-Indians devote a great amount of attention and effort to discover strategies of asserting the legitimacy and strength of their rule in an environment teeming with physical and psychological testaments to the contrary.

---

[24] Ibid, 224

CHAPTER 2
TRANSPLANTING "HOME"

By the late nineteenth century, the domestic sphere was well established as a landscape central to the articulation of Western self-concept and social self-creation. For the British, the home's private, insular nature facilitated a quelling of the destabilizing pressures of modern life. Home in modern Britain had grown into a very specific place—an interior world of comfort highly separated from the sphere of public life and its risks and responsibilities.[25] Furthermore, this permanent space could be used as a physical manifestation of its inhabitants' personal identity. Domestic space herded people into a nuclear structure and surrounded families with embodiments of their sense of self; family portraits, quilts, travel souvenirs, etc. These characteristics encompassed what it mean to be at "home" in the nineteenth-century British world of dizzying progress and impermanence, and at least in a small part, this definition of home was what it meant to be "British" on the global stage.

However, the exigencies of Indian life did not allow for a seamless exportation of the institution of home to the empire. In fact, rather than soothing the anxious British psyche as it had done in the metropole, home in India became a deeply problematic space fraught with tension in which the flames fostered by the memories of the Sepoy Mutiny were forcefully fanned. Because the Anglo-Indian home lacked those qualities of interiority and separation so central to its definition in Britain, it failed to aid Anglo-Indians in their assertion of legitimacy of rule, degree of civilization, or sense of "Britishness," and instead bestowed upon its purveyors an uncomfortable melding of private and public, male and female, and ruler and ruled that made it

---

[25] Robin D. Jones. *Interiors of Empire; Objects, Space and Identity within the Indian Subcontinent, c. 1800-1947* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), 3-4.

16

nearly impossible to feel "at home" in India. Unavoidable realities of Indian life—its climate, the

transience of military life, the overrepresentation of men in the British population, the expense of

British domestic goods—forced Anglo-Indians to adopt local, native material cultural practices

in the very place in which they sought to be the most "British." In turn, the home in India was

hybridized and forced open, making it highly permeable to the forces of the outside world (its

climate, culture, and creatures) in a period when the demand for separation, division, and

articulation of space from the world of the natives was at a premium.

Influence of Indian Climate and Material Cultural Practices on the Bungalow

The experience of "home" in India was unified by one constant characteristic—openness.

Both physically and culturally the British bungalow remained porous to infiltration of forces

outside its walls. The Anglo-Indian home functioned like a kind of Pandora's box: once opened

to the elements of nature, the encroachment of native structural elements was inevitable.

However, it was the physical environment of India that necessitated the kind of structural

openness that established a tone of hybridism within bungalow. The cyclical pattern of periods

of intense heat followed by a monsoon season, proved a formidable and often frightening

challenge to British transplants, accustomed to a far more moderate climate. Violet Jacobs

published a collection of short stories in the first decade of the twentieth century, one of which,

'The Fringe of the Jungle' evokes the strain that the hot season placed on Europeans:

> To Europe, the words 'hot weather' stand for very little, conjuring up, maybe, some
>
> vision of oppressive skies, languor and white umbrellas; to Asia they mean anything
>
> between a time of discomfort and tension, which to be even dimly understood must be
>
> endured, and a three months' fight with death. For with the flowering of the *dhak* the

17

shrill pipes of the east play up for tragedy, and the European, riding home in the evening

under low, hot moon, hears the crickets' intrusive and throbbing chorus in the darkness of

the wayside trees crying to every British subject that the time is at hand when he must

take up his little corner of the Empire's burden and stand up with it. Then the flight of

women and children to the hills begins, and the furnace doors close upon those who are

left.[26]

Here, Jacobs paints the picture of a malevolent mother nature at whose feet the British

were forced to bow as a reality of daily life in India. The "Empire's burden" was made infinitely

heavier by the heat. Anglo-Indians were therefore wise to make certain concessions to

accommodate a bearable life abroad. In order to carve out their place as rulers of a harsh

environment, the British needed to create a space in the Empire in which the pernicious effects of

the Indian climate could be minimized. Consequently, the weather dictated certain architectural

imperatives on the design of the Indian bungalow. Violet Jacob's devotes the opening entry in

her journal to a description of her home in India:

 Imagine yourself in the porch and coming up the steps. You go up across the verandah

and through the front door that opens into the drawing room; it has a fan-light and is very

tall…The drawing room has six doors running down each side of it opening into other

rooms…all have fan lights over them. There are seven windows and nineteen

ventilators…two little windows in the wall between the drawing room and the dining

room let you see from one into the other. A window *inside* a house always fascinates me

and you can look through these into the back verandah that is used by the servants as a

---

[26] Violet Jacob, *The Fortune Hunters and Other Stories* (1910), 320.

serving room and see the little brazier fanned up and the crows being chased violently away during meal time with dusters and abuse.[27]

Jacob's placement of this description at the forefront of her diary speaks to the importance of the details of Anglo-Indian home life to the author. The peculiarities of the home are the first thing Jacob offers her reader about her new life and India, thus placing the bungalow as the setting around which all other events are oriented. Along with iterating the power of home as an organizing force in a British woman's new life, Jacob's description also demonstrates the open design of her home. The windows, tall ceilings, and expansive floor plan give the impression of a space in which no part is entirely closed to another, and she makes note of certain structures such as fans, the verandah, and interior windows foreign to home life in Britain.

Craik offers a similar observation of the " general type of house—from which there are rarely any marked variations." He notes, "Each sleeping-room has its separate dressing-room and bathroom—a little walled-off space on the brick floor with its water pipe and drain hole opening into the verandah."[28]

In his description, Craik echoes Jacob's conception of the bungalow as a place in which one room seems to bleed into the next. Most notably, Craik identifies a peculiar failure in the home to mark off the bath and bedroom as a self-contained private sphere. Though he describes the dressing and bathroom as "separate" from the sleeping room, its actual description evokes a rather makeshift arrangement in which only a little wall divides the room where Anglo-Indians sleep from the drain hole from which their waste flows out into the verandah. Speid too identifies openness as a defining characteristic of the Anglo-Indian home by noting "the rooms, for the

---

[27] Jacob, 21.
[28] Craik, 121-122.

19

most part, open into each other, or on a centre, and all windows and doors are generally

unclosed."[29]

In addition to this portrait of openness of design, Jacobs and Craik also provide evidence

of the home as a hybrid space in which novel structural strategies are employed. Like the interior

windows and fans in Jacob's diary, the water pipe and drain hole and the kitchen placed at a

distance in Craik's description contribute to the creation of a home built at the mercy of the

Indian sun. These novel building practices meant that the bungalow was neither entirely western

nor eastern, but rather a curious amalgam of elements of each.

