Creating Indian and British Selves:
Life-Writing and Colonial Relations, 1794-1826

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Abstract

This dissertation examines literary self-representations by authors who occupied various roles within the Anglo-Indian relationship of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In scholarship that examines the effect of colonialism on individuals' subjectivities, critics often argue that colonizers and the colonized alike depict themselves as experiencing a fragmentation of the self. I argue, by contrast, that the early stages of Company rule produced specific social and political dynamics that led authors from a variety of backgrounds to represent themselves not as fractured literary characters but instead as consistent though nevertheless complex ones. This circumstance enables the authors I discuss to represent themselves as achieving limited but nevertheless real opportunities for self-determination within the imperial context of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During this era, the British East India Company gained political power in India. The early stages of this process, under the leadership of Warren Hastings, championed knowledge production as a means for cultivating asymmetrical, mutually constitutive relations among Indians and Britons. However, British attitudes toward India became increasingly restrictive as the nineteenth century progressed. As a result of these historical circumstances, the authors I examine view life-writing as a form that grants them–to varying degrees–opportunities to exert agency.

My dissertation centers on four texts that exemplify a variety of literary genres and modes. These works include Dean Mahomet's *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* (1794), Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah* (1796), Eliza Fay's *Original Letters from India* (1817), and John Borthwick Gilchrist's *The Orienti-*

Occidental Tuitionary Pioneer to Literary Pursuits (1826). In putting these works in conversation with each other, I demonstrate that the creative drive to represent the self unites various literary forms. Mahomet and Fay engage with the discourse of travel, Hamilton deploys satirical techniques, and Gilchrist details his philological project for an audience of Company officials. The works I examine each depict their author's experiences and subjectivity whether or not they announce themselves as autobiographies. In analyzing the selves that Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist present, I draw on postcolonial theory and South Asian studies. Engaging with these disciplines enables me to emphasize the distinctiveness of the selves that the authors I discuss construct within their specific colonial and historical contexts.

This dissertation charts the gradual strengthening of colonial hierarchies as the nineteenth century progresses. Depicting the earliest stages of the Company's transition from a mercantile to a governing body, Mahomet insists that his insider's perspective on India has the potential to strengthen Anglo-Indian ties. Comparably, Hamilton believes that the field of knowledge production may produce mutual understanding among Indians and Britons. Eliza Fay, by contrast, demonstrates the emergence of high imperialist attitudes by projecting largely negative views on Indian people and culture. While Gilchrist joins Hamilton in promoting scholarship on India, he also amplifies the sense of increasing social stratification that Fay details. He promotes the study of Indian languages for the purpose of securing British dominance in India. By examining these authors together, I demonstrate that they represent the Anglo-Indian relationship as becoming more rigid and constraining between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

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Introduction

To many literary scholars and historians, Warren Hastings defined his tenure as the first governor-general of Bengal (1774-1785) by nurturing the production of knowledge about India. He did so, as critics including C.A. Bayly and Kate Teltscher argue, to entrench the power of the British East India Company (hereafter the Company) as that organization transitioned from a mercantile to a governing body.[1] Without endorsing Company rule, Sisir Kumar Das and others nevertheless praise Hastings's encouragement of Orientalist studies.[2] His support of the Asiatic Society of Bengal–a group established in 1784 to create scholarship on India's languages, literatures, and history–constitutes a distinctive feature of his leadership. For this reason, Das states that Hastings's involvement in the Asiatic Society "show[s] in ample measure his admiration and attraction for Oriental literature and languages" (2). This statement describes an attitude that arguably distinguishes Hastings from later officials who did not comparably promote the study of India. Nevertheless, a range of perspectives on Indianness and Britishness originated within the eighteenth-century colonial context. Individuals' roles within that context led them to develop varying degrees of curiosity about the possibilities of Anglo-Indian relations.

Hastings's encouragement of scholarship on Indian languages in particular appears to differentiate his views from those of later politicians such as Thomas Babington Macaulay. However, I will complicate this notion by arguing that Britons' and Indians' mutual interest in each other's languages and cultures during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries engendered not only curiosity but also anxiety. For this reason, Macaulay's "Minute on Indian Education" (1835)–in which he advocates for

English as the medium of education in India–does not represent an abrupt shift in colonial policy. Works that predate Macaulay's speech, such as Charles Grant's *Observations on the State of Society Among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain* (written in 1792 and published in 1813), similarly champion the imposition of English in India.[3] Grant, an evangelist, insists that the "exceedingly depraved" population of India must receive moral instruction in the language of their colonial rulers (25). With regards to Hastings himself, the accusations of misgovernment that prompted his impeachment trial (1787-1795) demonstrate that his interest in aspects of Indian culture including languages did not produce a just form of colonial rule. Instead, curiosity tied together Britons and Indians in asymmetrical power relations.

Hastings's support of scholarship on India continued with a difference in later regimes. In 1800, Richard Wellesley (governor-general of Bengal, 1798-1805) established Fort William College to educate British civil servants in subjects including languages used in India. The College, like the Asiatic Society, supported the colonial project by enriching the Company's knowledge of Indian culture and history. Led by the comparative philologist William Jones, the Asiatic Society produced histories as well as translations of Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian and Hindustani works. This group received support from Hastings but nevertheless acted independently from the Company. By contrast, Fort William College had a direct tie to the Company. The College and the Asiatic Society each viewed the study of Indian culture, history, and especially languages as a strategy for bolstering Anglo-Indian relations. However, as scholars including Das and Walter N. Hakala have noted, each organization exemplifies varying levels of openness toward Indian culture. Jones's engagement with Sanskrit and Persian literary

traditions, in particular, has led scholars including Michael J. Franklin to view him as promoting curiosity about India. However, the Society and the College received encouragement from, respectively, Hastings and Wellesley because each institution strengthened Britons' knowledge of a subject population.

In addition to recognizing continuities within as well as changes to Anglo-Indian relations throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, I join Das and others in viewing this era as a distinct one within the colonial relationship. The authors I examine demonstrate that power imbalances among Indians and Britons became increasingly rigid as the Company gained political authority. Dean Mahomet portrays his experiences as a sepoy (or Indian soldier) in the Company's Bengal Army during the middle of the eighteenth century.[4] At that time, the Company did not yet exercise the level of control over sepoys' lives that would later cause those soldiers to rebel in 1857 (Alavi 9).[5] The Company's earlier failure to engage sufficiently with Indian culture draws ire toward the beginning of the nineteenth century from philologist John Borthwick Gilchrist. He argues that Britons must learn local languages to reconcile Indians to colonial subjection. Eighteenth-century British curiosity pervades novelist Elizabeth Hamilton's vision of India. Conversely, the same era engenders the racial prejudices that travel writer Eliza Fay displays. To document their subjective experiences of their particular colonial contexts, the authors I discuss resist colonial limitations by transforming their lives into narrative.

Along with other facets of their ties to the colonial context, relationships to the Asiatic Society and the College influence the varying degrees of openness that the aforementioned authors display toward Indian culture. For example, Mahomet endorses

the work of the Asiatic Society to broadcast that his engagement with Anglo-Indian culture extends beyond the realm of his military experience. Elizabeth Hamilton comparably affiliates herself with the field of knowledge production by drawing on the work of her brother, Charles Hamilton (a historian and translator), and other members of the Society. Though she projects more hostility toward Indian culture than Hamilton does, Eliza Fay directs her audience to read scholarship on India and thereby illustrates the prevalence of such studies in shaping the Anglo-Indian experience (202). The scholarship that Gilchrist, as a professor of Hindustani and the first principal of Fort William College, produced continues to influence perceptions of Hindi and Urdu. However, his *Tuitionary Pioneer* insists that the Company undervalued the study of regional Indian languages and consequently marginalized his work. Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist demonstrate that individuals engaged with Orientalist scholarship for different ends depending on their distinct roles within the Anglo-Indian relationship.

Despite their varying degrees of proximity to institutions of knowledge production, the authors I examine portray multilingualism as a key feature of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century colonial dynamics. Mahomet implicitly references a process of learning English by writing in that language to portray his transition from the context of an Indian familial home to that of the Company's Bengal Army. His familiarity with both environments enables him to act as a guide to languages used in India by providing his British audience with a glossary of Hindustani and Persian words. Comparably, Hamilton begins her novel with a glossary of Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian terms. She, unlike Mahomet, references the study of languages by depicting Indian and British characters who have learned languages other than their native ones.

Using Hindustani phrases allows both Hamilton and Fay to highlight, respectively, their indirect and lived experiences of the colonial context. Gilchrist builds on this representation of colonialism as producing multilingual British subjects by insisting that learning Hindustani will enable Company personnel to accrue and hold power in India.

While standard accounts of Orientalist scholarship focus on language study and translation within colonial institutions, I will instead foreground the individual perspectives on language learning that Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist unfold through life-writing. Doing so will enable me to highlight these authors' contributions to British discourse on the role of language in the Anglo-Indian relationship. By accounting for the perspectives on language study and translation that Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist offer, I will examine how mediating between languages shaped Britons' and Indians' views of themselves. The authors I discuss embrace Hindustani to varying degrees to proclaim their informed engagement with colonial life (whether actual or, in Hamilton's case as she never visited India, imagined). In contrast, Mahomet foregrounds his knowledge of English but obscures the process by which he learned that language for the purpose of broadcasting his acculturation to British norms. The multilingual dynamics that late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century colonial scholarship and policies encouraged form the self that each author presents, regardless of their proximity to official power or their curiosity about Indian culture.

Though they engage with the process of language learning to different extents, the writers I examine each represent negotiations of authority by depicting exchanges between Indians and Britons. This portrayal of Anglo-Indian relations reflects the regulatory impulse that Jon Mee identifies in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-

century British writings on conversation. He asserts that many of these writings represent a "paradox that wishes to ensure liberty by stabilizing, universalizing, or even imposing the terms of exchange a priori in an effort to ensure that misunderstanding and contention are avoided" (3). Gilchrist exemplifies this view most directly by promoting the study of Hindustani as a field that will enable Britons to speak with Indian people and thereby reconcile them to subjugation. Comparably, Mahomet, Hamilton, and Fay recognize conversation as a fraught endeavor. They portray scenes in which Britons and Indians strive to project autonomy through talking with one another. While each author champions the authority of their own perspective in these scenes, I assert that they also leave open the possibility of more ambiguous dynamics. The "paradox" of conversation that Mee identifies allows for the establishment as well as the troubling of hierarchies within the colonial context.

My first chapter examines Mahomet's *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* (hereafter *Travels*; 1794). This book, the first one published in Britain by an Indian author, details the constraints as well the limited opportunities for self-determination that define its author's position as a colonial subject in eighteenth-century Bengal. In Mahomet's portrayal, joining the East India Company's Bengal Army grants him not only proximity to European power but also the ability to continue the legacy of his father and brother (who also worked as soldiers). Acculturating to British mores, therefore, does not sever Mahomet's ties to Indian society. These ties drive him both to create a generally positive depiction of the Anglo-Indian relationship and to project a critical attitude toward previous misrepresentations of Indian culture in eighteenth-century British travel narratives. Upon immigrating first to Ireland and then to England (an experience that

Travels refrains from depicting), Mahomet continued to foreground his insider's perspective on India. He opened England's first Indian restaurant, the Hindoostanee Coffee House, in London in 1810. In 1814, he established a business in Brighton, England, that claimed to introduce Indian massage techniques to Britain. Mahomet's literary and business ventures thus centered his background.

While Mahomet engages critically with travel literature, Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah* (hereafter *Translation*; 1796)–the subject of my second chapter–satirizes Orientalist studies. *Translation* references the work of members of the Asiatic Society (including Charles Hamilton). By so doing, the novel affiliates its author with that group and the knowledge that they promoted. Elizabeth Hamilton creates this impression of biographical as well as intellectual proximity to the Asiatic Society to satirize William Jones for, in her view, overemphasizing connections between European and Indian languages. Though barred as a woman from official participation in the Asiatic Society, Hamilton nevertheless fictionally represents her own political perspective. This perspective derives from her background as not only the sister of a Company official but also as an Ulster-Scotswoman. As a result of this background, she develops a largely positive view of the Anglo-Indian relationship while nevertheless criticizing the limitations on women in both Britain and India. Furthermore, she draws parallels between the manifestations of English imperialism that eighteenth-century India and Scotland each faced. Hamilton's biography instils in her views that appear, by turns, conservative and reform-minded.

My third chapter discusses Eliza Fay's *Original Letters from India* (hereafter *Original Letters*; 1817). This work, by contrast with Hamilton's novel, details its author's

lived rather than imagined experience of the Anglo-Indian relationship. Describing her role within this relationship enables Fay to project agency. In India, her status as a white woman grants her power especially over her Indian servants. Nevertheless, her gender constricts her because it renders her financially and socially vulnerable when she separates from her husband, Anthony Fay. She initially travelled to India to aid his quest to join the British Supreme Court in Calcutta. She gained proximity to that city's increasingly powerful British community (which included many Company officials and their families). Ultimately, though, she failed to establish herself fully within that society. She later earned money by opening a millinery business in Calcutta and finally made arrangements for the publication of her travel narrative, which occurred after her death. Throughout *Original Letters*, she uses the technique of writing to the moment to depict her interactions with Britons as well as Indians. In so doing, she vividly represents her efforts to assert herself within Calcutta society.

In my fourth chapter, I examine John Borthwick Gilchrist's *The Orienti-Occidental Tuitionary Pioneer to Literary Pursuits* (hereafter the *Tuitionary Pioneer*; 1826). This text promotes British dominance in India not through informal social relations (as Fay does) but instead through educational policies. In his text, Gilchrist justifies his project of facilitating communication among British and North Indian, Hindustani-speaking personnel in the colonial military.[6] He championed the Hindustani language as a philologist and the first principal of Fort William College. Attaining practical linguistic knowledge, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* insists, will entrench and expand British rule in India by enabling Britons to command Indians more effectively. In Gilchrist's view, imperialism links Britons and Indians together in relations that, though

hierarchical in nature, nevertheless mutually impact all participants. He acknowledges this circumstance by insisting that Britons must acquire the linguistic knowledge of their Indian subjects. In order to expedite this process, Gilchrist encourages his students to instruct each other. He thereby cedes some of his pedagogical authority to them. By generating this innovative and reformatory educational plan, he aims to strengthen British rule in India.

I choose the four aforementioned texts because their authors each have biographical ties to colonial activity. These ties, along with other aspects of their individual identities, grant them distinct views on the Anglo-Indian relationship. Furthermore, their writings together unfold the distinctive policies and attitudes that defined the early stages of British colonial rule in India. Recognizing that eighteenth-century imperialism created particular dynamics globally, Srinivas Aravamudan asserts that imaginative fiction from that era (including Hamilton's *Translation*) produced a form of "positive Orientalism" that projects curiosity about Eastern cultures (253). I agree with Aravamudan that that era engendered distinct views on encounters among different cultures. However, I differ from him by recognizing connections between imaginative and bureaucratic literatures from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He distinguishes fiction from bureaucratic translations on the grounds that the latter genre exclusively supports imperialist ideologies. By contrast, I will demonstrate that authors project complex views by using different genres (fiction, travel literature, and bureaucratic reports) to represent their ties to colonial institutions. I will foreground connections between the contexts of fiction and official knowledge production by

comparing the methods that colonial writings from a variety of genres deploy to represent their autobiographical subjects.

Throughout this dissertation, I will use the term life-writing to encapsulate the generic heterogeneity of the texts I discuss. According to Bart Moore-Gilbert, life-writing (along with "auto/biography") connotes "work which is autobiographical without necessarily observing the classical rules of the genre, as is often the case in the Self-narration [sic] of western women and postcolonial subjects" (131). The travel narratives of Mahomet and Fay, Hamilton's novel, and Gilchrist's bureaucratic reports each present their author's perspective whether or not they announce themselves as autobiographies. Additionally, they construct the "second reading of experience" that Georges Gusdorf identifies as a key feature of autobiography. Each text splits its author into a **narrated self**, a character that has experiences, and a **narrating voice** that portrays and interprets those experiences. However, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist distinguish their work from other literary self-representations by invoking the geographic scope, cultural transformations, and developing hierarchies of the Anglo-Indian relationship. Because they depict this relationship using various forms of writing, I will support my readings of their work as life-writing with references to each author's biography. Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist narrate their lives to define their positions within the colonial context.

By referencing the global dimensions of the Anglo-Indian relationship, the authors I discuss engage with the motif of travel whether or not they describe their works as travel narratives. Travel, as Linda Anderson asserts in her discussion of postcolonial autobiographies, "put[s] the author's 'I' into movement, not allowing any settled

perspective" (117).[7] Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist resist "settled perspective[s]" by representing their real or imagined experiences of the colonial context–which, for each writer, centers around North India–from various locations. In *Travels*, Mahomet depicts his childhood and soldiering in Bihar while making occasional references to his Irish audience. Gilchrist comparably wrote in London for British readers (the Company's directors) about his instruction of students both there and in India. Fay published her India-focused travel narrative in Calcutta, but it consists of personal letters to her family in England. Hamilton's novel, which she wrote in Scotland, portrays not only North India but also England and Scotland through the eyes of various Indian characters. The authors I examine thus depict the complex subjectivity that travel engenders as a possibility that the Anglo-Indian relationship encourages.

Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist each portray their experiences of the colonial context by drawing on eighteenth-century European literary conventions to present a "relational self." This concept, according to Eugene L. Stelzig, recognizes that "connection(s) to the *alter*, or other" constitute autobiographical subjects (22). The term "relational self" originates from feminist criticism of women's life-writing, though more recent scholarship has applied it across gender lines.[8] The notion that bonds with others determine subjectivity, as Stelzig asserts, "is amply borne out by" the autobiographical writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, and William Wordsworth. These authors–like the ones I examine–foreground the influence of social, professional, and familial relationships on their distinct characters. However, for Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist, ties to institutions and other individuals locate their selves within not only European social structures but also colonial hierarchies.

Emerging racial categories and the Company's growing authority during the latter half of the eighteenth century determine these authors' capacities to exercise autonomy. Though limited to varying degrees by their subject positions, they deploy writerly agency to portray the ties that construct their subjectivities. The Anglo-Indian relationship thus transforms the relational self of European autobiographies.

By foregrounding their entanglements with other individuals as well as colonial institutions, the authors I examine engage with not only Western but also Eastern literary traditions. Scholars of autobiography including Karl J. Weintraub and Gustav E. von Grunebaum argue that self-representations by Eastern authors emphasize communal dynamics rather than distinctive subjectivities.[9] More recent studies, however, have complicated this view by recognizing that authors such as Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur (1483-1540), the first Mughal emperor, positon themselves in relation to others but nevertheless "evoke or depict individuality" (Dale 37). Therefore, using a model of interconnected yet distinctive subjectivity ties the authors I examine to both Eastern and Western literary conventions. This circumstance reveals that colonialism did not impose a radically new model of selfhood on Indian writers such as Dean Mahomet. Instead, the Anglo-Indian relationship built on ideas of subjectivity that already existed within North Indian society. The entrenchment of colonial power throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, however, enabled official groups as well as informal communities (such as the growing population of British civilians like Fay in Calcutta) to mold individuals. Under these circumstances, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist strive to exert agency through life-writing.

The extent to which Mahomet and Gilchrist define themselves in relation to others distances their work from gendered conventions of literary self-representation. According to Stelzig, autobiographies written by European men in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries often present an "autonomous and imperial self" (22). This character type views himself as an exemplar of his age and of humanity (22). Comparably, Moore-Gilbert argues that processes of decolonization gave rise to self-consciously nationalistic male autobiographies that make their male subjects representative of their entire communities (xx). Mahomet and Gilchrist depart from these versions of masculine self-depiction by emphasizing their roles not within a single nation but instead within the colonial relationship between India and Britain. This relationship, during its early stages which both authors experienced, created limited opportunities for negotiations of power between the colonizers and the colonized. For this reason, Mahomet and Gilchrist each fail to project an unambiguously "autonomous and imperial self" because they encounter both openings for and challenges to their authority. They reveal the relative (though by no means egalitarian) fluidity of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century colonial relationship through their efforts to proclaim their significance within that relationship.

Gendered conventions explicate the self-portrayals of not only Mahomet and Gilchrist but also of Hamilton and Fay. As Felicity Nussbaum and others have recognized, authorship afforded eighteenth-century European women power.[10] Female-authored life-writing in particular, according to Nussbaum, "helped to shape and resist the dominant cultural constructions of gender relations and to substitute alternatives" (xiv). While challenging societal limitations that circumscribed women's lives, Fay and Hamilton also existed within a cultural context that limited their creative and intellectual

possibilities. Hamilton engages with the work of the Asiatic Society through fiction because her gender precluded her from official participation in such an organization. Additionally, men controlled the publication of both her and Fay's creations. Despite these constrictions, Hamilton and Fay occupy positions of some power within the colonial context. European women, as Sara Mills recognizes, "cannot be said to speak from outside the colonial discourse, but their relation to the dominant discourse is problematic because of its conflict with the discourses of 'femininity'" (63). Their marginalization as women drives Hamilton and Fay to foreground their perspectives on the Anglo-Indian relationship. Additionally, their ties to the colonizing power enable them to do so from a station of ideological authority.

Although negotiating colonial power dynamics produces a sense of adaptability in the life-writing I examine, these works present selves that fundamentally maintain consistency. This model of identity, as Stelzig argues, proliferates throughout Romantic autobiographies that portray subjects who project a "core self" (12). This notion, according to Patricia Meyer Spacks, extends beyond autobiography into eighteenth-century English novels. Both genres, she argues, obey a narrative principle whereby things happen to people but people remain themselves in the face of events (*Imagining a Self* 8). In the context of the developing Anglo-Indian relationship, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist emphasize the consistency of their characters. Mahomet portrays his entrance into the Army not as a radical break from his Indian background but instead as a continuation of his familial legacy. Though she relates the perspectives of various fictional characters, Hamilton broadcasts her own views by deploying satire. Fay insists throughout her narrative that she occupies a precarious and marginalized position within

Anglo-Indian society. In his account, Gilchrist portrays himself as an individual who is singularly capable of reforming the colonial project. Each of these writers wields authorial power to present a distinct self.

Depicting himself as a consistent character enables Mahomet to project agency even as his historical circumstances restrict him. For this reason, his methods of self-representation connect to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's assertion that members of the Subaltern Studies Collective of historians make "*strategic use* of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest" (214; emphasis Spivak's). Deploying strategic essentialism, Spivak argues, enables members of the collective to uncover marginalized perspectives on Indian history and thereby resist imperialist ideologies through their scholarship. Mahomet does not promote such radical ends, given his ties to the Company and his relationship to his historical moment. In his portrayal, he undergoes discipline within the military. Familial expectations also constrain him. However, he depicts himself as extracting from his experience of the eighteenth-century colonial context the capacity to engage with both Indian and British cultures. Conversely, Spivak's postcolonial vantage point drives her to provide stronger criticism of British imperialism in India. I nevertheless view Mahomet as using, within the limitations of his era, strategic essentialism. Deploying this method allows him to exert narrative control over the restrictions that circumscribe his position as a colonial subject.

Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist experience different constraints than does Mahomet. For this reason, the three European authors do not deploy strategic essentialism. They nevertheless govern their presentations of the burgeoning Anglo-Indian relationship by accentuating aspects of their characters. This rhetorical strategy enables them to project

the consistency of character that Stelzig and Spacks identify in eighteenth-century European writings.[11] Furthermore, they follow a pattern of self-characterization which Nigel Leask identifies in Romantic-era travel writing. As Leask asserts, authors of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries situate their narrated selves within "highly particularized, performative parameters of class, gender, and nationality" (*Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840* 4). Recognizing these parameters challenges the idea that "any essential 'European' identity" exists (4). In the context of this dissertation, Mahomet comparably demonstrates the complexities of 'Indianness' by foregrounding the particularities of his background in deploying strategic essentialism. While they resist totalizing conceptions of their identities, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist nevertheless accentuate facets of their subject positions to proclaim their individual contributions to the colonial project.

The texts I explore depict complex relations among Indians and Britons. These relations, though governed by a power differential that privileges Europeans, enable Britons and Indians alike to exercise varying degrees of self-determination. Individuals' subject positions dictate the extent of their agency. By revealing surprising instances of adaptability within colonial bonds, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist provide an alternative to standard scholarly accounts–such as Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978)–that present imperialist hierarchies as irremediable forces of oppression. Other scholars of postcolonialism, by contrast, recognize that colonial ties transform Indians and Britons alike.[12] Sara Suleri develops this view in *The Rhetoric of English India* (1992). She writes, "the story of colonial encounter is in itself a radically decentering narrative that is impelled to realign with violence any static binarism between colonizer and colonized"

(2). This statement portrays colonialism as a system that erodes instead of reinforcing distinctions between rulers and their subjects. As their identities change in relation to one another, colonizer and colonized become destabilized and thus resist containment within rigid hierarchies.

Engaging with the field of colonial knowledge production enables Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist to represent a variety of attitudes that shaped the Anglo-Indian relationship in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries. During that period, as Robert Travers argues, "the search for points of connection with Indian tradition was cut across by the need to draw clear distinctions between colonizer and colonized" (28).[13] Siraj Ahmed and Sunil M. Agnani provide comparably nuanced depictions of eighteenth-century imperialist ideologies.[14] In so doing, they aim to complicate postcolonial theory's depiction of European writers from the long eighteenth century as establishing intellectual and moral justifications for imperialism. For example, Ahmed asserts that authors including Daniel Defoe, Jeremy Bentham, Edmund Burke, and Walter Scott deploy "the characteristic procedure of contemporary theory–the calling into question of Enlightenment reason and European modernity" (2). This statement emphasizes the capacity of certain European authors to interrogate the political and ideological construction of imperialism. By contrast, the texts I examine rarely criticize imperialism given their authors' proximity to colonial institutions. Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist nevertheless describe the early stages of Company rule as an era that circumscribes reciprocal interest within a system of asymmetrical power relations.

India and Britain's mutual transformation of each other constitutes the focus of "new imperial history." As Daniel E. White states, this body of scholarship "replaces a

Eurocentric binary perspective on metropolitan center and imperial periphery, long taken for granted, with attention to circulation and scale" (1). This understanding of Britain and India as reciprocally influencing each other challenges standard accounts of imperial power imbalances. In this vein, Dipesh Chakrabarty defines his project in *Provincializing Europe* (2000) as "the task of exploring how [European] thought–which is now everyone's heritage and which affects us all–may be renewed from and for the margins" (16). He pursues this aim by de-centering Europe in his examination of the emergence of capitalist modernity. Seeking to complicate accounts in new imperial history of colonial exchanges and asymmetrical power relations, I emphasize that mutual curiosity and more rigid dynamics not only coexisted but also reinforced one another during the early stages of Company rule. Given this circumstance, how do Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist exert agency within colonial social and political structures? Life-writing, I argue, affords them creative power over both the possibilities and the limits of their individual subject positions.[15]

Mary Louise Pratt develops another vision of mutual influence within colonial environments through her concept of the "contact zone." With this term, she describes asymmetrical though nevertheless mutually formative colonial relations. She describes the contact zone as "the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated […] establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (6). Pratt, like Suleri, recognizes that destabalizing colonial binaries does not mitigate their violence and injustice. Furthermore, in her use of the term "contact," Pratt draws from the field of linguistics. That discipline examines how new languages emerge when those who speak

different native languages must "communicate with each other consistently, usually in the context of trade" (6). To develop relations among one another, speakers of different languages must improvise a new one. Therefore, the idea of the contact zone foregrounds that the lives of distinct groups of people occupying various positions within colonial hierarchies become intertwined in colonial contexts. Power imbalances, Pratt argues, constrain subjugated peoples without eradicating the possibility that they may exert agency through acts of invention such as literary self-representation.

In addition to acknowledging possibilities for mutual exchange in the colonial context, the writers I discuss view the Anglo-Indian relationship as generating anxieties and traumas. Representing these circumstances enables Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist to acknowledge the conflict and repression that occurred during the early stages of Company rule. By discussing depictions of colonial violence, I criticize rather than endorse Britain's eighteenth-century colonial activity. This activity, though it enables Mahomet to make powerful European allies within the army, also facilitates the Company's dominance in his hometown of Bihar. This situation, along with his family history of military service, leaves him with few options other than enlistment. Hamilton and Gilchrist view the field of knowledge production as a means of strengthening Anglo-Indian ties, but they also worry about the possible problems that British rule in India might both create and encounter. The buildup to the Second Anglo-Mysore War causes Fay to suffer when Anglo-Indian tensions lead to her captivity.[16] The four authors I discuss, therefore, depict not only the positive but also the negative repercussions that shape their participation in the colonial context.

Through depicting colonial traumas, the narratives I examine presage nineteenth-century crises. These later events drove the Company to act in the increasingly repressive manner that characterized the period of high imperialism. Before this era, however, Britain's imperial ideology–as Betty Joseph details–transformed as a result of accounts of the 1756 Black Hole incident at Calcutta's Fort William. This calamity resulted in the death of (according to one account) one hundred and twenty-three English prisoners. They ostensibly suffocated because the *nawab* of Bengal (Sirāj-ud-Dawlah), after attacking the fort and winning a victory over the British, ordered their confinement in an excessively small space.[17] Joseph writes of this episode, "the connotative power of the Black Hole and its hold on the popular imagination were unparalleled till the Great Mutiny of 1857 provided a new national trauma" (65). By contrast, the authors I examine represent individual traumas without ascribing national importance to them. They nevertheless use writing to demonstrate that their positive and negative experiences of the colonial context shape their individual subjectivities and affects. Fay, in particular, foreshadows high imperialist attitudes in narrating her captivity.

Later authors of life-writing, according to Moore-Gilbert and others, often describe colonialism and diaspora as forces that rupture their identities. In developing this argument, scholars often use postcolonial theory. Linda Anderson, for example, builds on Homi Bhabha's assertion that "the colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between its appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference" (153). This statement represents colonialism as producing subjects with a fragmented sense of self. Such fragmentation, as Anderson notes, resists narrative coherence (107).[18] Nevertheless, she states that "the lack of an essentialized identity does

not rule out the possibility of constructing a place from which to speak" (108). This claim depicts fractured colonial identities as an impediment to the conventions of life-writing (though not an insurmountable one). Conversely, Mahomet's narrative demonstrates that subaltern individuals during the early stages of Company rule could not only build "a place from which to speak" but also project mastery over techniques of self-representation. The dynamics of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian relationship, therefore, allow Mahomet in addition to Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist to resist the fragmentation of self through writing.

Offering another model for exploring literature as a means for colonial subjects to exercise self-determination, Pratt uses the concept of "transculturation." This term, which she derives from the field of ethnography and applies to travel literature, "[describes] how subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant metropolitan culture" (6).[19] Deploying this idea, Pratt argues that authors from subject populations exercise agency in producing travel narratives. The non-European (Spanish American) authors on whom she focuses use European literary traditions to resist colonial dominance. Although none of the authors I examine present a comparably anti- or de-colonial vision, I view Mahomet as practicing a form of transculturation. He displays agency in his use of European travel writing by adapting passages from British accounts of India.[20] He often transforms these passages to provide a more positive depiction of India and Islam than do many eighteenth-century European authors.[21] Nevertheless, in accordance with Pratt's definition of transculturation, his historically determined subject position as a Company soldier restricts the self that he

presents. He forms this self in conversation with British literary conventions. Therefore, these conventions determine his subjectivity in both productive and constricting ways.

My discussions of *Travels*, *Translation*, *Original Letters*, and the *Tuitionary Pioneer* will examine how these texts wield authorial power to project agency amidst the difficult, chaotic, and sometimes traumatic experiences that they depict. By following this line of inquiry, I will demonstrate that the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century colonial context allows the authors I examine to cultivate self-determination through writing. The models of subjectivity that they present, therefore, depart from standard scholarly accounts of the effects of colonialism on the individual. I will analyze the selves that Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist represent by describing how they establish their power as authors to represent their perspectives on the Anglo-Indian relationship in each chapter's first section. In the second section of each chapter, I will highlight the difficulties that each author portrays as circumscribing their lives. The final section of each chapter will assert that, despite these restrictions, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist deploy their rhetorically and historically constituted subject positions to exercise varying degrees of autonomy within colonial hierarchies. The writerly choices that Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist make in depicting themselves, I argue, reveal limited but real possibilities for self-assertion within the Anglo-Indian relationship.

The authors I examine present alternatives to the models of fractured, de-centered subjectivity that scholars identify in postcolonial life-writing. By examining these alternative models, I will challenge standard accounts of the relationship between colonialism and self-perception. In experiencing the early stages of British rule in India, how do Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist develop the sense that they have the

authority to interpret and thereby shape their individual roles in that environment through life-writing? Despite their differing backgrounds, each writer views the burgeoning Anglo-Indian relationship as one that allows them some freedom to practice self-determination. To varying degrees, they benefit from colonial groups including the Company, the military, institutions of knowledge production, and the growing community of Britons in Calcutta. Interacting with these groups nevertheless places each author within a racialized power structure that becomes increasingly rigid as the nineteenth century progresses. While Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist recognize that their identities constrict them, they nevertheless use self-depiction to foreground their creative agency.

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[1] Here, I refer to the following sources: Teltscher's *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India 1600–1800* (1995) and C.A. Bayly's *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* (1997). Throughout the rest of this dissertation, I will abbreviate those titles as, respectively, *India Inscribed* and *Empire and Information*. Regarding the Company's transition from a mercantile to a governing power, scholars generally locate the origins of this transition in the Battle of Plassey (1757). In this conflict, the Company won a victory over Sirāj-ud-Dawlah, the ruler of Bengal. This victory granted the Company access to Bengal's revenues (Sen xii). The Company's political authority increased in 1765 when that institution acquired the "formal position of *divan* on August 19, 1765 enabling it to collect the extensive revenues of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa" (Sen xii-xiii).

[2] Other studies that praise Hastings's support for Orientalist scholarship include William Dalrymple's *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* (2002) and Rozina Visram's *Ayahs, Lascars and Princes: Indians in Britain 1700-1947* (1986).

[3] For more on Grant and Macaulay, see the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

[4] Scholars refer to Mahomet as both "Mahomet" and "Mahomed." I use the former spelling throughout this dissertation because Fisher does in *The Travels of Dean Mahomet: An Eighteenth Century Journey Through India* (1997).

[5] For further discussion of the evolving relationship between the Company and sepoys, see the first chapter of this dissertation.

[6] Today, the Hindustani language is known as Hindi and Urdu. These languages overlap considerably in their spoken forms but use different scripts (respectively, *devanāgarī* and *nastaʿlīq*) and vocabulary. Distinctly Urdu vocabulary characteristically originates from Persian and Arabic while a contrasting Hindi register derives from Sanskrit. In the early nineteenth century, however, neither Indians nor Britons had fixed these linguistic boundaries. In addition to Hindustani, Gilchrist also taught and wrote an instructional text (*A New Theory and Prospectus of the Persian Verbs: With Their Hindoostanee Synonimes in Persian and English*, 1801) in Persian. However, this dissertation will focus exclusively on his conceptualization of Hindustani.

[7] C.L. Innes, in "Authorizing the Self," also examines the role of travel in postcolonial life-writing.

[8] Stelzig offers a detailed account of this debate. He asserts that Mary G. Mason's "conclusion that 'the self-discovery of female identity seems to acknowledge the real presence and recognition of another consciousness,' and that female identity is relational (210), has become something of a truism in the feminist readings of the genre, although recently there has been a movement away from essentializing

identity differences in autobiography, including those of gender" (22). As an example of the latter view, Stelzig cites Paul John Eakin's *How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves* (1999). This expansion of the concept of a "relational self" enables me to foreground the ties that shape the identities of each author I examine.

[9] In a similar vein, Georg Misch's *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity* (originally published in 1907, translated in 1973) argues that "primitive peoples" lack the mental acuity to achieve autobiographical self-reflexivity (1:18). Georges Gusdorf, in "Conditions and Limits of Autobiography," comparably argues that non-Europeans replicate European templates, and therefore the development of the ability to write autobiography constitutes a sign of imperialism's success.

[10] Additionally, Nancy Armstrong argues that eighteenth-century British culture granted women "the authority to write and denied them the power to make political statements" (40). This circumstance produces, according to Patricia Meyer Spacks, simultaneous expressions of "desire for self-assertion and the need for self-suppression" in female-authored autobiographies ("Female Rhetorics" 232).

[11] The Spacks source to which I refer here is *Imagining a Self: Autobiography and Novel in Eighteenth-Century England* (1976). Throughout the rest of this dissertation, I will abbreviate that title as *Imagining a Self*.

[12] See, for example, Aijaz Ahmed's "Orientalism and After" in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (1992).