Natural Encroachments on the Home

This fusion of design strategies rendered the bungalow both culturally open to Indian

material cultural practices as well as physically porous to nature. Encroachments of the natural

world on the Anglo-Indian home were constant and an undeniable reminder of British failure to

close themselves off from the wilderness around them. An ant in the kitchen or a snake in the

hall was troubling because these uninvited visitors made an Anglo-Indian sense of interiority

nearly impossible to uphold.

The subject of nature invading those places the British sought to domesticate is an oft-

revisited theme woven throughout Violet Jacob's diary. Wildness in the form of animal life, heat,

rain, and disease make an appearance in the vast majority of her entries. Early in the diary Jacob

observes the manner in which the outside world makes its presence felt in the very place where it

should, by definition, be kept at bay—the home. "Wildness and civilization are very close

together in this country," she writes. " Even round this civilized house we live in the jackals yell

---

[29] Speid. 261.

at night and have often been up into the verandah."[30] She also describes the array of uninvited creatures that share her domestic interior:

> Creatures of all sorts are coming into the house, especially the mason-fly, which looks like a wasp with long hind legs and lives in little holes in wood or masonry…A very large flesh-colored lizard has come to live in my dressing room…When I dress for dinner he is usually flattened motionless against the bathroom door and sometimes I hear a soft thud and know that he has jumped down on the floor; very often he will spread-eagle himself near the wall-lamp over the dressing table waiting for the flies which gather on the wall round it.[31]

Later, she recounts an episode in which she traveled to an acquaintance's bungalow in which her bed for the evening was "the home of myriads of bugs and all night I never closed an eye though one of them closed for me.[32]" And in her own home, "A snake was killed in the dining room at dinner. Skipper, the new puppy, discovered it in the corner. It gave [Jacob] a horrid shake for [her son] had been playing there not long before.[33]

Jacob's relationship with domestic space is fraught with intrusions. Her sleep, her children, and her dog are all threatened by the failure of her home to effectively bar outside influences. Furthermore, her dressing room seems more like a menagerie than the private quarters of a civilized British woman. Her relationship with wildlife in the home bears on her senses. She perceives the lizard in her room by both sight and sound, accepting its presence as an inevitability of her daily life. This intimate sensory engagement with wildlife in the bungalow makes a conceptualization of the home as a bastion of British civilization and a realm

---

[30] Jacobs, 28.
[31] Ibid, 36.
[32] Ibid, 113.
[33] Ibid, 128.

appropriate for the assertion of legitimacy of rule difficult to support. A home whose very

foundation is riddled with flies cannot bear the symbolic burden of easing the feverish fears still

burning from the mutiny.

And it's not only the heat, insects, and animals that intrude on the Anglo-Indian sense of

interiority. Jacob also suffers from the wet season. On the 19th of August she writes, "Furious

rain in the night and water coming in streams into my dressing room," and four days later her

entry reads, "House leaking copiously and it still pours.[34]" Speid experiences similar breeches

of order in the home from the rain as well. After one particularly wet spell, "all things in the

house and store-room put forth a malignant effort either to spot, or ferment, or get moldy.[35]"

Once covered in the markings of the Indian climate, the relics of culture and civilization in

Speid's home (books, furniture, paintings, etc.) are problematized, no longer representing British

difference from India but rather Indian influence on British. If the European home within the

Indian subcontinent was to be a significant space to express the culture of an imperial power, it

had to first surmount the challenge imposed by its openness to the Indian environment—a

challenge that bred its own set of contradictions.

Destabilization of Objects, Gender, and Place

Filling the Anglo-Indian home with British objects was not a particularly feasible means

of imparting a sense of civilization to the bungalow for a number of reasons above and beyond

the susceptibility of such objects to heat and rain. Items physically transplanted from Britain

faced a hazardous journey to the empire, as Speid notes. Upon her arrival her furniture "was like

a dissected map, but unfortunately with many pieces missing…Not a single article had escaped

---

[34] Ibid, 136.
[35] Speid, 154.

scathless."[36] Once they arrived on the subcontinent, the procurement of British goods was expensive and inconvenient. Again Speid, "All English commodities, as clothing, supplies, etc, are…at least double the English prices.[37]" The lack of British artifacts in the Anglo-Indian home, paired with an open floor plan and other structural features dictated by the environment, yielded a space that bore only a passing resemblance to domestic space in the metropole. Speid reflects on this peculiar quality:

> In a country where there are no old oak wainscotings, no heavy tapestries, no long, dark, or subterranean passages, where the very pronounced white chunam walls, and the manifold, always open, green doors are lighted up all night with a brilliancy destructive of all ambiguity of shadow, and of all indistinctness of form, it is obvious that an apparition, in a spectral sense, must be as much out of his element as is a blinking owl among birds of the day.[38]

Here, Speid demonstrates the troubling nature of the hybridized bungalow. She sees it as a place in which refuge and coziness are severely minimized. Without the trappings of English objects, no corner of the home is free from exposure, so much so that even a ghost would be unable to hide within its walls.

The expense of setting up a proper home, paired with an official population in which men greatly outnumbered women in India, also meant that many Anglo-Indians experienced living conditions that did not center on the family. Because the cost of renting was so high, men would often share accommodations with other men in an arrangement known as chummery. In a 1904 guide published in Bombay, one writer describes the shortcomings of chummery as follows:

---

[36] Ibid, 83.
[37] Ibid, 151.
[38] Ibid, 84.

"When a bachelor keeps house alone or with two or three others in India he pays twice as much as he need for his food; probably three of four times as much as he needs for oil; the sitting room is dusty and there is a general air of untidiness and discomfort everywhere."[39] In addition to creating an environment in which tidiness and comfort were scarce, the chummery arrangement also speaks to the problem of the disorganization of gendered duties within the home in India. In the absence of women, domestic duties were left to the discretion of men. Yet, even in the presence of women, duties within the home took on a public air that blurred the distinction between domestic and official, masculine and feminine. According to Mary Procida the British Raj "drafted home and housewife into the professional service of the empire and subordinated the private functions of domesticity to the public demands of imperialism.[40]" Home life in India was thus stripped not only of tapestries and dark corners but also of the comfort of acting out the traditional daily chores and activities of a particular gender.

The bungalow's failure as a sanctuary in which Anglo-Indians could cloak themselves was further exacerbated by the transient nature of official life on the subcontinent. A life in service to Empire dictated constant upheaval as officials relocated to the ever-widening borders of the country. British attempts to consolidate their authority heightened the pressure to make their presence felt on the frontier. Thus, the transience of Anglo-Indian life bore a curious relationship to Anglo-Indians' anxiety of rule. Fear of further rebellion encouraged a mobilization of officials to the frontiers of the Empire. However, the experience of being regularly uprooted greatly stifled any efforts to effectively erect those vestiges of civilization that

---

[39] Maj. L.J. Shadwell. *Notes on the Internal Economy of Chummery, Home, Mess and Club* (Bombay 1904), 5.
[40] Procida, 59.

could physically and symbolically protect against the very sense of instability official

mobilization attempted to diminish. Speid describes the demoralizing effect of the instability of

her home life:

> You never begin to throw out roots in pleasant ground in this country but straightaway
>
> public duty demands your transplantation. Your house has just been painted; your
>
> cuttings have shot out fibres; your new batch of English seeds have come up; and
>
> imagining that you forsee a probability of a settled home, for at least a year or so, you
>
> purchase a pretty new carriage; when lo! Fate overtakes you in the ugly form of the
>
> yellow-looking *Fort St. George Gazette*…it consigns yourself to some drear spot, where
>
> there are no roads, no home, no hope, nor horticulture.[41]

In the improbable event that the British in India were able to cultivate a sense of

civilization, interiority, and comfort in a certain location, duty to Empire inevitably compelled

them to abandon the protection of that makeshift home in exchange for a space that offered even

fewer barriers from the uncivilized, outside world.

Intimate Native Contact

The home's most egregious failure as an outlet of anxious release for Anglo-Indians

troubled by their precarious authority over the subject race, however, was not its impermanence

or its exposure to nature. Instead, these factors synergistically combined to create a condition

wholly incompatible with the fostering of a sense of security in the strength of the British Raj—

constant contact with natives. Climate, cost, and constant relocation mandated a structural

openness on the bungalow that forced its inhabitants into a close relationship with Indians,

---

[41] Speid, 325.

precisely at a historical moment in which the articulation of distance and separation was in the greatest demand. In an environment in which nearly every room opens into the next, going about daily activities outside of the gaze of servants was a near impossibility. Speid demonstrates her disgust at overhearing, as a result of her physical proximity to their sleeping chambers, servants talking in their sleep: "It is rather oppressive to hear, in the dead of night, the abortive efforts of these corpse-like figures to struggle into articulation.[42]" Openness of the home forces a kind of intimacy between rulers and the ruled in which not even sleep is private.

Not only did native servants lack a space within the home sufficiently separate from those places in which Anglo-Indians moved, but their presence in the bungalow also grew exponentially in tandem with an official's social standing. Craik notes, "As the official attains to the position of a *Bara Sahib*, or great authority, the arrangements of his household change without any intervention by him. The duties which were performed by one servant now require two or more."[43] For the British, a conceptualization of civilization was paired with the maintenance of a proper home; however, in India, the maintenance of a home required a reliance on a society of servants whose social lives were dictated by a strict caste system. Therefore, if Anglo-Indians wished to express their degree of civilization through the home, they were simultaneously forced to bend to the cultural customs of a servant class. Again, Craik comments on this paradoxical relationship in which the servant class imposes their own cultural values on their masters:

> Even a moderate household cannot have less than from fifteen to twenty [servants]. Each
> has its own allotted work, which must not be infringed upon. Each has his grade in a
> long scale, and would be grievously insulted were he asked to do the work of the   grade

---

[42] Speid, 262.
[43] Craik, 182.

below. One man may do a certain part of waiting at table, but he would degrade himself were he to hand you meat…etc….it is no extravagance, but dire necessity, that compels the Anglo-Indian to surround himself with a long retinue, who live with their families within his compound.[44]

Speid confirms the necessity of maintaining a vast servant force within the Anglo-Indian bungalow. She attests, "at least one fifth of the income contemplated is absorbed by the wages of necessary servants.[45]" Being civilized in India meant establishing a home, but it also meant constant, direct, and ever burgeoning contact with natives. Combined with the strain of living in the public eye within a domestic space, the contradictory struggle to both limit and control India's invasion of the home created an environment fraught with tension.

---

[44] Craik, 120-121.
[45] Speid, 151.

CHAPTER 3
NEW STRATEGIES OF ANXIOUS RELEASE

Stripped of its function of anxious release, the home in India proved inadequate in

affirming British legitimacy of rule and in fact exacerbated tensions woven around a transplanted

concept of civilized society. Thus Anglo-Indians were forced to rely on a number of other

strategies to regulate the pervasive fears of declining imperial prestige aggravated by memories

of the Sepoy Mutiny and the seeds of a Nationalist movement. Domestic life in India failed to

enforce a rigorous kind of distance between the British and the outside world. The exigencies of

Indian life rendered a physical separation of the ruler and the ruled a near impossibility. Instead

Anglo-Indians attempted to carve out cultural terrain in an elaborate display of "civilized"

behavior. By literally embodying the values, attitudes, and ideologies of British culture, Anglo-

Indians could assert their imperial fitness in their everyday actions.[46] In this way etiquette and

official conduct became intimately tied to culture.

Personal conduct served an indispensable political function in the British Empire much

more so than in the metropole, where the stakes were infinitely lower. On the Afghan frontier,

performances of civility needed to be acted out with an attention to detail unnecessary in

London. For, if India was to be the crucible where notions of British bourgeois liberalism,

evangelism, and utilitarianism were to be tested, than Anglo-Indians had to be entrusted to act as

representatives of British culture. Thus, upholding standards of moral character was as much a

political imperative as a spiritual one. Qualities such as restraint, moderation, and,

industriousness were imbued with the power to delineate difference between civilized Anglo-

---

[46] E.M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800-1947*
(Cambridge, Polity Press, 2001), 3.

Indians and a subject race lacking the moral discipline necessary for self-rule. Even to an

outside observer, conduct of character as a marker of difference is readily apparent. In fact, in his

travel log, *Impressions of India*, Sir Henry Craik offers a portrait of passersby that pairs race with

expectancies of demeanor.

> What are our first impressions? First as we pass through the streets, the countless legions
>
> of dark-hued faces, the strange rarity of the white complexion…and next, amongst these
>
> countless dark visages, the endless variety of physiognomy, with only one common
>
> attribute that of absolute inscrutability. They are solemn and self-important, or careless
>
> and self-forgetful; they are dreamy and ferocious, melancholy and merry; but all alike are
>
> to us simply masks. They look at us as if they were divided from us by centuries, and as
>
> if they were gazing at sticks and stones…Next, the quietness, the coolness, the patience,
>
> the reserve of authority, of the few white faces that we meet. No wonder that with men
>
> like these, who know their work, its hard conditions and dangers, and have learned to
>
> face it, the recklessness of loose tongues is met by momentary anger perhaps, but, after
>
> the first moment, with the apathy of contempt. There is something of strain, and no great
>
> measure of light-heartedness, in the faces of that ruling class; but no fretfulness and
>
> nervousness, and no assumption of bullying and domineering. They are there to do their
>
> duty.[47]

Writing in 1908, Craik brings to his journal a certain set of assumptions about what it

means to be an Anglo-Indian ruling over a vast class of natives. Without some previous exposure

to other travel literature, stories, or news media, Craik would not have been able to offer such a

penetrating first impression. Craik looks into the faces on the street and ascribes a set of

---

[47] Henry Craik, *Impressions of India* (London: Macmillam and Co., Limited, 1908), 11-12.

motivations and desires that must be informed more by the race of the subject than their actual

behavior. However, these impressions are revealing of both the pervasiveness and the power of

character attributions to categorize and separate the rulers from the ruled. The careless, dreamy,

dark-hued faces are contrasted with the coolness, patience, and reserve of authority of the whites.