[13] Travers cites Dalrymple's *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* as "a fine exposition" of the "picture of a pre-racialist eighteenth-century empire as it intersected with the cosmopolitan ethos of the Mughals" (28).

[14] The Ahmed source to which I refer here is *The Stillbirth of Capital: Enlightenment Writing and Colonial India* (2011).

[15] For additional examples of new imperial history, see Stephen Howe's *The New Imperial Histories Reader* (2009).

[16] The Company fought this conflict (1780-1784) against Mysore's ruler, Hyder Ali. Mysore continued to resist British rule until 1799. At that time, the Company defeated Hyder Ali's son, Tipu Sultan.

[17] The term *nawab*, which derives from Persian and Arabic, denotes in this context a Muslim ruling a province of the Mughal Empire

[18] For another account of fractured postcolonial identities, see David Huddart's *Postcolonial Theory and Autobiography* (2014).

[19] While I agree with Suleri that "colonizer" and "colonized" do not exist in a binaristic relationship, I find Pratt's assertion that metropolitan culture imposes itself on subject populations useful in Mahomet's case. He demonstrates the influence of British travel writing on his own narrative by transforming passages from John Henry Grose's *A Voyage to the East Indies* (1757).

[20] In addition to Grose's narrative, Mahomet references Jemima Kindersley's *Letters from the Island of Teneriffe, Brazil, the Cape of Good Hope and the East Indies* (1777).

[21] As Humberto Garcia notes, however, Islam and especially Islamic republicanism received praise from some British writers. These authors include Edmund Burke, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, and Percy and Mary Shelley.

"The Performance of Cultivated Genius": The Transcultural, Strategically Essentializing Self in *The Travels of Dean Mahomet* (1794)

As an immigrant first to Ireland and then to England, Dean Mahomet made a career of selling an image of his homeland, India, to the British public. He opened London's first Indian restaurant–the Hindoostanee Coffee House–in 1810. Later, at the height of his professional life, he moved to Brighton, England, and engaged with that city's middle- and upper-class tourists as the self-proclaimed "Shampooing Surgeon." This role, in which he promoted Indian massage techniques, won him a modest degree of celebrity.[1] Upon first arriving in Britain, however, Mahomet led a relatively anonymous life in Cork, Ireland. The fact that he received little notice in print during his twenty-five years there indicates, as Michael H. Fisher asserts, "how easily [Cork society] absorbed him" ("Cork's Dean Mahomet," 81). According to Fisher, Mahomet failed to draw attention from sources such as local newspapers because the eighteenth century brought to the port city of Cork people from across Britain's colonies. Within this historical context, Mahomet sought to distinguish himself by becoming an author. He strove to influence the terms of his "absor[ption]" into Cork, and ultimately British society, by publishing an account of himself.

Mahomet's role as a sepoy who served in North India during the mid-eighteenth century inculcated in him a sense of the restricted power that an Indian person could achieve through affiliation with the Company. This institution depended on Indian soldiers not only to reinforce a much smaller number of Britons but also to support colonial rule. In describing the origin of sepoys, Seema Alavi notes that they "constituted one of the few ideological bridges between the Company and Indian society, and formed

a major source of legitimacy for it" (1). This statement foregrounds the ability of Indians to extend the Company's reach among themselves. *Travels* demonstrates this ability by attributing Mahomet's desire to enlist to the examples of his brother and father. He views himself as continuing their legacy by serving in a European army. For this reason, Mahomet's portrayal of the Company reflects the dynamics of his historical moment rather than the increasingly restrictive ones that shaped the nineteenth-century colonial relationship.[2] He insists that, during the time of his service, he could exercise a limited degree of self-determination in acculturating to both Indian and British societies.

To delineate the particular set of allegiances that he acquired as a result of his colonial background, Mahomet uses the form of travel literature. Doing so enables him to join other eighteenth-century writers of color who use that genre to foreground their perspectives within both British and Eastern cultural contexts.[3] This literary background has led scholars to examine *Travels* alongside other contemporaneous works by writers of color. Such studies place *Travels* within Eastern and Western literary contexts despite its status as the first book published by an Indian author in Britain. There, "ships' captains, adventurers, and explorers" had previously controlled the discourse of travel (Batten 2).[4] However, during the eighteenth century, writers of color in Britain began to narrate their experiences of colonialism and enslavement. This circumstance enables C.L. Innes and Kate Teltscher to compare Mahomet's account to those written by formerly enslaved authors.[5] Additionally, Tabish Kahir and others connect *Travels* to narratives of Muslim writers' journeys that circulated among Eastern audiences.[6] Comparisons of Mahomet's work to life-writing by other authors of color demonstrate that his use of the discourse of travel does not comprise mere emulation of white European writers' perspectives.

While other scholars have emphasized the autonomy that Mahomet's narrative projects, I instead foreground his ability to develop productive relationships to both Britishness and Indianness within cultural and literary constraints. Critics including Innes and Teltscher emphasize the agency that *Travels*' narrated self appears to exert in joining the Army.[7] I agree that Mahomet depicts himself as exercising self-determination in that situation. However, I also contend that he exchanges the predetermined subject position of son to an elite Mughal family for that of sepoy. The role of author, by contrast, offers Mahomet greater autonomy because, as scholars including Teltscher, Mona Narain, and Vinay Dharwadker note, it enables him to intervene in British discourse on the burgeoning Anglo-Indian relationship. For instance, Dharwadker asserts that *Travels* "was potentially radical and conflictual, since it sought to correct the misimpressions that were current in the British representations of the subcontinent at the end of the eighteenth century" (99).[8] I endorse this reading of the power that authorship grants Mahomet. Furthermore, I assert that affirmative as well as "conflictual" engagement with British culture enables Mahomet to delineate his perspective.

Mahomet's position as a colonial subject restricts his capacity for autonomy. In this situation, how does he use life-writing to control his presentation of the forces that define his subjectivity? I will address this question by examining his depiction of the relationship to both Britishness and Indianness that he develops as a result of his background. In this chapter's first section, I assert that he distinguishes his perspective within the fields of both British and Indo-Persian literature through his engagement with the discourse of travel. He uses this discourse to reveal that his background enables him to participate in Eastern and Western cultures alike. This dual acculturation originates

from a disciplinary process, which constitutes the focus of the second section. Mahomet's ties to both his family and the military condition his views on the Anglo-Indian relationship. Within this context, he–as the third and final section examines–foregrounds his ability to build connections with various groups of Indian people while in the army. The first two sections will demonstrate how Mahomet establishes the parameters of his experience of the contact zone. As the third section will detail, he also exposes means of permeating those boundaries.

Mahomet constructs his self-representation using methods of transculturation and strategic essentialism. By insisting that his insider's perspective offers a necessary corrective to stereotypes about India and Islam, he presents a transcultural subjectivity. He does not convey an anti- or de-colonial vision as do the authors to whose work Pratt applies her concept of transculturation (6). Nevertheless, Mahomet's engagement with British literary traditions displays his ability to absorb some aspects of the dominant culture while also challenging others. Regarding his use of strategic essentialism, his Company affiliation precludes him from championing the politics of resistance that Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak portrays the Subaltern Studies Collective as endorsing. Mahomet joins Spivak, though, in recognizing essentialism as a possible strategy for subverting imperial binds. Positing an alternative view, Innes asserts that eighteenth-century writers of color "demonstrate the inadequacy of categories which essentialise their identities as either black or Asian or white, African or Indian or English" ("Eighteenth-Century Men of Letters" 34). I agree with Innes that Mahomet offers a complex self-representation. However, I argue that he portrays the nuances of his subject

position by essentializing his contribution to the Anglo-Indian relationship while also pushing against the limits that constrain him.

I

Mahomet engages creatively with the form of British travel literature. In so doing, he realizes the potential for both constraint and resistance that Pratt defines as a key feature of transcultural self-representations from the contact zone.[9] Mahomet strategically essentializes his individual perspective as a travel writer by asserting that he will provide "a sketch of the manners of [his] country" and "some account of [him]self" (35). This assertion intertwines Mahomet's background with his understanding of Indian people. By providing an insider's account of India, he seeks to correct previous misrepresentations of that country. He pursues this aim by revising passages from an English travel narrative, John Henry Grose's *A Voyage to the East Indies* (1757). Additionally, he challenges European antipathy toward Indian religions by championing tolerance of both Hindu and Muslim practices. Using the discourse of travel aligns Mahomet not only with European writers but also with formerly enslaved authors as well as Muslim ones from India and elsewhere.[10] A process of learning English, which Mahomet refrains from depicting, enables him to make subjective literary choices that by turns replicate and adapt the conventions of travel literature.

Given his background as a North Indian Muslim with ties to the Mughal regime, Mahomet probably knew a number of languages. He, as Dharwadker asserts, "is likely to have been bilingual in Bengali and Hindustani (or a speech variety of the Patna region), knew Persian, and learned the Nagari or the Bengali script at an early age" (111). In *Travels*, Mahomet provides no account of the languages that he spoke, wrote, or studied.

However, a descendent of his describes finding a book in which Mahomet "had written his name in Sanscrit–a thing of dots, crescents, three sides of a square, etc." (Mahomed 42).[11] The claim that Dean Mahomet could write in Sanskrit seems implausible owing to his religious affiliation and his lack of formal education. Regarding his schooling, he mentions having undertaken minimal learning in Patna (36). He later studied English in Cork, but *Travels* does not reference that education. Despite this omission, his descendant's account indicates that Dean Mahomet wrote in a Sanskrit-derived script. Perhaps Mahomet declines to mention this knowledge because he lacked a scholarly education in Indian languages.

The region (Bihar) in which Mahomet lived experienced linguistic changes under Mughal rule. Therefore, his acquisition of English constitutes not a shift from one language to another but instead a possible expansion of an already complex linguistic background. As Fisher notes, "the people of Bihar, who spoke a local dialect of Hindi, became subordinated to the Bengali-speaking province of Bengal, under a Persian-speaking Nawab" during the Mughal era (Mahomet 4). This linguistic diversity supports Dharwadker's claim that Mahomet probably knew a number of languages used in India. Additionally, Fisher's description emphasizes that people in regions such as Bihar communicated with each other in languages other than those of state power before the establishment of Company rule. English, therefore, might have appeared during the transition from Mughal to British governance as an alternative bureaucratic language rather than the dominant one. Bolstering this notion, the work of philologists including Gilchrist demonstrates that colonial administrators in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries did not seek to impose English throughout the Company's territories.

Mahomet's learning English, therefore, constitutes a process born not of newfound subjugation but instead of a transformation of colonial dynamics that already existed in Bihar.

By way of introducing himself, Mahomet connects his background to his writing. This gesture enables him implicitly to invoke his multilingualism without foregrounding the difference that this characteristic produces. He asserts that his "want of literary attainments, that refine and polish the European" precludes him from creating a "performance of cultivated genius" (32). This statement conforms to eighteenth-century British conventions of authorial self-deprecation. Beyond following these conventions, Mahomet demonstrates his familiarity with European literature by referencing John Milton and classical writers such as Martial and Seneca.[12] These references, along with Mahomet's initial posture of modesty, draw attention to his efforts to acculturate to British society. He understands himself as an outsider in that society, and he displays knowledge of Western literature to broadcast his adjustment to his new life. Furthermore, his literary references–like all aspects of his writing–highlight his mastery of the English language. Mahomet thus declines to portray the process by which he learned English and instead chooses to present the results of that education. This decision enables him to obscure an aspect of his upbringing that distinguishes (and potentially alienates) him from his British readership.

Mahomet justifies his entrance into Britain's literary marketplace by strategically essentializing the erudition of colonial subjects as a manifestation of their identities. He references the discourse of philosophical primitivism to assert that, while European thinkers seek to display their knowledge, Indians approach learning with a comparatively

more curious and receptive attitude. In making this claim, Mahomet betrays his belief that he provides a more accurate and nuanced portrait of India than could Europeans. He writes, "my countrymen […] have still more of the innocence of our ancestors, than some of the boasting philosophers of Europe" (34). This statement, as D.S. Roberts notes, replicates the juxtaposition of sophistication and ingenuousness that eighteenth-century philosophers including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, and Immanuel Kant proffer. In drawing on these philosophers' idealized visions of colonial subjects, Mahomet aims to define his own perspective. He thereby presents his insider's view of India as not only a novelty within the context of Britain's literary marketplace but also a necessary corrective to accounts that engage reductively with his culture.

Through his portrayal of dancing girls, Mahomet demonstrates the innovativeness of the perspective that constructs his travel narrative. He offers a warmly humorous account of the dancers to combat the negative images of Indian women that many European writers of his era promoted.[13] He states, "they are regularly trained in all the arts of pleasing, by a hackneyed matron, worn in the campaigns of Venus, whose past experience renders her perfectly adequate to the task of instruction" (70). This passage initially offers a favorable evaluation of the dancers' craft by noting that they study "all the arts of pleasing[.]" Mahomet undercuts this praise, however, with his satirical portrait of the "hackneyed matron" who passes on her overtaxed skills to the next generation. This description invokes a potentially bleak future for the young dancers. Nevertheless, the narrating voice bestows upon the older woman a sense–albeit an ironic one–of heroism and champions the dancers' training by comparing their trade to a military

operation. *Travels*' mockery of the dancers, therefore, appears fundamentally affectionate rather than censorious.

The satirical portrait discussed above softens nearly identical remarks by Grose. He asserts that the dancing girls "live in a band or community, under the direction of some super-annuated female of the same profession, under whom they receive a training, as regular as in the academy, or like horses in a manage, and learn all the paces, and the acts of pleasing" (138). Like Mahomet, Grose foregrounds the dancers' education. These women appear ridiculous in *Voyage* because Grose compares them to schoolchildren and horses in order to mock the notion that they practice a craft. In contrast, *Travels* commends the dancers' training for instilling in them "all the arts of pleasing" (70). This description, by supplanting Grose's biting portrait with a more positive one, tempers the satire in the earlier account. *Travels* strives to ameliorate the literary reputation of dancing girls in recognition of the labor that their role in Anglo-Indian life as entertainers requires.

Descriptions of the dancing girls' public affiliations further evince Grose and Mahomet's differing estimations of these figures. Grose emphasizes the erotic implications of the dancers' work by characterizing them as being "for the use of the public" and "appropriated to the service of the Gentoo-temples, and the use of the Brahmin-priests that belong to them" (138). These assertions position the dancers' sexuality as a manifestation of the ostensible depravity of Indian communal and religious life. Conversely, Mahomet emphasizes the public good that the dancers' wealth enables them to perform. He states, "In many parts of India, there are several fine Mahometan chapels built by them, and rich factories established, where various artisans and

tradesmen find their greatest encouragement" (71). This assertion highlights the practical and economic rather than the erotic "use" (though Mahomet omits this word from his account) of dancing girls to religious and working communities. While Grose depicts transactional eroticism as the sole motivation for the dancers' actions, Mahomet instead highlights their sincere capacity for charity.

Mahomet continues to transform Grose's account by praising the dancers for acting virtuously not only in public but also in private. Mahomet asserts, "there are some of them, even amidst their vices and depravity, whose minds are finely impressed with generous sentiments" (72). By invoking "vices and depravity," the narrating voice betrays that it does not condone the dancers' general conduct. This assertion, however, appears cursory given the description's lighthearted tone. In contrast, Grose uses more straightforwardly critical language to characterize a virtuous dancing girl as "an exception to their general want of sentiments" (140). This negative formulation indicates that the majority of dancers lack compassion whereas Mahomet's more positive depiction instead foregrounds those who display benevolence. Both authors illustrate their point through the story of a dancer who supports her former benefactor when his finances suffer because his "attachments to her diverted his business" (Mahomet 72). In *Travels* and *Voyage*, this dancer's generosity appears ironic because it contrasts with the ostensible wantonness of her profession. Only in Mahomet's account does the deployment of irony contribute to a predominantly sympathetic portrait.

The similarities that Mahomet elucidates between the dancing girls' circumstances and his own as a soldier may explain his comparatively favorable depiction of them. The assertion that "they are regularly trained[,]" though more comic in

tone than the description of his acculturation to army life, nevertheless invokes a comparable disciplinary process (70). For both groups, this process involves the performative adoption of a distinctive costume and set of behaviors. Mahomet forms his identity as a sepoy by wearing regimentals in addition to observing and subsequently practicing drills.[14] Comparably, the dancing girls broadcast their profession by wearing "the most splendid conceivable" clothes and "avoid[ing] every degree of affectation in their manners" (72). Describing a review of his regiment enables Mahomet to demonstrate that sepoys, like dancing girls, perform for Anglo-Indian audiences (56). By drawing these implicit parallels between the public roles that sepoys and dancing girls occupy within the contact zone, Mahomet counters reductive portrayals such as Grose's.

Adapting passages from *Voyage* enables Mahomet to challenge that text's portrayal of not only dancing girls but also of Islam. By rebutting this negative depiction of Islam, he tacitly criticizes print and theatrical cultures in Cork (and throughout Britain) that proliferated such disparaging images. *Travels* states, "The Mahometans are strict adherents to the tenets of their religion, which does not, by any means, consist in that enthusiastic veneration for Mahomet so generally conceived" (69).[15] Instead, Islam "considers much more, as its primary object, the unity of the supreme Being, under the name of Alla" (69). This passage aims to distance Islam from Western associations of that religion with excessive, unthinking zeal for a prophet rather than devotion to the god that that prophet serves. Through this assertion, Mahomet denounces culture that allows false ideas about Muslims to become "so generally conceived" in the late eighteenth century. The word "conceived" depicts literature and other forms of entertainment as forces capable of engendering prejudices in their audiences. By thus foregrounding

culture's power to transmit bigotry, Mahomet positions his self-representation as a corrective to works by European authors that propagate harmful and inaccurate portraits of Islam.

The contrast between Grose and Mahomet's descriptive approaches highlights the greater awareness that *Travels*, in comparison to *Voyage*, projects of culture's ability to promote misimpressions of Indian society and religions. In challenging these negative images, Mahomet foregrounds his insider's perspective on Islam. Grose writes, "As to Mahomet himself, there is faint reverence kept up for his name; which is, however, more more [sic] matter of habit than of devotion: neither was their [Muslims'] superstitious regard for him ever pushed to that length which is commonly imagined" (175). This passage, despite repudiating widespread European misconceptions of Islam, relates the general understanding that the author has received of that religion as an outsider to it. By contrast, first-hand knowledge bolsters Mahomet's assertion that worship of Mahomet does not constitute a "tenet" of Islam (69). Introducing the word "tenet" into Grose's account, moreover, enables *Travels* to project an erudite tone while *Voyage* deploys a casual one. In another departure from Grose, Mahomet substitutes "conceived" for "imagined[.]" This alteration draws attention to the role of culture in shaping Europeans' erroneous ideas about Islam. Literature, Mahomet argues, may only combat Britons' misapprehensions of Islam by first identifying the underlying causes of those misapprehensions.

Mahomet extends his portrayal of religious life in India by describing his visit to a *faquir*, or Muslim hermit. In relating this episode, Mahomet demonstrates that certain aspects of Indian society appear novel to natives just as they do to European observers.

The narrated self visits the *faquir* because this figure, "as an object of curiosity, is much frequented by travelers" (49). With this assertion, Mahomet positions himself as a curious outsider rather than an acculturated interpreter of the *faquir*'s beliefs and practices. Describing the narrated self and his fellow officers as "observing every thing curious inside [the *faquir*'s] residence" allows the narrating voice to further emphasize the hermit's exceptionality (50). By thus construing himself and his British associates alike as tourists, Mahomet aligns his perspective with that of Europeans who lack the familiarity with Indian culture that he elsewhere exhibits. This self-depiction enables *Travels* to promote curiosity and a desire to learn as generative approaches to representing India's cultural and religious diversity even for native writers.

In another description of *faquirs*' general practices and beliefs, Mahomet emphasizes their unusualness while also praising their behavior on moral grounds. The narrating voice asserts that some *faquirs*, by contorting their bodies, "pretend to see what they call the sacred fire" (94). The words "pretend" and "what they call" project a dismissive attitude that does not characterize the previously discussed account of the individual *faquir*. However, the narrating voice proceeds to state that "[s]trange as this austerity may seem, if accompanied with purity of intention, it must be considered by the unprejudiced, as less offensive to the Deity, than the indulgence of the passions" (94). This assertion, because it immediately follows a seeming disparagement of *faquirs*' practices, depicts a reconsideration of these acts. Mahomet seeks to convince not only his imagined audience but also himself of the relative value of asceticism. Though he ultimately disbelieves that *faquirs* categorically exemplify "purity of intention," Mahomet nevertheless concludes that "unprejudiced" people must grant some respect to

their devotion. His portrayal of the rapid evolution of his own thoughts betrays his wish to present even aspects of Indian society that he finds off-putting in a positive light.

As a complement to this representation of the extremity of *faquirs*' practices, Mahomet depicts the behaviors of devout Hindus as being both atypical and worthy of appreciation. Brahmins' conduct appears strange to Mahomet because they are "so exceedingly scrupulous" in their efforts to avoid destroying any living being (82). This comment projects Mahomet's sense, whether derived from British or Muslim acculturation, of Brahmins' peculiarity and consequently of British readers' potential skepticism toward them. To counter this wariness, Mahomet makes a direct appeal to this audience. He states, "However strange their [Hindus'] doctrine may appear to Europeans, yet they are much to be commended for the exercise of moral virtues that they inculcate, namely, temperance, justice, and humanity" (83). This assertion addresses only the potential prejudices of Europeans. However, the earlier description reveals that Mahomet also views Brahmins as an atypical group. As in his account of the visit to the *faquir*, Mahomet again occupies the position of outsider–here to Hindu culture–and thereby aligns his perspective with that of Europeans. This performance of affinity allows Mahomet to display tolerance toward Hindu practices in the hopes that he may lead his audience to do the same.

Travels connects itself not only to European travel literature but also to slave narratives by emphasizing, like those works, the full humanity of a subaltern individual. The colonial system, however, grants Mahomet more privilege than it does formerly enslaved authors. Scholars have argued that Mahomet's text and life-writing by formerly enslaved writers offer a global counter-discourse to works that justify imperialism and

slavery on the grounds of European superiority. Despite this similarity, texts such as Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavas Vassa, the African* (1789), unlike *Travels*, often champion the anti-colonial cause of abolition. Affiliation with the Company precludes Mahomet from taking a similarly reformatory stance. Furthermore, because Mahomet and formerly enslaved authors face different pressures in asserting their intelligence, the words "written by himself"–as Innes argues–acquire distinct meanings by appearing on the frontispiece of both *Travels* and Equiano's *Narrative*. She claims, "Arguably this assertion by Dean Mahomed is more concerned with authenticity […] than with asserting the author's humanity through the ability to write" ("Eighteenth-Century Men of Letters" 26). This statement demonstrates that Mahomet challenges a lower level of constraint than do formerly enslaved authors.

Travels responds not only to the British literary marketplace but also, as Teltscher, Chambers, and Fisher argue, to eighteenth-century Muslim travel narratives. By engaging with both Eastern and Western literary traditions, Mahomet generates connections among them.[16] Doing so enables him to form a productive and creative relationship to Western culture. Regarding his ties to Muslim narratives, critics most often examine *Travels* alongside Lucknow-born Company official Mirza Abu Taleb Khan's *The Travels of Mirza Abu Taleb Khan*, which was published in Britain in 1810. Like the other Indian, Persian, and Arab authors that Chambers and Fisher examine, but unlike Mahomet, Abu Taleb initially composed neither for a Western audience nor in English. This circumstance, Chambers argues, often leads authors to convey "anxieties about eating halal food, wearing modest clothing, and performing appropriate ablutions and rituals" (25). Though it does not share these concerns, *Travels* joins other eighteenth-

century Muslim accounts in evincing mutual curiosity among natives of the East and West through the voice of the former (Chambers 23). Mahomet differentiates his perspective by orienting his work from its inception toward a British audience.

Owing to his background and education, Mahomet's narrative appears distinctive within the context not only of the eighteenth-century British literary marketplace but also of South Asian travel accounts. He contributes to the field of South Asian travel writing by expanding that tradition beyond the Indo-Persian context. In *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries*, *1400-1800* (2007), Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam note that those four centuries produced little travel writing in South Asia by authors who did not come from elite Indo-Persian backgrounds (11). Mahomet, despite his connections to the Mughal empire, likely did not acquire the Persianate education that would allow him to create such an account. Regarding South Asian literatures in languages other than Persian, Alam and Subrahmanyam assert that writings in Sanskrit, Tamil, Pali, and the Prakrits only engage with the motif of travel by representing "the highly stylized imaginary voyage" (11). This type of story characteristically involves the description of a journey "by a flying messenger, often a bird or a cloud, traversing the distance between two separated lovers" (11). Conversely, Mahomet represents his lived experiences of traversing India. His innovation consists of using English to represent a non-elite perspective on the contact zone.

Although he received less schooling than did Indian authors who wrote in the Persianate tradition, Mahomet's study of English draws attention within Abu Taleb's description of their meeting. This circumstance demonstrates that Mahomet garnered curiosity and possibly admiration from other Indians whose education and social status

exceeded his own. Abu Taleb conforms to what Alam and Subrahmanyam describe as the contemporary conventions of South Asian travel narratives because he was of Persian descent, and he studied in Lucknow under Iranian scholars. This education enabled him not only to speak Persian (as Mahomet might have) but also to compose sophisticated prose as well as verse in that language. Abu Taleb also absorbed English through his travels in Britain. Although his Persianate learning surpassed Mahomet's, Abu Taleb nevertheless describes Mahomet as "remarkable" because he has acculturated to British society in part by studying English at a local school in Cork (98). The ability to write in English, as Tabish Kahir notes in his discussion of Abu Taleb's narrative, indicates Mahomet's autonomy in comparison to other Indians who came to Britain as servants. For this reason, Abu Taleb appreciates Mahomet as a novel type of Indian in British society.

Mahomet's use of the form of travel literature not only distinguishes him from other Indians in Britain but also establishes his authorial power. To foreground his writerly agency, Mahomet displays the creativity that he acquires by experiencing transculturation. This process leads Mahomet to follow conventions of European travel writing while nevertheless deploying these conventions to accentuate the novelty of his own perspective through strategic essentialism. In his most conflictual expression of his views, Mahomet transforms Grose's account of India into a more positive representation. Comparably, his work's ties to narratives by other Muslim writers as well as formerly enslaved authors accentuate the complexity of his relationship to the European discourse of travel. Mahomet's affiliation with British society drives him to imitate the writing of authors such as Grose. However, he cultivates a productive relationship to the form of

travel literature by combatting reductive and inaccurate notions about India. The authority that Mahomet projects as a writer contrasts with the limitations that he represents as defining his experience as a colonial subject.

II

While Mahomet displays creative agency through engaging with the discourse of travel, he also depicts the pressures that drive him to enlist. These pressures bind Mahomet to the Company while nevertheless allowing him to project a transcultural subjectivity by occasionally taking a critical stance toward colonialism. His strategically essentialized, soldierly perspective expresses loyalty to the Company without endorsing all of their activities including their treatment of civilians. Regarding the forces that restrict Mahomet, they include the army's dominance in Bihar and his familial tradition of military service. These circumstances leave Mahomet with little choice but to become a soldier. His mother, however, expresses concern about the possibility of his leaving her and becoming attached to Europeans. Mahomet counters this anxiety by insisting that he joins the army of his own volition. Nevertheless, he credits European soldiers with facilitating his acculturation to the military through a disciplinary process. This process instills in Mahomet primarily though not exclusively positive views on colonial endeavors including knowledge production. In addition to the army, his family determines his subject position. He exercises some control over this dual conditioning by portraying his relationship to the contact zone as a complex though nevertheless generative one.

Mahomet explains the limitations on his agency in scenes that depict the colonial constraints on his life. For example, he dramatizes a confrontation between Godfrey Evan

Baker and his mother as the catalyst for his definitive embrace of the military and rejection of his mother's home.[17] This description has led scholars to emphasize "the sense of […] agency" that Mahomet displays (Teltscher, "The Shampooing Surgeon and the Persian Prince" 413).[18] With this reading, Teltscher fails to account for the circumscribed nature of the autobiographical subject's autonomy. Mahomet recognizes the army's power over colonial subjects (perhaps including himself) by stating that his mother entreated Baker "in the language of supplication, that I might be given up to her" (42). In response, Baker, according to Mahomet, asserted "that it was so remote from his intentions to keep me from her, he was perfectly reconciled to part with me, were it my inclination" (42). This statement may demonstrate not Baker's willingness to allow Mahomet to leave but instead his confidence that he exercises greater influence over Mahomet than does Mahomet's mother. In this scene, Mahomet represents both himself and his mother as having limited power in relation to a European colonial official.

Mahomet invokes in more detail the various pressures that constrain him through representing the thinking that drives him to join the Army. In depicting the forces that shape his decision, he emphasizes not his individual will but instead his perceived debts to others. He writes, "[M]y deep sense of gratitude to a sincere friend [Baker] conquered my duty to an affectionate parent, and made me determine in favour of the former" (42). While projecting a triumphant tone, the words "conquered" and "determined" also reveal that the narrated self's desires stem from competing affective ties. These ties convey gendered expectations as Mahomet associates the domestic realm with his mother and the military environment with men including his father, his brother, and Baker. Military life exerts a greater appeal because it presents models of masculinity that, although they

derive from a European army, nevertheless solidify the autobiographical subject's alignment with a familial tradition of soldiering.

In addition to the draw of the Army, the traumatic effects of Mahomet's separation from his mother constitute a defining feature of his narrative. He centers this event within his story by portraying it using the discourse of sensibility. Mahomet states,

> I would not go, I told her–I would stay in the camp; her disappointment smote my soul–she stood silent–yet I could perceive some tears succeed each other, stealing down her cheeks–my heart was wrung–at length, seeing my resolution fixed as fate, she dragged herself away, and returned home in a state of mind beyond my power to describe. (42)

In this passage, Mahomet emphasizes his and his mother's individual affective responses by setting apart descriptions thereof using dashes (tears "[steal] down her cheeks" while "–[his] heart was wrung"). This stylistic choice foregrounds each character's pain while also providing a visual representation of their separation. Moreover, the abundance of dashes throughout this scene portrays their separation as destabilizing both Mahomet and his mother. This response adds force to the narrating voice's assertion that the narrated self's intention to join the Army was "fixed as fate[.]" The mutual distress that Mahomet and his mother experience fails to impede his pursuit of a military career and instead affirms the strength of his "resolution" to do so. By portraying this narrative trajectory, Mahomet represents his mother's opposition to his enlistment as a formative adversity.

The example of his father, rather than contact with British soldiers, kindles Mahomet's interest in pursuing a military career. His background thus demonstrates that, for Indians in mid-eighteenth-century Patna, participation in a European army could both

honor an Indian familial legacy and offer a pattern of masculine accomplishment. Additionally, the army's performance of its authority increases Mahomet's desire to join that institution. To memorialize his father's valor during the battle in which he died, Mahomet asserts that his parent "gave the enemy some striking proofs of the courage of their adversary" (35).[19] This description commends the image of Indian masculinity that spurs Mahomet to enlist. Therefore, the sight of British officers parading near his mother's home does not engender but instead "excite[s] the ambition that [he] already had of entering on a military life" (37). This description, while it implicitly portrays Mahomet's father as his initial inspiration for joining the army, also foregrounds the coercion that that organization enacts through its public displays.

Mahomet portrays both himself and his father as men of feeling. Through this depiction, he asserts that his parent's example comprises not only martial bravery but also sensibility. Mahomet states of his father's death, "I recollect well no incident of my life ever made such a deep impression on my mind. Nothing could wear from my memory the remembrance of his tender regard" (36). This statement foregrounds the role of Mahomet's father as a nurturing parent. Following this paternal example, Mahomet develops a strong capacity for affect. The experience of an early parental loss distresses him severely "though children are seldom possessed of much sensibility or reflection at such immature years" (36). In describing this exceptionally powerful affective response, he amplifies the notions of masculinity that his familial context has taught him. Mahomet, like his father, does not view courage and tenderness as conflicting forces. For this reason, the narrated self cultivates the sensibility that he displays in scenes such as his separation from his mother. Portraying this event and the loss of his father alike as

formative traumas enables Mahomet to emphasize the influence of his family on his development of sensibility.

As a result of this familial conditioning, Mahomet bonds with a European parental figure who projects sensibility. This process of developing an affective bond within the army solidifies his connection to that institution. Mahomet asserts, "I never found myself so happy as with Mr. Baker: insensible of the authority of a superior, I experience [sic] the indulgence of a friend; and the want of a tender parent was entirely forgotten in the humanity and affection of a benevolent stranger" (41). This statement reveals that, upon enlisting, Mahomet not only maintains familial ties but also develops a new one to a European. By cultivating this relationship, the narrated self strengthens his affinity for the army and thereby potentially mitigates his desire for parental care. Baker, though initially a "stranger[,]" acts as an effective substitute for Mahomet's mother and father. Furthermore, the European's military role as well as his sensibility align him particularly with Mahomet's father. This resemblance instigates their pseudo-familial bond. Therefore, the connection between Baker and Mahomet not only orchestrates the latter's acculturation to British military life but it also meets the expectations of familial relations that he absorbs especially from his father.

Beyond emulating his father's conduct, Mahomet learns from his brother that connections to Europeans and a tradition of familial service both strengthen a sepoy's ties to the army. Mahomet's brother, after the death of his and Mahomet's father, "made an application to Capt. Adams who, in gratitude to the memory of my father, whose services he failed not to represent to the Governor [Harry Verelst,] speedily promoted him to his post" (36). By thus succeeding his father, Mahomet's brother establishes distinction by–

rather than mere participation in–the army as a familial tradition. *Travels* presents Mahomet's brother's promotion as a matter that reflects on and therefore primarily concerns his family rather than his individual self. Placing additional emphasis on Anglo-Indian relations within the army, the narrating voice highlights the role of European figures (Adams and Verelst) in facilitating Mahomet's brother's promotion. This situation demonstrates that the combination of an Indian familial tradition of military service and the endorsement of Europeans may entrench a sepoy within the army through professional advancement.

Enlisting, as Mahomet's brother's actions demonstrate, does not sever familial obligations. Therefore, a sepoy must obey familial as well as military commands. *Travels* asserts that, in the wake of their father's death, Mahomet's brother did not sufficiently attend to Mahomet and their mother (36). Nevertheless, Mahomet's brother heeds his mother's demand that he attempt to reclaim Mahomet from the Army camp. *Travels* states, "My poor mother under all the affliction of parental anxiety […] sent my brother as an advocate to Baker, to whom he offered four hundred rupees, conceiving it would be a means of inducing him to send me back" (42). This description grants no sense of agency to Mahomet's brother. Instead, *Travels* imagines Mahomet's mother's interiority as well as the effect that she aims to have on Baker. Her desires, therefore, rather than his own govern Mahomet's brother's conduct. This episode represents familial duties as a pressure that exerts a strong influence over sepoys' lives.

Following his brother's example, Mahomet seeks to affiliate himself with the army by pursuing a connection to a European. The narrating voice describes a tennis party at which "among the other gentlemen, I one day, discovered Mr. Baker, and often

passed by him, in order to attract his attention; he, at last, took particular notice of me, observing that I surveyed him with a kind of secret satisfaction" (38). The power of Mahomet's gaze, according to this account, persuades Baker to approach him. Nevertheless, Mahomet only achieves his desire by acting in what he presents as a somewhat ridiculous manner. He wins Baker's attention not because he exudes charm but instead because he "often passed by" him. With this description, Mahomet uses self-deprecating humor to render anew the lesson (which his brother's experience of gaining a promotion initially conveys to him) that an Indian soldier of the Company can best succeed by cultivating positive relations with individual Britons.

In addition to interpersonal ties, the army's self-presentation as an institution manipulates sepoys. Mahomet portrays this system of control by insisting that he chooses military life while also revealing the limitations that drive him to enter that career. He projects agency, as Teltscher and Innes highlight, by representing enlistment as an internally motivated break from his familial context. Nevertheless, by noting the proximity of his family's home to the army's quarters, he illustrates the extent to which his background predetermines his actions. The narrating voice states, "My mother's house was not far from the Raja's palace; and the number of Officers passing by our door in their way thither, attracted my notice" (37). This statement emphasizes that the army seeks to entice Indians to enlist by parading near their homes. Intrigued by this display, the narrated self one day "seiz[es] the happy opportunity" to follow the officers to the palace (37). The verb "seize" foregrounds Mahomet's capacity to act in what he views as his own interest. However, his description of Patna under British occupation demonstrates that the army's actions to a large extent determine his own.