These differences not only impart cultural space between the two groups but, at least for Craik,

temporal space as well. The native visage fails so entirely in conveying those essential

characteristics of civility made plain from simply gazing at a white face that the observer feels as

if the native is centuries behind, untouched by the progress and modernity known to the Anglo-

Indian.

Etiquette: Reappropriating Morality

This act of stereotyping quells British anxiety of rule not only by articulating cultural and

physical space between masters and subjects living in a state of constant contact but also by

offering Anglo-Indians a strict code of conduct to which they are obligated to adhere, thus

imparting a sense of hierarchical order to a troublingly hybridized society. Qualities such as

"patience, calmness, and measured judgment" are drafted in a kind of behavioral blueprint. If an

English official is successful in portraying these qualities they can rest assured that they are

doing their part to solidify British rule.

Craik sees the adherence to a strict moral code as both a logical consequence and

pressing necessity of living and working in a society characterized by the kind of openness

observed in the late British Raj. "It inevitably follows that in such a society, composed of those

engaged in serious work, highly trained, and of education far above any general average at home,

the tone both of manners and of intelligence is high. One symptom is born of the habit of

constant contact with the subject race. It is that of what may be called a certain circumspection of demeanor." Craik's comment suggests a hyper-consciousness of conduct and etiquette of the Anglo-Indian. Under the ever-present gaze of the native, "more harm still is done by the rough manners, natural to his kind, of the low-class Englishman," who is utterly unfit for colonial service. Instead, Anglo-Indians must uphold nearly aristocratic standards of behavior. Craik observes, "It is only by the simple directness of its aim, by its quiet assertion of authority, by its undeviating rectitude of justice, by its slow pervasiveness, that our rule can hold.[48]"

The failures of the Anglo-Indian home to act as a barrier between civilized society and the outside world forced the British to mine their cultural landscape for alternative designators of superiority. Physically personifying the values of modern British society offered Anglo-Indians an alternative strategy of rule centered on moral probity—in other words, the difficulty of enforcing bodily distance between whites and natives encouraged Anglo-Indians to engage in a dialogue of internal difference, emphasizing character qualities that could fundamentally separate sectors of society.

British moral superiority could not merely be discussed though. It was essential that evidence of these qualities be conspicuously put on display. Anglo-Indians displayed their degree of civilization by emphasizing two modes of behavior: Patience and restraint, and energy and initiative. Openness—the very same quality of Anglo-Indian home life so problematic to the British Raj's sense of self—became essential in this alternative strategy of demarcating difference. The constant gaze of a subject class offered Anglo-Indians the opportunity to put culture on display. Thanks to the native's watchful eye, British legitimacy of rule could be affirmed and reaffirmed in the minutia of daily life. Anglo-Indians could protect their imperial

---

[48] Ibid., 125.

prestige by demonstrating qualities of civility in the public space of their very homes. Craik describes this strategy of anxious release this way:

> As a rule, the educated Anglo-Indian has learned, under severe provocation, to hold himself severely in check. He knows what *prestige* means to him, and his life is one long education in the adjustment of his attitude towards those whose natural bent is often to an undue servility mixed with a self- evident dissimulation. For his own welfare and for theirs, he knows that he must not derogate from his position…without it, our rule in India would not last a year.[49]

At least in the mind of this observer, the proper response to challenges of British authority is the careful maintenance of an appearance of a calm, regimented demeanor. Craik also explicitly acknowledges the self-serving aspect of this strategy. By severely holding themselves in check the Anglo-Indians perform important imperial work not only by demonstrating a context for rule, but by reassuring one another of the firmness of the foundation of their position of power. The performance of etiquette is as much, if not more, for the benefit of the actors as it is for the audience.

Performances of patience and restraint are readily observable in the advice given to Anglo-Indians on the subject of servant discipline. Violence toward servants represents an unacceptable loss of calm moderation. Craik comments that only "a young subaltern…in his first year in India" would be ignorant enough to "treat an Indian with the callow discourtesy of a schoolboy."[50] The wife of a civil official, Mrs. John B. Speid also writes in favor of the exercise of restraint when disciplining native servants in her diary, *Our Last Years in India.*

---

[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid, 124.

The ordinary mode of punishing the misdemeanors of your attendants is by the imposition of a fine, a penalty which, I think, should only be inflicted when all remonstrance has proved fruitless, and then with great moderation…If a servant is so bad as to deserve flogging, he must, one would imagine, be too bad to keep at all; and a punishment so debasing and brutalizing is not likely to improve his character. His self-respect is gone, and…he reconciles himself to his state of reprobation as an inevitable fate and fact".[51]

Speid's opposition to physical punishment assumes a moral responsibility on the part of Anglo-Indian masters to model civilized behavior for the sake of the advancement of native observers. However, Speid's expression of contempt for native agency renders this logic suspect. Like Craik, she relegates the native to a distant time and place in which they are immune to the forces of civilizing progress. "Assuredly," she says, "They do not move with the times, and they are just as ignorant as were their grandsires and as will be, also, their grandchildren—unless another prophet rises to teach them their deficiencies".[52] She also claims that honesty, "does not according to our English conception of the virtue, exist among them" and that "the natives prove themselves—without an exception—untrustworthy".[53] Reason and role models leave no lasting impression on Speid's vision of the native. Perhaps blind faith in a mysterious foreign deity could advance their character, but certainly not an observation of British restraint. Speid's contradiction suggests an alternative function of a strict adherence to nonviolence and moderation—one that serves the master a greater service than the attendant. A conceptualization of violence and passionate fury as untactful helps the Anglo-Indian to redefine a precarious

---

[51] Mrs. John B. Speid. *Our Last Years in India* (London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1862.) 265.
[52] Ibid, 93.
[53] Ibid., 258

position of rule as strength rather than weakness. Vastly outnumbered in the home and the country at large, and collectively shrouded in memories of the Sepoy Mutiny, recasting physical impotence as superior moral restraint became a useful strategy for asserting legitimacy of rule.