The process of watching drills disciplines Mahomet by increasing his affection for the army. He writes, "Mr. Baker and his brother Officers, endeavoured to find amusement for me. I was taken out, every morning, to see the different military evolutions of the men in the field, and on such occasions, I was clad in suitable regimentals" (42). This description positions the officers as the directors of the narrated self's conduct. While they actively "endeavoured" to entertain him, he passively "was taken out" in order to observe rather than join in the exercises. Mahomet's assertion that he "was clad […] in suitable regimentals" further emphasizes his obedience in this situation. Furthermore, dressing the narrated self in military clothing allows the officers to grant him a role in the drills beyond mere spectatorship. *Travels* thus portrays other officers as joining Baker in taking a careful, gradual approach to orchestrating Mahomet's acculturation to military life. This approach strengthens Mahomet's attachment to the Company.

Through learning drills himself, Mahomet acculturates to the army more fully and thus attains an even closer tie to that institution. He writes, "I felt great satisfaction in having procured the esteem of my friend [Baker], and the other Officers, and acquired the military exercise, to which I was very attentive" (44). The use of active voice in this statement depicts Mahomet as the agent of his own professional progress. Through this self-representation, the author construes the officers' approval not as a gift that they deign to offer but instead as a prize that he "procured" through his own actions. Mahomet further emphasizes his agency by describing himself as learning drills by practicing "attentive[ness]." With this language, he implicitly references the teaching figure (or figures) who taught him the exercises that he perfected. The invocation of such a figure,

along with the mention of the officers' approval, announces the disciplinary gaze that bolsters Mahomet's affiliation with the Company even as he becomes a more active participant in his training.

Another military spectacle–a review of Mahomet's regiment by Governor Cartier–reveals that the sepoy's attachment to the Army engenders in him a sense of professional identity and pride. Mahomet notes, "The entire night was spent in preparation for [the soldiers'] appearance next day" (56). The use of passive voice in this statement construes "preparation" as something that happens to the soldiers so that their "appearance" may impress the British officers and administrators who constitute their audience. Further emphasizing the performative nature of the review, Mahomet describes the spectators watching this event. He writes that, during the demonstration, "not a man […] but displayed uncommon abilities; and was rewarded for his exertions, by the unanimous consent of the Officers, with an extra allowance of pay and refreshment" (Mahomet 56). This statement, which offers the assessments of Mahomet, the officers, and ostensibly Cartier, presents financial success in the military as the result of self-display. While this process relegates Mahomet and his fellow soldiers to a position of inferior power, they nevertheless exercise limited agency by claiming the expertise to make their own evaluations of their performance.

A commemoration of the review in verse grants this event both increased prominence and a broader audience within *Travels*.[20] The spectators that the narrative references consist of Indians as well as Britons. Mahomet states:

> The natives, who flocked from all quarters, for many miles around, were delighted and astonished at the sight–

> Of martial men in glitt'ring arms display'd,
>
> And all the shining pomp of war array'd;
>
> Determin'd soldiers and, and a gallant host,
>
> As e'er Britannia in her pride cou'd boast (56)

The words "glitt'ring," "display'd," "shining pomp," and "array'd" all highlight the soldiers' spectacular appearance. By mentioning "a gallant host" (the officers) and "Britannia," the narrating voice further emphasizes the soldiers' consciousness of their relationship to their European audience. Additionally, utilizing iambic pentameter aligns Mahomet with British literary traditions. The presence of Indian "natives," however, rather than of British officers or administrators inspires the author to craft a poem. Indian observers draw Mahomet's attention because of their potential to follow his example and join the ranks of the sepoys. Given this circumstance, the soldiers seek validation of their performance from Indian as well as European spectators.

Witnessing and accepting the army's use of torture uncovers to Mahomet that institution's power to direct the behavior even of those who do not enlist. *Travels* positions the narrated subject and his regiment as observers of a conflict by stating that they "perceived" the efforts of a Company official, Captain Brooke, to subdue the Pahareas, a group of mountain-dwelling Indians. The narrating voice states, "numbers [of Pahareas] happily! were taken […] and justly received exemplary punishment" (54). The most "daring and flagitious" of these prisoners were "suspended on a kind of gibbets, ignominiously exposed along the mountain's conspicuous brow" (Mahomet 54). The proliferation of descriptors in this passage–"happily," "justly," "daring and flagitious," as well as "ignominiously exposed"–engenders a stark contrast between the evil of the

Pahareas and the righteous bravery of the Company. Nevertheless, the passage conveys a note of ambivalence regarding the army's use of torture. The word "ignominiously" refers to the violent spectacle as a whole and thereby possibly condemns the Company and the Pahareas alike.

An extended account of the army's battle against the Pahareas further emphasizes the violence that produces in Mahomet an occasionally conflictual relationship to his role as a soldier. Pahareas "inhumanely butchered seven or eight" military personnel, and, in response, Company soldiers pursued, attacked, and imprisoned these "licentious savages" (55). To foreground the Pahareas' cruelty, Mahomet offers an in-depth description of their mistreatment of the army's animals. The narrating voice states that elephants, camels, horses, and bulls "were left behind in the hurry of the sanguinary and rapacious enemy's flight, cruelly mangled and weltering in their blood: our very horses and bullocks had iron spikes driven up their hoofs" (55). This passage depicts the toll that the battle inflicts on its animal rather than human participants. Nevertheless, the gory description conveys the horrors that shape Mahomet's military career. He insists that the Pahareas exemplify brutality in an effort to obscure the trauma that military campaigns may inflict on all sides.

Mahomet associates himself with not only martial activity but also the field of colonial knowledge production. By so doing, he demonstrates that Indians and Britons alike may support Company rule while also appreciating writings from India that predate this period. As one example of such a text, he praises the translation by Asiatic Society member Francis Gladwin of the *Ain-i-Akbari* (1783-1786). This work, a bureaucratic account of Akbar's reign originally published in 1684, had particular significance to

Hastings's government because "[t]hey needed to inherit the knowledge, and particularly the political knowledge of former rulers" (C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information* 52).[21] Therefore, the colonial project received support even from works such as Gladwin's that emerged from the independent Asiatic Society. Producing such works nevertheless–in the view of scholars including Gladwin and the Society's founder, William Jones–entailed deep engagement with and respect for the history and intellectual traditions of India. *Travels* endorses this conception of the Society's work by asserting that the new version of the *Ain-i-Akbari* "has fully evinced" the "strong natural genius" of Hindus as well as their scientific and literary achievements (52). By lauding Gladwin's translation, Mahomet asserts that European-authored bureaucratic scholarship may credibly represent Indian history.

In addition to referencing the Asiatic Society's work, Mahomet follows William Jones in comparing Hindu and classical European cultures. This comparison presents radical possibilities because emphasizing the transmission of knowledge from East to West challenges imperialist notions of the latter's superiority. Nevertheless, Jones and Mahomet each center Western culture by championing Hinduism on the grounds that it influenced ancient Greece. Mahomet asserts that, in Gladwin's translation of the *Ain-i-Akbari*, "We may trace the origin of most of the sciences, in their [Hindus'] ancient manuscripts. Even before the age of Pythagoras, the Greeks traveled to India for instruction" (83). This statement broadcasts that Europeans have already encountered Hindu learning through studying ancient Greece. Comparably, Jones's 1784 speech titled "On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India" identifies similarities between Hindu and Greek deities. Both Mahomet and Jones, therefore, strive to render Hinduism accessible

to European readers by portraying it using a Western framework. However, they perform this gesture from different subject positions. While Jones aims to transmit his knowledge to his fellow Europeans, Mahomet champions Orientalist studies because he experiences pressure to represent the value of his country to the West.

Ideological constraints also govern Mahomet's portrayal of Anglo-Indian politics. Specifically, Mahomet takes care to defend his regiment without disparaging Warren Hastings in portraying the governor-general's controversial role in the 1781 defeat of Raja Chayt Singh. The accusation that Hastings had authorized soldiers to take Chayt Singh's property, as Narain notes, led the British public to view him as corrupt and spurred government and Company officials to impeach him from 1788-1795 (708). Amidst these political circumstances, Mahomet writes that "A principal part of the property taken at Bidgegur, became a prize to the captors, as reward for their services. A letter written by the Governor [Hastings] to Major Popham, during the siege, was understood as giving a sanction to such a distribution of the spoil" (120). This retrospective account of a historical event acquired newfound significance at the time of *Travels*' publication as a result of Hastings's trial. Rather than join the current debate with either praise or condemnation of Hastings, Mahomet instead justifies his particular regiment's behavior and thereby projects loyalty to them above all else.

Yielding space to substantial quotations from Chayt Singh's letters enables Mahomet to balance allegiance to the British regime with a degree of sympathy for the vanquished Indian ruler. For this reason, scholars including Roberts and Narain view this episode as evidence of ambivalence on Mahomet's part toward his role in the colonial process. His military background, however, restricts his expression of ambivalence. He

therefore uses not his own words but instead those of Chayt Singh. In one letter to Hastings, the Raja offers the following self-exculpation: "To men of condition, who have travelled here, I have sent my officers to enquire their wants, and supplied them with provisions and carriages at my own expence [sic]" (Mahomet 138). This statement insists that the Raja's exceptional hospitality toward the British should compel the Company to allow him to retain his power. By presenting this argument without comment, *Travels* avoids criticizing Hastings directly while nevertheless tacitly endorsing Chayt Singh's claim that he has experienced injustice.

Mahomet continues to demonstrate professional loyalty by relating the defeat of Chayt Singh in fatalistic language that obscures the Company's role in that event. After quoting the Raja's positive depiction of his own rule, *Travels* states, "Such was the happy situation of the Prince, and the philanthropy of the man, who shortly after became the sport of fortune, amidst the vicissitudes of life, and the trials of adversity" (121). The proliferation here of resigned phrases–"the sport of fortune," "the vicissitudes of life, and the trials of adversity"–characterizes Chayt Singh as a helpless victim of forces more powerful than he. Despite creating this sympathetic portrait, Mahomet avoids criticizing the Company by declining to name the agent that causes the Raja's hardships. This rhetorical strategy does not project a naïve endorsement of the actions of Hastings's government. Instead, obscuring the Company's role in Chayt Singh's suffering enables Mahomet to soften the explicit accusations of misconduct that the Raja's letters present without contradicting those claims.

Acculturation to the army produces in Mahomet an ambivalent and sometimes even critical attitude toward the Company and Mughal rulers alike. The narrating voice

notes that, during a famine in Bankeepore, "Nabobs and other Europeans, distributed as much rice and other food as they could spare" (41). This statement attributes to both Mughal and Company officials a desire to help the Indian populace. Nevertheless, such measures proved ineffective, and many died. Regarding the deceased, Mahomet states that "Little did the treasures of their country avail them on this occasion: a small portion of rice, timely administered, to their wants, would have been of more real importance than their mines of gold and diamonds" (41). The possessive pronouns in this statement imply that both India and its natural resources (ranging from food to jewels) belong to those who died. Through this rhetorical choice, Mahomet criticizes the prevailing model of landownership because it renders those with wells less vulnerable to the "want of rain" and resulting food shortages (41). This notion expresses a more critical attitude toward colonialism than scholars generally identify in *Travels*.[22]

Familial, military, and ideological pressures shape the subjectivity that *Travels* presents. However, Mahomet does not unthinkingly endorse colonialism but instead presents his relationship to that system in a manner that evinces his transculturation. Through writing, he exercises agency by displaying his ability to both support and (less overtly) criticize the Company's activities. His thinking about the politics of his day reflects his acculturation to army life as well as his familial legacy of military service. For this reason, *Travels* never envisions communal resistance to Company governance. Mahomet's role as a sepoy whose ties to the army allow him to rise within that institution lead him to view himself as benefitting, if only to a limited extent, from colonial rule. This circumstance fails to deter him from illustrating the power that the Company holds over Indian soldiers and civilians including himself. By representing the forces that

restrict him, Mahomet accentuates the creative authority that he attains through life-writing. Examining his position as a colonial subject enables him to portray the constraints that he experiences as obstacles that he may rhetorically manage. Mahomet's confidence in his authorial power arguably reflects the colonial dynamics of his era.

III

Travels documents a historical moment in which the relationship between sepoys and the Company was less rigid and antagonistic than it would later become toward the middle of the nineteenth century. This circumstance, in Mahomet's depiction, allows him to encounter, both within and beyond the military context, a variety of other Indians including sepoys, villagers, and his family. In representing these interactions, Mahomet exercises a limited form of self-determination. He manages the pressures that circumscribe his life and writing by explaining to his British audience religious, familial, moral, and social dynamics among different groups of Indians. Concerning relations among Company soldiers (whether Indian or British) and Indian civilians, Alavi asserts that, between 1770 and 1830 (the period that her book chronicles), "the boundary between army and society was much more blurred than it came to be" later (1). This fluidity, in Mahomet's account, grants him the autonomy to stray a little beyond the Company's influence by engaging with other Indians. In representing these encounters, Mahomet exceeds the bounds of strategic essentialism and seeks to reconcile his ties to Britishness and Indianness. He channels these ties through life-writing into a transculturally coherent identity.

Mahomet's accounts of both himself and sepoys convey that army training shapes his political allegiances but does not confine them to the side of the British. The glossary

of Persian and Hindustani words that *Travels* provides defines sepoys as "Indian foot soldiers, hired and disciplined by Europeans" (78). This definition posits that the Company entirely dictates the process by which Indian soldiers form their professional identities. However, an earlier description of Mahomet portrays a less constrained relationship between sepoy and army. The frontispiece of *Travels* distinguishes between affiliation and identification by describing Mahomet as "A Native of Patna in Bengal" who worked "in the Service of the Honourable The East India Company" (31). Despite furthering the Company's political aims by acting "in [its] Service[,]" Mahomet aligns himself firstly and more fundamentally with a specific part of India.[23] This self-positioning, as critics including Roberts and Narain note, broadcasts that Mahomet does not unquestioningly adopt the Company's perspective on all martial and political matters.[24] Through a process of performative acculturation, he develops professional and affective ties that shape his perspective on the contact zone without destroying either his Indian connections or his critical faculties.

Together, adaptation to British norms and the maintenance of familial ties constitute the identity that Mahomet develops within the military context. Contrary to his mother's fears, his life in the army does not engender a definitive rejection of his background. She acknowledges not only the personal but also the greater cultural stakes of his association with the Company by exhibiting trepidation about "resigning her child to the care of a European" (42). Doing so, she fears, will irrevocably distance Mahomet from his family and their cultural traditions. However, circumstances prove less repressive than either parent or child anticipates. Mahomet relates that, after enlisting, "I called now and then to see my mother who, at last, became reconciled to my absence; and

received some visits from my brother while I was in camp" (44). Joining a European army thus allows Mahomet not only to continue a familial tradition of soldiering but also to preserve both filial and fraternal bonds. By portraying this situation, *Travels* argues that acculturation to British norms and the conscientious nurturing of familial ties together constitute the narrated self's identity.

Beyond the familial context, emphasizing Indian soldiers' freedom to interact with civilians enables Mahomet to resist a one-dimensional image of Indian people's characters. He demonstrates that social dynamics in India may incite violence as well as justice and compassion. With two other sepoys, Mahomet went to a market near Denapur to refresh the regiment's food supply. One of the accompanying sepoys irritated a vendor by refusing to apologize for ruining the latter's bed of melons, "and discord expanding her gloomy wings, a battle ensued" (114). Villagers then stabbed the offending sepoy while Mahomet's second companion escaped. The narrated self, however, "fainted" while attempting to leave on foot (114). When this event occurred, "[a] few of the peasantry […] kindly ministered what relief was in their power" (114). This chaotic scene emphasizes the potential for diversity in Indian people's conduct. Mahomet appears helpless while one of his companions, despite belonging to his same profession, acts villainously. The peasants, though grouped as a class and therefore not individuated, exhibit compassion for the narrated self and the fruit seller while also murdering the sepoy who disrespects the vendor. This range of behavior offers a multi-faceted portrait of Indian society.

A different episode illuminates the pressures that compel Mahomet to depict groups of Indians in such clear moral terms even as he emphasizes the less restrictive

aspects of army life. When a group of villagers near Fulwherea kidnapped the narrated self but ultimately spared his life, Baker "admired such humanity in a savage breast" (47). This scene, like the one discussed above, emphasizes that Indian people have the capacity for both mercy and cruelty. However, Baker's moral judgment on the Fulwherea villagers contrasts with the resolution of the market incident. The kindness that the Denapore peasants exhibit by helping Mahomet after he faints fails to dispel his regiment's view that that group embodies "rage and resentment" (114). Concerning the Fulwherea villagers, Baker appreciates their ultimate display of mercy although he deems them "savage" for having kidnapped Mahomet. Witnessing Britons' varying levels of willingness to acknowledge variety and nuance in Indians' behavior drives Mahomet to highlight his countrymen's potential for virtue even in violent or otherwise chaotic circumstances.

In Mahomet's view, the Company successfully incorporates sepoys as a group into army culture by tolerating their expressions of distinct religious affiliation. This circumstance highlights the practical and interpersonal effects on Indian soldiers of the Company's eighteenth-century disinclination toward religious intervention. Despite this official attitude, sepoys, according to the narrating voice, only express their faiths outwardly to a limited extent. Mahomet remarks that these soldiers "make no other distinction in their exterior appearance, than that the Hindoos colour each side of the face and forehead with a kind of red paint, produced by the timber of the sandal tree" (74). This statement precedes a description of the uniform that all sepoys must wear. Therefore, Mahomet depicts the army as largely homogenizing its Indian soldiers without precluding them from displaying some markers of religious affiliation. *Travels* thus

foregrounds Indian soldiers' relationship to the Company rather than their interpersonal dynamics. This choice demonstrates that, within the military context, professional codes have more bearing on sepoys' lives than do their religious differences.

Incorporating both Hindus and Muslims into the army, according to Mahomet, reflects the Company's eighteenth-century vision of its governance. This vision entails fostering stability through practicing a degree of religious tolerance. By projecting this attitude, the army reflects Britons' and Indians' understanding that sepoys constitute a pivotal force although they occupy the lower end of the military's power structure. Recognizing this circumstance holds the potential to bridge religious divides between Hindus and Muslims. To champion sepoys' shared professional identity, Mahomet notes that they "serve as a strong reinforcement to a much less number of Europeans" (74). This statement acknowledges that the Company does not discriminate in their recruiting practices based on religious affiliation because they require a large number of soldiers in order to expand their domains and political authority. This circumstance produces among the sepoys, according to Mahomet, a degree of interfaith solidarity. Within the military context, Hindus and Muslims cultivate a greater sense of their common identity as Indians because this marginalized affiliation differentiates them from their European colleagues.

Mahomet's depiction of religious dynamics among sepoys reflects Company policies that engineered an even balance of Hindus and Muslims within the Bengal Army. During the time of Mahomet's service, as Fisher notes, "Muslims consistently composed nearly half of the higher Indian officer corps, about two-fifths of the lower Indian officers, and about one-third of the sepoys" (Mahomet 16). However, only one-quarter of

the Bengal presidency's general population identified as Muslim (Mahomet 16). Robert Clive, as British Governor of Bengal, and other Company officials orchestrated the overrepresentation of Muslims within the Bengal Army so as to avoid appearing to favor one religion over the other. To encourage stability, therefore, the Company manufactured a religious balance that did not exist in Indian society. Furthermore, the possibility of enlisting appealed to eighteenth-century Indian Muslims in particular because their opportunities narrowed as the Mughal Empire lost power. In representing these circumstances, Mahomet acknowledges the benefit that Hindu and Muslim soldiers together provide to the Company.

Beyond portraying familial, social, and professional relationships, Mahomet situates himself within Indian society by depicting his family's complex religious background. He describes himself as a "native" of India although this term, according to *Travels*' glossary, connotes a "Gentoo," or Hindu (77). For this reason, the author's profession of both a "native" and a Muslim background might appear antithetical. His family, however, "on the paternal side, probably was descended from Indian converts to Islam" (Dharwadker 111). By contrast, his maternal line may have had "strong links to the indigenous Brahminic-Hindu culture of the Ganges plain" (Fisher, *The First Indian Author in English* 115). Choosing not to detail these familial associations allows Mahomet to align himself more closely with Islam than with Hinduism. Nevertheless, his self-identification as a "native Indian," given his own definition of this term, demonstrates a sense of personal connection to Hindu culture. Invoking the multi-faceted religious affiliations that comprise his lineage enables Mahomet to resist a monolithic conception of Indian families.

He broadens his account of his family's religious life by establishing an authoritative yet distanced perspective on that background. He unfolds this perspective through portraying a relative's circumcision. By noting his attendance at this event, Mahomet continues to demonstrate that enlisting in a European army does not dissolve all connections to Indian family life. He initially highlights his presence at the ceremony by stating, "I met with a relation of mine, a Mahometan, who requested my presence at the circumcision of one of his children" (62). Nevertheless, the narrating voice proceeds to obscure the narrated self's participation. Mahomet diminishes his role by giving a general description of how circumcision characteristically happens before briefly returning to the specific event at hand. Even that final section, however, gives merely an overview of the audience's actions with descriptions such as "every individual in the numerous crowd, stood on one foot, and joined [the child's parents] in heartfelt petitions to heaven for his safety" (64). This description establishes Mahomet's direct, intimate knowledge of Muslim practices while ultimately aligning him with a distanced, potentially European perspective on these rites.

Providing an even more expansive view of his background, Mahomet describes his Mughal ties. He comes to understand these connections by traveling to Murshidabad in his capacity as a soldier. Therefore, his profession allows him to encounter the possibilities that his lineage once presented. After describing the opulent procession of Murshidabad's *nawab*, Mahomet asserts, "I waited for some time, to see him enter into the temple with all his retinue[.] The view of this grand procession, gave me infinite pleasure, and induced me to continue a little longer in Muxadabad [Murshidabad]" (62). This episode, according to Fisher, exemplifies the "nostalgia" that the shift from Mughal

to British rule evoked from families like Mahomet's ("Representations of India" 905). As previously discussed, Mahomet uses similarly affective language to convey his desire to enlist. That inclination and the description of the Murshidabad *nawab* together broadcast the appeal of the various possibilities that Mahomet's background contains. As *Travels* demonstrates, however, by the mid-eighteenth century, only the Company offers a viable option for employment given the waning state of Mughal power.

In the period of colonial history that Mahomet depicts, sepoys such as himself could exercise a limited degree of self-determination that eroded during the nineteenth century. Mahomet construes his ability to interact with other Indians both in- and out-side of the military context as a mark of his circumscribed autonomy. Crafting his narrative gives him additional agency by allowing him to broadcast his own understanding of Indian social, religious, and political dynamics. These dynamics transformed as a result of Company interference in the nineteenth century. In the 1830s, the Company enacted reforms that expanded their authority over aspects of sepoys' lives including the distribution of their inheritances (Alavi 9). Ultimately, these reforms led to the rebellion of 1857 in part because they affected not only sepoys but also their families (Alavi 9). Mahomet portrays the Company as determining sepoys' lives by shaping them into a unified force. This process instills in Indian soldiers a newfound sense of professional identity while nevertheless allowing them to preserve their cultural affiliations through (albeit limited) religious expression. Additionally, Mahomet maintains his connections to Indian society by interacting with villagers and visiting his family. These circumstances demonstrate Mahomet's ability to reconcile his Indian background with his Company affiliation.

Conclusion

At the height of his professional life, Mahomet received the attention from others in print that he did not attract during his time in Cork. His fame in nineteenth-century Brighton as the self-appointed "Shampooing Surgeon" to Kings George IV and William IV inspired many to portray him with varying degrees of admiration in popular print sources. One such description, by George Augustus Sala, deemed Mahomet "a truly worthy Indian, whom I remember in my earliest childhood as a proprietor of some baths at Brighton" (201-2).[25] This account represents the shampooer as a well-regarded fixture of Brighton society. While Sala and others praised Mahomet's baths, some disparaged him as a charlatan. Charles Malloy Westamott, for example, labeled Mahomet "[a] dingy empiric [who] has invented a new system of humbug" (Blackmantle 1:345). Other criticisms of Mahomet express racialized antipathy toward him (Fisher, *The First Indian Author in English* 299). This circumstance illustrates the resistance that Mahomet encountered even as nineteenth-century Brighton embraced signifiers of Orientalism. By contrast with his entrepreneurial endeavors (the bathing establishment and, before that, an Indian restaurant), writing grants Mahomet the autonomy to present his own vision of his background and experiences.

Travels strategically essentializes Mahomet as a figure capable of providing an insider's perspective on India. This perspective, he believes, may strengthen Anglo-Indian ties. In pursuit of the same aim, Scottish novelist Elizabeth Hamilton (the subject of the following chapter) represents imagined rather than lived experience of India. She does so by satirizing Indian and British culture alike through the voices of fictional Indian characters. Hamilton and Mahomet each had connections to the Company. This

circumstance explains their generally–though not exclusively–supportive attitude toward colonialism. Additionally, both authors wrote in the 1790s. For this reason, their works allude to the impeachment trial of Warren Hastings. This event drives each author to address the charges of misrule against the governor-general. Mahomet avoids naming these allegations directly, but Hamilton offers an impassioned defense of and dedicates her novel to Hastings. Against the backdrop of Hastings's trial and the wrongdoing that it exposed, Hamilton and Mahomet each advocate that Britain and India should mutually influence each other. Their era's politics preclude them from ignoring the Company's misgovernment. Nevertheless, their individual attachments to that institution drive them to champion the possibilities of the colonial project.

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[1] Mona Narain writes, "Shampooing was inspired by an ancient Chinese practice. The descendant Indian practice of *Champi*, a vigorous head massage with oil, and Malish, a thorough body massage, were widely popular in India […]. Mahomet combined the idea of vapor baths with Champing and Malish, which he called shampooing, when he set up baths in Brighton" (714).

[2] For a more detailed discussion of these historical changes, see this chapter's third section.

[3] Fisher's "From India to England and Back: Early Indian Travel Narratives for Indian Readers" focuses on writers from India. In *Britain Through Muslim Eyes: Literary Representations, 1780-1988* (2015), Chambers discusses Indian, Persian, and Arab authors.

[4] Furthermore, Batten asserts that the shift toward greater self-revelation in late eighteenth-century British travel literature marks a break from Renaissance accounts that aimed primarily to relate factual descriptions of travelers' journeys (5-6). This claim reflects what Elizabeth A. Bohls identifies as the critical consensus that Romantic-era travel writing exemplifies a "turn from objective to subjective" (19). However, Nigel Leask provides a more nuanced account of this shift by cautioning against "hastily" splitting European travel narratives from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries into two categories, the "purely entertaining travel book and the instructive guide" (*Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840* 5-6). This warning captures the mixture of external and internal experience that *Travels* relates.

[5] See Innes, "Eighteenth-Century Men of Letters," and Teltscher, "The Shampooing Surgeon and the Persian Prince." Teltscher's article mainly examines the narratives of Mahomet and Mirza Abu Taleb Khan alongside each other. However, she also contrasts *Travels* with eighteenth-century slave narratives.

[6] See Chambers's *Britain Through Muslim Eyes: Literary Representations, 1780-1988*, Teltscher's "The Shampooing Surgeon and the Persian Prince: Two Indians in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain," and Fisher's "From India to England and Back: Early Indian Travel Narratives for Indian Readers." Although they do not reference Mahomet, I draw on *Indo-Persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400-1800* (2007), by Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, to inform my discussion of *Travels*' relationship to that genre.

[7] See Innes, "Eighteenth-Century Men of Letters," and Teltscher, "The Shampooing Surgeon and the Persian Prince."

[8] Comparable views appear not only in criticism on Mahomet in particular but also in surveys of travel literature. For example, John Paul Rubles highlights *Travels* as an example of "native voice" that shows that Mahomet "has made the European discourse his own" (255).

[9] Ref Narain here? (d129)

[10] Chambers and Fisher examines Persian and Arabic in addition to Indian authors.
[11] This claim appears in a letter responding to a 1939 article on Mahomet in *The Sussex County Magazine*.
[12] These citations appear on pages 103 and 101 of *Travels*. Fisher notes that *Travels*' references to Latin and English literatures in addition to the Bible recall earlier works such as Joseph Addison's 1705 *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy* (*The First Indian Author in English* 224).
[13] See, for example, Grose as well as Eliza Fay.
[14] This chapter's second section offers an in-depth discussion of Mahomet's acculturation to the army.
[15] See Fisher, *The First Indian Author in English*, for an account of the proliferation of exhibitions, theatrical performances, newspaper articles, and literary works depicting Indians and Muslims that residents of Cork could have encountered in the 1790s (210-12).
[16] The autobiographical mode characterizes some Hindu in addition to Muslim literature. As G.N. Devy details, Hindu religious leaders across India, beginning in the thirteenth century, aimed to bolster readers' faith by writing poetry which displays "the autobiographical tendency in ample degree" (64). These works do not constitute apt points of comparison for *Travels*, however, because their authors portray themselves not "as poets but rather as saints" (64). Mahomet's work, by comparison, does not exemplify religious didacticism.
[17] Baker, an Irishman, was Mahomet's friend and patron. Mahomet left India for Cork with Baker in 1784.
[18] Innes, in "Eighteenth-Century Men of Letters," comparably foregrounds Mahomet's projection of autonomy.
[19] Mahomet's father died in a battle waged by the Company in Bengal to collect taxes from the Rajas Budhmal and Kora Singh.
[20] For an additional instance of Mahomet's poetry in *Travels*, see page 123.
[21] From the perspective of highly educated Mughals who worked as interpreters for the Company, "serving Britons did not mean that they had relinquished their identification with their own class, or its long tradition of rule, administration, and cultural dominance in north India. Rather, there was a strong sense that they were obliged to educate the Britons who employed them about the higher Persianate culture and administrative forms that they themselves preserved and embodied" (C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information* 161).
[22] Teltscher's argument that, for Mahomet, "anglophilia is leavened with criticism, and the authority of colonial discourse is at times significantly challenged" exemplifies a critical consensus (422). While I agree that endorsement of British power and critique of misrepresentations of India coexist in *Travels*, I see the famine description as offering more than a corrective to a stereotype because it casts the Company's actions in an especially negative light.
[23] Fisher notes that, in part because the Company's armies were not national like the Royal Army, soldiers felt more loyalty to the leaders of their respective regiments than to England (*The First Indian Author in English* 149). Therefore, involvement in the Company's armies did not engender a strong sense of English identity.
[24] See Roberts, 131, and Narain, 699.
[25] Fisher ties together print culture and the late eighteenth-century rise of travel for leisure by noting that "[a] resort town such as Brighton spawned a genre of literature designed to amuse visitors by parodying its outstanding features, including Dean Mahomed" (*The First Indian Author in English*, 298).

"That Narrow and Contracted Path, Which They Have Allotted to the Female Mind": The Fictionalized, Satirical Self in Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah* (1796)

Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation* uses the form of epistolary fiction to convey satirically a variety of British and Indian perspectives on the burgeoning Anglo-Indian colonial relationship. In order to delineate her own perspective on this relationship, Hamilton begins her novel with a "Preliminary Dissertation" that relates her qualifications for depicting Indian culture and history. *Translation*'s main narrative unfolds as a conversation between three Hindu characters: a Rajah named Zāārmilla, Māāndāāra (a *zamindar*, or landowner), and a Brahmin named Sheermaal. When Zāārmilla gains an idealized vision of English culture after meeting an English soldier named Percy, Māāndāāra and Sheermaal unsuccessfully strive to quash his desire to visit that country. Describing their respective experiences in Britain and India enables Zāārmilla and Sheermaal to compare the situations of women in each country. Through portraying the Rajah's and the Brahmin's observations on multiple cultures, Hamilton situates her criticism of the oppression that British women face within a global context. She, unlike Dean Mahomet, does not explicitly own any part of *Translation* as a self-portrait. Nevertheless, her introductory disclosures and fictional characterizations alike announce the beliefs in openness to other cultures and women's education that comprise her autobiographical subject.

Susan B. Taylor and others argue that *Translation* takes a pro-imperial stance owing to its author's biographical connection (through her brother, Charles Hamilton) to the field of colonial knowledge production.[1] I, by contrast, view Elizabeth Hamilton as promoting Orientalist scholarship while expressing ambivalence toward other

manifestations of English imperialism through her fictional representation of the circumstances of her own life. Critics have long followed Hamilton's first biographer, Elizabeth Benger, in recognizing that the novel draws on its author's biography by presenting a "tribute" to her brother (1:125).[2] He not only resembles a character (Percy) in *Translation* but also wrote two works that provide much of the novel's information about India. References to his *Historical Relation of the Origin, Progress, and Final Dissolution of the Government of the Rohilla Afgans in the Northern Provinces of Hindostan* (1787) develop *Translation*'s setting in North India during the First Rohilla War.[3] Additionally, the novel praises his *The Hedaya: or Guide: A Commentary on the Mussulman Laws* (1791) for promoting respect of Muslim legal traditions under Company rule.[4] Through her engagement with these sources, Elizabeth Hamilton demonstrates that her background does not preclude her from questioning aspects of the imperial project.

Translation promotes not only certain dimensions of the Anglo-Indian relationship but also a Christian belief in women's autonomy. Hamilton's religiosity has led Claudia Johnson and Marilyn Butler to label her an anti-Jacobin.[5] Aligning herself with that conservative ideology, the novelist ridicules Mary Wollstonecraft through the character of Miss Ardent. This figure, however, also projects self-satire as Hamilton shares Wollstonecraft's commitment to women's education. Nevertheless, the novelist departs from Wollstonecraft by developing what Pamela Perkins and Shannon Russell describe as an "explicitly Christian justification for giving women a proper education and recognizing their contribution to society" (E. Hamilton 17). *Translation* develops this vision by comparing the situations of British and Indian women. Through these

comparisons, Hamilton criticizes both British and Indian society (Freeman 53). *Translation*'s peripheral references to Indian women largely depict them as the victims of Eastern men who celebrate women's subjugation.[6] As Nigel Leask recognizes, this portrayal replicates "conventional 'sexual orientalism'" that provided a cultural justification for eighteenth-century imperialism ("Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation*" 189-90). Hamilton participates in this discourse because, although she does not advocate for Indians' conversion, she cannot disentangle her protofeminism from her Christianity.

While embracing the possibilities that satirical fiction offers her to represent her political and social views imaginatively, Hamilton strives to manage these possibilities through representing aspects of her own life.[7] This strategy enables her to maintain perspectival authority over a fictional form that otherwise resists such control. Discussing the satirical dimensions of *Translation*, Srinivas Aravamudan asserts that they create "a double-sided critique of subject and object" (101). This multi-directionality allows Hamilton to present Britain and India alike as deeply flawed societies that could nevertheless benefit from each other's cultural ideals. Along with creative flexibility, satirical criticism produces opportunities for misinterpretation.[8] Hamilton resists this possibility by "[g]overning her novel in absentia through" its characters as well as an autobiographical portrait in the "Preliminary Dissertation" (Freeman 48).[9] Additional details of Hamilton's life, as Sonja Lawrenson asserts, help to explain her views on society, politics, imperialism, religion, and gender. The novelist's protofeminist vision of Christianity reflects the teachings of her Presbyterian upbringing.[10] Furthermore, her complex attitudes toward imperialism stem not only from her connection to Charles

Hamilton but also from their shared Ulster-Scots background.[11] Through referencing aspects of her biography, Hamilton exerts control over the unruly mode of satire.

How does Hamilton use life-writing to channel her social and political views into fiction? To examine this question, I will discuss her satirical narrative's representation of the convictions that her background engenders. In this chapter's first section, I assert that she references both the life and work of Charles Hamilton to define her own relationship to the field of colonial knowledge production. Further honing her perspective on Orientalist scholarship, she mocks William Jones's theory of common Indo-European ancestry. Her ridicule of this theory will constitute the focus of the second section. She counters the philologist's theories by depicting the prejudices that she believes an Indian visitor to Scotland would face given the alienation that she felt as an outsider living in that society. Drawing on a different aspect of her background, Hamilton champions her Presbyterian-derived belief–which the third and final section will explore–in women's autonomy. She expresses this belief by criticizing the restrictions on women in England, Scotland, and India. Additionally, she encourages British women to develop an interest in Orientalist scholarship. Through allusions to her biography, Hamilton uses satire to represent creatively the role of her experiences in shaping her intellectual and social views.

Hamilton distinguishes herself from the other authors I examine in this dissertation because she deploys fiction to convey her experiences and views. However, in examining her methods of self-representation alongside those of Mahomet, Fay, and Gilchrist, I demonstrate connections between imaginative and bureaucratic literatures. By so doing, I blur the ideological distinction that Aravamudan's makes between

Enlightenment Orientalism and other, officially sanctioned representations of the East. I agree with him that works including *Translation* approach colonial relationships with an aim toward cultivating mutual influence. With this argument, he emphasizes the inventiveness of Hamilton's satirical techniques. However, I also endorse Sara Suleri's and Mary Louise Pratt's recognition that the process of obscuring boundaries between colonizers and the colonized entails violence.[12] Hamilton betrays some awareness of this circumstance by encouraging British interest in Indian topics while also expressing uncertainty about the effects of Company rule on India's population. Furthermore, she emphasizes differences between India and Britain by resisting Jones's argument that their languages share common ancestry. Deploying satirical techniques thus enables Hamilton to convey her views forcefully, including her twinned desires to connect and draw distinctions between Indian and British societies.[13]

I

Hamilton's biography defines her perspective on India. For this reason, she represents her connection to Charles Hamilton by drawing extensively on his *Historical Relation* and *The Hedaya*.[14] Doing so gives her license to represent her own ideas about the Anglo-Indian relationship. By referencing Charles Hamilton's work throughout her footnotes and in the body of one letter from Zāārmilla, Elizabeth Hamilton establishes her credentials for engaging with the field of colonial knowledge production (164). Charles Hamilton's scholarship bolsters her depictions of the First Rohilla War and the history of Muslim rule in India. However, rather than mirror Charles Hamilton's views, Elizabeth Hamilton portrays her own subjectivity by dispersing her perspective through representations of herself and of fictional characters. Furthermore, she distinguishes her

novel from his scholarship by focusing on Hindu rather than Muslim culture. Beyond citing Charles Hamilton's studies, *Translation* also invokes him through a character–Percy–who shares his background as a Company soldier with an interest in Eastern languages. Elizabeth Hamilton and Charles Hamilton thus share the aim of championing the Company and Orientalist studies. Nevertheless, they use their distinct genres and intellectual proclivities to endorse while also questioning aspects of the colonial project.

While Hamilton generally portrays the Anglo-Indian relationship in a positive light, she also expresses uncertainty about British colonialism. This equivocation stems from her Ulster-Scots background. Hamilton writes, "In those provinces which, by a train of circumstances, totally foreign to our purposes to relate, have fallen under the dominion of Great Britain, it is to be hoped that the long-suffering Hindoos have experienced a happy change" (70). Portraying the Company's presidencies as "hav[ing] fallen under" British control conveys a haphazard image of the colonial process (70).[15] By invoking this notion, Hamilton foregrounds the ostensible advantages of British governance for the population of India and elides that governance's repressive, militaristic components. This obfuscation of violence, along with the hedge that "it is to be hoped" that Hindus benefit from Company rule, betrays the ambivalence that critics including Lawrenson have recognized in Hamilton's depiction of imperialism (70). In offering such a portrait, she demonstrates her awareness of the harm that colonialism inflicts on subject populations given her Ulster-Scots background. This biographical context leads her to develop a more explicit criticism of imperialism by disparaging English repression of distinctly Scottish culture.

Hamilton uses language that troubles her endorsement of colonialism not only when writing as herself but also when portraying a fictional Indian character. Because he supports Company rule, the Brahmin Sheermaal appreciates (to a limited extent) Zāārmilla's desire to better understand

> a people, who seem destined to make so conspicuous a figure in the annals of Asia. As a race of brave and daring mortals, chosen by Veeshnû to curb the fury of destructive tyranny, to blunt the sword of the destroyer, and break the galling fetters of the oppressed, I, and every Hindoo, must unite with him in pronouncing their eulogium[.] (108)

Without referencing any specific rulers, Sheermaal implicitly attributes "the fury of destructive tyranny" to the Mughals. This account bolsters Elizabeth Hamilton's condemnation of that empire in the "Preliminary Dissertation." Beyond amplifying this critique, Sheermaal underscores *Translation*'s alignment of British and Hindu interests by declaring that the former's efforts to displace the Mughal administration "must" garner admiration from "every Hindoo[.]" The notion of an Anglo-Hindu alliance receives further emphasis through Sheermaal's description of the British as a people "chosen by Veeshnû" to suppress Mughal tyranny. While this assertion presents British rule in India as an inevitability, the word "eulogium" connotes mortality and therefore offers a darker vision of Company power. Hamilton's position as an Ulster-Scots subject of English dominion enables her to recognize the destructive potential of empire despite her general support for the Company (130).

Charles Hamilton also betrays some ambivalence toward the colonial project by promoting Company rule using language that invokes political turmoil. He conveys this

attitude in a description of the Company's growing political power in India. After detailing previous Muslim leaders' ostensibly measured but nevertheless biased treatment of their Hindu subjects, he asserts that the English will act more justly than did their predecessors in government. He finishes his account of Muslim rule in India by announcing, "Such was the state of jurisprudence in the *BENGAL* provinces, when a wonderful revolution threw the government of them into the hands of the English" (*Hedaya* vi). With this statement, Charles Hamilton expresses confidence regarding the possibilities of Company authority. He champions this organization as one capable of instituting a more just legal system in India. However, his use of language that connotes upheaval ("revolution" and "threw") demonstrates that he feels some trepidation regarding the potential outcomes of Company rule. His role as a translator exposed him to the political and military realities of the colonial process. An awareness of these realities precludes him from ignoring the violence of Company rule even as he endorses that system.

Unlike Elizabeth Hamilton, Charles Hamilton references the immoral consequences of British colonialism in India. His introduction to *The Hedaya* states,

> To open and to clear the road to science; to provide for its reception in whatever form it may appear, in whatever language it may be conveyed: these are advantages which in part atone for the guilt of conquest, and in many cases compensate for the evils which the acquisition of dominion too often inflicts. (iii)

This passage depicts colonialism as harming Britons and Indians alike because that system inflicts "guilt" on the former and "evils" on the latter. Because this notion "invok[es] colonial trauma," Lawrenson asserts that Hamilton "undermine[s] his own

argument" that Company rule has increased knowledge and innovation in India (130). I agree with Lawrenson that Hamilton's equivocal language emphasizes the harm rather than the good that colonialism produces. He asserts that knowledge production mitigates the effects of colonial violence only "in part" or, somewhat more optimistically, "in many cases[.]" These qualifying phrases weaken his claim by circumscribing it. Nevertheless, Hamilton offers a more positive depiction of colonialism by asserting in the following paragraph that "the history of the world does not furnish an example of a nation" that has benefited from conquest as much as Great Britain has in India (iii). This statement reveals that Hamilton endorses the colonial project on the grounds that it benefits Britain. Therefore, he mentions the suffering of India's population only to proclaim its relative unimportance. This rhetorical gesture differentiates his ambivalence toward colonialism from Elizabeth Hamilton's despite their shared Ulster-Scots background.

Elizabeth Hamilton addresses while also distancing herself from the Company's damaged reputation in the 1790s by seeking to distinguish military activity from knowledge production. She asserts that some of the Asiatic Society's living members have returned to Britain

> not enriched by the plunder, and splendid by the beggary and massacre of their fellow creatures, as has been represented in the malevolent and illiberal harangues of indiscriminating obloquy; but possessed of those virtues which ennoble human nature, and that cultivate the mind and talents, which dignify the enjoyment of retirement. (67)

In this passage, Hamilton differentiates scholars from the stereotype (which she also disavows) of colonial officials who returned from India with immense fortunes. Such

figures garnered derision in late eighteenth-century culture because Warren Hastings's impeachment trial deepened associations of Company rule with brutality and corruption. These qualities, Hamilton asserts, do not afflict members of the Asiatic Society because their studies of law, religion, literature, and history in India endow them with "virtues which ennoble human nature." This statement foregrounds the scholars' private characters rather than their work's potential to benefit the public. As a result of this focus, Hamilton projects personal rather than professional admiration for the Society's members. She thus implicitly references her close tie to Charles Hamilton to foreground the influence of her affective life on her intellectual interests.

Charles Hamilton does not attempt to differentiate his scholarship from military activity but instead uses the *Historical Relation* to rehabilitate the image of Company personnel including himself. His subject position, in contrast with that of Elizabeth Hamilton, precludes him from viewing conquest and knowledge production as separable endeavors. Concerning accusations of plundering and brutality during the Battle of Kutra, Charles Hamilton writes, "God forbid that *British troops* should ever be employed in acts of such detestable atrocity!" (xiv; emphasis Hamilton's). This exclamation depicts character-based attacks on colonial soldiers as a collective and deeply personal insult to them all. Further down the same page, Hamilton admits that "To confute aspersions so cruelly injurious to" the Company "is, it must be owned, one, and that not the least, of the author's aims" (xiv). This statement reveals that he understands scholarship as a means of promoting his own best interests given his association with the Company.

Within her autobiographical account, Hamilton offers a potentially confusing description of her relationship to the work of translation that highlights her respect for

this field. She asserts that, had tragedy not curtailed her Orientalist studies, "a competent knowledge of the language of the originals would likewise have been acquired" (73). This statement appears somewhat perplexing as *Translation* rests on the fictional premise that it constitutes a translation of Zāārmilla's letters by the female scholar who writes the "Preliminary Dissertation." Hamilton implies this circumstance by stating that "the study of" the Rajah's letters "was resumed" after she experienced tragedy (73). However, she does not specify whether or not this "study" included translation. The novel's fictional premise, therefore, allows for the possibility that another scholar provided her with a literal translation that she polished. The idea of Hamilton as the translated letters' editor imbues the "Preliminary Dissertation" with additional autobiographical accuracy given that Hamilton does not appear to have studied any Indian languages.[16] Nevertheless, she portrays a character who expresses interest in learning these languages (especially Hindustani) in order to foreground her belief that a facility for translation bolsters Orientalist scholarship.[17]

Like Elizabeth Hamilton, Charles Hamilton provides autobiographical details that explain his interest in producing Orientalist translations. He writes in the *Historical Relation* that, after joining the Company, he initially "applied himself with some assiduity, to the study of the oriental languages, particularly of that grand medium of all correspondence and negotiation in India, the *Persian*" (v).[18] With this assertion, Hamilton foregrounds the usefulness of language learning for his work as a colonial administrator. He further supports this point by relating that his knowledge of Persian ultimately won him employment as a translator (v). This self-description reveals that Hamilton created the *Historical Relation*, which he translated from a collection of Persian manuscripts, by

drawing on his professional qualifications. Conversely, Elizabeth Hamilton's account of her scholarly background cannot cite such training and accomplishments. Each author, however, projects authority and champions the work of translation by foregrounding the knowledge of and connections to India that they individually acquired whether in- or out-side of the professional sphere.

In the "Preliminary Dissertation," Elizabeth Hamilton represents *Translation* as an expression of both her intellectual proclivities and her experience of grief. She justifies her interest in Orientalist literature by describing circumstances that mirror her biography. By so doing, she presents her life story as a source of scholarly credibility. She relates that she first began to read Orientalist literature extensively while living in the country. Later, she moved to London and gained "opportunities for instruction, of a nature still more pleasing" through hearing first-hand accounts of India (73). However, a "fatal event" cut short this education (73). A period of "sorrow" and "despondency" followed after which Hamilton found both "employment" and "useful relaxation" in translating the Rajah's letters (73). This trajectory reflects Elizabeth Hamilton's biography as she wrote *Translation*, her debut book, in the wake of Charles Hamilton's death.[19] By leaving unspecified the "fatal event" that curtailed her education on Indian topics, she offers an autobiographical portrait that foregrounds her scholarly rather than familial background. This authorial choice demonstrates that she offers only enough information about her life to explain the development of her knowledge of Indian culture and history.

Elizabeth Hamilton's general interest in Indian topics leads her to consult texts that she views as the key to understanding India's majority Hindu population. For this

reason, she creates her imaginative portrait of that country by drawing mainly on sources related to Hinduism. Despite referencing Charles Hamilton's accounts of Muslim histories and laws as well as George Sale's translation of the *Koran* (1734), *Translation* primarily cites works that foreground Hinduism in their examinations of the history and cultures of India.[20] These works include Charles Wilkins's translation of *The Bhagavad-gita* (1785) and of the *Hitopadesa* (1787), a book of moral and political advice written by the Hindu poet Narayana between 800 and 950 CE. Additionally, Hamilton references William Jones's *Sacontalá* (1789). That play constitutes a translation of *Abhijñānaśākuntalam* (c. 4th century CE), the Hindu poet Kālidāsa's version of a story from the *Mahābhārata* (c. 8th-9th century BCE). Beyond these texts, Hamilton cites eighteenth-century bureaucratic accounts of Hinduism such as Halhed's *A Code of Gentoo [or Hindu] Laws* (1776) and William Jones's "On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India" (1784). All of these sources bolster Hamilton's portrayal of Hindu characters and Indian history.

By contrast, Charles Hamilton cultivates his interest in Persian-language sources to ameliorate relations between the Company and Indian Muslims. He announces this goal in *The Hedaya*'s dedication to Warren Hastings. In that section, Hamilton conveys his wish that his translation will "facilitat[e] the administration of Justice throughout our Asiatic territories, and unit[e] us still more closely with our *Mussulman* subjects" (ii; emphasis Hamilton's). This aim drives Hamilton to challenge European stereotypes about Mughal–and, more broadly, Muslim–tyranny. He asserts that, contrary to "what has been generally considered in Europe[,]" Muslims did not impose "a rigid and undeviating adherence to their own LAW" on their Hindu subjects (v). Instead, Hindus received from

their Muslim rulers "complete indulgence" regarding their religious practices (v). Hamilton elsewhere undermines this claim by depicting the Company as treating Hindus more justly than did Mughal rulers.[21] Nevertheless, his stated reasons for translating the *al-Hidayah* include offering a new perspective on Indian Muslims. This new perspective, he believes, has the potential to reduce pervasive tensions between them and Britons.

Elizabeth Hamilton depicts the language skills that Company personnel like Charles Hamilton developed in a positive light because they facilitate cross-cultural ties. Percy and Zāārmilla bond because they share a number of languages. When Percy leaves the Battle of Kutra with a severe injury, Zāārmilla greets him in English and offers to help him recover.[22] However, during this recovery, Zāārmilla learns that Percy understands "the Persian language; of which, as well as the Arabic, and the different dialects of Hindostan, he was *perfect master*" (80). Conversations with Percy (potentially in any of the aforementioned languages) reveal to Zāārmilla "a different view of human nature" that ignites the Rajah's interest in visiting England (82). While "Persic literature" convinces Zāārmilla that human nature is "universally darkened by depravity[,]" he derives from Percy's account a vision of England as a land of free, virtuous Christians (82). This image shatters during Zāārmilla's visit to that country. Therefore, the satire of *Translation* pivots on the idealized notion of England that Zāārmilla mistakenly obtains through his intercultural, polyglot, and inspiring exchange with Percy.

Learning Indian languages, in Hamilton's depiction, enables Britons not only to foster interpersonal connections but also to practice what she views as the supreme Christian virtue of helping those who are suffering. When Sheermaal finds himself stranded without lodging during his visit to England, a cottage dweller who learned

Hindustani in the military offers to take him in. The mediocrity of this Englishman's language skills does not preclude the Brahmin from taking pleasure in their conversation. According to Sheermaal, his host's Hindustani "was but indifferent, but it was intelligible, and more charming to my ears than the music of the seven genii" (117). This description praises the cottage dweller's linguistic knowledge as one of his moral qualities because it increases his guest's sense of wellbeing. Furthermore, his benevolence offers a rebuke to the other villagers who turned Sheermaal away with "the language of contempt" presumably owing to their racial prejudices (116). The Anglo-Indian contact zone, Hamilton argues, enables Britons to acquire new skills–such as knowledge of Hindustani–with which to enact Christian principals.

Hamilton promotes Hindustani on the grounds that, in addition to facilitating hospitality across cultures, this language can prevent misunderstandings in the colonial environment of North India. When an English officer there requests milk from a village's chief, the latter responds, "Archa Sahib, tamarrow Mulluk" (160).[23] In a footnote, Hamilton translates this statement as follows: "Is not this your country – command in it what you please!" (160). The officer's inability to understand this invitation leads him to say, "To-morrow won't do for us, friend" (160). However, an army captain who can speak Hindustani recognizes that his colleague has mistaken the word *tumhara* (your) for tomorrow and "laugh[s] very heartily at his friend" (161). Although Hamilton asserts that the officer's mistake hinges on a misunderstanding of "a Bengal word[,]" it seems likely that she means to reference the Hindustani possessive pronoun *tumhara* rather than the similar Bengali possessive pronoun *tomader* (161).[24] She invokes Bengal, therefore, as a synecdoche for the Company's territories in North India. Deploying this synecdoche

enables Hamilton, though she lacks knowledge of Indian languages, to champion them as a means of strengthening ties between Britain and India.

Within the realm of bureaucratic scholarship rather than the broader context of Anglo-Indian relations, Charles Hamilton portrays language skills as a means of bolstering official knowledge of India on terms that he controls. Much of his *Historical Relation*, he asserts, derives from the Persian manuscript of an Afghan (whose name he omits) who worked for Faizullah Khan.[25] Hamilton states that "he depends much upon the authority of" the manuscript's originator because that author's "knowledge of the subject must be naturally supposed to be accurate and extensive" given his background and role in the history that he relates (xvii). This endorsement of the Afghan writer's authority counters the distrust that often pervades Company personnel's depictions of intermediaries in India.[26] While challenging this conventional attitude to some degree, Hamilton nevertheless asserts that "he has necessarily had recourse to other sources of information" regarding policies of colonial governance (xix). This statement conveys Hamilton's disagreement with parts of the Afghan writer's account. By synthesizing this text with other (unspecified) ones, Hamilton foregrounds the creative agency to shape imperialist discourse that he exerts as a bureaucratic author.

Translation comparably challenges British prejudices by offering a positive depiction of two Muslim characters. However, this portrait has a peripheral relationship to the main plot and therefore fails to dismantle the novel's general insistence on Muslim tyranny. During the Battle of Kutra, Zāārmilla witnesses an Afghan man fleeing the violence with his father on his back. The two Afghans see the Rajah and "[prepare] themselves to receive the stroke of death" given their ostensible status as his enemies

(80). However, Zāārmilla reassures the son that "Whatever your offenses […] your filial piety has in my eyes made atonement: turn, therefore, to the shelter of my fortress, where you may remain in safety till times of peace" (80). The two Afghans thank Zāārmilla, and the father displays additional kindness by using his medical knowledge to help Percy (80). This episode arguably exists to establish Zāārmilla's magnanimity and openness to those outside of his own culture. Nevertheless, Hamilton's portrayal of the two Afghans offers a counterpoint to her predominantly negative depiction of Muslims throughout *Translation.* This counterpoint ultimately reinforces the dominant representation by positioning two individual characters as exceptions to the rule of Muslim brutality.

Further emphasizing Zāārmilla's benevolence, Elizabeth Hamilton portrays him as rejecting the violence that the *Historical Relation* depicts his real-life counterparts as perpetrating. The Rajah considers others as individuals rather than representatives of an undifferentiated group while the Hindus whom Charles Hamilton invokes view all Rohilla Afghans as their enemy. These contrasting portraits illuminate a difference between *Translation* and the *Historical Relation.* While Charles Hamilton makes some positive comments about Muslims with the aim of advancing the colonial project, Elizabeth Hamilton does so to display Zāārmilla's openness to fostering bonds across religious divides. The *Historical Relation* states, "Wherever the defeat of the Rohillas became known, the Hindoo Zimeendars […] shut their forts, and refusing their late masters succor or protection, plundered, without distinction, all whom they found flying towards the hills" (241). This passage appears in a footnote in *Translation* to support Zāārmilla's praise of "the sons of mercy" (the British) for liberating North Indian Hindus from Afghan tyranny (78). Elizabeth Hamilton thus endorses Charles Hamilton's

representation of tensions between Afghans and Hindus. However, she characterizes Zāārmilla as having the capacity to overlook Hindu-Afghan conflict within a specific interaction.

In *Translation*, the Rajah continues to distinguish himself from other Hindus by not only helping two individual Muslims but also expressing curiosity about Muslim culture more broadly. This curiosity drives him to learn to read Persian and Arabic in addition to Sanskrit. As a rebuke to this multilingualism, Sheermaal deems Persian texts "scarcely lawful for a Hindoo to peruse" (133). Hamilton also denigrates (unspecified) Persian texts by asserting that they project the bleak view of humanity in general and of Europeans in particular that Zāārmilla must overcome by first conversing with Percy and then traveling to England. Though Hamilton satirizes the idealized picture of England that Zāārmilla initially develops, she also rejects the unremittingly dark conception of human history that he acquires from Persian literature (82). Regarding his knowledge of Arabic, *Translation* portrays Zāārmilla as having read the Gospels in that language (87). This background, along with his references to the Qur'an, leaves open the possibility that he has also read an untranslated version of that text (86, 181). By granting the Rajah an affinity for languages and works associated with Muslims, Hamilton distinguishes her novel's protagonist from other, less tolerant Hindu characters.

Zāārmilla's exceptional openness to other cultures stems from the acceptance of all faiths that, in Hamilton view, Hinduism fosters. Despite their varying levels of openness to other cultures, the Rajah, Sheermaal, and Māāndāāra share a religion that Hamilton portrays as teaching them to respect those with differing beliefs. The "Preliminary Dissertation" introduces this notion by asserting that "the most fervent zeal

in the most pious Hindoos, leads them neither to hate, nor despise, nor pity such as are of a different belief" (60). Consequently, Hinduism precludes its followers from "consider[ing] others as less favored by the almighty than themselves" (60). This statement portrays Hindus as not merely tolerating but instead respecting those whose religious beliefs differ from their own. Adding nuance to this generalizing portrait, Hamilton produces individuated characterizations of Sheermaal, Zāārmilla, and Māāndāāra. Within this trio, the Rajah expresses the most curiosity about the West, Christianity, and Islam. His uniqueness, therefore, connects to his cultural background.

Elizabeth Hamilton utilizes Charles Hamilton's work to develop her own perspective on Indian culture. For this reason, she demonstrates her authorial power by offering a complex representation of her own biography. *Translation* enables her not only to promote the work of Charles Hamilton and other Orientalists but also to interrogate and diverge from their studies. Her individual Company ties, therefore, do not bar her from questioning aspects of colonialism including the notions about India that emerged through knowledge production. Comparably, Charles Hamilton may express trepidation regarding some of the Company's actions owing to his background as an Ulster-Scot. Elizabeth Hamilton's perspective on the Anglo-Indian relationship reflects not only her individual subjectivity but also her position at the beginning of a new generation of British writers. She and other authors toward the end of the eighteenth century, as Freeman notes, "[build] on the foundation laid by those original, ultimately 'late' Orientalists" such as Charles Hamilton and Hastings (46). Responding to earlier studies enables Hamilton to position herself within the field of colonial knowledge production.

Exerting additional creative agency, she defines her own perspective on Anglo-Indian relations.

II

Hamilton takes a conflictual rather than a favorable stance on Orientalist studies by satirizing William Jones's theory of Indo-European languages. In ridiculing this idea, she draws on her Ulster-Scots background to collapse together the social structures of caste and class. Comparing these two systems enables her to criticize the Scottish insularity that, because she came to that country from Belfast, may have constrained her. She depicts her outsider's view of Scotland by asserting, in a 1780 letter to Charles Hamilton, that "in general our country people have […] a more liberal, enlarged way of thinking, than those of the same station in this kingdom [Scotland]" (qtd in Benger 68). She not only claims the Irish as "our country people" but also praises their generosity in comparison to Scots. Given her understanding of Scotland as a narrow-minded society, she mocks Sheermaal for insisting that Hindus and Scottish elites share ancestry. By thus constructing an exaggerated version of Jones's theory, she conveys her "belief in the moral value of comparing and contrasting different cultures, providing this is done with sufficient reflexivity" (Leask, "Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation*" 190). Prejudices, she argues, limit the extent to which colonialism can engender mutual affinities.

In addressing caste, Hamilton replicates the overly broad and totalizing understanding of that system that many Europeans of her era promoted. She conflates caste with class to sharpen her criticism of Scotland. By so doing, she participates in the transformation of caste that occurred in India under British rule. Her criticism of Scottish elites' insularity rests on her belief that, just as class determines an individual's position

in Scottish society, caste represents an all-encompassing system that governs the lives of Hindus. Therefore, Hamilton's satire reflects the nebulous ideas about caste that eighteenth-century gazetteers (popular written compilations of information about India's geography, politics, and economy) provided. As Susan Bailey details, these texts often "used the terms caste, tribe, sect and nation interchangeably" (109). This circumstance demonstrates that European commentators created an understanding of caste that did not exist in India prior to the colonial period. For this reason, Nicholas B. Dirks describes the notion that caste represents the primary system of communal organization in India as "the product of an historical encounter between India and Western colonial rule" (5). *Translation* supports his argument that Europeans did not create but instead narrowed and codified definitions of caste.

Hamilton portrays Hinduism as fostering not only tolerance of outsiders but also internal caste-based divisions that have both positive and negative effects on Indian society. On the one hand, *Translation* asserts that rigid hierarchies among Indians facilitate "the preservation of the general harmony" (58). On the other hand, the caste system has allowed the general practice of Hinduism to deteriorate into idolatry because Brahmins maintain their status as the "peculiar guardians" of religious learning (63). This ambivalent depiction of Hindu social distinctions receives further development through Hamilton's characterization of Sheermaal, the only Brahmin figure in *Translation*. By insisting that Hindus and elite Scots share an origin, he exhibits the openness to an unfamiliar culture that Hamilton believes characterizes Hindus. Additionally, Sheermaal displays the snobbishness that she ascribes to Brahmins. Their ostensible arrogance,

which manifests in India as insularity, translates in the context of British society into an identification with elite Scots based on their excessive pride in their lineages.

This curiosity not only enables Sheermaal to appreciate Scottish hierarchies during his visit there but also incites his interest in that country. Prior to his trip, he "had heard that the original Casts into which these, as well as other nations, had been divided at their creation, were here [in Scotland] preserved in their original purity and perfection" (122). This description represents Scottish society as an ancient, fixed, and thus imposing phenomenon. Furthermore, because Sheermaal neglects to specify how he developed his preconceptions about Scotland, his account takes on an apocryphal tone. This tone foregrounds Scotland's uniqueness. Hamilton further emphasizes Scotland's exceptional capacity to maintain internal distinctions by contrasting that country with "other nations" in which less severe class barriers exist. Additionally, she uses alliteration ("preserved […] purity and perfection") to accentuate the Brahmin's praise of Scotland for maintaining an exceptionally strict class system. Granting this perspective to an Indian character enables Hamilton to condemn Scottish social divisions on a global scale through satire.

Sheermaal appreciates Scottish class distinctions as a manifestation of that country's resistance to English cultural imperialism. Although the 1707 Union of the Scottish and English parliaments increased commerce in Scotland, the Brahmin asserts that "the barrier between *people of family* and *people of no family* has been too strong for the tide of wealth to break, too powerful for the teeth of time to destroy" (124). The figurative language in this passage conveys at once Sheermaal's positive attitude toward Scottish social hierarchies and Hamilton's frustrations with them. In one respect, vivid

metaphorical descriptions ("the tide of wealth" and "the teeth of time") express Sheermaal's endorsement of Scottish antipathy toward social mobility. And yet, the comically exaggerated nature of these descriptions marks the inflexibility of Scotland's class system as ridiculous in the face of the eighteenth-century economic developments that commerce and colonialism incited. Scottish society's refusal to adapt to these circumstances, Hamilton argues, inflicts more harm than does the equally stabilizing though potentially less rigid force of India's caste system. Sheermaal admires both structures because they persist under comparable circumstances of English political control.

Through uniting caste and class, Hamilton criticizes William Jones's theory of Indo-European languages. This idea, she argues, elides imperial divisions. She likely gained familiarity with Jones's theory through her familial connection to the Asiatic Society. In his role as that group's founder, Jones argued in his 1786 "Third Anniversary Discourse" that "no philologer could examine [Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin] without believing them to have sprung from some common source" (*Asiatic Researches* 422). He further asserts that these languages, along with the Gothic, Celtic, and Persian ones, all belong "to the same family" (423). This description, according to Michael J. Franklin, presents "revolutionary" possibilities because it "links East and West in linguistic and racial terms" by invoking kinship (37). Jones continues to challenge the notion of European preeminence by portraying Sanskrit as "more explicitly refined" than either Latin or Greek (422). Therefore, his explanation of Indo-European languages offers a vision of mutual constitution that refutes imperialist hierarchies. Hamilton's belief in the practical impossibility of eradicating these divisions fuels her satire of Jones's theory.

Utilizing the destabilizing possibilities of Jones's familial conceit, Hamilton posits closer connections among Scots than among them and Hindus. Sheermaal asserts that "to believe the venerable and exalted cast of *people of family* should have sprung from one common parent with *people of no family*, is equally absurd as to suppose that […] they should moulder into the same sort of dust!" (124). While this passage deploys explicitly familial language ("one common parent"), Hamilton generally references a mutual "origin" in her descriptions of possible Indo-Scottish ties. She thus implies that stronger bonds exist among Scots of various classes than among them and Indian people. For this reason, Sheermaal's insistence on the "absurd[ity]" of declaring similitude between upper- and lower-class Scots appears heavily ironic. The gruesome image of both groups posthumously decomposing together exposes as ridiculous elites' strict preservation of class boundaries. Despite mocking Jones's assertion that kinship ties link India to other cultures (including European ones), Hamilton nevertheless recognizes and exploits the radical possibilities of this rhetorical gesture by using it to unite Scots across classes.

Hamilton mocks Jones's theory for–in her view–stretching credulity by asserting fundamental similitude between people of distinct and complex cultural backgrounds. Her depiction of Sheermaal's flawed understanding of the concept of Indo-European languages constitutes a warning against disregarding cultural difference. Deploying an oversimplified version of Jones's theory, Sheermaal attempts to establish ties between Hindus and elite Scots. He cites as evidence of their shared origin "the similarity of the sound between Laird and Rajah" (125). Through this assertion, Hamilton satirizes Jones's method of demonstrating links among various European and Indian languages. Jones

connects Sanskrit and Gaelic, for instance, using their respective words for mother, *matar* and *mathair* (Franklin 36). Sheermaal insists that his own example, though less convincing than Jones's, may appear "to learned antiquarians […] more than sufficient to establish an etymology" (125). This assertion ridicules the theory of Indo-European languages by imagining a distorted application of its logic.

Hamilton amplifies her criticism of Jones for oversimplifying potential connections between Indian and European cultures by declining to cite his theory. Beginning with Gary Kelly, many scholars have described *Translation* as a "footnote novel" that uses para-textual mediation to provide factual context for and authorial commentary on fictional scenarios (*Women, Writing, and Revolution* 133). Like many eighteenth-century Orientalist works, *Translation* supplements characters' letters with references to scholarship. These citations appear in both footnotes and the text itself. For example, when discussing India's caste system in the "Preliminary Dissertation," Hamilton traces her understanding of that structure to Charles Wilkins's 1785 translation of the *Bhagvat-geeta* (59). By so doing, she endorses that text as a reputable source of information on India. The lack of a comparable recommendation of Jones's "Third Anniversary Discourse," however, does not constitute an overriding dismissal of his scholarship. A description of him as "a learned gentleman" to whom "the world is indebted" for his writings and translations appears in the "Preliminary Dissertation" (66). Therefore, Hamilton objects to the specific theory of Indo-European languages (rather than all of Jones's work) because it creates an overly general portrait of culturally distinct places and peoples.

Hamilton extends her critique of Scottish elites by condemning them for not reciprocating Sheermaal's openness to them. The Brahmin states, "These highly favoured people, being too tenacious of their dignity to admit strangers (with whose pedigree they are unacquainted) into the honour of their society; the person, to whom I was chiefly indebted for information, was the lady, at whose house I lodged" (125). Unlike Sheermaal's arrogance, that of "people of family" bars them from embracing the notion of Indo-Scottish kinship. Instead, their insularity and elitism drive them to exclude the Brahmin from their society. This circumstance limits Sheermaal's experience of Scotland to the blinkered, haughty views that his host offers and thereby casts doubt on his understanding of that country. The limitations on Sheermaal's knowledge not only render his insistence on Indo-Scottish ties dubious but also grant him moral superiority over elite Scots. They, unlike the Brahmin, deny that any background other than their own could merit respect because they (mistakenly in Hamilton's view) reject the value of embracing different cultures.

Even as he experiences social exclusion, Sheermaal allows his own and his host's prejudices to dissuade him from engaging with non-elite Scots. He would have liked to converse with a servant in his host's home, "but the cousin of one-and-twenty mountain Rajahs had too just a claim on my veneration, to be put into competition with the paltry advantages of youth, beauty, talents, and understanding" (126). Sheermaal denies his attraction to a lower-class person because his high estimation of his own status within Hindu culture drives him to seek affiliation only with those at the top of Scotland's social hierarchy. Thus, the prejudices that Hamilton ascribes respectively to Brahmins and to elite Scots together prevent him from pursuing a connection that he genuinely desires.

This circumstance reveals the suffering that Sheermaal's arrogance causes him and thereby casts him in an arguably sympathetic light. In seeking an exclusive tie to elite Scottish society, he thwarts other opportunities for connection with people of a different culture that might prove more rewarding for him.

Although Hamilton mocks Jones's vision of Indo-European relations, she also takes this theory seriously in noting the positive qualities that Hindus and Scots share. They both, as Sheermaal relates, prize hospitality and literature (124). Furthermore, they respect those who have an impressive lineage but must nevertheless labor in order to earn a livelihood (124-5). These shared values lead the Brahmin to assert that "the characteristic virtues, and particular customs of this nation [Scotland], are so evidently of Hindoo origin, that nothing, but the most wilful [sic] blindness, could make anyone assert the contrary" (124). This emphatic statement betrays Hamilton's desire to draw favorable connections among Hindus and Scots. By so doing, she exhibits some openness to Jones's theory. This attitude drives her to mirror the philologist's language in Sheermaal's description of the virtues that Scots and Hindus share. While Jones asserts that "no philologer" could fail to recognize the similarities between Sanskrit, Greek, and, Latin, Sheermaal claims that only inattention or stubbornness could impede a comparable recognition of Hindu-Scottish cultural ties. Hamilton satirizes Jones's theory for its generality while also sharing his desire to strengthen ties between India and Britain.

Sheermaal's role within *Translation* strengthens Hamilton's ridicule of his mistranslation of different cultures' hierarchies. By portraying the Brahmin, she creates not only a distinct satirical voice but also a necessary conduit for her own perspective. Depicting Sheermaal, I argue, enables Hamilton to relate her social and scholarly views

with an acidity that she cannot express through the novel's other correspondents (Zāārmilla and Māāndāāra). In comparison to them, Sheermaal provides the most negative perspective on the West. This circumstance produces some of Hamilton's sharpest disparagements of elements of British culture including elite Scots' antipathy toward outsiders. As Taylor asserts of Zāārmilla's narration, Hamilton "disguises her words as those of a Hindu man" and thereby achieves "a certain distance from her own identity as a woman in the 1790s, a potentially powerful strategy for articulating her didactic points" (558). The "distance" that Hamilton gains from her identity through representing Sheermaal allows her to condemn the arrogance of elite Scots and William Jones's (in her view) overly broad theory of Indo-Aryan languages. These criticisms derive from Hamilton's lived experience as an Ulster-Scot and her belief that comparative rhetoric must acknowledge both the positive and negative aspects of individual cultures.

III

Hamilton deploys her vision of Indian society to denigrate not only Scottish snobbery but also British society's treatment of women.[27] In condemning their oppression, Hamilton draws on the ideas of Mary Wollstonecraft. The novelist does so primarily through her satirical portrayal of Miss Ardent, a metaphysically inclined learned woman who criticizes the limitations that British women face. Although Hamilton ridicules Miss Ardent for following her passions rather than Christian morality, her representation of this character does not constitute "a total refutation of radical feminism" (Lawrenson 140).[28] Hamilton projects reform-mindedness by joining Wollstonecraft in championing women's education. However, the novelist distinguishes

her ideal system of learning by grounding it in her protofeminist understanding of Christianity. This belief system does not compel her to advocate for the conversion of Indian people. Instead, she links Indian and British women by highlighting the educational restrictions on both groups, justifying her interest in Orientalist scholarship, and using imagery from Indian culture to present learned women such as Miss Ardent as anomalies in British society. While Hamilton foregrounds the constraints on those who share her subject position as a white woman, she situates these limitations within the global context of imperialism.

In *Translation*, the association that Hamilton develops between Christianity and women's autonomy stems from her particular upbringing. Lawrenson argues that, although Hamilton's religious and political convictions might appear contradictory to modern readers, they reflect not only her historical moment but also her specific background as a Presbyterian Ulster-Scot. A faction of that population in the eighteenth-century, according to Lawrenson, "combined a new political radicalism with a traditional Arminian theology" (143). Within this cultural context, Hamilton likely absorbed a version of Christianity that embraced reformatory ideals like nurturing women's practical and intellectual abilities. Furthermore, Hamilton's connections to Belfast indicate that she would have familiarity with the ideology the New Light Presbyterian group. This group, as Lawrenson details, championed "rationalism, a commitment to religious pluralism, and the defense of the sovereignty of the people" (131n20). Such ideas informed the revolutionary ideology of the United Irishmen. A founding member of that group, William Drennan, had a sister, Martha McTier, who befriended Hamilton in Belfast. This

background helps to explain how Hamilton could view Christianity and reformatory projects including women's education as mutually constitutive forces.