A conscientious commitment to moral restraint could be practiced in the daily running of the household above and beyond servant discipline. The overwhelming popularity of household advice literature published in the last decade of the century bolsters the idea that the exercise of proper etiquette in the home, or at the very least the maintenance of an appearance of order, was a salient component of civilized Anglo-Indian identity. Titles popular in this period include, *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook, The Wife's Help to Indian Cookery*, *Notes on an Outfit for India and Hints for the New Arrival, Indian Domestic Economy and Receipt Book,* and *At Home in India.* These volumes describe in great detail such household tasks as the ordering of servants, entertaining, and general household management. The abundance of publications of this type suggests the problematic nature of homemaking in India. The content of these manuals also point to the public nature of the Anglo-Indian bungalow. For example, Gardiner dedicates *Indian Housekeeper and Cook* to "The English Girls to whom fate may assign the task of being HouseMothers in our Eastern Empire," thus suggesting that a women's domestic role was not limited by the bungalow walls, but rather served the empire as a whole. Violet Jacob admits in her diary that she is reading a book by Flora Anne Steel, one of the authors of *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook*, suggesting a widespread familiarity of books discussing rules of household conduct.[54] A reimagination of the civilized home was a necessary component of the

---

[54] Violet Jacob. *Diaries and Letters from India 1895-1900* (Edinburgh: Canongate Publishing,1990) 74.

reappropriation of morality. By transforming daily chores into work of the empire, anxiety of

rule was given a regular, regimented outlet of release.

Activity as Antidote

The specific conduct of Anglo-Indians under the native gaze, however, seems to be less

important than simply staying busy. In other words, in the "debilitating" climate of India where

"the sedentary habits and neglect of stated energetic occupation…easily and insidiously creep on

a resident," resisting these urges in any fashion becomes an exercise in creating difference

between ruler and ruled. In her account of her final years in India, Speid explicitly points to,

"determinants of aim and activity of action" as "superior to all external assaults" and "some of

the chief secrets of social power,"[55] thus acknowledging activity as a protective factor against

declining Anglo-Indian hegemony. If the British could keep busy enough, activity itself could

become a category of comparison to the lethargy of the native to articulate distance between the

problematically overlapping groups and in this way maximize the dichotomizing function of

action. Craik describes the bustle of Anglo-Indian society in his journal:

> You see first only the strenuous lives of the British community, the evidence meeting you
>
> at every turn that there is no room here for the loafer or the idler. No one is here merely
>
> to please himself. You may criticize their methods—I find it difficult to do so—but you
>
> cannot deny their energy.[56]

Craik not only describes the British community as active and strenuous but also implies

that this behavior serves a function to society as a whole, not just the individual. If the British

---

[55] Spied, 218.
[56] Craik, 29.

refrain from loafing, it is not for personal benefit. A life of activity is part and parcel of British

duty to empire. Craik comments further on this phenomenon:

> Their energy is good to see, and, one has little doubt, is good in its effects. In the eager
>
> race of strenuous life the dead weight of retarding influences may be forgotten; and it is
>
> well, too, that the voice of experience—sometimes of sad experience—should make itself
>
> felt in leaving petty embroglios to work their own solution, and allowing the slow
>
> processes of the Eastern nature some rest from the over-pressure of impetuous zeal. In the
>
> task that has to be accomplished energy and bold initiative count for much; patience,
>
> perhaps counts for even more.[57]

Here Craik speaks to the idea of activity as antidote to the pernicious effects of Indian

life. Cultivating a high level of energy protects the Anglo-Indian against the retarding effects of

Eastern life. Craik's comments also suggest that remaining alert and active may also act as a

channel through which the British can practice other essential moral attributes such as patience.

Activity distracts Anglo-Indian society from focusing anxiety on "petty embroglios" and frees

mental resources to be directed towards "the task that has to be accomplished"—the work of

maintaining the empire.

Speid also notes, "a very small task assumes very exaggerated proportions: and it must be

remembered that habits, either of thought or action, soon become too obstinate to be corrected in

a climate where the energy necessary to overcome them can itself only be preserved by constant

vigilant cultivation".[58] Thus, it is not the size or the nature of the task per se that is essential in

demonstrating an Anglo-Indians' level of civilization, but rather the discipline required to

maintain an active lifestyle in the Indian setting. This level of personal vigilance can then be

---

[57] Ibid., 48-49.
[58] Speid, 219.

contrasted with the behavior of the natives who, for example, "step slowly as if they despised the earth they trop upon".[59]

This juxtaposition of activity and stagnation can be observed in the pages of Violet Jacobs's diary. Her *Diaries and Letters from India* are teeming with accounts of travels to surrounding forts and towns, flower gathering expeditions in the woods, morning horseback rides with neighbors, and dinner parties stretching into the early hours of the morning. In contrast, however, she frequently describes and observes natives in a state of inactivity. Twice in her diary she provides details about the sound of her servants snoring,[60] and she is fond of the image of the cross-legged native sitting in stillness.[61] While the Civil Officer and his wife are busy embodying the values of British culture, the Indians sit motionless or snore. Speid offers a similar portrait of native lassitude:

> Your ayeh having dressed you, and arranged your room, devotes the rest of her day, meal-times excepted, to sitting on her heels in the verandah, gazing into space, or listening to any passing gossip. In like manner the paeons about the house, whose special vocation it is to go on messages, or to announce visitors, in the absence of such light demands on their energies never attempt to relieve the tedium of their many leisure hours by any occupation.[62]

The natives depicted in these diaries and journals fail to act out the performance of Anglo-Indian-defined civilization comprised of intricate rules of etiquette and activity. This failure creates a conceptual space in which the British in India could imagine distance and difference between themselves and the ever-present subject race. However, this space was far too

---

[59] Craik, 74.
[60] Jacobs, 22, 30.
[61] Jacobs, 71,84,131
[62] Speid, 65.

permeable to serve as a wholly sufficient strategy of anxious release. What if an Indian servant

learned and practiced the intricate rules of British and morality etiquette and spent his days in a

constant state of productive action? What then would separate him from his ruler? In order to

impart a kind of permanent distance between British and natives, Anglo-Indians needed a more

concrete basis of superiority (and consequent legitimacy of rule) that could not be traversed by

an Indian. Only a strategy hinged on color and rooted in racial difference could serve this

function.

Articulating Racial Distance

Consequently, under the anxious imagination of the British Raj, evolutionary theory and

its conceptual cousin, social Darwinism became closely tied to strategies of Anglo- Indian

embodiment of British culture. The advent of the Darwinian revolution made available a vast

conceptual landscape from which to assert a right to rule. Racialized discourse could be used to

articulate a new set of rules and regulations on which hegemony could lean. Sex and race

became increasingly important sources for the reassertion of moral, physical, and evolutionary

dominance in a climate of decline and colonial deterioration. Scientific racism, and those laws

and practices informed by its logic helped Britain solidify the connection between the empire and

science, progress, and modernity challenged by the rebellions, uprisings, and failures of empire,

burgeoning nationalist movements, and competition for economic dominance in the second half

of the century.