Hamilton provides an autobiographical sketch in *Translation* to preempt an audience that she assumes, given her gender, will doubt her qualifications for engaging with the field of Orientalist studies. She foregrounds the reading and relationships that inform her ideas about India in an effort "[t]o obviate" possible resistance from those who would denigrate *Translation* (72). Such critics, she imagines, will likely view the novel "as a presumptuous effort to wander out of that narrow and contracted path, which they have allotted to the female mind" (72). The wry tone of this passage conveys Hamilton's disparaging view of readers who require an author's self-disclosure because they inherently distrust and therefore attack women's intellectual ambitions. Nevertheless, as Charles Hamilton's comparable description of the genesis of his interest in Orientalist studies in the *Historical Relation* evinces, female authors alone did not experience pressure to detail their scholarly backgrounds. Unlike Charles Hamilton, however, Elizabeth Hamilton vividly portrays the specific difficulties that a woman might face in choosing to reference and interrogate Orientalist scholarship.

Elizabeth Hamilton recognizes that her gender, though it potentially undermines her authority in the eyes of some readers, nevertheless offers her the opportunity to invite other women to develop an interest in translations of Persian and Sanskrit writings. These texts, she asserts in the "Preliminary Dissertation," fail to attract many European readers because they portray heroes with unfamiliar names and stories (55-6). For this reason, she resolves to explain her references to Indian culture in footnotes "[f]or the sake of readers […] particularly those of my own sex, who may have been deterred for the reasons hinted

at, from seeking information from a more copious source" (56). This statement broadcasts *Translation*'s generic status as a novel that engages with and thus potentially seeks to popularize Orientalist translations and studies. Hoping to expand the reach this scholarship, Hamilton self-reflexively embraces her capacity to interest the (predominantly middle- and upper-class) female contingent of her audience in an erudite subject that might otherwise intimidate them.

Deriding the closure of mixed schools in Scotland enables Hamilton to criticize the intersecting gendered and colonial oppressions that Scottish Presbyterian women experienced in the eighteenth century.[29] Sheermaal asserts that Scotland's following "the system of their southern neighbours" will soon render "the daughter of a *mountain Rajah* […] as amiably frivolous, as engagingly ignorant; as weak in body, and in mind, as the pupil of the greatest Boarding School in London" (131; emphasis Hamilton's). Given Hamilton's strong interest in the cultural traditions of Ulster and Scotland, Lawrenson posits that the novelist ridicules changes to Scottish girls' educations in order to express "indignant consternation and defiance in the face of inexorable cultural homogenization" (138). This imperialist process garners praise rather than scorn from Sheermaal because he opposes women's education (131). Although the Brahmin shares Hamilton's status as a native of a country that England politically oppresses, his belief in curtailing women's freedom precludes him from recognizing England's domineering role within Britain as a problem.

Translation examines women's oppression in a global context by contrasting Indian women with a pious and educated English female character named Charlotte Percy. Zāārmilla expresses "astonishment" upon learning from Percy that Charlotte (his

sister) gave him a Bible as a parting gift. In explaining this circumstance, Percy attributes the Rajah's surprise to his "having always been accustomed, to behold the sex in the degrading state of subjection" (89). This claim supports *Translation*'s overarching representation of Indian women as having less autonomy than do Western ones. Further emphasizing this point, Zāārmilla gathers from Percy that "the powerful mandate of" Christianity has liberated Western women from patriarchal oppression (89). This statement appears heavily ironic because Hamilton consistently derides British society for circumscribing women's opportunities for learning. Rather than condemn Britain and India equally for oppressing women, however, Hamilton primarily targets Britain for failing to manifest what she views as the Christian ideal of gender-based equality.

While Percy distinguishes Charlotte from Indian women on the basis of her superior education, Sheermaal links together different factors that restrict Indian and British women. The Brahmin inadvertently highlights the constraints that both groups face by asserting that inadequate education harms British women as much as *sati* does Indian women.[30] By invoking this idea, Hamilton satirically conveys her frustration with the hardships that British women experience as a result of their damaging educations. Using an Indian character to make this point enables Hamilton to compare the kinds of suffering that women experience globally while nevertheless maintaining focus on British women. Aiming to refute Zāārmilla's claim that Christianity promotes female learning, Sheermaal states,

> I have frequently seen a little family cast upon the care, and depending for protection, on a poor, helpless being, incapable of any idea, save that of dress, or any duty, except the Poojah of cards![31] How much wiser is the institution of

> Brahma, by which creatures, incapable of acting with propriety for themselves, are effectually put out of the way of mischief, by being burned with the bodies of their husbands.–Wise regulations! Laudable practice! by which the number of *old women* is so effectually diminished! (129; emphasis Hamilton's)

This passage declares that British women's education produces only "poor, helpless being[s]" who are "incapable of acting with propriety for themselves[.]" For this reason, they would fare better under a religious system that reduces "the number of *old women*" through murder. Though she posits this notion ironically, Hamilton does so to communicate the severity of her concerns about the limitations that British society imposes on women's lives.

Hamilton complicates her portrait of women's status in India by praising Zāārmilla and Prymaveda's seemingly companionate marriage. *Translation* presents this type of relationship as a deviation from Indian social norms. In mourning his wife, the Rajah describes her as "the companion of my days, the friend of my heart, whose gentle manners, and prudent counsels, smoothed the rugged path of life, and gave value to every blessing" (146). With this characterization, Hamilton portrays Zāārmilla and Prymaveda's relationship as one that (on his side at least) encompasses both affection and respect. This circumstance bolsters Zāārmilla's ability to "puncture stereotypes of oriental sexual despotism" within *Translation* (Leask "Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation*" 188). However, the peripheral nature of Hamilton's depiction of his and Prymaveda's marriage precludes it from offering a robust counterpoint to the conventional notion that Indian women face especially harsh subjugation.[32] For this reason, Hamilton's account of Zāārmilla and Prymaveda's relationship broadcasts his exceptionality as an Indian

husband who appreciates his wife's intellect without construing this type of relationship as a pattern for reforming Indian society.

Focusing on the colonial context enables Hamilton to explore the contrasting situations of Eastern and Western women in greater depth than Wollstonecraft does. Wollstonecraft asserts of women who receive no useful education that "[s]urely these weak beings are only fit for a seraglio! Can they be expected to govern a family with judgment, or take care of the poor babes whom they bring into the world?" (74). With this claim, she posits that the poor education that most British women receive equips them only for the vapid and decadent existence that she imagines Eastern women to lead. Comparably, Sheermaal asserts in *Translation* that Britain should adopt the Hindu practice of killing women after their husbands die because British women–like Hindu ones–do not develop the practical skills necessary to thrive independently (129). This notion, like Wollstonecraft's dismissive invocation of seraglios, criticizes a Western society for reducing women to the status of Eastern ones. However, Hamilton complicates her generally bleak depiction of Eastern womanhood by representing Prymaveda and Zāārmilla as enjoying the type of companionate marriage that Wollstonecraft invokes as a possibility only for Western women.

Translation's depiction of Miss Ardent demonstrates that education cannot free a woman from gendered limitations. Despite her learning, she suffers under the patriarchal strictures that Hamilton recognizes as oppressing eighteenth-century women regardless of their schooling or homeland. Through her characterization of Miss Ardent, therefore, Hamilton betrays some doubt about the potential of education to increase women's autonomy whether in Britain or India. Miss Ardent, unlike the European women whom

Sheermaal criticizes, expresses "idea[s]" beyond "dress" (129). For example, she ridicules a group of partygoers who mock a woman for wearing plain, outmoded clothes. Miss Ardent defends this character by saying, "That very woman, with her flat cap and petticoat, has an understanding of the first quality; and a heart replete with every virtue" (226). Additionally, Miss Ardent experiences oppression directly within her metaphysical circle. The male philosophers in that group dismiss her by excluding women from the age of reason that they anticipate (261). In this situation, Miss Ardent's learning arguably fails to elevate her very far above "the degrading state of subjection" that Percy attributes to predominantly uneducated Indian women (89). Their condition, in Hamilton's depiction, bears some resemblance to that of even learned British women.

By expressing apprehension about the possibility that education may improve the situation of British women, Hamilton echoes Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (hereafter *Vindication*, 1792). The novelist's uncertainty adds nuance to her predominantly satirical representation of Miss Ardent. By depicting the constraints that this character faces despite her learning, Hamilton portrays her with (perhaps a limited degree of) sympathy rather than derision. Adding further nuance to her characterization of Miss Ardent, Hamilton imbues her with some trepidation regarding the intellectual capabilities of women (262).[33] The novelist, though she criticizes through Miss Ardent the irreligiosity of radicals such as Wollstonecraft, shares with them a commitment to championing women's education. As a result of their advocacy, all three recognize that their society precludes them from knowing the possible effects of education on women. *Vindication* states,

> In tracing the causes that, in my opinion, have degraded women, I have confined my observations to such as universally act upon the morals and manners of the whole sex, and to me it appears clear that they all spring from want of understanding. Whether this arise from a physical or accidental weakness of faculties, time alone can determine; for I shall not lay any great stress on the example of a few women who, from having received a masculine education, have acquired courage and resolution[.] (149)

Wollstonecraft refuses to generalize about women's intellectual faculties because she feels incapable of doing so based on the example of only "a few women who, from having received a masculine education, have acquired courage and resolution[.]" Comparably, Hamilton and Miss Ardent recognize that their society obscures the capabilities of women by limiting their roles regardless of their education.

Hamilton criticizes British society's refusal to accommodate educated women through Zāārmilla's use of Indian cultural references to describe Miss Ardent. When she insists that women should have a place in the age of reason that her male metaphysician friends anticipate, Zāārmilla portrays her as "a worthy daughter of Seraswatti" (261). This alignment of Miss Ardent with the Hindu goddess of knowledge appears to ennoble rather than satirize the former given the novel's generally positive attitude toward Hinduism. Beyond conveying the strong impression that Miss Ardent's intelligence makes on him, Zāārmilla's comparison portrays her as an isolated figure even within her radical, educated subsection of English society. Amplifying this notion, Zāārmilla affiliates Miss Ardent with Seraswatti directly after relating that "nothing could be more repugnant to" her than the male metaphysicians' imaginative exclusion of women from

the age of reason (261). Witnessing (and narrating in indirect discourse) Miss Ardent's gendered clash with her circle drives Zāārmilla to describe her in intercultural terms because he and Hamilton recognize her as a perpetual outsider.

With another intercultural comparison, Hamilton satirizes Miss Ardent and possibly herself as well by emphasizing that character's political zeal. Zāārmilla expresses surprise at Miss Ardent's interest in government by deeming her "qualified to become the Vizir [sic] of an Empire" (233). This comparison appears potentially satirical because it aligns Miss Ardent with a term (*vizier*) associated in Indian history with the Mughal Empire, which Hamilton derides throughout *Translation*. However, this possible basis for ridicule does not imbue the novelist with an overarching antipathy toward the idea of women's participation in political discourse. Her choice to satirize Miss Ardent's interest in current events might, as Perkins and Russell assert, betray "a hint of self-mockery" (233). In a 1781 letter to her brother, Hamilton ridicules her own interest in politics by describing a conversation about the Battle of Yorktown between herself and her uncle. She states, "Had my uncle been commander-in-chief of the sea or land forces, or I prime minister at home, Cornwallis would have been victorious, and Graves had sent the French home with disgrace" (233). In Hamilton's view, enthusiasm for politics renders herself and Miss Ardent alike ridiculous within their comparable social environments.

By contrast, Wollstonecraft invokes the possibility of women's political leadership earnestly rather than satirically. She nevertheless shares with Hamilton a recognition that this possibility appears absurd within the context of eighteenth-century Britain. Wollstonecraft asserts, "I may excite laughter, by dropping an hint, which I mean

to pursue, some future time, for I really think that women ought to have representatives, instead of being arbitrarily governed without having any direct share allowed them in the deliberation of government" (228). Like the notion that Wollstonecraft "may excite laughter" by positing that women should have a political voice, Hamilton's comparison of Miss Ardent to a *vizier* depicts women's participation in politics as an impossibility within eighteenth-century British society. Wollstonecraft seeks to counter this view while Hamilton, by contrast, invokes it in order to satirize Miss Ardent's excessive attention to current events. However, both authors recognize that political knowledge and–to an even greater extent–ambition render British women oppositional toward their society.

Hamilton again aligns herself with Miss Ardent by granting her an interest in Orientalist studies. Therefore, the novelist uses that character to promote the value of openness to other cultures. The fear that Zāārmilla absorbs from an English acquaintance of "holding any communication with a *Learned Lady*" dissipates when Miss Ardent begins to talk about his homeland (226; emphasis Hamilton's). Because most of the educated people whom he meets in England display little curiosity about India, he particularly appreciates her interest in that country. He states, "You may believe it impresses me with a very high idea of the superior powers of Miss Ardent's mind, when I found out that she had paid particular attention to everything connected with the history and literature of India" (227). Through Zāārmilla, Hamilton endorses these proclivities of Miss Ardent's because they unite author and character. The similarities between Hamilton and Miss Ardent have led scholars like Lawrenson to read the latter as more than a merely satirical figure. Though she often ridicules Miss Ardent's displays of erudition, Hamilton imbues this character with her own interest in Orientalist studies.

Scholars of that field, *Translation* argues, have the capacity to strengthen Anglo-Indian bonds.

Despite foregrounding their shared literary interests, Hamilton mocks Miss Ardent and Zāārmilla alike for allowing their national affinities to prevent them from sufficiently appreciating authors from the other's homeland. Zāārmilla remarks that, during their conversation about Indian works, Miss Ardent appears reluctant to accept the *Mahabharata* and Kālidāsa (an Indian poet from c. 4th-5th century CE) as the equals of the *Iliad* and Shakespeare.[34] Though this circumstance perturbs Zāārmilla, he nevertheless asks Māāndāāra to "make allowances for this lady" (227). Zāārmilla forgives her because he recognizes that he and Māāndāāra would similarly disdain "the arrogance of any foreigner, who should have the presumption to put the works of his countrymen in competition with those divine Bards" of India (227). With this statement, Hamilton asserts that India and Britain share a degree of cultural chauvinism. However, Zāārmilla's exceptional openness to a variety of literary traditions (despite his belief in the ultimate superiority of Hindu ones) enables him to accept Miss Ardent's prejudice in favor of European works. Rather than either Miss Ardent or Zāārmilla, the narrowness of individual society's literary traditions constitutes the object of Hamilton's satire.

Hamilton, though she refrains from advocating for the conversion of Indian men and women, nevertheless condemns Miss Ardent for lacking–like the rest of her metaphysical circle–a sense of Christian morality. This discrepancy between *Translation*'s depictions of Indians and Miss Ardent demonstrates that the novel appreciates Hinduism but not the absence of religion. In Hamilton's view, Mrs. Ardent errs by absconding to Europe with Mr. Axiom. This act, according to Doctor Severan

(Zāārmilla's wise host in England), marks Miss Ardent as "a female who bids defiance to modesty and decorum" (305). This statement ridicules the learned woman for valuing her intertwined attractions to Mr. Axion and the philosophical system he follows above her reputation. As Lawrenson states, *Translation* depicts Miss Ardent "the victim of her own irreligiosity" (141). She attains this status as a result of the deficiencies in her education. Despite sharing Miss Ardent's enthusiasm for politics and Orientalist studies, Hamilton ultimately disparages this character's learning because it fails to instill in her an ethical code.

Focusing on Anglo-Indian relations enables *Translation* to denigrate the constraints on both British and Indian women. In so doing, Hamilton uses the "double-sided" nature of her satire to ridicule the gendered subjugation that she experiences (Aravamudan 101). "Zāārmilla's naive assumption that" women in England have more freedom than women in India provides, according to Mellor, "[t]he basic structural irony of the novel" (156). By contrast, I view Zāārmilla's idealized view of English women as one aspect of–rather than the driving force behind–his broader fascination with English culture. I agree with Mellor, however, that the Rajah's perspective on the limitations that eighteenth-century English society places on women's intellectual development produces much of *Translation*'s sharpest satire. In addition to projecting this satire, Zāārmilla's narrating voice enables Hamilton to compare the situations of women in the East and West. She often invokes the former to subvert the notion that they receive worse treatment than the latter. Nevertheless, she argues that not only British but also Indian women's intellects deserve nurturing and recognition in companionate marriages. She

does not explore further possibilities for promoting Indian women's learning because her subject position as a white British woman circumscribes her perspective.

Conclusion

Translation channels Hamilton's views on the Anglo-Indian relationship through fictional characters and an autobiographical representation of a translator figure. By contrast, Eliza Fay–the subject of this dissertation's next chapter–explicitly describes herself as writing in the autobiographical mode. She does so using the epistolary form that Hamilton deploys as a fictional construct. In *Original Letters*, Fay represents the direct experience of India that she, unlike Hamilton, acquired. This experience produces a more visceral and less learned vision of Indian culture than *Translation* offers. In her novel, Hamilton uses distancing strategies including satirical characterizations and para-texts (such as footnotes) to represent her study of Anglo-Indian relations. *Original Letters*, by contrast, deploys the technique of writing to the moment to convey Fay's immediate impressions of the contact zone. As these impressions accumulate, Fay develops a more pragmatic and less hopeful view than Hamilton does of British colonialism in India. These authors' contrasting perspectives derive from their individual experiences of the eighteenth-century colonial context.

Hamilton and Fay represent their differing relationships to Company rule through their portrayals of Warren Hastings's government. While Hamilton views his leadership as nurturing her intellect, Fay disparages the hierarchy among Britons in India that he engenders. *Translation*'s dedication to Hastings praises him "as the distinguished patron of Shanscrit [sic], and Persian literature" who has encouraged "the most important Oriental translations" (54). She appreciates Hastings's patronage of the texts that shape

her knowledge of India. In Fay's depiction, Hastings constitutes the most powerful figure in the society in which she struggles to succeed. She, unlike Hamilton, does not allude to Hastings's impeachment trial. This circumstance reflects each author's individual relationship to colonial power. Through her brother, Hamilton has a biographical connection to Hastings and consequently develops a positive view of his support for knowledge production. Fay, by contrast, encounters him only as the overbearing ruler of Calcutta's British community. Given these biographical differences, Hamilton views the Anglo-Indian relationship as benefitting her to a greater extent than does Fay.

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[1] Siraj Ahmed ("'The Pure Soil of Universal Benevolence': The Rule of Property and the Rise of an Imperial Ideology in the 1790s"), Isobel Grundy, Gary Kelly (*Women, Writing, and Revolution, 1790-1827*, 1993), and Claire Grogan also promote this view of *Translation*. For detailed discussions of Hamilton's relationship to the Asiatic Society as a whole, see Kathryn S. Freeman, Balachandra Rajan, Jenny Sharpe, Jeanne M. Britton, and Susan B. Egenolf. In this chapter, I will focus on *Translation*'s engagement with Charles Hamilton's scholarship.

[2] More recent scholarship has, in a departure from Benger, discussed in depth how *Translation* not only references but also builds on Charles Hamilton's work. For example, Pamela Perkins and Shannon Russell cite specific passages of his that influence Elizabeth Hamilton while also noting that *Translation* offers a more positive depiction of both Hindus and Afghans than does his *Historical Relation* (E. Hamilton 33-34).

[3] The First Rohilla War (1773-4) took place in Rohilkhand, North India. Shuja-ud-Daula, the *nawab* of Awadh (a North Indian state), instigated and won this war against the Rohilla Afghans–who came to India in the early eighteenth century–in partnership with the Company. By working with the *nawab* to defeat the Rohillas, the Company increased its colonial power. Many in Britain decried this war as it formed the basis for some of the accusations of misconduct that Warren Hastings faced during his impeachment trial.

[4] This book constitutes a translation of a twelfth-century Islamic legal text titled *al-Hidayah*. Along with this translation, Nathaniel Brassey Halhed's *A Code of Gentoo Laws, or, Ordinations of the Pundits* (1776) advanced Hastings's project of seeking to govern India using Muslim as well as Hindu laws.

[5] For an overview of the conventions of anti-Jacobin literature, see chapter two of Kelly's *English Fiction of the Romantic Period 1798-1830* (1989). Sonja Lawrenson, as this chapter will later detail, challenges the interpretation that *Translation* fits within that conservative literary tradition by asserting that Hamilton's portrayal of Miss Ardent conveys the novelist's endorsement of some of Mary Wollstonecraft's radical ideas. Janice Farrar Thaddeus, Anne K. Mellor, Freeman, and Nigel Leask (in "Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation*") comparably argue that simplistic categorizations cannot encapsulate the complex politics of *Translation*.

[6] For discussions of the relationship of British women writers including Hamilton to imperialist discourse, see Felicity Nussbaum ("British Women Write the East after 1750: Revisiting a 'Feminine' Orient") and Rajan. See also Sara Mills's *Discourses of Difference* (1991), though that book does not discuss Hamilton specifically.

[7] See Gary Dyer's *British Satire and the Politics of Style 1789-1832* (1997) for an account of that mode throughout the Romantic era.

[8] Reading Hamilton as a narrowly anti-Jacobin writer, I argue, constitutes such a misinterpretation.

[9] Freeman argues that Hamilton projects her didactic messages using "two levels of mediation" (48). These levels include "the three male correspondents as the novel's only direct voices and the women known only indirectly through the letters of these men" (48). Additionally, "Hamilton employs a third device: a

vestigial narrator as translator and editor who is literally marginalized to footnotes" (48). Unlike Freeman, I–following the majority of criticism on *Translation*–refer to the "vestigial narrator as translator and editor" only as Hamilton throughout this chapter in order to emphasize that figure's role as an autobiographical portrait. Though I differ from Freeman in this regard, I agree with her that Hamilton's methods of satirical characterization as well as her scholarly apparatus all project her own perspective. I build on Freeman's analysis by arguing that Hamilton's authorial techniques produce a representation of self.

[10] For a detailed account of Hamilton's religious background, see Lawrenson. I find her attention to Hamilton's Ulster-Scots background useful for understanding the cultural context that produced the views that *Translation* expresses. I build on Lawrenson's article by examining, in addition to the influence of Hamilton's biography on *Translation*, I also foreground her methods of representing herself within the text and its para-texts.

[11] This background leads Hamilton not only to criticize British imperialism in Scotland but also, as this chapter's second section details, to conflate the systems of caste and class. For more on British authors' representations of caste, see Nicholas B. Dirks's *Castes of Mind*: *Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (2001), Susan Bayly's *Caste, Society and Politics in India: From the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age* (1999), and *Empires and Boundaries: Rethinking Race, Class, and Gender in Colonial Settings* (2009), edited by Harald Fischer-Tiné and Susanne Gehrmann.

[12] Comparably, Travers asserts that British discourse on the eighteenth-century Anglo-Indian relationship evinces curiosity as well as a drive to establish cultural distinctions.

[13] Eighteenth-century conventions of the forms of novel and autobiography demand the narrative control that Freeman recognizes in Hamilton's deployment of techniques of fictional characterization to depict her own views. Describing representational methods that novels and autobiographies share, Patricia Meyer Spacks asserts that characters across both genres maintain internal consistency despite experiencing external changes. Therefore, in each genre, "atmospheres of social fluctuation [...] contrast sharply with the personal stability" that Spacks identifies (9). In *Translation*, Hamilton's personal convictions bind together her portrayals of herself and fictional characters.

[14] For a comprehensive account of *Translation*'s references to these works, see Perkins and Russell's notes to the Broadview edition.

[15] This portrayal echoes Hamilton's claim, in the "Preliminary Dissertation," that the colonial relationship has proceeded chaotically because it demonstrates that "means the most improbable" have produced "the most unexpected ends" (55).

[16] Hamilton does not display much knowledge of Indian languages in *Translation*. However, she does introduce the novel's glossary by discussing the distinct strategies of transliteration that various philologers use, and she references the differences in pronunciation that arise in individual provinces such as Bengal (73-4).

[17] Given Zāārmilla's status as a resident of North India, Hamilton likely imagines that he would predominantly speak Hindustani.

[18] Although Hamilton uses the third person voice here, he is referring to himself.

[19] Charles Hamilton died in England in 1792 (four years before the publication of *Translation*).

[20] Beyond citing Charles Hamilton's and George Sale's works, Elizabeth Hamilton engages with Muslim culture by referencing John Richardson's *A Dictionary, Persian, Arabic, and English…To Which is Prefixed a Dissertation on the Language, Literature, and Manners of the Eastern Nations* (1777-80).

[21] See, for example, *The Hedaya*, page vi.

[22] During the Battle of Kutra, the combined forces of the Company and *nawab* Shuja-ud-Daula won a decisive victory over the Rohilla Afghans.

[23] This Hindustani phrase translates to "Good sir, your country."

[24] Both pronouns translate into English as a medially respectful form of "your."

[25] Faizullah Khan (c1730-1794) was a prominent leader of Rohilla Afghans in Rampur, North India, during the First Rohilla War.

[26] See this dissertation's fourth chapter for additional discussion of Britons' distrust of Indian intermediaries,.

[27] For further discussion of Hamilton's criticism of the situations of women in India and Britain, see Freeman, Miller, Leask ("Elizabeth Hamilton's *Translation*"), and Lawrenson.

[28] Mellor also details similarities between the perspectives of Wollstonecraft and Hamilton (156-7).

[29] Wollstonecraft also champions mixed schools, though she–unlike Hamilton–does not discuss their abolishment in Scotland and its imperialist implications.

[30] *Sati*, which derives from Sanskrit, refers to a Hindu widow's immolation after her husband's death.
[31] The term *puja* (or Poojah as Hamilton spells it) derives from Sanskrit and denotes religious ceremony or act of worship in South Asia. Throughout *Translation*, Hamilton mocks Britons' irreligiosity through the Indian narrators' descriptions of them as performing the "Poojah of cards" (in other words, worshipping them).
[32] *Translation* offers a more extended portrait of a companionate marriage in depicting an English couple named the Greys (278-9). For a discussion of Hamilton's portrayal of this couple, see Mellor 157.
[33] Miss Ardent argues that "as women will, in the age of reason, probably be found to have the largest share, it is they who will then drive the chariots of state, and guide the steeds of war!" (262). The word "probably" undercuts her seemingly bombastic assertion.
[34] Kālidāsa is most famous for writing the play *Abhijñānaśākuntalam*. This work gained some recognition in eighteenth-century Britain when, in 1789, William Jones produced a translation of it titled *Sacontala: or, the Fatal Ring*.

"This Story Must Be Told in My Own Way": The Traumatized Self in Eliza Fay's *Original Letters from India* (1817)

In his 1925 introduction to Fay's *Original Letters*, E.M. Forster construes her biography as a literary virtue. He does so by claiming that she offers "an account of Calcutta that would never occur to the well-bred, the highly educated, the sincerely pious, or the satisfactorily introduced" (Fay 22). Her narrative does not describe her upbringing, but historical records indicate that she was the daughter of a shipwright from Surrey, England.[1] Moreover, her evident knowledge of clothes-making leads Forster to state that, regarding her education, "[s]omething vaguely commercial is indicated" (Fay 9). This middle-class background engenders in Fay a practical rather than an intellectual perspective on her experiences in India between 1780 and 1817. These experiences include captivity (the result of growing tensions preceding the Second Anglo-Mysore War), struggles to integrate among other Europeans, and efforts to help her husband, Anthony Fay, to join Calcutta's supreme court. After separating from him, Eliza Fay established her own millinery business in Calcutta. Portraying her role in these difficult and sometimes extreme circumstances enables her to broadcast her authorial power. She uses this power to define the specific triumphs and marginalization that she encounters as a white middle-class woman within the colonial context.

Many scholars and editors have highlighted the liveliness of Fay's narrating voice. Building on this scholarship, I will examine how she rhetorically constructs her self-depiction. Commentaries on Fay's work, beginning with an 1818 *Calcutta Gazette* review, praise her "spirited manner" of storytelling (226).[2] No critic before E.M. Forster, however, recognized literary merit in *Original Letters*' approach to life-writing.[3] Fay's writerly capacities have received even greater attention from more recent analyses by

Linda Colley, Felicity Nussbaum, and Nira Gupta-Casale.[4] To examine Fay's artistry, these scholars discuss her relationship to conventions of eighteenth-century captivity narratives, women's travel writing, and epistolary fiction.[5] These studies demonstrate that Fay's participation in the discourses of colonialism and gender connects her to the literary traditions of her day. Conversely, journalist Simon Winchester's introduction to Fay's account emphasizes her distinctiveness. He writes of her letters, "What a world they described, being so very different from the comparatively genteel and comfortably settled life depicted by her other exact contemporary, Jane Austen" (Fay ix). While I agree that Fay's experiences distinguish her, I will focus not on her circumstances but instead on how her use of life-writing complicates the conventional attitudes that she projects.

Her self-depiction foregrounds the limited authority that the colonial context afforded European women.[6] For this reason, Fay evinces the development of racial hierarchies that Robert Travers identifies as emerging within the eighteenth-century Anglo-Indian relationship. She, unlike Hamilton and Gilchrist, does not participate in the field of colonial knowledge production. Nor does Fay endorse that field as does Mahomet. Her narrative, therefore, provides not a transcultural but instead a practical, self-interested perspective on India. To develop that perspective, Fay represents her gender and class identities as marginalizing her. However, as scholars including Nandini Bhattacharya argue, she also distances herself from Indian people generally and from Indian women in particular. In "Behind the Veil: The Many Masks of Subaltern Sexuality," Bhattacharya examines English "eighteenth-century protofeminists' dichotomizing construction and representation of the public and the domestic contexts

and roles of subaltern women in colonial India" (277). Fay's negative image of Indian women, as Bhattacharya notes, probably stems from biographical circumstances such as the infidelity of her husband, Anthony Fay. Building on this idea, I will examine how Fay's depiction of her autobiographical self by turns amplifies and complicates her views on Indian society.

She foregrounds her writerly autonomy in an effort to manage the possibilities and limitations that her subject position represents. Given the varying levels of power that different aspects of her identity afford her, how does she delineate her specific role within the Anglo-Indian relationship? To develop my exploration of this question, I will analyze the forces that she portrays as shaping her gendered and racialized identities. She depicts her authorial persona, which constitutes the focus of the first section, as granting her agency to determine the meaning of the traumas and social difficulties that she portrays. The second section examines the ideological power that Fay wields in portraying her encounters with Indian people even as her relatively low social status restricts her within Calcutta's British community. Although marital separation further constrains her as a woman, the colonial context–as the third and final section details–affords her opportunities to assert moral superiority over Indian women and to subvert certain gender norms. By attending to the specific powers and limitations that Fay depicts herself as exerting, I will complicate her portrayal of herself as one whose experiences consist primarily of suffering and marginalization.

The power that life-writing grants Fay reflects her immersion in a colonial environment that was in the process of establishing racial divisions. These boundaries, as Betty Joseph details, gained ideological power through late eighteenth-century narratives

of trauma. Britons' accounts of the 1756 Black Hole, in particular, foreground their suffering in the colonial context. According to Joseph, the narrative use of sensibility "adds to the event's ideological power in colonial discourse" (Joseph 73). This discourse predominantly constituted the domain of male authors in the mid-eighteenth century. However, as Janet Todd argues, women authors had appropriated the literary field of sensibility by the 1780s. In the imaginations of some female writers, women's authority over the discourse of sensibility expands when "the colonial setting exiles the female subject from the constraining structures of family and society" (Joseph 83). Fay, however, (whose narrative Joseph does not discuss) uses tropes of sensibility to manage the aspects of colonial society that restrict her and cause her to suffer. She also displays her ability to resist conventions of feminine sensibility. Whether embracing or resisting these conventions, the affective responses that Fay depicts presage the amplification of racialized colonial divides later in the nineteenth century.

I

To delineate the power that writing grants Fay over her own affect, she foregrounds the choices that she makes in representing her experiences. She does so using the epistolary technique of writing to the moment.[7] Through portraying the difficulties (including captivity) that afflict her, Fay insists that she regulates her internal state amidst chaos. She therefore "powerfully evoke[s] the sensations of physical and mental suffering" in a style that reflects the flow of her thoughts (Dyson 127).[8] Drawing attention to her narration's digressive quality, Fay asserts, "I detest matter of fact *writing*, almost as much as matter of fact conversation:–yet this story must be told in my own way, or not at all" (129). This statement conveys Fay's view of writing as a means of

controlling her understanding of her experiences in their immediate aftermath. Additionally, she seeks to manage her audience's reception of her story by explaining the reasons for her authorial decisions. She also strives to endear her narrated self to readers by contrasting that character with other, less savvy travelers. Even as her circumstances and her subject position as a middle-class woman author limit her, she projects authority through representing her affective life.

Fay's impulse to display authorial power leads her to represent the early nineteenth century as an auspicious time for female writers. In so doing, she chooses to ignore the control that male editors and printers could exert over women's creations. She instead imaginatively constructs an environment in which women authors flourish. She does so by asserting that, since the eighteenth century, "a considerable change […] in public sentiments" has produced a comparatively favorable climate for female writers (28).[9] To develop this notion, she asserts that "*literary Lords of Creation*" such as Henry Fielding and Tobias Smollett would not criticize later female authors as they did eighteenth-century "learned ladies" (28; emphasis Fay's). This statement captures the ideological power that, as many twentieth-century literary critics have argued, writing afforded women of Fay's time.[10] Eighteenth-century life-writing by women, as Felicity Nussbaum argues, interrogates and resists gendered social constraints (*The Autobiographical Subject*, xiv). Although Fay does not champion such reformatory thinking, she nevertheless recognizes the power that writing affords her. Depicting her experiences allows her to exert agency by rhetorically shaping her reality.

While Fay displays confidence in the position of women writers in the early nineteenth century, the publication history of *Original Letters* illustrates the control that

male printers and editors exercised over the work of nineteenth-century women. Fay, therefore, provides a hopeful rather than a realistic account of the position of female authors in her era. In 1817, a most likely male printer (the first edition does not give the name of a firm) in Calcutta published *Original Letters*.[11] A second edition, edited by a clergyman and historian named Walter K. Firminger, appeared in 1908. He criticizes Fay's work on the grounds that her "manner of writing can scarcely be called a 'style,' and […] she is none too careful of grammar" (xi). To address this problem, Firminger makes changes to her punctuation and syntax. Forster condemns Firminger's edits because they "lead us away from [Fay's] spirit, and occasionally from her meaning" (Fay 8).[12] Wishing to convey a more accurate sense of her subjectivity, Forster's version of *Original Letters* "restore[s] the original text" (8). The involvement of the initial printer, Firminger, and Forster demonstrate the varying degrees to which men have governed the presentation of Fay's work.

Fay offers her strongest display of authorial power in explaining her decision to either omit or delay the revelation of information about her life. She announces her capture by declaring, "It was my determination never to write to you [her family], during the state of dreadful Captivity in which we have long been held, but having hopes of a release" compels her finally to do so (110). This statement draws attention to Fay's ability to control how she mediates her experiences through writing. By announcing that she has withheld details from her audience, she foregrounds her creative agency. This narrative choice broadcasts Fay's commitment to scrupulously managing her presentation of her story. The autobiographical mode thus grants her the autonomy to derive meaning from her own experiences. Using this power, she elects to portray herself as an assailed

but indomitable figure. She therefore does not prize *Original Letters* because it gathers her first-hand observations of India. Instead, she values her text because it allows her to project a rhetorically constructed sense of dominance over the destabilizing and, in some instances, evidently traumatizing circumstances that shape her experience of colonialism.

Fay continues to emphasize her creative agency by referencing the gulf between the experiences of her narrated self and those of her audience.[13] By so doing, she betrays some anxiety about the capacity of the epistolary form to accurately convey her experiences. Having escaped captivity, she writes that "[a]fter wading through my melancholy journal, you will be enabled in some measure to form an idea of the joy that fills my breast on contemplating the contrast between my present situation, and that from which I have so recently escaped" (151). This statement hopes that Fay's letters enable her audience to imagine how she feels upon leaving captivity. Nevertheless, she recognizes that her writing may only expand her readers' understanding of her life "in some measure[.]" Circumstances such as a lack of direct experience in India (as might affect Britain-based readers) or blindness to the possible dangers of travel for non-elites (as wealthy Britons in Calcutta could exemplify) potentially distance Fay's audience from her. In an effort to bridge this gulf, *Original Letters* seeks to win readers to its protagonist's side by insisting on her ingenuity and resilience.