In his book about colonial South Africa, historian Saul Dubow speaks to the

pervasiveness of scientific racism and its ability to act as a theoretical framework whose

momentum in the late nineteenth century served as a conceptual net useful for capturing and

ordering such disparate concerns as Western social decay, white poverty, and miscegenation in the empire. Dubow points to the thorough impregnation of biological metaphor into the language of social Darwinism. Examples include 'adaptation', 'segregation', 'degeneration', 'hygienic', 'fitness', 'hybridization', and 'stock'. Dubow claims, "The retreat from explicit racism in the post-war era [post-Hitler, post-World War II] had tended to inure us to the Social Darwinist connotations of these words, but earlier in the century they were heavily encoded terms with the capacity to convey a range of recognizable meanings and connotation that are somewhat lost on us today[63]"

Vocabulary borrowed from the realm of biological sciences was routinely used in the late nineteenth century to describe and explain social conditions, and in this way biology helped to "create the kind of moral universe in which nature reflected society and vice versa." [64]As a strategy of anxious release, the average person need not be well versed in the intricate scientific details of the hereditary acquisition of traits or the geographical flow of racial and linguistic groups through history. A general familiarity with the language used to describe these phenomena was enough to allow the typical Anglo-Indian to utilize racialized discourse in daily conversation.

Mrs. John B. Speid devotes a significant portion of her daily diary entries to discussion of race. Upon contact with various hill tribes such as the Koolies, Bheels, Ramooses, Gonds, and Khonds, Speid utilizes racial and linguistic theories to describe and order these various social groups. Early in her diary she cites the academic work of a professor, Max Muller, whose theories have apparently been incorporated into lay knowledge. Speid describes the professor's

---

[63] Saul Dubow. *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 8-9.
[64] G. Jones, *Social Darwinism and English Thought* (Brighton, 1980), 147.

theory, based on the "irrefragable evidence of language," that the Hindus and the races which have civilized Europe stem from a common origin race and outlines the subsequent historical flow of Celts, Germans, Slavonians, Greeks, Italians, Persians, Hindus, separate from the Semitic and Turanian races, referring to the Western groups as possessing "more vigorous and practical minds." Speid also point out, "The name by which the Indo-European races are distinguished—that of Aryan—is, I believe, derived from a word (arja or arya) meaning 'respectable' or 'venerable'," and describes a recently encountered tribe as "A mixed race—who having seen them compared with the feeble and effeminate races of Southern India, could, I should think, scarcely avoid the conclusion---in the evidence of convincing evidence to the contrary—that the original stock had been a noble one; and that its deterioration in the instances adduced had been attributable to intermixture."[65]

Violet Jacob also evokes Darwin when commenting on her servants' procurement of a leather football. She remarks, "If the youth of the district play they have either to evolve or procure rules."[66]

Speid and Jacob's use of racialized discourse in her diary is revealing both of the pervasiveness of the language of scientific racism as well as its functions in the Empire at large and India in particular. Scientific evocation of race bolsters their position as members of a ruling class by performing a number of useful rhetorical functions part and parcel with the premises and power of scientific authority. Speaking in the language of science renders Speid and Jacob objective, systematic observers of the colonial order. Historian Kavita Philip also sees an adoption of scientific language as a useful way to exercise a more permanent sense of cultural distance. "By positioning himself behind the scientific gaze, the creator of official knowledge

---

[65] Speid, 197-198.
[66] Jacobs, 170

about the natives rendered himself invisible; the knowledge thus produced was therefore held to be unquestionably true, as the masking of its conditions of production created the illusion that it was interest-free and value-neutral." Thus, conclusions drawn from this position fall into the category of incontrovertible fact and are no longer subject to the precarious refutability inherent in subjective opinion. In the words of Philip's intellectual colleague on the subject of racial history, S.L. Gilman, description of the biological world became "the source of a universal explanation of causality through analogy,[67]" inextricably tying cultural differences to innate, unalterable scientific fact. Thus, Speid's consideration of natives through the lens of Muller's scientific racial theory transforms her into an unbiased observer and naturalizes her subject into the logical products of biological determinism. Philip describes the process below:

> By treating cultural habits and political formations as inherent characteristics of communities or nations, they hypostatized them, or made them into eternal, static, hereditary characteristics of communities or nations. Once cultural "traits" had been hypostatized into scientific facts, they were available as a resource to anyone who sought to write about the history or culture of the people concerned. Whereas political considerations often operated explicitly in the formative stages of scientific knowledge, once ethnological stereotypes were reported in official tracts, supported by masses of data, they passed into the apolitical realm of incontrovertible scientific fact.[68]

Speid's words also impart distance between natives and Anglo-Indians by rhetorically establishing "corresponding dichotomous oppositions between sensual and rational, credulous and skeptical, static and dynamic." Though this juxtaposition is apparent in diary accounts of

---

[67] S.L. Gilman, *Difference and Pathology* (find publisher of this source) 204.
[68] Kavita Philip. *Civilizing Natures: Race Natures: Race, Resources, and Modernity in Colonial South India.* 135

Anglo-Indian activity and native lethargy, racialized discourse broadens the chasm between these groups by grounding these differences in an inherent kind of biological permanence. Thus when "respectable and venerable" Aryans are contrasted with "feeble and effeminate" tribes of Southern India, Speid's Anglo-Indian and British audience understands that these differences are no accident of history, but are rather a result of evolutionary destiny.

Along with Speid, Sir Henry Craik's travel account is both informed by and strengthens the passage of racial stereotypes into "the apolitical realm of incontrovertible scientific fact" by utilizing language informed by evolutionary biology. Not only is Craik's familiarity with biological terminology apparent in the pages of his journal, the publication and dissemination of his *Impressions of India* subsequently solidifies racialized discourse as a pervasive component of the intellectual culture of this period. Craik describes native Indians as follows: "They are the product of all these centuries of ceaseless strife and ruthless tyranny; and from it all they have learned infinite patience, inbred habits of submission, apathy and lack of energy, and ingrained aptitude for obedience to authority, broken only by passionate obedience to custom, and by a potentiality to blind religious zeal.[69] Craik's use of evolution-informed language imbues his description with a biological determinism, placing an impenetrable divide between the Anglo-Indians and the submissive, apathetic native, rendered subservient not by politics or consequence, but by nature and science. However, this language suggests a further link in the author's mind between labor and activity and a hierarchical view of civilization and racial superiority, thus implying an additional mechanism through which scientific racism strengthens Anglo-Indian's sense of control over their empire: the transformation of natives into natural resources.

---

[69] Craik, 107-108.