Crafting letters affords Fay the power to mitigate the distress that captivity inflicts on her. While captured, she asserts, "I will here by way of relaxation transcribe a few passages from my Journal […]; reserving to myself, however, the option of resuming the narrative style, whenever I shall deem it necessary" (132). The technique of writing to the moment here allows Fay to portray transcription as an activity that has a calming effect

on her given its mechanical nature. However, the (in her view) comparatively less autonomous and more rote process of transcription evidently causes her some discomfort. She expresses this feeling by insisting that she will return to "the narrative style" when she feels able to do so. This assertion might appear counterintuitive because, as Forster declares, "one would not expect her to reserve options" considering her captive state at the time of writing (Fay 13). Forster nevertheless notes that "the remark is typical of her" given that it foregrounds her individual agency as an author. In Fay's view, writing enables her to manipulate her relationship to her actual circumstances as they occur and thus constitutes a central act of identity formation.

Making another choice that directs her self-representation, Fay utilizes the epistolary conceit that she writes to a familial audience. She addresses this readership directly in announcing her and Anthony Fay's separation. To introduce this topic, she declares that "You must have perceived that the style of my letters for some months past has been constrained, nor could it possibly be otherwise" (196). This statement asks readers to search previous letters for clues about the Fays' marital difficulties. More particularly, Fay claims that not only the events she relates but also the "style" of her writing attests to the problems in her and Anthony Fay's relationship. She remarks, by way of illustrating the influence of her affective responses on her prose, that her despair regarding his increasingly inconsiderate and socially harmful conduct led her "to enlarge on less important subjects" (196). By thus referencing the language as well as the content of previous letters, the narrating voice foregrounds its artistry. This artistry prepares readers, in Fay's view, to receive news of a destabilizing event that distinguishes her life

and experiences in India. She details the considerations that guide how she reveals information to emphasize her skill as a narrator.

Addressing her letters to a familial audience allows Fay, in addition to controlling her presentation of her experiences, to adopt a tone of conspiratorial intimacy. This tone creates a sense of national exclusivity between Fay and her English audience. However, her narration ultimately reveals her dependence on Indian people. After criticizing her servants in an effort to entertain her correspondents, Fay asserts, "As if these people were aware that I am writing about them, they have very obligingly furnished me with another anecdote" (180). This statement portrays disparagement of Indian people as a means of strengthening the autobiographical subject's bonds with her family members in England. By noting the servants' exclusion from an epistolary conversation between English correspondents, Fay reaffirms her national identity. The strength of that identity comes into question, however, through her mention of her physical proximity to Indian people and consequently her distance from England. Given their presence in her home, the servants' actions shape the domestic environment that Fay represents in her letters. The servants enable her to create by "very obligingly furnish[ing]" her with material to recount. Her conspiratorial tone fails to obscure their influence over her writing.

By projecting a sense of intimacy with her audience, Fay also attempts to direct their compassion toward her. She does so through depicting the imagined affective responses of family members to events that she relates. When a fellow Englishman–named Mr. Church–exhibits kindness by affirming Fay's belief that Hyder Ali orchestrated her capture, she compares Mr. Church to her father. She states, "Just thus would my father have treated a distressed countryman–methinks I see his benevolent

heart venting itself in tears of sympathy at the recital. Precious tears! Why am I not permitted to mingle mine with them?" (144). By invoking an individual father-daughter relationship, Fay uses conventions of literary sensibility to present herself as a figure the story of whose exceptional experiences should move her entire audience. Additionally, the mention of "tears of sympathy" offers readers a model for reacting properly to the narrated self's plight.[14] Seeking to manage her audience's response to her account allows Fay to assert autonomy within the chaotic, disempowering situation of captivity.

Fay's rhetorically constructed tie to readers also drives her to encourage them to seek information about India from Orientalist studies. In referencing these sources, Fay distinguishes her perspective on Indian culture from those of scholars. She, unlike them, derives her views not from rigorous learning but instead from visceral, unsystematically gathered, and individual observations. She writes, "I now propose, having full leisure to give you some account of the East Indian customs and ceremonies, such as I have been able to collect, but it must be considered as a mere sketch, to point you to further researches" (202). This statement betrays a reluctance on her part to write in a generalizing ethnographic vein. For this reason, Fay cites her own knowledge, whether acquired secondhand or through direct experience, of Indian culture as well as other (potentially better educated) authors' works. These "researches" ostensibly employ a more deliberate methodology than Fay's often chaotic circumstances allow her to use. Though this reason drives her to endorse scholarship on India, Fay broadcasts her own lack of interest in that field by declining to cite any specific texts. This lack of interest determines the imaginative relationship that she constructs with her correspondents.

To define her narrated self, Fay contrasts this character with another British female figure, Mrs. Tulloh, who takes excessive risks. Tulloh "had frequently, in the course of the voyage, expressed a violent desire for some species of adventure,–a passion for some romantic danger, on which she could descant hereafter" (111). This description portrays Tulloh as a figure who tenaciously pursues dangerous and irrational schemes. Through this characterization, Fay implies that Tulloh seeks from real life the same level of excitement that eighteenth-century audiences pursued by reading extravagant fictions. This desire for thrills leads Tulloh to rashly demand a chair on deck so that she may witness rumored maritime hostilities (which never actually materialize). The narrating voice judges this behavior negatively by asserting that the narrated self has "no ambition to play the Heroine in this way" (112). By labeling Tulloh a would-be "[h]eroine[,]" Fay reinforces her association of that character with fictional tropes. The narrating voice further distinguishes Tulloh from the narrated self by noting that, while the former seeks adventure, the latter prepares to help the ship's surgeon (112). This juxtaposition depicts Fay as a sensible rather than an incautious traveler.

Fay portrays a different foil for herself, named Mr. Hare, to demonstrate that her travels have given her a flexible attitude toward national identity. The possibility of an attack on Fay and her fellow passengers (and soon-to-be captives) owing to their shared British background drives them to pretend to be French. However, Hare reveals their true identities to Ayres in "a sudden fit of Patriotism, aided by an irresistible fondness for exhibition" (122). This description ridicules Hare's patriotism by characterizing it as an egotistical, unpredictable, and therefore possibly dangerous quality. Placing even greater emphasis on Hare's foolishness, the narrating voice observes his "excess of joy and

confidence" in Ayres (123). This "confidence[,]" which arises merely from a shared national origin, ultimately proves disastrous when Ayres orchestrates the captivity of his ship's passengers including Hare. This circumstance reveals that, while Tulloh's conduct manifests only her personal desire for excitement, Hare's comparably theatrical behavior has graver ramifications. His reckless behavior places national loyalties above those to his fellow travelers. In mocking Hare, Fay rebukes his stubborn Anglo-centrism.

Eliza Fay presents Anthony Fay as another foil for herself by exhibiting her intelligence as a traveler. Her narrated self displays this quality to a much greater extent than does her husband. However, her status as a woman precludes her from using her acumen to change her fate. She further emphasizes this circumstance by depicting herself as exhibiting more savviness than not only Anthony Fay but also John the Gunner. She deems him "a prudent steady man," but he ultimately endangers the lives of the Fays and their fellow travelers by allowing one hundred and fifty sepoys to board the ship on which they are traveling. Learning this news drives Eliza Fay to state, "'Oh Mr. F–' […] this is a very improbable story, for God's sake suffer not these people to enter the ship, if you can avoid it; otherwise we are ruined. I see plainly this is a second Suez business" (114).[15] The narrating voice accentuates the force of the narrated self's speech by relating it in direct discourse (though not entirely between quotation marks). Her response nevertheless has no effect, and her powers of judgment cannot alter the decisions of either corrupt or foolish men.

Eliza Fay further distinguishes herself from her husband by contrasting their social abilities. In so doing, she portrays herself as overcoming the threat that her marriage poses to her standing within the larger community of Calcutta-based Britons.

Eliza Fay and Anthony Fay travel together to Calcutta in the hopes of forwarding his legal career, but she declares soon after their arrival that she "had great reason to be dissatisfied with Mr. Fay's conduct" (190). His failure to show sufficient deference to Elijah Impey, the chief justice of Bengal's supreme court, especially perturbs her. Nevertheless, Eliza Fay notes that her friend, Lady Chambers, "continues on my account to show [Anthony Fay] attention as do the Jacksons and some few others" (197). This statement credits Eliza Fay with enabling her husband to attain some social status. Despite this circumstance, Lady Chambers expresses trepidation about inviting the pair to her child's christening because Impey will also attend. This episode reveals that Anthony Fay's actions impede not only his own but also his wife's efforts to integrate into Calcutta's British community. His unskillful conduct renders Eliza Fay's success in making connections particularly impressive.

By drawing attention to her authorial choices, Fay recognizes her ability as a writer to define her role within the colonial context. She represents herself as a figure who experiences acute suffering and seeks to mitigate that suffering through writing. Lacking official power owing to her gender and class positions, she foregrounds her ability to exert control over her circumstances by narrating them. Fay's sense of writerly autonomy contrasts not only with the limitations that she portrays herself as enduring but also with the circumstances of publication that posthumously impinged on her work.[16] For this reason, her depiction of the early nineteenth century as an era in which female authors thrive reflects not the realities of book production and dissemination but instead her desired reality. Fay additionally exerts her creative will by deploying self-consciously authorial techniques. These techniques include explaining her use of writing to manage

her affect and contrasting her narrated self favorably with other characters. In using these writerly strategies, she combats the loss of agency that situations including captivity impose on her.

II

Fay channels her awareness of her writerly power into depictions of the constraints as well as the freedoms that she experiences in the colonial context. Her subject position as a white woman grants her authority over Indian servants. Nevertheless, her middle-class background marginalizes her to some extent within Calcutta's emerging British community. Fay's portrayals of her encounters with Indians and Britons center her individual subjectivity. Consequently, she does not demonstrate the interest in mutual exchange that "new imperial history" views as the defining feature of the eighteenth-century colonial relationship. She instead expresses racialized fear. Therefore, she provides an early example of British attitudes that would later (toward the middle of the nineteenth century) inform the Company's imposition of greater control over Indian soldiers and civilians. Fay endorses colonial hierarchies by disparaging Indian people even as she laments that those hierarchies preclude her from gaining a more secure position within the society of Calcutta-based Britons.

Traumatic circumstances instill in Fay the vividly negative impression of Indian soldiers that she relates using the discourse of sensibility. Before she reaches India, a large group of sepoys instigate the plan to capture Fay and her shipmates by entering the boat on which they are traveling.[17] The narrated self "beheld through [the door the sepoys'] terrific countenances, and heard them incessantly calling '*ao*, *ao*,' (in English come)" (118). As a result of this episode, Fay declares that the Hindustani "word [*ao*] has

made such an impression on me which is indescribable. I can never hear it pronounced on the most common occasion, without trembling" (118). Rather than the morpheme "*ao*" itself (which, as this passage indicates, does not carry an inherently menacing meaning), the soldiers' appearances and their manner of repeatedly commanding the Fays to leave their room incites the narrated self's terror. The narrating voice evokes this sentiment obliquely by highlighting the "terrific[ness]" of the sepoys' demeanors and the "indescribab[ility]" of Fay's response to them. Through this account, she attributes her fear of another culture to the tumultuousness of her first encounter with radically unfamiliar faces, sensations, and the Hindustani language.

Although frightening and specific circumstances terrify Fay, her response stems from a pre-judgment of the sepoys (though not necessarily of Indians in general). She asserts that, before the soldiers arrived, "I clung round my husband and begged for God's sake, that he would not admit them; for what could be expected from such wretches but the most shocking treatment" (117). This statement rejects the possibility that the sepoys have any capacity to respect their antagonists. Underscoring this view, Fay refers to the soldiers as "wretches" and thereby invokes dehumanizing eighteenth-century stereotypes of Indian people. She conjures these prejudices in describing soldiers whom she knows to be sent by Sardar Khan–the governor of Calicut and an ally of Hyder Ali's against the Company. Therefore, her portrayal of the sepoys does not necessarily betray antipathy on her part toward all Indians. Instead, her anxieties spring from her accurate understanding of Anglo-Indian political tensions in 1780. This understanding drives Fay to fear a specific group of Indians whose professional affiliation puts their interests at odds with those of Britons.

Along with worries about political tensions, racialized antipathy may permeate Fay's response to the sepoys. She initially describes them as having "terrific countenances" (119). Later, while they guard the room in which they have confined her, she wishes to sleep unseen by them. Anthony Fay helps her to do so, "perceiving that the sight of them prevented [her] from taking that repose, so necessary to recruit [her] poor worn out frame" (121). In this situation, Eliza Fay leaves unspecified the aspect of the sepoys' looks that troubles her. Her fear could plausibly arise from the sternness that they would likely project while managing captives. However, the word "terrific" connotes something beyond sternness or even anger. The unfamiliarity of the sepoys' appearances, rather than those appearances in and of themselves, upsets Fay. Though she does not mention it here, perhaps the color of the sepoys' skin contributes to her sense of their otherness. This possibility draws out the racialized dimensions of Fay's antipathy toward the sepoys.

Her considerable experience of India over time does not lessen Fay's racialized discomfort with that country's native population. This unease, as scholars including Nandini Bhattacharya detail, betrays Fay's anxiety within the colonial environment. Building on this notion, I assert that the narrating voice expresses an explicitly racialized fear of Indian people by depicting–in an account of a later journey to India–the native population of Bombay. Fay does so by comparing and contrasting that city with England. She states, "[T]he many fine ships building and repairing with the number of Europeans walking about, almost persuaded me, I was at home, til the dark complexion of the workmen destroyed the pleasing illusion" (233). The activities of the shipyard appear reassuringly expected, but the appearances of those who perform these activities produce

a sense of novel discomfort. The mere sight of Europeans, however, delights Fay even as she recognizes that that they provide only a "pleasing illusion" of familiarity. Rather than the flora, fauna, climate, or customs of India, the presence there of a large population of dark-skinned people prevents Fay from ever conceiving of that country as her home.

Perhaps as a result of her prejudices against Indian people and her resulting discomfort in the contact zone, Fay imagines that Indians have a racialized hatred of Europeans. She writes that, upon arriving at Calicut as captives, she and her companions "were surrounded by all the mob of Calicut, who seemed to take pleasure in beholding the distress of white people, those constant objects of their envy and detestation" (120). This statement assigns to Indians, on seemingly little evidence, malicious feelings toward Europeans. Fay construes this animus in racialized terms by highlighting the color of the Europeans' skin. However, the word "seemed" introduces into the passage a note of uncertainty. This verb betrays that Fay instinctively, though probably to a limited degree, questions her ability to fully understand the motives and behaviors of an unfamiliar population. For this reason, the passage's attribution of racialized enmity to Indians appears a retroactive justification of her assumption that the Indians' expressions convey "pleasure[.]" Laying bare this thought process enables Fay to project some awareness that sweeping generalizations do not accurately represent the population of India.

Despite projecting a generally negative attitude toward Indian people, Fay nevertheless expresses sympathy toward them when they share with her an antagonist. Fay condemns Captain Ayres, who helped to orchestrate her captivity, for "advising his General, who is Governor of this Province [Madras], to massacre all the natives by way of quelling a rebellion which had arisen" (116). Later, Ayres and others seek to "cut off

several of the more opulent natives *secretly*, and possess themselves of their effects" (187). These two examples foreground the captain's mistreatment of Indians from high and low classes alike. However, rather than illuminate the suffering of specific groups of Indians, Fay emphasizes the villainy that–in her experience–Ayres first displays by harming Europeans. This circumstance does not negate the compassion that she exhibits toward the rebels by lamenting their "hard fate" (116). With this statement, Fay expresses muted support for an assertion of autonomy by a particular group of Indian people because they share with her a common enemy. Repeatedly portraying Ayres as a villain thus enables *Original Letters* to draw parallels between the status that its autobiographical subject and various groups of Indian people share as his victims.

Fay exhibits some tolerance of the religious customs of Indians through her approach to overseeing Muslim servants. She thereby distinguishes herself within Calcutta's British community. When tensions arise because the servants' beliefs preclude them from serving pork, Fay deems this practice bizarre but nevertheless allows it. The narrating voice states, "This being represented as a religious prejudice, I felt it right to give way, however ridiculous it might appear" (186). This description broadcasts at once an exasperated, negative judgment of the servants and an overriding reluctance to interfere with their faith. By thus projecting an attitude of resignation, Fay offers an alternative to the view of Islam as a tyrannical, dangerous, and therefore intolerable religion that pervaded eighteenth-century British thought on India. She views the servants' refusal to handle pork not as a sign that they possess evil characters but instead as a bearable difficulty for her. Fay's sense of morality–and perhaps of Christianity–dictates that it is "right" to respect the tenets of others' religions, however grudgingly.

Despite her own values, pressures from Calcutta's British community lead Fay to change her treatment of her Muslim servants. She describes these employees' refusal to serve pork as "an inconvenience we felt in common with the whole settlement, except the gentlemen of the army who had long before emancipated themselves from any such restraint" (186). The word "inconvenience" conveys Fay's irritation as well as her reluctance to intervene. Nevertheless, British households including hers soon follow the officers in compelling their servants to accommodate European diets. This process appears liberatory in Fay's account because it drives Calcutta-based Britons to band together to promote their own interests. By demanding that their Muslim servants serve pork, the wider British community, like the officers, rejects the limitation of accommodating others' religious practices. This action forces Fay, despite her initial tolerance of the servants' religious prohibition, into a consensus. By allowing herself to join in this agreement, Fay reveals her overriding desire not to alter her lifestyle in accordance with her new environment and social circumstances.

The servants' ultimate capitulation reveals to Fay the strength of her domestic authority. When Fay's Muslim employees return, they "[acknowledge] that the only penalty incurred by touching the plates was the necessity of bathing afterwards: from this you may judge of their excessive idleness" (186). This statement implies that the servants manipulate Fay by exaggerating the seriousness of their objections to serving pork. Based on this notion, Fay concludes that "excessive idleness" rather than sincere faith motivates their conduct. This belief contrasts sharply with her initial willingness to tolerate the servants' religious observances. Fay's perspective changes because, with encouragement from the rest of the British community in Calcutta, she learns that managing a household

in India requires the steadfast imposition of British mores. This message receives further emphasis from the narrating voice's assertion that "all now goes on well and we hear no more of their objection–" (186). The dash that ends this statement undermines its seemingly conclusive tone. Recognizing that she has betrayed her first impulse to tolerate the servants' beliefs, Fay cannot feel entirely secure in her assertion of domestic authority.

In her depiction of Hindus, Fay references but also strays beyond the domestic context. Her interactions with Muslims, by contrast, occur only within her home. This circumstance reveals that she displays more interest–sometimes in a derogatory manner and sometimes with muted positivity–in Hindu than in Muslim religious practices. She expresses this interest by describing temples as well as her vague notions of Hindu customs. By contrast, she only references the servants' adherence to Islam when it interferes with her domestic life. She also gains information about Hindu society from her Banyan (a term that describes Bengali men who worked as intermediaries for British businesses and individuals). His religious practices, unlike those of her Muslim servants, evidently do not interfere with her household management. For this reason, she refrains from criticizing his Hinduism although she elsewhere disparages that religion as encouraging fanaticism. Additionally, Hindu servants provoke her by displaying what she perceives as duplicitousness. Her understanding that their religion encourages placidity, however, precludes her from cultivating an entirely negative view of them.

Fay absorbs sensationalistic ideas about Hindu practices because she does not engage directly with them but instead learns about them through others. For example, in describing a "distant view" of three temples to Jagannatha in Calcutta, she relates

information of which an unspecified source has "credibly assured" her (171). The fact that Fay has only observed these temples at a remove, she argues, does not lessen the veracity of her account. According to her, a figure of Jagannatha regularly parades through the streets in "an enormous car, with a great number of wheels beneath which his votaries prostrate themselves" (171). These votaries feel "firmly persuaded that by sacrificing their lives, they shall pass immediately after death into a state of everlasting felicity" (171). With this description, Fay offers a gruesome portrait of Jagannatha worship as a form of idolatry that engenders a desire for death. By invoking an unnamed outside authority to corroborate this account, she projects a desire to authenticate her alarming claim. She resorts to this rhetorical gesture given her lack of experience with Hinduism.

Fay ends her description of the temples to Jagannatha in a conventional assertion of Christianity's superiority over other religions. Nevertheless, she avoids championing the forcible conversion of Hindus. She criticizes devotees of Jagannatha for committing "gross acts of folly and superstition" (171). Although the Company banned missionary activity in its Indian territories until 1813, Fay's letter of 1780 looks forward to this circumstance by invoking conversion. She states, "May it please the Almighty disposer of events to hasten the period of [Hindus'] emancipation, that all mankind may hail each other as brothers, and we may be brought together as 'one fold, under one shepherd'" (171). This passage, by imagining a unified "fold," asserts that Indians' embrace of Christianity will strengthen Anglo-Indian ties. The reference to John 10:16, in which Jesus describes himself as the caretaker of all people, provides scriptural support for Fay's hope that Indians will convert. Nevertheless, she implies that God alone (rather

than an earthly agent such as herself or another Protestant) should catalyze the Hindus' adoption of Christianity. Using the language of spiritual community enables her to promote the voluntary rather than forced renunciation of Hinduism.

In depicting Hindu society, Fay displays attitudes of both attraction and repulsion. A complaint about Indian servants, for example, includes the assertion that, "I wish these people would not vex one by their tricks; for there is something in the mild countenance and gentle manners of the Hindoos that interests me exceedingly" (162-3). This statement's position at the end of a paragraph grants it a deceptive air of finality. While the first clause depicts all Indians as practicing dishonesty, the second clause betrays a more ambiguous perspective by identifying as "interesting" an unnamed "something" about Hindus. This trajectory from a seemingly definitive generalization to a more open-ended notion illustrates her potential to display toward an unfamiliar culture both aversion and curiosity. By exhibiting these disparate attitudes, Fay reveals an awareness that her generally negative sentiments toward Indian society weaken and preclude her from acting on the curiosity that she also feels. This dynamic, like the marginalization that she at times experiences within Calcutta's British community, alienates her from Anglo-Indian society while also revealing the power that her race grants her in the colonial context.

Regarding the constraints on Britons in Calcutta, Fay depicts this community as one governed by arbitrary power. She highlights this circumstance by expressing concern that her husband–and perhaps she as well–will suffer because he has resisted measures of Hastings's government. Among other unspecified deeds, Anthony Fay hosted in his and Eliza Fay's home meetings to organize support against a proposed tax on houses (196).

Such acts drive her to assert that "the character of our *chief ruler* being known;–he will never desert a friend or forgive an enemy; what chance then has an individual who rashly incurs his resentment of escaping its baneful effects?" (196). Fay portrays Hastings as an exceptionally (and perhaps unduly) powerful leader who holds positive and negative attitudes toward others with equal rigidity. Although Anthony Fay worked for the ostensibly independent Supreme Court rather than the Company itself, Eliza Fay believes that he nevertheless has a responsibility not to offend senior members of that institution.[18] The Company's growing power during the second half of the eighteenth century dictates that only their support can enable Britons, particularly non-elite ones, to exercise self-determination in the colonial context.

Anthony Fay's political schemes prove increasingly dangerous to Eliza Fay when they involve her immediate circle and thereby threaten her prospects for social advancement. She learns that he "has contrived to get himself appointed to" bring documents to England in order to forward a plan, instigated by Colonel Watson, to have Elijah Impey impeached (198). The word "contrived" hints at Anthony Fay's propensities for slyness and ingratiation. Beyond using such implicitly judgmental language, the narrating voice explicitly condemns the impeachment scheme. Fay asserts that "The duty of a wife which is paramount to all other civil obligations compels me to silently witness what is beyond my power to counteract; although the character of a highly revered friend [Sir Robert Chambers] is obliquely glanced at" (199). This statement reveals that, while Fay recognizes her marital obligations, she feels more loyalty to Chambers than she does to her husband because Chambers's wife has helped her to advance socially. The bond of

marriage–though weakened at this point in the narrative by separation–restricts Fay's autonomy by barring her from acting in her own perceived best interest.

Expanding on her portrait of Calcutta's British community, Fay describes their Christmas celebrations using a Hindustani phrase. Doing so enables her to foreground the involvement of Indian people in Britons' festivities and her acculturation to Anglo-Indian life. The narrating voice relates that servants "bring presents of fish and fruit from the Banian down to the lowest menial […] as a compliment to our *burrah din* (great day)" (191).[19] In this statement, the presence of both a Hindustani phrase ("*burrah din*") and its English translation ("great day") illustrates that Britons and Indians mutually participate in the Christmas celebrations. Fay's deployment of Hindustani also underscores that she absorbed some of that language although she had no connection to either the field of colonial knowledge production or, more specifically, to scholars who studied Indian languages. By contrast with such figures, she potentially uses Hindustani not to encourage Britons to learn Indian languages but instead to mock her servants for not speaking English. Given her generally negative attitude toward Indian people, Fay might resent their language for reminding her that she remains in an unfamiliar environment. Perhaps she highlights their use of Hindustani to project mastery in a situation that discomfits her.

The exchange of gifts among Indians and Britons described above invokes resentment in Fay.[20] While she generally foregrounds the trials and restrictions that she faces as a middle-class woman traveler, her portrayal of her duty to give presents to her servants reveals the position of comparative advantage that she occupies within the colonial environment. She therefore begrudges the sense of obligation that Christmas

celebrations in Calcutta impose on Britons. Among them and Indians, the exchange of gifts appears mutual though unequal to Fay because this practice compels Britons "in many instances to make a return, perhaps beyond the real value" of what they receive (191). Through this statement, Fay betrays her irritation with what she perceives as the pretense of reciprocity. The colonial context, in Fay's view, precludes truly mutual exchange by engendering asymmetrical power dynamics among Britons and Indians. These dynamics emerge with particular severity between servants and their employers. Within these relations, Fay's socially mandated duty to give presents aggravates her because it foregrounds the power that she attains through her proximity to colonial authority.

Fay's traumatic experience of captivity renders her an outsider among Calcutta-based British women. When Mrs. Hastings insists that Fay holds some responsibility for her own capture, the narrating voice laments that "Alas! Mrs. H could not know what you are all well acquainted with, that I undertook the journey with a view of saving my husband from destruction" (175). The exclamation "Alas!" projects Fay's frustration with Mrs. Hastings's criticism. In the moment, the narrated self cannot refute this censure given her inferior social status. The narrating voice, however, retroactively challenges Mrs. Hastings's comment by appealing to its audience. Fay confides in them because they "are well acquainted with" her reasons for traveling to India. Through this assertion, the author invokes the sense of intimacy that she strives to cultivate with readers by deploying the autobiographical mode. This mode enables Fay to foreground the social restrictions that inhibit her as a non-elite woman.

Despite her inferior status, Fay shares a nationality with other Englishwomen and therefore may rhetorically exclude Mrs. Hastings (who was German) from their group. Mrs. Hastings's style of dressing, according to Fay, distinguishes her even from other elite women in Calcutta's British community. This distinctiveness causes no overt tension because "as a foreigner you know, she may be excused for not strictly conforming to our fashions; besides, her rank in the settlement sets her above the necessity of studying any thing but the whim of the moment" (Fay 174). With this assertion, Fay emphasizes Mrs. Hastings's authority while also broadcasting her own superior understanding of English mores. This understanding enables the narrating voice to hint that Mrs. Hastings's choice not to adopt British fashions unwisely flaunts her arbitrarily acquired position. Fay cannot safely denigrate anyone associated with senior Company officials given her comparatively lower social standing. Nevertheless, she wields her familiarity with English customs to mark Mrs. Hastings as a perpetual outsider in Calcutta's British community.

Although Fay cultivates strong relations in Calcutta, the dissolution of her and Anthony Fay's marriage renders her social position precarious though not hopeless. She declares that, after their separation, only a few of her connections "allow [her] to call on them without formality, the very idea of which is hateful to [her] at present" (210). This assertion betrays that, in her newly vulnerable–and perhaps denigrated–state, the formal gatherings that Eliza Fay used to attend have given way to more intimate, relaxed opportunities for affirming social bonds. This style of interaction, though it might hinder the development of new connections, benefits Fay by enabling her to deepen her existing ties. However, she expresses discomfort with these new circumstances by foregrounding

her dependence on her social circle. Fay's assertion that her friends "allow" her to visit them casually portrays them as merely tolerating her presence. Further emphasizing her friends' role in according her status, she asks, "[W]hat place do I now hold in the Society in which I am permitted to mix?" (210). This despairing, timid question elucidates Fay's concern that separating from Anthony Fay might diminish her ability to continue improving her social standing.

Fay not only works to preserve her status but also attains the freedom to act entrepreneurially through cultivating ties with British men in Calcutta society. After briefly returning to England to recover from her separation, she returns to Calcutta because she views that city as "the most likely theatre of exertion" (229). This description aligns the pursuit of business opportunities with an art form that requires collaboration. Through this comparison, the narrating voice presents the narrated self's pursuit of financial independence as a relational endeavor. Fay emphasizes this notion by relating that Mr. Berry, a male acquaintance of hers, teaches her how to keep account books once she decides to open a millinery business. In addition to this personal connection, the narrated self relies on the support of male creditors. Fay emphasizes the power that she maintains in her relationship with these men by noting that "such was the confidence reposed in my integrity, that everything remained in my own hands" (239). This statement reveals that she achieves financial autonomy by gaining trust from men. Therefore, social acumen not only allows Fay to maintain some of her status after separation but also facilitates her entrepreneurism.

Through her self-representation, Fay accentuates both the possibilities and the constraints that her subject position entails. Her identity as a middle-class white woman

within the colonial context leads her to view herself as exercising autonomy while also encountering gender- and status-based limitations. Nevertheless, Fay presents herself as an individual even as she conforms in some respects to a type. She uses her authorial power to foreground her subjectivity whether the situation that she depicts challenges or bolsters her ability to self-determine. Given her racial identity, she wields ideological authority in transmitting conventionally derogatory messages about Indian people and their religions. She also conveys the domestic power that she attains as an employer of Indian servants. Within the context of Calcutta's British community, however, she asserts that she struggles to achieve status. These self-representations amplify the aspects of Fay's background that situate her within various groups. Additionally, life-writing affords her the creative agency to represent her individual perceptions and affective experiences and thus complicate the conventional dimensions of her views.

III

While Fay portrays herself as experiencing autonomy as well as limitations within the Anglo-Indian relationship, her depictions of Indian women illustrate more forcefully her ideological power as a white woman author. Fay, unlike Hamilton, does not connect the differing oppressions of Indian and British women but instead foregrounds her own suffering. To distance herself from British and Indian women alike, Fay insists that she struggles to perform wifely obedience. She also expresses pleasure that travel affords her opportunities to deviate from gendered European norms of dress and behavior. Fay's self-depiction thus encompasses by turns resistance and conformity to her subject position as a woman. Nevertheless, she broadcasts the power that her racial identity grants her by discussing a 1794 court case that accused her of organizing the enslavement of her former

servant, Kate Johnson. In depicting this situation, Fay emphasizes its inconvenience to her and thereby presents herself as the aggrieved party. She strives to exculpate herself while, by contrast, the Company's official record of the case offers multiple perspectives on her conduct.[21] Although she failed to evade culpability for her treatment of Johnson, she nevertheless exerts agency by narrating her relationship to gender in the colonial context.

Fay speculates about Indian women by imagining parallels between the gendered oppression that English and Indian wives each experience. According to the narrating voice, "so much are we the slaves of habit *every where* that were it necessary for a woman's reputation to burn herself in England, many a one […] would yet mount the funeral pire" (203). The women of India and England, as Fay emphasizes by italicizing the words "*every where,*" have severely limited options that render them dependent on men for financial and social stability. Beyond drawing this connection between the situations of Indian and English women, the narrating voice distinguishes these two groups from each other. The image of Englishwomen committing *sati*, I argue, aims to shock British readers because contemporary popular sources disparaged this practice as a chief sign of Indian backwardness. In order to invoke this notion, Fay remarks that England has "a religion infinitely more pure than that of India" because Christianity condemns suicide (203). This statement renders the image of Englishwomen committing *sati* a particularly jarring one. Fay deploys this disturbing notion to heighten her criticism of English and Indian women alike for blindly following patriarchal customs.

Regarding her own marital struggles, she portrays them as the antithesis of such unthinking obeisance. She defines her particular relationship to her subject position as a

woman by insisting that she, in contrast with other women in Britain and India, may only conform to gendered expectations of submissiveness through constant exertion. Fay asserts,

> The most specious sacrifices are not always the greatest; she who wages war with a naturally petulant temper, who practices a rigid self-denial, endures without complaining and unkindness, infidelity, extravagance, meanness or scorn, of the man to whom she has given a tender and confiding heart, and for whose happiness and well being in life all the powers of her mind are engaged;–is ten times more of a heroine than the slave of bigotry and superstition. (203)

In this passage, Fay obliquely references (by mentioning "infidelity") the real-life circumstance that perhaps incited her antipathy toward Indian women. Her account, however, has more than autobiographical significance because it projects a broader critique of Indian and British cultures. According to the narrating voice, men who praise "slave[s] of bigotry and superstition" as "heroine[s]" fail to appreciate a more genuine kind of wifely fidelity. Fay insists that a woman who, rather than easily submit to a husband's will, actively "wages war" with volatile emotions deserves admiration and respect. This ostensible self-portrait might appear surprising given that the narrated self, when interacting with her husband, appears not to "[endure] without complaining and unkindness" but instead to speak and act assertively. Nevertheless, this passage recalls the gendered dynamics that, in episodes such as the sepoys' boarding of the ship, restrict Fay's actions within the colonial context.

Her understanding of the role of Hindu women in Bengali society stems not only from her assumptions about Indian culture but also from others' accounts. Fay's narration

of these stories demonstrates her wish to understand more about Bengali women. For example, she relates and then builds on her Banyan's description his happiness with his wife (207). Such indirect encounters with Hindu women spark Fay's interest. Indulging her curiosity, she speculates that Bengali Hindu women respond to polygamy by using makeup "to render them more completely fascinating […]–the motive being to secure the affections of a husband, or counteract the plans of a rival" (207). The seeming definitiveness of the phrase "the motive being" masks Fay's lack of actual engagement with Bengali women. The dash before this phrase accords it extra emphasis and thereby highlights *Original Letters*' drive to explain the women's ostensible behavior. In seeking to engage with Bengali society, Fay draws conclusions even about the aspects of it that remain inaccessible to her.

Though she has seemingly few encounters with Indian women, she describes her relationship with a particular one–a former servant named Kate Johnson–as provoking her. Johnson, as Robert Brooke (Governor of St. Helena) details in the Company's official record of this legal episode, accused Fay in 1794 of having orchestrated her enslavement. This event occurred when Fay left India in 1782 after separating from Anthony Fay. According to Johnson, Fay abandoned her at St. Helena because Johnson knew that Fay "was intimate with the Doctor of the Ship going home" (2*r*). Johnson, after Fay's departure, was "sold to several Masters back and forward since, and very ill used" (2*r*). To defend herself, Fay claims that she gave Johnson to a woman–Betsy Mason–in St. Helena "as a present […] but did not suppose [Johnson] would have been sold" there (2*v*). The description of Johnson as a "present" to Mason characterizes Johnson as Fay's property. According to the court record, therefore, Fay recognizes her power over

Johnson's fate despite her assertion that she did not intend for Johnson to become enslaved.

Betsy Mason's father, like Fay, attempts to defend his family's treatment of Johnson by pleading ignorance. While Fay insists that she did not anticipate Johnson's enslavement, Mason claims that he did not intentionally flout St. Helena laws regarding slavery. Fay's self-exculpation, therefore, differs from Mason's because it seeks to distance her from the institution of slavery. In the court record, Mason asserts that "it was the custom of the Island to take People as Slaves without making application to the Governor or Council, that had he known it to have been improper he would not have done it" (2*v*). This statement contradicts Fay's account by revealing that, in Mason's view, she sold Johnson to his family. With this understanding, Mason defends himself against the accusation that he disobeyed St. Helena's legal protocol for owning an enslaved person. He justifies his behavior on the grounds that it reflects common practice in St. Helena. By contrast, Fay challenges Johnson's account of the nature of the former's treatment of the latter. This discrepancy between Mason's and Fay's narratives demonstrates that she recognizes to a greater extent than he does the evils of slavery although neither advocate against those evils.

To emphasize the injustice of Johnson's enslavement, the court record underscores her mother's status as a free woman who may have had European ancestry. This rhetorical choice foregrounds Johnson's distinctiveness from African as well as other Indian people enslaved on St. Helena. In noting her mixed heritage, therefore, Johnson seeks to emphasize the cruelty of Fay's actions. The record asserts that Johnson's "Mothers [sic] name was Silvia a Free Woman/half cast/" (2*r*). To highlight

this point, the account's final sentence reiterates that Johnson's "Mother is still alive at Calcutta and is at this moment a Free Woman, as she always was" (2*r*). The description of Johnson's mother as a "half cast" woman could indicate that she had a mixed European-Indian background. Concerning the backgrounds of enslaved people on St. Helena, Colin Fox notes that Indian and African people alike experienced subjugation there (2). Eighteenth-century records from the East India Company use "negro, black, and slave" as "a sloppy form of shorthand for any enslaved person" whether of Indian or African descent (Fox 2). Given these circumstances, Johnson strives to accentuate Fay's guilt by distinguishing herself as a partial European from the majority of St. Helena's enslaved population.

The court record further condemns Fay by emphasizing her responsibility for the fate of her former employee. This view stems from a determination based on the testimonies of Fay, Mason, and Johnson. While Fay attempts to present herself as a sympathetic character, the record displays a more negative image of her by relating others' views on her conduct. The official account states that Fay "took the Deponent [Johnson] with her promising to take care of her, that after Arriving at St. Helena she the said Mrs. Fay parted with Deponent without her consent at St. Helena" (2*v*). According to this statement, Fay has erred by breaking her pledge to look after Johnson. Therefore, Johnson's case rests on the notion that, despite her status as an enslaved person, she can hold Fay to account for acting unjustly. The record affirms this view by accusing Fay of acting without Johnson's "consent." In the view of the St. Helena court, Fay has a duty not to deprive her employee of all autonomy. This perspective reflects the record's

mandate to synthesize and judge multiple figures' perspectives while Fay, through her use of life-writing, represents only her own subjectivity.

Fay's own account, by contrast with the court record, foregrounds the suffering that she experiences as a result of Johnson's accusation. By accentuating her own distress, Fay utilizes her authorial power to exercise control over her self-depiction. She projects this ability by describing herself as the passive victim of "an unpleasant affair" (242). With this description, Fay seeks to absolve herself of responsibility for selling another human being. She further emphasizes her own impotence by lamenting that "the strong hand of power left [her] no alternative" but to pay a considerable fee for facilitating Johnson's enslavement (242). In addition to helplessness, Fay projects the more active feeling of indignation by complaining that "a demand was made of £60 more, to pay the woman's passage back to Bengal with her two children!!!" (242). The concluding exclamation marks betray that Fay's previous encounters with arbitrary power (such as her captivity) do not grant her either a disinclination to oppress others or the ability to recognize herself as doing so.

Because Fay has relatively little interaction with Indian women, she primarily defines her relationship to her gender in contrast to Anthony Fay. His flaws, she asserts, compel her to act as a bold protector. Eliza Fay depicts herself as saving her husband from an attack by Pereira, a Portuguese officer of Hyder Ali's. Upon viewing Pereira following Anthony Fay with a dagger, she "sprung between [Pereira] and the door through which Mr. F had just passed […] and then gently expostulated with P– on the oddness of his conduct and appearance" (147). This account broadcasts Eliza Fay's capacities for quick action, persuasive speech, and benevolence. Along with compassion,

however, an instinct for self-preservation motivates her. Belonging to a couple provides–as the urgency of her self-reported behavior indicates–some protection from the dangers that she might encounter given both her gender and the circumstances of travel. Utilitarian considerations drive Eliza Fay to protect those who ostensibly have the power to help her.

She troubles eighteenth-century gender norms for her own benefit by not only acting courageously but also recounting her heroism to others in an effort to win their favor. Fay writes that her friend, Mrs. Chambers, "seems never weary of listening to my sad story. 'She loves me for the dangers I have passed, and I love her that she does pity them'" (174). The allusion here to William Shakespeare's *Othello* (1603) aligns the narrated self's practice of telling her dramatic tale with the behavior of a hyper-masculine martial hero.[22] This subversion of gender as well as racial norms through storytelling enables Fay, in her view, to strengthen her ties within Calcutta's British community. Her difficult travel circumstances distinguish her from other European women in Bengal and thus render her interesting to at least one of them. Together, a talent for narration and a willingness to strategically eschew conventions of femininity promote Fay's social advancement despite her unimpressive background and lack of preexisting connections in India.

While only one allusion to *Othello* appears in *Original Letters*, the text references *Hamlet* (1599-1602) multiple times and thereby associates Fay with that play's protagonist.[23] In one instance, she references *Hamlet* to portray herself as a wronged individual seeking revenge on her antagonist. She asserts that, in response to Anthony Fay's concern that she will divulge his infidelity, she "deigned no reply except by a look;

when I with secret triumph beheld his hitherto undaunted eye sink beneath the indignant glance of mine" (201). The narrating voice finishes the letter in which this confrontation appears by quoting Hamlet's assertion that "'[t]is Conscience that makes cowards of us all'" (201). With this reference to a soliloquy in which Hamlet contemplates suicide, Fay introduces into her narrative a jarring note of violence. Furthermore, she strives to project moral authority by depicting her husband's infidelity and Hamlet's desire to end his own life as comparable transgressions.

Fay strengthens her alignment with an assumed, theatrical style of masculinity by relating an episode in which she takes pleasure in cross-dressing. An attempt to escape captivity drives her to wear men's clothes. First, she relishes the novelty of this costume by offering a detailed description of the "nankeen jacket […] long striped trousers […] man's night cap […] *mighty* smart hat,–with a pair of Mr. F–'s shoes" that she wears (146; emphasis Fay's). She then notes that "[i]n this dress Mr. F– declared that I was the very image of my dear father, which highly gratified me" (146). With this statement, the narrating voice positions clothing, like letter writing, as a means of preserving connections between distant correspondents. Cross-dressing, therefore, appears to Fay not only necessary but also enjoyable. By pausing to note the senses of happiness and familial connection that wearing men's clothes brings her, Fay demonstrates her capacity to experience gratification even in an exceptionally difficult situation. Chaotic circumstances drive Fay to trouble gender norms in a way that she ultimately finds unexpectedly satisfying.

Although Fay in some instances challenges gender norms, she conforms to these norms in other situations by displaying sensibility. Doing so allows her to portray the

conditions of travel as weakening but not severing her commitment to gendered codes of behavior. During her captivity, she "dropped to the floor completely overpowered" upon learning that Anthony Fay had failed to secure their freedom (141). When he then carried her to their quarters, she "became a few moments sensible […], but soon fainted again and did not recover until [she] found [her]self once more entering the English factory as a prisoner" (141). The narrated self, like a fictional heroine who projects conventional sensibility, faints when overcome by emotion and requires assistance from a male figure. This behavior provides a strong contrast to the examples of bravery and resistance to gender norms discussed above. Therefore, Fay invokes literary sensibility to emphasize her ability to act within the confines of femininity although she occasionally strays beyond those limits.[24]

Fay resists gendered constrictions while also deploying her status as a white European to exercise ideological as well as material power over Indian women. In so doing, she refracts conventional attitudes through the lens of her individual, subjective experience. Her use of life-writing thus complicates her representation of her subject position. By focusing on her affective responses, she rhetorically creates a sense of her inner life. She therefore portrays her experiences as driving her to express conventionally derogatory views about Indian society while also individuating her. Her denigration of Indian wives stems from a personal betrayal. For this reason, she views expectations of wifely submission as oppressing her more than they do other women (both Indian and British). She nevertheless fails to recognize herself as exercising arbitrary power against Kate Johnson. Instead, Fay construes her former servant's accusation against her of enslavement as a significant hardship to herself. However, Fay appreciates that she gains

the freedom to transgress gender boundaries under the conditions of travel. She thus portrays as one of her defining features the ability within the colonial context to manage her relationship to gendered discourse through writing.

Conclusion

To draw attention to her agency as a narrator, Fay offers a summary of events that she has already depicted. The beginning of *Original Letters*' second section not only references earlier episodes but also constructs a moral and affective framework for interpreting them.[25] Fay describes her first journey to India as

> a period which according to my own estimation, had comprized a whole life of suffering and anxiety, and dissolved for ever the strongest tie the human heart can form for itself; a period in which physical and moral evils had alike combined to wound the heart to its inmost core, and destroy that confidence in our fellow creatures, without which the world is "a howling wilderness," peopled with terrific monsters, each prowling either by violence or fraud for his defenceless prey. (227)[26]

This passage condenses "a whole life of suffering" into a relatively short description. By thus emphasizing the hardships that she experiences, Fay masks her narrated self's displays of both humor and resilience throughout *Original Letters*' first section. These qualities manifest as both a contrast to and occasionally the result of difficult circumstances including captivity, illness, and traveling with unhelpful and occasionally even malicious companions. Such obstacles, along with separation from Anthony Fay, constitute the "physical and moral evils" that have engendered in Fay an overriding distrust of others. Seeking to convey this emotion, the narrating voice uses heightened

language to invoke figures such as Ayres–and possibly Anthony Fay–as "terrific monsters." Referencing the Israelites' suffering with a biblical citation (Deuteronomy 32:10) lends even greater magnitude to the narrated self's distress. Cumulatively, Fay's rhetorical choices portray her tale as an overwhelmingly harrowing one.

Further emphasizing her authorial power, Fay highlights not only the suffering but also the kindness that she has encountered in India. She writes, "Happily for me gentler beings had blended in my path their benign influences; my sorrows had been cheered and consoled by many. I was still young, and with buoyant spirits relieved in some degree from their late severe pressure" (227-228). These statements display an appreciation of certain qualities, namely youth and resilience, that consistently define *Original Letters*' portrayal of the narrated self. Presenting this self-description immediately after an account of the hardships that comprise her story enables Fay to emphasize her own strength. Along with this emphasis, the narrating voice highlights the positive aspects of its tale through a subsequent literary citation. The satirical assertion that "drink is the feast of reason and the flow of soul" appears in Alexander Pope's *Intimations of Horace* (1734), and Fay deploys this notion to portray the hospitality that she received from her Calcutta friends (228). Citations and exuberant self-descriptions both convey Fay's sincere gratitude for the helpful ties to others as well as the personal qualities that have enabled her to endure distress.

Fay's portrayal of her often difficult circumstances documents the emergence within the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian relationship of racialized boundaries. For this reason, she presages a later stage of imperialism that speaks to Forster's historical moment. As the nineteenth century progressed, racial

divisions led the Company to intervene more severely in the lives of Indians soldiers and civilians. Writing in the early twentieth century, Forster depicts a rigidly stratified Anglo-Indian social system in *A Passage to India* (1924). The heroine of this novel, Adela Quested, interrogates England's colonial power when the English community in the fictional city of Chandrapore gather in court to support her accusation of rape against an Indian Muslim, Dr. Aziz. She wonders, "In virtue of what had she collected this roomful of people together? Her particular brand of opinions, and the suburban Jehovah who sanctified them—by what right did they claim so much importance in the world, and assume the title of civilization?" (218). Unlike Adela, Fay does not question England's right to assert cultural superiority. Nevertheless, Fay and Forster each complicate a female character's relationship to the colonial environment by rhetorically constructing a sense of her interiority.

As a result of her experiences, Fay develops a predominantly negative attitude toward Indian people and society. This circumstance produces a subjectivity that contrasts with those of Mahomet, Hamilton, and Gilchrist. Fay further distinguishes herself from these three authors through literary technique. While she writes to the moment, Mahomet, Hamilton, and Gilchrist narrate their past experiences. Doing so enables Fay to create a seemingly more immediate account of her impressions, observations, and affective responses than do the other authors I examine. Nevertheless, Fay rhetorically distances herself from the colonial context by engaging with Indian culture to a lesser extent than do Mahomet, Hamilton, and Gilchrist. Each author, though they represent differing attitudes toward Anglo-Indian relations, endorses colonial rule. However, of the writers I discuss, Gilchrist (the subject of this dissertation's next chapter)

and Fay evince the strongest drive to entrench British dominance in India. They champion the asymmetrical power structures that emerged during the late eighteenth century and became increasingly pervasive as the nineteenth century progressed. Fay's subject position as a middle-class woman precludes her from officially advocating for policies that she believes would strengthen colonial rule. Conversely, Gilchrist does so in his role as a Company-supported educator.

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[1] Many critics have overlooked Fay's literary abilities because of her non-elite status. As Nira Gupta-Casale notes, many of Fay's editors have asserted that, in particular, her "references to food characterize her as 'underbred'" (71). M.M. Kaye, in the introduction to a 1986 edition of *Original Letters*, portrays the author as "a good trencherwoman with a proper respect for the quality of food and drink." Six decades earlier, Forster noted that "[f]rom various passages it is clear that our heroine was of the hungry type" (Fay 280). He elsewhere construes Fay's class position as a literary virtue (Fay 22). Comparably, Gupta-Casale links Fay's artistry and her social position by recognizing that the author becomes "more than a chronicler of history" through deploying autobiographical techniques to represent a "middle-class female subjectivity" (67). I agree with Forster's and Gupta-Casale's arguments that Fay uses narrative to represent a specific class background. Additionally, I contend that she distinguishes her perspective by using the technique of writing to the moment to foreground her affective responses. In so doing, she contributes to the development of racialized divisions within the Anglo-Indian relationship.

[2] Early critics often pair this admiration of Fay's story with a denigration of her prose. The *Calcutta Gazette* review notes that "though there is little magic in her style, the reader will feel no disposition to throw the narrative aside" because of its vivacity (226). Comparably, Walter Firminger's introduction to a 1908 edition of *Original Letters* praises Fay for "throw[ing] light on the social life of the Calcutta of Warren Hastings and Sir Philip Francis" while declaring that her "manner of writing can scarcely be called a 'style'" (iii, xi).

[3] Forster offers the following defense of Fay's prose: "Style is always being monopolised by the orderly minded; they will not admit that slap-dash people have equal literary rights, provided they write slap-dash" (Fay 15). Building on the intellectual connection between Forster and Fay, recent scholarship by Maryam Wasif Khan and Kathleen Collins Beyer has positioned *Original Letters* as a precursor to postcolonial writing by emphasizing its influence on *A Passage to India* (1924).

[4] The source by Nussbaum to which I refer here is "British Women Write the East after 1750: Revisiting a 'Feminine' Orient."

[5] Much scholarship demonstrates *Original Letters*' conventionality by examining it alongside a number of other works. For example, Colley cites Fay's work as one characteristic example of an early modern captivity narrative. Looking at a broad selection of such works together, Colley argues, produces a social history that offers a counter-narrative to dominant portrayals of "British and other European colonizers who have been written about overwhelmingly from the top down" (191). Nussbaum (in "British Women Write the East after 1750: Revisiting a 'Feminine' Orient"), Nupur Chaudhuri, Isobel Grundy, Nandini Bhattacharya, and Elena Spandri, all compare Fay's text to others by eighteenth-century British female travelers to India. Ketaki Kushari Dyson's *A Various Universe* (1978), a survey of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century autobiographical writings by British men and women in India, briefly discusses *Original Letters*. These studies helpfully situate Fay within various literary traditions and thereby delineate the conventions on which she draws. By focusing on the autobiographical dimensions of Fay's text, I will examine not only her use of literary conventions but also her projection of a distinctive subjectivity.

[6] Sara Mills examines the subject positions of white women travelers in the colonial context in *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*. For additional discussions of travel

writing by white European women, see Pratt, 152-68, and *Women, Writing, and Travel in the Eighteenth Century* (2018), edited by Katrina O'Loughlin.

[7] The second part of *Original Letters*, which is much shorter than the first one, was composed in 1815 (after the events that it depicts). However, because Fay (unlike the other authors I discuss) defines her narrating voice using the technique of writing to the moment, I consider this literary strategy as distinguishing her work from the other texts that this dissertation examines.

[8] Dyson joins a critical consensus by highlighting the vividness of Fay's sensory descriptions. For example, Forster comparably notes that Fay "is constantly registering through her senses, and recording the results with a powerful though untrained mind" (Fay 15).

[9] In this passage, Fay does not highlight any specific female authors whose work flourished during the early nineteenth century. The following description, however, (which appears toward the end of *Original Letters*) mentions Ann Radcliffe: "Santa Cruz is indeed a fine place, and the country around, well deserves the pen of Mrs. Ratcliffe [sic]" (257).

[10] See Armstrong, Spacks's "Female Rhetorics," and Nussbaum's *The Autobiographical Subject* xiv.

[11] See P.J. Marshall's "The White Town of Calcutta Under the Rule of the East India Company" for a discussion of European-owned presses in early nineteenth-century Calcutta.

[12] According to Forster, his 1925 edition of *Original Letters* was "the first to be published outside of India" (Fay 8).

[13] For other instances of this same rhetorical strategy, see pages 118 and 152.

[14] Furthermore, by imaginatively projecting this response onto a male authority figure, Fay invokes the discourse of masculine sensibilty.

[15] In Egypt, a violent robbery befalls some of Fay's fellow European travelers while they cross the desert (86-90).

[16] Fay arranged for the publication of her letters in the hopes of mitigating her financial constraints. The "Advertisement" at the end of *Original Letters* specifies that "the administrator […] from a view of benefitting the estate has been induced to undertake the present publication" (272).

[17] I use the term sepoy here because Fay does. However, while this term generally refers throughout this dissertation to Indian soldiers working for the Company, it describes in this instance the troops of Sardar Khan.

[18] *Original Letters* depicts the relationship between the Supreme Court and the Company as a fraught one. Regarding Anthony Fay's decision to pursue a legal career in India without having already obtained an invitation from the Company to do so, Eliza Fay quotes Elijah Impey as saying "The Supreme Court is independent and will never endure to be dictated to by any body of men whose claims are not enforced by superior authority" (176). This assertion leads Eliza Fay to note that "[t]here exists, it seems, a strong jealousy between the Government and the Supreme Court, lest either should encroach on the prerogatives of the other" (176).

[19] The term Banian here refers to an Indian broker or clerk working in a Bengal-based European's home. Alternatively, Banians could hold similar positions in European businesses.

[20] See Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* (originally published in 1925) for a comparative, anthropological discussion of how gifts have functioned across a range of societies to bind recipient and giver to one another.

[21] I consulted this legal document in The British Library's India Office Records.

[22] See *Othello* 1.3.181-2. *Original Letters* changes the tense of Shakespeare's text, using "loves" instead of "loved." This alteration emphasizes Fay's technique of writing to the moment.

[23] Fay first aligns herself with Hamlet by, in a reference to *Hamlet* 3.2.18, mocking Hare for "'Suiting the action to the words'" (123). Later, when she returns briefly to England in 1795, she notes (alluding to *Hamlet* 1.5.209) that "it was easy to read in many a sorrowful countenance that, 'the times were out of joint'" as a result of general economic hardship in that country (246).

[24] Further invoking stereotypes of feminine sensibility, the narrating voice portrays the narrated self as either fainting or almost fainting on pages 118, 126, 141, and 157.

[25] In this section, Fay transitions from providing an immediate to a retrospective account of her travels.

[26] Fay's ascription of a moral meaning to her experiences may constitute a tacit rebuttal to the association of epistolary conversation, which Nicola Watson details, with both radicalism and unchecked female sexuality.

"A Mutual Good Understanding, Seasonably Cultivated Between the Conquerors and the Conquered, Through the Popular Speech": The Practical Orientalist Self in John Borthwick Gilchrist's *The Orienti-Occidental Tuitionary Pioneer to Literary Pursuits* (1826)

Toward the end of his career, Scottish philologist Gilchrist aimed to justify his scholarly promotion of the Hindustani language. He did so by emphasizing his unique qualifications for improving the Company's approach to governance in the *Tuitionary Pioneer*. This text, which Gilchrist published himself, comprises a series of annual reports that he submitted to the Company arguing that he deserved greater recognition (as well as a larger pension) than that organization had granted him.[1] In addition to these reports, the text contains other sections that offer proposals for strengthening the education of British civil servants as well as Indians.[2] These materials collectively insist that reforms to learning in general, and to language instruction in particular, will bolster the Anglo-Indian relationship. Gilchrist writes,

> A mutual good understanding, seasonably cultivated between the conquerors and the conquered, through the popular speech, when duly acquired by all the British employed in the Company's dominions, will greatly promote that general conciliation and reciprocal advantage to the natives and ourselves, by which the internal tranquility, permanent peace, durable happiness, and prosperity of an entire population, will rather be consolidated and confirmed, than disturbed or endangered by the territorial aggrandizement of British India. ("Dedication" 5)

The beginning of this passage deploys a stark taxonomy–"the conquerors and the conquered"–to describe language education as maintaining existing an hierarchy. This system fosters "[a] mutual good understanding" and "reciprocal advantage" that will ultimately produce "tranquility […] peace […] happiness, and prosperity" in India. In

Gilchrist's imagination, cultivating ties with Indians by developing knowledge of their languages constitutes an effective means of advancing Britain's colonial project.

To promote this view, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* depicts Hindustani as a unified language despite the differences in script and vocabulary that it encompasses. This portrait of Hindustani challenges the assessment that many Indian scholars writing toward the end of British rule and the beginning of Independence offer of Gilchrist's work. Predominantly, these scholars criticize Gilchrist and Fort William College–where he served as principal from 1800 until 1804–for enacting a deliberate strategy of divide and rule. This strategy manifests through the association of different writing systems and vocabulary with, respectively, Hindus and Muslims in literary and instructional works. Such texts, according to Farman Fatehpuri, constituted "a pre-planned political manoeuvre, meant to get the minor communities of India into the clutches of Hindu nationalism" (57-58).[3] Recently, this view has garnered criticism from Alison Safadi and Alok Rai.[4] As Safadi asserts, Fort William College did not separate Hindi and Urdu because "a key feature […] of the all-encompassing British construct of Hindustani was that it always included both scripts" (52). Understanding Hindustani as a single language enables the *Tuitionary Pioneer* to present that language as a potential medium for colonial governance.

Because he seeks to advance the Company's aims tangibly, Gilchrist represents his work as a form of what he terms "practical Orientalism." He distinguishes this approach from that of other scholars, including William Jones and Francis Gladwin, who belonged to the Asiatic Society of Bengal. As Das and Hakala detail, Gilchrist developed his focus on Hindustani in contrast to other British philologists' characterizations of

Persian and Sanskrit as the respective languages of statecraft and high literary culture. Conversely, Gilchrist and Fort William College promoted language learning not as a field of scholarly exploration but instead as an expedient means of facilitating communication between Britons and Indians. This approach to colonial education, asserts Bernard S. Cohn, "had the effect of converting Indian forms of knowledge into European objects" (21). Comparably, translations by Jones and Gladwin of Sanskrit and Persian works–as Kate Teltscher and C.A. Bayly recognize–also facilitated the Company's acquisition of power throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century.[5] Knowledge of erudite as well as colloquial languages supported British colonialism in India. To champion the superiority of his own approach, Gilchrist narrates the specific benefits of practical Orientalism to both himself and his students.

This chapter will examine, in addition to Gilchrist's linguistic contributions, his reformatory views on education. He insists that his methods of instruction will not only allow Britons to govern Indian people more efficiently but also foster meritocracy within the Company's ranks. By advocating for this possibility, Gilchrist connects his work to that of educationalists from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries who sought to extend education to Britain's working classes through monitorial learning. This system, which Gilchrist adopted, requires students to teach one another while receiving oversight from a lead instructor. In depicting the philologist's educational approach, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* echoes the form of a text by a prominent champion of monitorial learning named Andrew Bell. His *The Madras School, or Elements of Tuition* (1808) includes reports to the Company (which supported his work) of the institution for half-European, half-Indian boys that he ran in the southern presidency. Like Gilchrist, Bell

supplements official reports with accounts from his students of their educations. Constructing their narratives from both kinds of materials enables Gilchrist and Bell to assert their power even as the dynamics of monitorial learning diffuse their pedagogical authority among their students.

In delineating his reformatory visions of language instruction and colonial governance, how does Gilchrist represent his own experience of the colonial context as a scholar and teacher? I will pursue this line of inquiry by discussing the connections that he makes between his biography and his methods of scholarship and pedagogy. In this chapter's first section, I examine his technique of defining practical Orientalism against the intellectual projects of other scholars. To explain the origins and development of his particular scholarly focus, Gilchrist relates episodes from his own life. He also draws on his own experiences, as the second section will discuss, to emphasize the capacity of practical Orientalism to reform the Company. He does so by crediting the superior merit of rising colonial administrators to his teaching. As Gilchrist recognizes, the methods of study that he encourages produce fraught power dynamics. These dynamics, which comprise the focus of the third and final section, characterize his depictions of relationships of learning either among Britons or between them and various types of Indian people. By appropriating these interactions as evidence of his success as a teacher, Gilchrist argues that an innovative and useful approach to colonial governance derives from him.

Gilchrist's approach to championing colloquial languages engenders an authoritative, performative self. He constructs this self by explaining his contentious relationship to the Company and promoting his work using not only his own voice but

also those of his students (in the form of quoted letters). Additionally, he includes in the *Tuitionary Pioneer* not only eleven annual reports but also other writings that convey the breadth of his thinking on the education of British civil servants and Indian people. By justifying his work using these various forms of evidence, Gilchrist betrays his reluctance to cede power to his students through monitorial learning. He combats this perceived threat to his authority by projecting a "core self" that makes a unique contribution to the imperial project. Gilchrist thus joins Mahomet, Hamilton, and Fay in delineating the paramaters that create his autobiographical subject. Like Hamilton, however, Gilchrist does not explicitly describe his work as an autobiography. He and Hamilton instead use scholarly positioning as a means of self-disclosure. He represents himself to unfold the collaborative yet assymetrical vision of colonial governance that he has developed as a result of his background and experiences.

I

To define his intellectual project, Gilchrist asserts his credibility by contrasting his work with that of other scholars using the autobiographical mode. He derides the Company for heeding the advice of scholars "whose common sense is by far too small to perceive, that one ounce of real practical knowledge, at first, in the East, is more precious than a hundred weight of mysterious tongues ("Eleventh Report" 9). Philologists such as William Jones, Gilchrist asserts, harm the Company by promoting erudite languages including Sanskrit above commonly spoken ones such as Hindustani. Both forms of knowledge strengthen imperial power, but only the latter may support the everyday business of colonialism. In both the *Tuitionary Pioneer* and *A Succinct Narrative of Dr. Gilchrist's Services from 1782 to 1821* (1821), he presents his background as a military

surgeon, philologist, and Scot as evidence that language learning will bolster the Anglo-Indian relationship. He additionally asserts that, just as England united Ireland, Wales, and Scotland under a single language, Hindustani should attain a comparably official status throughout India.[6] In promoting this view, Gilchrist represents his distinct scholarly approach as the only one that will prove capable of managing a diverse and fractured subject population.

Situating his work within a larger body of scholarship enables Gilchrist to insist that his focus on local languages has as much value to the colonial project as does the study of Sanskrit and Persian that figures such as Jones and Francis Gladwin championed. In providing an overview of his field, Gilchrist distinguishes between practical Orientalism and "profound learning." He asserts that his "improved system of practical Orientalism, when fairly contrasted in all its bearings with profound learning" will ultimately garner him "a well-earned triumph over every foe" of his work ("Dedication" 1). This statement challenges the supremacy of Sanskrit and Persian within eighteenth-century Indian linguistics. Through translations such as *Sacontala: or, the Fatal Ring*, Jones presented Sanskrit to the British public as an erudite and literary language.[7] Persian, by contrast, acquired the status of the language of colonial statecraft. Works including Gladwin's version of the *Ain-i-Akbari* bolstered the Company's knowledge of both Indian society and Mughal governance. The aforementioned translations complement the philological texts on the Persian language that Gladwin and Jones each created. By referencing this scholarly context, Gilchrist proclaims the equal merit of his alternative focus on Hindustani.

Gilchrist and Jones hone not only distinct linguistic focuses but also contrasting approaches to philology through their affiliations with, respectively, Fort William College and the Asiatic Society. According to Hakala, Jones's "pursuit of comparative philology gave prestige to India's classical languages" (38). Conversely, "promoters of vernaculars like Gilchrist […] saw in them a more expedient means of administering Britain's growing South Asian dominions" (Hakala 38).[8] The term "comparative philology" references Jones's 1786 "Third Anniversary Discourse" to the Asiatic Society, in which he established his theory of Indo-Aryan languages. This theory furthers the Asiatic Society's aim of championing Indian intellectual traditions. To support this objective, Jones argues that Sanskrit not only belongs to the same linguistic family as Latin and Greek but also displays more sophistication than do those classical European languages. Hakala, for this reason, associates Jones's philological work with "prestige[.]" In contrast, Gilchrist pursued an "expedient" interest in Hindustani in order to train rising colonial administrators studying at Fort William College. Jones and Gilchrist thus exemplify the distinct ideologies of the Asiatic Society and Fort William College. These ideologies drive the philologists to create diverging approaches to addressing the problems of colonial governance through linguistic study.

Through their institutional affiliations, Jones and Gilchrist both advance the colonial project despite the differences in their scholarly methods. Acquiring linguistic knowledge, Gilchrist argues, will enable Britons to reconcile Indians to subjugation. Scholars of the Asiatic Society promote the diverging view that their literary efforts will instill a reverence for Indian culture in British audiences. Nevertheless, the Asiatic Society's work supports Company rule by constructing official knowledge of Indian

legal, religious, and literary traditions.[9] Jones, as Kate Teltscher asserts, did not develop a mutually constitutive relationship to Hindu poetic traditions but instead "conflated and commodified" them (204). He packaged for British readers the novel (to him and them) images and stories that Hindu poetry depicts for the purpose of bolstering his own literary and scholarly reputation. This strategy privileges British representations of India above Indian ones and thereby supports imperialism. Comparably, Gilchrist presents the acquisition of knowledge about India (specifically Hindustani) as a means of advancing the Company's aims. Furthermore, Jones and Gilchrist alike describe translation as a means of avoiding engaging with untrustworthy Indian aids (Teltscher 195). The two philologists each support colonial institutions by seeking to establish British control in India through the development of cultural knowledge.

Gilchrist exhibits his vision of ideal colonialism by criticizing Jones. Through representing Jones's experience in India, Gilchrist warns that even the most learned Britons may encounter difficulties there as a result of their inability to converse in Hindustani. Poor speaking skills, as Gilchrist states, "prevented the celebrated Sir William Jones from ever being understood in India, either as a Persian or Hindustanee *Colluquist*" (First Report 8; emphasis Gilchrist's). Illustrating a negative outcome of Jones's literary focus enables Gilchrist to emphasize the differences between their respective scholarly projects. While Jones privileges the study of Indian legal and literary traditions, Gilchrist instead promotes what he views as the more essential skill of communicating intelligibly with Indian people. This ability, rather than the acquisition of literary languages, constitutes what the *Tuitionary Pioneer* views as an exemplary civil servant. While practical Orientalism and erudite translations both facilitate colonial rule,

the former does so more efficiently than the latter in Gilchrist's view. Therefore, he believes that his system provides the greatest benefit to rising administrators.

In addition to defining his project against those of other scholars, Gilchrist characterizes his perspective as the result of his particular experiences in India. He warns of the problems that neglecting to learn Hindustani might cause for Britons by narrating an episode in which a lack of linguistic knowledge almost prevented him from orchestrating the defeat of a Company adversary. On this occasion, Gilchrist states, "after a very short residence near Surat, where I was compelled to assume the command of an escort attacked by a body of Pindaree horse, whom we repulsed" (untitled section 10).[10] As a result, the Pindari did not take "a valuable convoy of grain, &c. for the Bengal army" (untitled section 10). This account of the conflict does not specify whether or not (and, if so, how) Gilchrist avoided providing erroneous instructions to Indian soldiers. He instead foregrounds his ability to overcome the impediment of inadequate preparation, which he references by noting that his superiors "compelled" him to assume a position of leadership despite his unfamiliarity with the place of battle. By emphasizing his individual triumph, Gilchrist obscures the details of his relationship to Indian military personnel (including, perhaps, intermediaries).

An earlier work by Gilchrist–*A Succinct Narrative of Dr. Gilchrist's Services from 1782 to 1821* (hereafter *Succinct Narrative*)–offers an extended version of the same story that reveals Gilchrist's dependence on a translator.[11] He omits this instance of productive reliance on an Indian person from the *Tuitionary Pioneer* to strengthen that text's argument that practical Orientalism entrenches colonial dominance. According to the *Succinct Narrative*,

> Before he had been *two months* in the Country, he was forced for self-preservation to assume the command of a small party of native troops, who, while escorting a valuable convoy of ammunition and grain, were suddenly attacked, in the casual absence of the European Officer, by a large body of Pindarees; but which was soon dispersed under the arrangements and orders of DR. GILCHRIST, communicated to the Sipahees through his groom, who fortunately understood a little English, and happened to be on the spot when the skirmish began. (qtd in Steadman-Jones 3; emphasis Gilchrist's)

This account, unlike the version in the *Tuitionary Pioneer*, describes in detail how Gilchrist avoided the miscommunication that would have precluded him and the Indian soldiers from defeating the Pindaris. In so doing, the *Succinct Narrative* credits Gilchrist's groom with performing the necessary work of translation. The abbreviated account of this episode in the *Tuitionary Pioneer*, by contrast, leaves open the possibility that the philologist succeeded through his own abilities. By eliding his use of an intermediary figure, Gilchrist attributes his military success solely to himself. This rhetorical choice supports the *Tuitionary Pioneer*'s focus on the triumphs that Britons may achieve through linguistic study.

To illustrate the problems that may derive from a Briton's lack of linguistic knowledge, the *Succinct Narrative* describes an instance in which Gilchrist could not rely on a translator. This circumstance prevented him from effectively treating Indian soldiers. The text states,

> Not long after this occurrence, he was sent *alone* as Assistant Surgeon, with a considerable detachment, which had orders to storm a Marhutta [Marhatta] camp

> in the neighborhood, where a few lives were lost, and several people badly wounded; to all of whom it was impossible in the heat of action, to do justice, when no interpreter was at hand to compensate for his total ignorance of the Hindoostanee, at that *early period* of his medical career with the army. (qtd in Steadman-Jones 3; emphasis Gilchrist's)

In this episode, Gilchrist receives no help from an intermediary figure. His ability to perform his work consequently suffers. In this situation, he does not criticize the wounded soldiers for their inability to speak English but instead foregrounds his own lack of adequate training. Gilchrist, as Steadman-Jones asserts, portrays his superiors as "hav[ing] carelessly placed him in an impossible position" (2). Gilchrist offers this depiction by using italics to emphasize that his supervisors dispatched him to the Marhatta camp "*alone*" at an "*early period*" of his career (2). Throughout the *Tuitionary Pioneer*, Gilchrist continues to denounce Company leadership for failing to demand that British soldiers and officials learn Indian languages in preparation for their work. The *Succinct Narrative* traces Gilchrist's development of this criticism to his early experiences as an army surgeon.

The self-portrait that Gilchrist offers in the *Tuitionary Pioneer* enables him to authoritatively criticize medicine's status within the colonial context as a more prestigious field than philology. By so doing, he depicts practical Orientalism an endeavor that enhances not only the knowledge but also the integrity of those who pursue it. In choosing a career as an educator and philologist, Gilchrist views himself as having "sacrificed all [his] professional prospects in Bengal" including the opportunity to become head of the Medical Board (First Report 1). This assertion represents Gilchrist's

abandonment of his initial role within the Company as a surgeon for a career in philology as an altruistic act. Further emphasizing this notion, the narrating voice describes the medical profession as one "with respect to pay, rank, or fortune, infinitely superior to any literary preferment and emolument I ever enjoyed, or can now expect" (First Report 1). Gilchrist achieves insight into the Company's differing estimations of medicine and philology through his experience in both fields. Drawing on this background, he contrasts strands of his biography to foreground the moral worth of practical Orientalism.

Gilchrist expands on his autobiographical depiction by deploying self-deprecation to assert that his individual character renders his approach to teaching superior to that of other Hindustani instructors. In making this argument, he portrays the careful study of aspiration in that language as "a species of drudgery […] that appalls nearly everyone but [him]self from the rigid execution of this part of his tuitionary duties" ("Dedication" 2). In an effort to foreground the rigors of pronunciation, Gilchrist represents his disposition as engendering a talent for learning and teaching Hindustani. Labeling this work "drudgery" and insisting that it "appalls" other instructors grants this description a self-mocking tone. Additionally, Gilchrist conveys his sincere disapproval of instructors whose approaches neglect pronunciation. Belief in the value of conversational skills drives him to condemn teachers who undervalue these skills for shirking their fundamental responsibility to their pupils. Consequently, he views his own exceptional attention to pronunciation as preparing his students to communicate with Indian people for the purpose of managing them.