This conceptual transformation was performed by anthropologists and ethnographers charged with a distinctly nineteenth-century faith in the infinite potential of science to explain and order all, who devised a system of viewing and describing natives that allowed them to relate to the colonized as natural resources as opposed to political agents. According to Kayita, scholars in these fields faced a struggle for professional legitimacy that closely mirrored the precarious British hold over empire; therefore they similarly turned to science to recast the role of the native into one useful to the goals of the empire. Unable to settle the vast wildness of the Indian frontier, social scientists sought to order, describe, and record these "backward" societies rather than directly control them. According to Philip:

> The characteristics of ethnographic knowledge—its personal acquaintance with people and customs, its vast store of local experience, and its methods of combining systematization of these data with personal anecdotal evidence—provided an important framework by which to conceptualize a form of government that sought to represent itself as a centralized power with localized expertise, firm yet understanding, authoritative yet knowledgeable.[70]

However, the criteria by which ethnographers categorize these varied tribes was not arbitrary. On the contrary, a group's placement in the scientist's hierarchy depends greatly on that very key around which Anglo-Indians pivot their own concept of civility—the capacity to produce. Specifically, the failure of indigenous tribes to establish a productive relationship with the natural world was taken as damning evidence of their inferior civilization status. Social scientist Marshall, for example, denigrated the Toda through racial discourse for their failure to appreciate nature as Western races do:

---

[70] Philip, 102

"These hills are covered with good soil—indeed in the moist hollows it is pre-eminently rich and productive, and the land is very accessible to the plough. There is excellent clay for pottery. A laborious, acquisitive race, conserving the glorious water supply, would render this land a paradise. But the Toda scheme is far simpler. He has cattle who afford him all his wants; why should he work? Why should he plow? And from the lazy man's point of view, perhaps he is right"[71]

Laziness and work are positioned in an ordered system of racial and civil progress in which the lack of transformative extraction from the natural world relegates whole sectors of native society to a more primitive stage of civilization. The inevitability imparted on race by biology consigns natives to an impenetrable definition as 'other.' Meanwhile, their relationship with nature extends this distance by allowing the British to imagine natives as operating in a cultural system preceding private property and industrious commerce.[72]. Once ordered and defined by race and labor practices, natives were transformed into a resource for the alleviation of British anxiety of rule in India. Anglo-Indians were unable to infiltrate and settle every inch of their domain, thus British self-interest necessitated a scientific system of categorization to redefine that which it could not control as uncivilized and subsequently less threatening.

Speid and Craik's journals are also united in their implication of a specific behavior capable of delivering a racial group to incontestable biological inferiority—miscegenation. In the wake of Darwin, inbreeding as a violation of racial purity was perceived as the root of decline and deterioration of a people. A second look of Speid's description of "a mixed race" hill tribe whose "deterioration…had been attributable to intermixture,"[73]confirms her subscription to this

---

[71] Marshall, *A Phrenologist Amongst the Todas*, 265 from Philip, 116.
[72] Philip, 116-117.
[73] Speid, 197-198

belief in decay through intermixture and she further discusses intermixture with "the rude hill tribes"[74] as the cause of the introduction of backwards, superstitious worship practices into a certain racial group. Craik too blames inbreeding for those criteria of laziness and apathy by which natives are deemed uncivilized.

However, late nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian belief in racial decay through miscegenation suggests an equivocal message of scientific racism that renders it an imperfect instrument of anxious release. Fears of mixing between the races may have resonated particularly strongly for Anglo-Indians in light of the failures of the home to properly separate the public from the private, for the implication of sexual relations between whites and natives acted as yet another breech of the separation of these domains and conceptually linked race to those anxieties exacerbated by the open Indian home. Thus discussion of intermixture and decay may have done more to induce anxiety than to reduce it.

In addition, the ability of biology to deteriorate the purity of a race and strip a people of their civilization raised the disturbing possibility that white superiority and progress was neither inevitable nor transhistorical. The language of degeneration is problematic in that it "reflects—simultaneously and contradictorily—an overweening sense of whites' biological superiority, and a perception of their social vulnerability."[75] Discussion of degeneration informed by evolutionary theory was a dangerous weapon for Anglo-Indians to use to impart further distance between rulers and ruled, because it inevitably shined a light into those dark corners housing the very fears it sought to alleviate. In his historical study of the scientific basis of the concept of degeneration, Daniel Pick describes this double-edged quality:

---

[74] Ibid, 105.
[75] Dubow, 166-167.

The European idea of degeneration had both an internal and external dimension. At one level it was projected outwards where it helped to affirm the language of racial imperialism and to construct notions of 'inferiority', 'savagery', 'atavism', and so on. At another level, this aggressive evolutionary discourse reflected colonial fears of internal fragmentation and the disintegration of social solidarity.[76]

However, the ambiguity of evolutionary theory as applied to the realm of social interactions is perhaps its most compelling feature. The internal contradictions of biological determinism allowed colonizers to see themselves as both irrefutably superior and in peril of genetic deterioration. This ambiguity, however, speaks as much to the strength of racialized strategies of legitimizing British rule in India as its shortcomings. Dubow believes, "the capacity to embrace simultaneously, logically contradictory ideas was, indeed, a key to the relative success of the race paradigm."[77]

The flexibility imparted on evolutionary racial theory by its ambiguity and lack of precision enhanced its appeal as an ideology on which to build a strategy of describing and ordering troubling social questions.

Hierarchy Through Hygiene

Racial discourse linking notions of heredity, degeneration, and social decay also allowed Anglo-Indians to imagine themselves as modernizers, seeking the betterment of society through the application of science and reason. In this way, scientific racism became closely linked to ideas about public health and hygiene. As historian Elizabeth Van Heynigen has shown, communities of doctors in the British Empire considered it their imperial mission and natural

---

[76] Daniel Pick. *Faces of Degeneration* (find publisher of this source) 189, 176
[77] Dubow, 17.

responsibility to "promote civilized values as well as the latest scientific thinking."[78] Thus, one way Anglo-Indians could demonstrate their degree of civilization was to impart medical knowledge on Indian communities. By shrinking the intellectual gap regarding issues of sanitation and medicine, whites in India were simultaneously articulating and broadening the cultural chasm that divided them from natives. Scientifically informed hygienic and medical practices were self-serving gifts bestowed upon Indians, functioning at least as much to assure Anglo-Indians of their cultural and intellectual superiority as to civilize natives.

Journals and diaries of this period juxtapose images of native dirtiness and medical ignorance with British cleanliness and scientifically informed knowledge. Jacob, for example describes a group of natives as people who are "quite filthy and live in a straw hut like a haycock on the top of a mound."[79] She also recalls the following encounter:

> A walk in the morning up a hillside and met a woman who asked me for medicine for a cut on her leg and was much surprised when I told her that quinine was no use for it. I suggested a thorough washing with warm water and a clean bandage which appeared to be a new idea to her. She seemed impressed but the difficulty will be that she doesn't know what cleanliness means"[80]

Here, Jacob's understanding of the value of basic hygiene is contrasted with this woman's utter lack of medical knowledge, clearly delineating which actor in this scene is more civilized than the other. However, this division between rulers and ruled was also accomplished by juxtaposing native reliance on superstition and tradition with British adherence to strict rational science. Speid encounters a beggar who took her by surprise and who, she assumes,

---

[78] Elizabeth Van Heynigen from Dubow 168.
[79] Jacob, 27
[80] Jacob, 163.

"must be afflicted with madness and cholera combined." She then goes on to describe the manner in which native Indians attempt to cure those suffering from such afflictions:

> Their remedy is to sacrifice a cock, or some other offering, to appease the demons, who will then—so they affirm—release his victim. A friend once called to see his horsekeeper, who was stated to become suddenly possessed. The man was standing quite unconscious,   with his head thrown back, staring fixedly upwards, and foaming at the mouth. His friends were bestowing on him a sound beating, to dislodge, as they said, the demon. I suppose the attack was one of catalepsy.[81]

The archaic remedies and superstitious attribution of symptoms to demonic possession described by Speid stand in stark contrast to her medical diagnosis of the condition as catalepsy—a contrast that does much to reassure Anglo-Indians of their superior cultural standing.

Craik offers similar instances in which natives fail to utilize the technical knowledge offered by Anglo-Indians.

> There are here and there wheel-wells, from which water for all household purposes is obtained, and we had ocular demonstration that their purity was very little regarded. In one case we saw nothing but stagnant water in a tank; but a proposal to replenish it from the canal had been vetoed, because it was "holy water," which must be tainted by no intermixture. To put disinfectants in the wells might easily raise a rumour of poisoning them, and would give a convenient weapon to the to the agitators…In these narrow streets, roughly paved, unlighted, buried in a thick covering of dust and with a monotony of oppressive odour, there are by day a busy hum of business and a

---

[81] Speid, 282.

constant chorus of cries and gesticulations. As evening falls they become quiet, and are

curtained in by a heavy pall of haze and dust. Their denizens take life as it comes, with

the elixir of a sublime patience. If disease falls on them, it is the stroke of fate; and

schemes for fighting it they regard at best with apathetic tolerance. If their life is to be

raised, it must be by other agency than their own.[82]

Craik's words are indicative of the complex relationship between civilization, cleanliness,

and scientific knowledge, In Craik's eyes, the British are not to blame for India's failure to adopt

hygienic practices such as assuring water sanitation. On the contrary, the streets of India remain

filled with dust, odor, and disease because of superstition, suspicion, and an utter lack of agency

on the part of the native. Craik claims that the water cannot be sanitized because it will only fuel

native agitators who cannot grasp the distinction between a disinfectant and a poison, and

attributes a blind patience and apathy to the Indian population that prevents Western progress

from permeating their society. By stripping native Indians of the cognitive ability to benefit from

scientific advancements in hygienic knowledge, Craik and other Anglo-Indians impart yet

another dimension of distance between the rulers and subjects. Thus, the act of offering scientific

knowledge to Indian society bolsters British sense of power in the Raj through multiple

mechanisms. It allows Anglo-Indians to imagine themselves as the privileged possessors of a

body of knowledge as well as benevolent rulers acting in the interest of progress and social

improvement. Framed in this context, instances of native dirtiness, superstition, and ignorance

can be interpreted, not as a British failure, but a further indication of inherent Indian inferiority,

the insurmountable distance between two races and an altruistic justification for permanent

British rule.

---

[82] Craik, 85-87

CONCLUSION

The British Raj, like all imperial endeavors, was built on a central illogicality. It attempted to erect a society in which native peoples needed to be perceived as both the beneficiaries of the colonizers' civilizing mission as well as inherently inferior vessels, incapable of attaining a full degree of civilization. This paradox by which empire hinges requires constant and creative performances of difference between the rulers and ruled. Because these differences are created based on context and convenience they can be rooted in a variety of identities such as class, gender, sexuality, language, religion, or race, but the constructed nature of these differences require that the performance be perpetually acted and re-acted in order to maintain the strength of its function as a barrier between people; an articulation of otherness.

At the particular moment captured by the journals of Sir Henry Spied, Mrs. John B.Craik, and Violet Jacob, race was the most salient setting in which performances of difference could be acted out. Because the memories of the 1857 uprising were so pervasive and the violent bloodshed fell across distinctly racial lines, the growing discourse of scientific racism offered the most useful conceptual category on which to base the further articulation of otherness on the Indian people, especially in those instances where other strategies of embodying values of a superior culture were problematized or prone to challenges by the exigencies of Indian life. Race was also an amazingly flexible conceptual net, firm enough to enforce seemingly insurmountable distance between groups of people, but also rhetorically fluid enough in its social applications to tolerate a great deal of contradictory logic. Consequently, ideas of racial

difference proved sturdy enough to act as a temporary stopper in the swirling whirlpool that was the British Empire.

Race was the most strategic category on which to base a creation of the "other" in late nineteenth-century India; however, racial purity, like Empire itself, is an inherently unsustainable condition. No racial line can remain unaltered and untarnished by time, hence an Empire based on an assertion of racial superiority will surely fall. However, it is not just this particular imperial strategy that necessitates the demise of a colonial project. The very act of exaggerating and focusing on the imagined or created differences between groups of "others" is inherently untenable. The boundless humanity that unites all people surely imparts us with far more commonalities than differences. And if these differences are made to be understood as small exceptions to the rule of similarity, any system in which one aims to exercise power over an "other" is bound to unravel.

Works Cited

Primary Sources

Craik, Sir Henry. *Impressions of India*. London: Macmillam and Co., Limited, 1908.

Jacob, Violet. *Diaries and Letters from India 1895-1900*. Edinburgh: Canongate

    Publishing,1990.

Jacob, Violet The Fortune Hunters and Other Stories (1910)

Maj. L.J. Shadwell, *Notes on the Internal Economy of Chummery, Home, Mess and Club*.

    Bombay 1904.

Speid, Mrs. John B. *Our Last Years in India*. London: Smith, Elder and Co. 1862.

Steel, F.A. and Gardiner, G. *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook, 7th edn.*

    London: 1909

Violet Jacob, The Fortune Hunters and Other Stories (1910), 320.

Secondary Sources

Bourdieu,Pierre *The Logic of Practice* (Cambridge, 1990)

Budd, Michael Anton. The Sculpture Machine: Physical culture and body politics in the age of

    empire. 1997

Cooper,Frederick and Stoler, Ann Laura. Tensions of Empire. Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois

    World. Berkeley, 1997.

Dubow, Saul. *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*. Great Britain: Cambridge

    University Press, 1995.

Durba, Ghosh. *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire*. Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Collingham, E.M. *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800-1947.*

Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001.

Norbert Elias, Norbert. The Civilizing Process. The history of manners and state formation and

civilization. Oxford, 1982.

Foucault, Michel. Discipline and Punish. The birth of the prison. Harmondsworth, 1977.

Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality*. Harmondsworth, 1990

Hall, Catherine. *Of Gender and Empire: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century* from

Levine, Phillipa. *Gender and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Jones, D. Robins. *Interiors of Empire; Objects, Space and Identity within the Indian

Subcontinent, c. 1800-1947*. Manchster: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Jones, G. *Social Darwinism and English Thought* (Brighton, 1980)

Llewellyn-Jones, Rosie. *The Great Uprising in India, 1857-58:Untold Stories, Indian and

British.* Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007.

Pati, Biswamoy. *The 1857 Rebellion.* Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2007

Philip, Kavita. *Civilizing Natures: Race, Resources, and Modernity in Colonial South India.*

New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2004

Procida, Mary A. *Married to the Empire; Gender, Politics and Imperialism in India, 1883-1947*.

Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002.