By claiming that he shares with other Scots as well as Irishmen a talent for aspiration, Gilchrist ties himself to these groups to argue that they collectively merit

power within the Company despite their marginalized status within Britain. The *Tuitionary Pioneer* criticizes some philologists for eliding the differences between aspirated and unaspirated versions of Hindustani letters and graphemes by representing each using a single character ("Dedication" 2).[12] In Hindustani, aspiration can alter the meaning of words that otherwise might appear and sound similar. Gilchrist illustrates this circumstance by referencing the words *gora* (which describes a fair-skinned or white person) and *ghora* (which denotes a horse). To highlight the importance of aspiration, Gilchrist complains that the English "are too prone to either to put breath into a word that positively has none, or to knock it unmercifully out where it notoriously exists" ("Dedication" 2). They struggle in speaking "where no difficulty is apparent to their Scottish and Irish brethren" ("Dedication" 2). In addition to his individual talents, therefore, the common linguistic background of the Scotch and the Irish strengthens Gilchrist's ability to advance the colonial project.

Further emphasizing the utility of his focus on Hindustani, Gilchrist portrays that language as the *lingua franca* of India. As the narrating voice states,

> a due command of the Camp or Court dialect, in its grammatical form, […] will alone lead to the utmost perfection in the whole circle or score of tongues which pervade the Peninsula, and are concatenated together by visible links, that every true philologer will easily unfold, after becoming master of the Hindoostanee according to the plans most successfully pursued by myself for many years[.] ("Dedication" 3)[13]

Gilchrist's reference to "the Camp or Court dialect" of Hindustani acknowledges that his students occupy a variety of roles and ranks within the Company's armies. As references

to these students throughout the *Tuitionary Pioneer* demonstrate, knowledge of that language will benefit common soldiers, prospective civil servants, and lawyers alike. Studying Hindustani will equip Britons not only to communicate with the population of North India but also to learn all Indian languages, which "are concatenated together by visible links[.]" These connections, Gilchrist argues, become apparent through his method of instruction. His teaching, therefore, prepares Britons to learn a range of Indian languages. These languages represent a cultural heterogeneity that threatens the effective implementation of Company rule. Posing a solution to this problem, Gilchrist claims that Hindustani offers the key to "the whole circle or score of tongues" of India. He portrays Hindustani as facilitating knowledge of all Indian languages to bolster his argument that his work may promote unified colonial governance throughout India.

In addition to depicting Hindustani as the key to all Indian languages, Gilchrist illustrates its spread beyond North India to Madras. Highlighting this transmission of language enables Gilchrist to criticize the Company for excessively focusing on its capital of Bengal. The narrating voice states that one student (named Lavie) studied Bengali in England only to receive a posting to the southern presidency where that language "is totally useless" ("Seventh Report" 2). Through this anecdote, Gilchrist warns of the poor choices that a prospective civil servant might make before obtaining a specific assignment from the Company. Lavie would have better prepared himself to serve in Madras by learning Hindustani and Persian, which "are almost now indispensable at a Presidency daily extending on all sides" under Company rule ("Seventh Report" 2). By thus promoting Hindustani above Bengali, Gilchrist argues that the latter, though prevalent in the Company's main seat of power, does not afford Britons

the flexibility necessary to communicate with and thereby govern the entire population of India.

While highlighting the breadth of the Company's territories, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* also recognizes Calcutta's importance as the capital of British-occupied India. Gilchrist acknowledges Calcutta by asserting that studying Hindustani facilitates the learning of the Bengali language. A student (and aspiring legal professional) named Humphries may wish, Gilchrist acknowledges, to learn Bengali once he reaches Calcutta so that he may communicate with his Indian clients in that city. According to the philologist, Humphries will find the change from Hindustani and Persian (which he has already studied) to Bengali "easy in the extreme, whenever he shall find this dialect also conducive to his own interests, or those of his clients" ("Fifth Report" 4). Gilchrist's insistence on the simplicity of the transition from Hindustani and Persian to Bengali betrays his awareness that his work cannot directly benefit Britons in Calcutta. However, by asserting that knowledge of Hindustani facilitates the acquisition of Bengali, Gilchrist champions his scholarly focus as providing Britons in the Company's capital with necessary cultural skills.

To strengthen his portrayal of Hindustani as uniting the Company's domains, Gilchrist draws a linguistic comparison between India and the United Kingdom. He asserts that Hindustani is the *lingua franca* of India just as English mediates official activities throughout England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. The languages of the latter three countries have given way in public life "to sterling English, with which alone, as an oral and written medium, justice, law, and gospel are at last generally administered in the three kingdoms" ("Sixth Report" 1). With this assertion, Gilchrist possibly betrays the

pressure that he feels as a Scot to proclaim his loyalty to England given that he addresses an English organization (the Company). The recognition that Wales, Scotland, Ireland, and India together exist under English rule also enables Gilchrist to support his argument that Hindustani will advance Britain's colonial project. Using Wales, Scotland, and Ireland as examples, he illustrates England's capacity to unite distinct countries under a single government through the imposition of an official language. However, in the case of India, greater cultural differences will require England to position a native language as the dominant one rather than their own.

Gilchrist uses life-writing to represent himself as an authority who makes an innovative contribution to the Anglo-Indian relationship. He does so by defining his scholarly project against those of other philologists. Additionally, he seeks to bolster his credibility through detailing his background as a Scot and his various roles within Company. His experiences, he asserts, have inspired him to develop an expedient solution to the problem of governing India's heterogeneous and often clashing populations. Learning Hindustani, Gilchrist argues, facilitates Britons' understanding of a "people, divided […] into tribes, nations, and sects, by both civil and religious barriers" (untitled section 9). These "barriers" appear to Gilchrist resistant to colonial interference. However, he argues that Britons "seem destined, under existing circumstances, to govern with prudence and effect, so long as our useful knowledge marches, *pari passu*, with British power over the plains of Hindoostan, and all its extensive dependencies" (untitled section 9; emphasis Gilchrist's). This statement champions practical Orientalism as the means of encouraging stability within the territories of the Company. Despite the

seeming inevitability of this group's reign, they may only secure their power by acquiring an element of local cultural knowledge.

II

By construing practical Orientalism as a solution to the problem of colonial governance, Gilchrist positions himself as a reformatory figure. He accentuates this notion by arguing that he may improve the Company through not only his philological ideas but also his system of monitorial learning. This educational approach, he argues, will produce a more skilled class of colonial soldiers and administrators and thus eradicate favoritism within the Company. Additionally, what Gilchrist alternately terms "social study," a "system of social studies," or "mutual instruction" troubles the power differential between students and instructors. This circumstance connects Gilchrist's work to the radical ideas of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century educationalists including Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster. Furthermore, Gilchrist's educational vision amplifies his endorsement of other radical views including republicanism. He also champions the instruction of England's working classes. Through promoting reforms in Britain, Gilchrist bolsters his support of the colonial project. He may reinforce the Company's agency, he insists, by instilling knowledge of Hindustani in Britons and thus eradicating their reliance on ostensibly untrustworthy intermediaries. In pursuit of this aim, he chooses to cede some of his instructional authority to his students by implementing a system of monitorial learning.

Gilchrist defines social study by explaining the benefits that it offers to his students. In so doing, he de-centers himself as the source of their linguistic education. Mutual instruction, in Gilchrist's view, has "salutary effects upon both the instructors and

instructed, in every branch of Oriental acquisitions" ("Sixth Report" 5). Students deepen their knowledge of the particular languages (such as Hindustani and Persian) that they are studying whether by increasing or reinforcing each other's learning. Through this pedagogical system, pupils not only sharpen their own skills but also reduce the extent to which Gilchrist wields singular authority as their instructor. This circumstance reflects Gilchrist's wish to make practical Orientalism accessible to a wide range of Britons. Decreasing his individual importance as a teacher allows him to expand the reach of his work. This facet of social study reveals Gilchrist's willingness to relinquish some control over his students' learning for the sake of potentially increasing his impact on the colonial project.

The system of monitorial learning that Gilchrist describes in the *Tuitionary Pioneer* stems from his mandate to educate a large number of pupils as a language instructor based in England and sanctioned by the Company. While Fort William College during Gilchrist's time there never accommodated more than ninety-seven students, he instructed one thousand three hundred and six new recruits and between 1818 and 1826 in London.[14] He moved there in 1816, after leaving Fort William College in 1804 and returning first to Scotland, to offer private lessons in Hindustani and Persian. The Company gave him support from 1818 to 1825 for these lessons, which he conducted in lecture rooms in Leicester Square. Before the establishment of Fort William College, Richard Wellesley encouraged Gilchrist's efforts to publish textbooks and instruct students privately in India. These circumstances illustrate that the Company's endorsement of Gilchrist's project predated and outlasted his tenure as the College's leader. As a result of this continued patronage, he educated more students in London than

he ever had previously. Gilchrist therefore advocated for mutual instruction to promote the learning of the high volume of students for whom he newly held responsibility.

The system of social study that Gilchrist practices draws on the educational theories of Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster. In adopting their monitorial approach to teaching, the philologist conveys not only his mandate to instruct large numbers of students but also his desire to reform colonial governance. Bell and Lancaster each advocate that, under the supervision of an experienced teacher, students from working-class families should give one another elementary instruction. This practice aims to extend learning beyond Britons' elites. Therefore, Lancaster's and Bell's visions of monitorial learning inform the proposal for national education that Samuel Whitbread submitted to the English Parliament in 1808 (Richardson 91). Beyond a desire to render British society more equal, a connection to India unites Gilchrist and Bell as the latter honed his pedagogy from 1786-1796 in an orphanage for half-European, half-Indian boys in Madras. This circumstance led Bell to name his plan for monitorial education "the Madras system." Lancaster, by contrast, worked exclusively in England. Gilchrist adjusts Bell's system by implementing it with British civil servants rather than Eurasian boys. This change in focus reflects Gilchrist's desire to reform not British society, as Bell and Lancaster aim to do, but instead Company rule.

Bell, like Gilchrist, recognizes that monitorial learning has the potential to undermine the overseeing instructor's authority. Consequently, the Madras system emphasizes the discipline that the lead teacher must inculcate in both pupils and peer tutors. Gilchrist, by contrast, does not place equal emphasis on discipline because he views himself as instructing colonial leaders rather than subjects. Bell details his

educational strategies in *The Madras School, or, Elements of Tuition*. This book, like Gilchrist's *Tuitionary Pioneer*, includes reports to the Company about the school as well as testimonials from students. In the "Advertisement" that precedes this material, Bell asserts that he developed his educational techniques in India "with unlicked and puerile agents" (vi). This statement acknowledges that the successful implementation of monitorial learning requires students' cooperation. To manage this difficulty, Bell projects strict control over his students. He claims that his system instils in them "habits of subordination, of industry, and of well-grounded attachment to the government, under which they enjoy so many blessings, the only rational ground of attachment, which they can either feel or comprehend" (128). Recognizing that his students (unlike those of Bell) may govern India, Gilchrist makes no comparable demand for their submission.

Gilchrist further develops his interest in educational reform by depicting practical Orientalism as enabling his students to dismantle the favoritism that has traditionally shaped the Company's power structure. He states, "Till very lately, when strict examinations were introduced at each of the Presidencies, the natural result has been, that *senior subalterns*, best known to the Commandant, merely as such, have held Interpreterships" ("Dedication" 3, emphasis Gilchrist's). Consequently, those who work as intermediaries generally lack proficiency in local languages including Hindustani. This circumstance arose because the Company placed insufficient emphasis on knowledge of those languages. However, the institution of exams has enabled junior officers, who are "infinitely better acquainted with the native dialects" than their established superiors, to replace those "inadequate incumbents" ("Dedication" 3). This description portrays the Company as gradually realizing that it might benefit from giving power to Britons who

can speak with Indian people. This circumstance, Gilchrist argues, has already engendered and will continue to promote the evaluation of Britons' potential to the colonial project based on ability rather than connections.

To bolster his support for the Company's shift toward rewarding knowledge of local languages, Gilchrist warns that granting power to Britons who lack that knowledge dooms them to failure. Practical Orientalism, by contrast, enables colonial officials to govern effectively by conversing with Indian people. Gilchrist asserts that "we may then, in our turn, under wise Governments, rejoice at the solid triumph of past forlorn intellectual worth and utility, over blind patronage and partial interests alone" once his students attain positions of authority ("Dedication" 3). Ascending the Company's ranks, Gilchrist argues, will enable his pupils to champion the study of local languages through official policies to an even greater extent than did their predecessors. This reformatory notion, as Gilchrist recognizes, might appear threatening to his audience of colonial officials because it necessitates change to their entrenched practices. Therefore, he appeals to their self-interest by claiming that favoritism "is baneful to both the sufferers from this injustice, and, ultimately, even the gainers, by its unreasonable sway" ("Dedication" 3). This statement depicts practical Orientalism as a system that supports and improves colonial rule by producing an administrative class that can communicate with the populations over whom they rule.

Gilchrist offers a more detailed account of his work's reformatory potential by outlining the possible benefits of this project to British officers and, through them, scholars, civil servants, and soldiers. By gaining an understanding of "the current speech of the people under his inspection[,]" an officer may relate "colloquial facilities" to

scholars ("Dedication" 3). Such an officer would, in addition to bolstering scholarly knowledge, "be the means, at every bona fide examination of Writers, Cadets, &c., of discriminating the relative proficiency of each as a practical Orientalist" ("Dedication" 3). With this assertion, Gilchrist highlights the authority that officers have over the Company's British and Indian personnel alike. The imagined officer's power allows him first to extract from Indian soldiers linguistic knowledge. Subsequently, he may use that knowledge in evaluating the abilities of British military personnel. The officer also holds authority over scholars because they rely on him for the colloquial knowledge that he may gain as a result of his proximity to Indian soldiers. The high status of officers, Gilchrist argues, enables them to promote and disseminate practical Orientalism.

By welcoming the reforms that he imagines his students will implement, Gilchrist extends to the colonial context his praise of the spread of education in England. Laborers there, the philologist asserts, exhibit an enthusiasm for literary and scientific knowledge that the gentry must strive to match. Otherwise, society will change dramatically when educated laborers attain the power that formerly remained accessible only to elites. This change, "if met with becoming fortitude, prudence, and good faith by persons of consequence and wealth, may settle into a dead calm, which will then be hailed as the prelude to universal peace and good-will to every nation on the surface of the globe" ("Eleventh Report" 2). Using a wry tone, Gilchrist expresses his general propensity for reform by conveying his sincere desire for a society that values diligence, knowledge, and ability above lineage and wealth. The *Tuitionary Pioneer* thus highlights the wider societal benefits of rewarding Britons for their talents rather than their backgrounds. In so

doing, the text bolsters its argument that the Company should recognize British talent in India.

Gilchrist's promotion of education for Britons in both England and India bolsters his self-depiction as a radical. He creates this image not only through his pedagogical views but also by championing republicanism. As a result of his political beliefs, his professional prospects do not suffer. He maintains ties to the Company because his ideology does not challenge but instead supports the colonial project. He criticizes England's monarchical system in a pamphlet titled *Parliamentary Reform on Constitutional Principles, or, British Loyalty Against Continental Royalty* (1815). Although it lacks any substantive discussion of colonialism, this text asserts that Gilchrist's political views could endanger his relationship to the Company. He speculates that his pension as a surgeon "will probably be taken entirely away, when the Honourable Court learn, that a pensioner of their's [sic] has dared to become a Radical Reformer" (175). This concern proved unfounded as the Company re-hired him in 1818 (after he left Fort William College in 1804) to teach prospective lawyers, doctors, and civil servants. Furthermore, Gilchrist's anti-monarchical stance aligns with the Company's aims because tensions pervaded that organization's relations with the Crown.[15] His desired societal and pedagogical reforms, therefore, aim to strengthen colonial power.

III

Anxiously recognizing that the dynamics of social study undermine his pedagogical authority, Gilchrist appropriates students' experiences through citing them in his reports.[16] Describing students' progress and providing testaments from them to his instructional gifts enables the philologist to present himself as the figure most capable of

facilitating their dominance in India. In their letters, students endorse this image of Gilchrist by depicting colonial power imbalances as governing their relations with Indian instructors. Pupils at Fort William College, writes Das, "knew they were the rulers of the country and the Indian teachers–their *munshis*–belonged to the population to be ruled by them" (xiii).[17] In addition to this Anglo-Indian student-teacher relationship, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* depicts interactions between Britons and their Indian servants. The text also examines other Anglo-Indian ties that Christian charity, newly sanctioned missionary endeavor, the possible instruction of Indians in Latin, and ostensibly "mutual" learning with a *nawab* might cultivate ("Fifth Report" 3). These relationships, like those between students and *munshis* or students and servants, place Britons in a position of superior power. Nevertheless, Gilchrist and his students strive to dictate the terms of Anglo-Indian ties because they recognize Indians' ability to challenge this authority.

Gilchrist relates the experience of a particular group of students in order to depict social study as a practice that may reinforce his own authority by transmitting it through deputies.[18] He and the students that he describes "have been under peculiar obligation to Mr. Roswell, for the organization and management of" additional classes to supplement lectures (Second Report 3). With this statement, Gilchrist acknowledges monitorial learning as a necessary expedient that renders him indebted to those who take charge of this process. He praises Roswell further by noting that this student's classes offered "the most perceptible benefit to all who had the leisure and inclination to attend" them (Second Report 3). The obstacle of students lacking time as well as motivation afflicts Roswell just as it does Gilchrist. By highlighting this circumstance, the philologist identifies similarities between himself and one of his auxiliary instructors. This rhetorical

strategy portrays mutual instruction as a system that does not pose a severe threat to Gilchrist's authority. Even when successfully implemented, social study fails to eradicate the challenges that arise within his classroom.

By praising his pedagogical methods using not only his own observations but also a pupil's testimony, Gilchrist strives to assimilate that pupil's instructional authority as his own. The student– named W.G.T. Lewis–asserts, "that much of the proficiency I have acquired, may be attributed to the benefit derived from communicating my stock of knowledge to Students so enlightened and respectable" ("Eleventh Report" 8). In citing this letter, Gilchrist bolsters his claim that social study deepens pupils' knowledge of Hindustani. Accounts such as this one, therefore, provide essential support for his defense of his scholarly and pedagogical work. Because Gilchrist did not participate in Lewis's supplementary lessons, the student offers a perspective on mutual instruction that the philologist cannot. Moreover, the inclusion of letters such as this one in the *Tuitionary Pioneer* betrays Gilchrist's worry that his perspective alone cannot fortify his position within the Company. He therefore deploys students' letters as one narrative strategy for addressing his professional anxieties.

Despite the many benefits of social study, Gilchrist warns that students may mismanage this system if they have not already acquired an adequate foundation in practical Orientalism from an experienced instructor such as himself. He posits that mutual instruction may build on but not substitute for initial lessons from an experienced teacher. In making this declaration, he attempts to minimize the extent to which his championing of social study requires him to surrender his pedagogical authority. He champions rudimentary language lessons by describing medical students who, as he

observes, often seek to leave Britain for India before they develop the necessary knowledge of local languages ("Tenth Report" 3). These students embark "with or without any colloquial expertness in Hindoostanee alone, or even elementary insight enough to profit during the voyage, by social study among their fellow-passengers" ("Tenth Report" 3). By relating this circumstance, Gilchrist implicitly foregrounds his role as the mediator and instigator of students' mutual instruction. He authorizes them to increase and reinforce their learning among themselves while also claiming his own authority as the source of their knowledge.

Along with a dearth of previous lessons, problems with students' attendance impede social study and thereby betray the mutual dependence among teachers and students that this system engenders. The progress of a group of Persian learners, Gilchrist asserts, "[has] been nearly paralyzed […] by the unexpected absence of those students most capable of conducting their own schoolfellows in that department, through their social classes, with adequate effect" ("Eighth Report" 1). By using the word "paralyzed," the philologist depicts some students' lack of attendance as a problem that hinders his own ability to facilitate others' learning. The system of mutual instruction, therefore, creates difficulties even as it offers an efficient means of developing language skills. A pervasive lack of commitment–in addition to other factors such as illness and professional obligations–among rising Company personnel troubles Gilchrist because he cannot carry out his work without their cooperation. In order to champion the learning of languages used in India, Gilchrist promotes an educational approach that is efficient yet vulnerable because it requires students to share his belief in the usefulness of studying those languages.

The demands of social study on experienced students present another challenge to Glchrist's ability to orchestrate students' mutual instruction of one another successfully. A former pupil of his, named Lieutenant Lewis, studied Hindustani in England and subsequently wishes to learn Persian as well. Lewis's efforts to do so, however, suffer because he engages in the social study of Hindustani in India. Consequently, he "has hardly been able to master [Persian] from the want of leisure, by his constant attendance on the social studies and mutual instruction classes, which have for months past, without intermission, devolved on his shoulders" ("Eleventh Report" 3). Lewis, to the detriment of his own learning, expends considerable effort on teaching others. While these efforts benefit novice students as well as primary instructors, they impede the continued advancement of experienced students. These student-teachers should nevertheless make this individual sacrifice, Gilchrist implies, for the benefit of the colonial project as a whole.

The *Tuitionary Pioneer* invokes an additional obstacle that practical Orientalists may face by including a letter from a student who encounters resistance when trying to form a group for social study during his journey to India. According to this student, his fellow travelers mock him for choosing to learn Hindustani ("Tenth Report" 6). Rather than ignore this ridicule, he endeavors to persuade his critics that they should, like him, engage in practical Orientalism. The student writes, "one day particularly, I remember being extremely (if I may use the term) eloquent upon the subject, which not only surprised myself, but all around me, and I absolutely succeeded so well as to convert two or three" ("Tenth Report" 6). To foreground the efficacy of his speech, the student describes his secular course of study using the language of missionary activity. This

language represents social study as benefiting its participants on moral as well as intellectual grounds. Furthermore, the student's account, like the *Tuitionary Pioneer* as a whole, emphasizes the necessity of group cooperation (which often proves elusive) for the successful implementation of practical Orientalism.

Gilchrist betrays some recognition of and frustration with the possibility that social study constrains the efficacy of his work. In a footnote, he refutes an anonymous letter that questions the fitness of a student to give Hindustani lessons "after 28 days' study only" ("Ninth Report" 9). Gilchrist responds, "No–the youth merely possesses well-grounded confidence in his ability to teach any person the whole of his own elementary knowledge" ("Ninth Report" 9). The defensive tone of this statement conveys irritation on the philologist's part. Continuing to defend both the student and the practice of mutual instruction, Gilchrist asserts that the student's knowledge is "founded on a rock of right reason, and therefore indelibly fixed in every taught or teaching pupil–who has duly attended to my lectures" ("Ninth Report" 9). The philologist here emphasizes the potency of his lessons by deploying alliteration. The "rock of right reason" that students acquire from his classes will ground their futures as both learners and teachers. By championing monitorial learning so ardently, Gilchrist seeks to obscure the fact that his students' general lack of commitment may limit his work's potential to influence Company thinking.

To further his exploration of power negotiations within instructional relationships, Gilchrist portrays his students' interactions with *munshis* (a term he and they use to connote Indian language teachers). Prior to Company rule, *munshis* worked as scribes for the Mughal Empire creating histories and keeping administrative records. The *munshi*'s

role thus centered around "a branch of knowledge that was regarded as secular, in the sense of being distinctly this-worldly and largely devoid of religious or theological connotations" (Alam and Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal World* 313). Owing to this circumstance, Hindus and Muslims who received an education in Persian literary traditions gained employment as *munshis*. The ability to join the ranks of the *munshis* not only strengthened the participation of Hindus–especially those from the Khatri, Kayastha, and Brahman castes–in the Mughal state but also produced literary innovation. As Alam and Subrahmanyam write, *munshis* in the late seventeenth century "were feeling sufficiently confident of their position to propose changes in received [Persian] models of history-writing and new framings for old histories" (427). This statement highlights the *munshis*' creativity and erudition. In addition to recording administrative practices, they could transform historical narratives.

As the Company gained political power, the role of *munshis* changed. British colonial administrators relied on them to explain Mughal legal and cultural traditions. *Munshis,* as Alam and Subrahmanyam relate, introduced Company personnel to "the arcane matters of the Mughal chancery and *adab*" (423).[19] Therefore, *munshis* helped to acculturate Britons to their role as colonial rulers. Establishments such as Fort William College also employed *munshis* as language instructors and producers of translations in addition to original works of prose. As Das notes, the school and its students recognized the status of these Indian scholars as colonial subjects (xiii). *Munshis* thus did not receive sufficient acknowledgment for their intellectual contributions. Instead, students often treated their Indian instructors as a type of servant. This conception represents a departure from the *munshis*' role in the Mughal Empire as necessary functionaries. Britons

depended on Indian teachers and writers for the linguistic, historical, and administrative knowledge they harbored. Nevertheless, colonial hierarchies prevented the Company from honoring *munshis*' contributions to their acquisition of power.

A student of Gilchrist's projects an awareness of Britons' authority over their Indian instructors by relating how he and his classmates seized control of their lessons. This pupil writes that his and his classmates' first *munshi* "knew less of the Hindoostanee grammar than ourselves" ("Fifth Report" 1). However, "having hired him for the month, we made him tell us long stories, as the best practical mode left for learning the idiom, and the natives' way of expressing their sentiments in that Tongue" ("Fifth Report" 1). First, the letter writer identifies the fault–an ostensible lack of grammatical knowledge–that he and his fellow pupils find (whether justly or not) with the *munshi*. Then the letter writer describes how his group nevertheless benefits from the instructor by directing his approach to teaching. This narrative trajectory details how the student and his fellow learners exercise power within their relationship to the *munshi*. As his employer, they have the authority to "make" him change his pedagogical approach. The student justifies this assertion of authority by providing his assessment of his group's abilities as well as the *munshi*'s.

With a different Indian teacher, the same group embraces rather than overrides his pedagogical methods. The new *munshi*, unlike the old one, cannot understand English. Therefore, the second teacher does not threaten the students' authority as the first one does by sharing with them knowledge of their native language. The new *munshi*, according to the letter writer, "was truly good" because "[h]e could not talk English, which forced us from the first to converse with him in the Hindoostanee only" ("Fifth

Report" 1). The teacher's monolingualism helps the students by "forc[ing]" them to practice the language they are learning. In praising this circumstance, the letter writer reveals his group's willingness to adjust their conduct within a student-*munshi* relationship provided that they view the change as benefitting them. The second teacher, they believe, assists them by catalyzing their learning. This instructor's monolingual approach, like the previous *munshi*'s ostensible lack of grammatical knowledge, might impede his ability to communicate principles of Hindustani to his English-speaking pupils. However, the second teacher cannot understand English and therefore maintains the power imbalance between himself and his students. For this reason, the letter writer depicts only the new *munshi*'s techniques as warranting accommodation.

According to another student of Gilchrist's, *munshis* may hinder Britons' efforts to learn Hindustani by either refusing or proving unable to explain the rules of that language's grammar. This student writes, "If you ask them [*munshis*], why is this or that? they tell you, it's Qaide ke mowafiq [according to the rule], and that's all they know about it" ("Eleventh Report" 5).[20] Indian teachers, in the student's view, can convey the rules of Hindustani grammar but not the reasoning behind these rules.[21] Consequently, the student dismisses the process of employing a *munshi* as "a farce" ("Eleventh Report" 5). This criticism encourages colonial personnel to assert their power by refusing to tolerate or accommodate the ostensible shortcomings of Indian language teachers. Thus, the student declares his confidence in the authority of Britons over Indians. Nevertheless, he also betrays the former's dependence on intermediary figures like *munshis* who may explain aspects of Indian culture and thereby facilitate colonial rule. The refusal of Indian

instructors to elucidate the details of Hindustani grammar reveals their awareness of the limited power that they gain from Britons' reliance on them.

Britons, Gilchrist argues, should restrict the extent to which they cede power to Indian instructors by attaining an elementary understanding of Hindustani from each other. In the philologist's view, Indian instructors mislead British students by teaching them language that deviates from the norms of Hindustani. For this reason, Gilchrist asserts that "the native teachers abroad will prove very inadequate, if not blind and perverse guides to the true pronunciation, grammatical proficiency, or idiomatical practice, of raw English youths" ("Eleventh Report" 4). Novice students may avoid the difficulty of grappling with the individual, regionally differentiated speech patterns of various *munshis* by instead working with British teachers. In making this claim, Gilchrist seeks not only to promote British instructors such as himself but also to foreground the necessity of carefully managing Anglo-Indian interactions. A lack of preparatory instruction will harm Britons by rendering them susceptible to the idiosyncratic and–according to Gilchrist–improper linguistic habits of native teachers.

Like the *Tuitionary Pioneer*, exams from Fort William College attest that this establishment instilled in British students a sense of their power over *munshis*.[22] The second exam of 1801, for example, requires pupils to translate from English into Hindustani a fictional dialogue between a Briton and his Indian instructor in which the latter strives to balance instruction with deference. This dialogue centers around the question of how the student may continue to strengthen his language skills. While proposing to correct the Briton as he reads Hindustani passages, the tutor states, "You have too much sense, I am sure, to be offended at this freedom" (194). Rather than take

umbrage, the student asserts that he wants the *munshi* to correct him so that he may learn. The student tells his instructor that he doubts his own potential for improvement "unless you faithfully execute the duties of a Tutor, and I diligently attend to your advice and instruction as a Student, in the Hindoostanee Language" (194). Through this dialogue, the College teaches the Company's British novices that they have the authority to direct their Indian teachers' methods of instruction.

The *Tuitionary Pioneer* envisions Britons using language skills to exercise power in their relationships not only with *munshis* but also with Indians in other service roles. According to Gilchrist, a group of less accomplished students "are determined to prosecute their colloquial studies on the passage with such persevering assiduity, as will enable them, on reaching India, to converse with the natives intelligibly" ("Seventh Report" 2). This social study will allow the pupils to engage "in the ordinary transactions of life, between masters and domestics, or patients and their physicians" ("Seventh Report" 2). According to this account, the students will primarily interact with Indians either as their employers in a domestic setting or as their professional caretakers. The additional possibility that Britons may help Indian legal clients materializes in the letter from Humphries ("Fifth Report" 4). Within this network of imagined Anglo-Indian ties, language teachers figure prominently but not on a more exalted level than other Indians. *Munshis*, therefore, appear in the *Tuitionary Pioneer* as one of many groups that Britons must strive to manage using their developing linguistic knowledge.

As in other pedagogical relationships between Britons and Indians, colonial hierarchies shape the former's efforts to learn Hindustani through conversing with native speakers of that language in England. Gilchrist states that "numerous native sailors […]

arrive here annually from India, and are collected under a Superintendant's management, on behalf of the Company" ("Dedication" 3). This description, by stating that the sailors receive oversight from a Company official, portrays them as living under that organization's control. To expand this portrayal, Gilchrist declares that from this group of Indians "there can be little doubt, that a few might always be selected for occasional conversations with all the Hindustanee students in London" ("Dedication" 3). The status of the Indian sailors as colonial subjects allows Gilchrist to imagine plausibly that he (with the Company's help) may conscript them into helping Britons learn that language. By proposing this scenario, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* depicts the success of Company rule as depending upon that organization's exploitation of Indians' cultural knowledge.[23]

Talking with Indians, in Gilchrist's view, affords Britons the opportunity not only to perfect their Hindustani skills but also to practice charity. While one student (named Harris) initially displays minimal linguistic talent, he rapidly improves to the point where he can "converse intelligibly on common topics with a poor native of India" ("Fifth Report" 2). Harris brought this Indian man "as a servant, to Bombay at [Gilchrist's] suggestion, as an act of charitable utility towards a starving Hindoostanee" ("Fifth Report" 2). By so doing, Harris improves his speaking skills while also ostensibly ameliorating the circumstances of an impoverished person. This act of charity involves Gilchrist because he mediates the relationship between the student and the servant. Therefore, Harris's story broadcasts that practical Orientalism has moral in addition to intellectual benefits for students and teachers alike. Proffering this idea enables Gilchrist to depict his work as facilitating virtue within the colonial environment but outside of the missionary context.

Gilchrist, though he distinguishes practical Orientalism from Christian evangelism, nevertheless praises missionary schools for bolstering the colonial project through linguistic education. At a London institution for aspiring missionaries, "[T]he greatest care is […] taken to make those Divines who are destined to preach the Gospel in foreign lands, well versed colloquially in" the languages spoken in the location of their posting (untitled section 10). This commendation of a missionary academy does not produce an overarching endorsement of Christianity or any other faith throughout the *Tuitionary Pioneer*. Instead, the text declines to address the role of religion in Indian society and disparages the uses of Christianity in Europe. Gilchrist warns against foisting religion on children because the cultivation of "implicit assent or faith […] opposes the operations of reason in comparing, examining, doubting, and balancing probabilities" (untitled section 10). However, he aligns himself with the missionaries because he recognizes their growing capacity to influence Anglo-Indian relations after the Charter Act of 1813 permitted them to preach in Company domains for the first time.[24] The philologist recognizes the missionaries as his potential allies because they, like him, foreground language study in their vision of the colonial context.

In a reference to educational activity that includes but also extends beyond missionaries, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* invokes the possibility of Britons' teaching Latin to Indians. This instruction, Gilchrist argues, will promote the intellectual and moral edification of its recipients. The philologist insists (on the text's title page) that the "Perfectly New Theory of Latin Verbs" that follows his reports to the Company will enable Britons to teach that language to Indians. "Thousands of" them, he asserts, "are at present thirsting after operative, literary, scientific, and moral Cultivation from the

beneficent Hands of their liberal Conquerors and Christian Rulers" (title page). In describing Britons as the "Christian rulers" of India who may facilitate the "moral Cultivation" of that country's population, Gilchrist potentially appeals to those with an interest in missionary work. However, he betrays his own lack of interest in that work by listing other kinds of knowledge ("operative, literary, [and] scientific") before moral instruction. Incorporating this type of learning into the list, therefore, displays Gilchrist's awareness of missionaries as an audience that could help to promote his ideas about colonial education.

Gilchrist highlights the desirability of communicating directly with Indian people outside of the educational context by citing a military-affiliated student's wish to avoid using an interpreter. The pupil, Lieutenant Ralph Thorpe, wants to learn the *devanāgarī* script so that he may correspond with the Indians under his command in the army. Otherwise, he writes, "we must submit all letters received from them to our Native Teacher, who will perhaps neither read correctly what has been written, nor answer the letters received truly, as directed" (Second Report 1). Thorpe projects conventional British fears of Indian deceptiveness by expressing wariness of translators as a group. Rather than dwell on their characters, however, he expresses an overriding concern with his ability to communicate effectively with Indians soldiers. He foregrounds this concern by deploying the words "correctly" and "truly[.]" Through Thorpe's letter, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* illustrates the potential of practical Orientalism to encourage communication within colonial armies. Linguistic knowledge, therefore, will allow the Company to expand its domains through military actions.

To further emphasize the dangers of relying on native intermediaries, the *Tuitionary Pioneer* describes the particular problems that they might cause within the field of colonial law. Learning languages used in India, Gilchrist insists, will allow British legal practitioners to avoid ceding power to Indian interpreters when they wish to communicate with their Persian- and Hindustani-speaking clients. One student, named Mr. Humphries, who wishes to practice law

> will have an immense advantage over his brethren in the Court of Justice at Calcutta, from the great progress he has already made in Hindustani and Persian; [...] that no third person, as interpreter between them [Humphries and his Indian clients], may have it in his power to sell them, or their secret opposite party, which he otherwise might do, without the smallest remorse of conscience, provided he received a large enough bribe for that infernal purpose. ("Fifth Report" 4)

This passage offers a conventional warning about the ostensible untrustworthiness of Indian intermediaries. According to Gilchrist, they will sabotage those who employ them as interpreters "without the smallest remorse of conscience" in order to realize an "infernal purpose." This hyperbolic description portrays knowledge of local languages as a skill that will protect Humphries from the threat that interpreters pose to his profession. In the situation that Gilchrist imagines, practical Orientalism will enable Humphries to defend himself against the possible harms of translators and thus to protect Indian people who rely on his advocacy. Britons occupy a secure position of power within the lawyer-client relationship that Gilchrist envisions. Therefore, he champions practical Orientalism on the grounds that it bolsters Anglo-Indian ties that expand Britons' autonomy.

The *Tuitionary Pioneer* asserts that, like interpreters, servants who hide their knowledge of English may impede Britons' professional lives. Additionally, multilingual domestic workers threaten colonial power structures by directing the terms on which they communicate with Britons. A student of Gilchrist's asserts that a servant "with a smattering of English, will conceal the knowledge, so that an European officer is positively entirely dependent on *Hindoostanee*, both for usefulness in their vocation and comfort in all others where natives are concerned" (untitled section 3; emphasis Gilchrist's). To emphasize his disapproval of this circumstance, the pupil redundantly asserts that Indians' refusal to speak English renders Britons "positively entirely dependent on" their own developing language skills. The student recognizes Britons' reliance on these skills without acknowledging that this reliance possibly undermines their power over Indian people. Therefore, this letter presents an alternative to the student-*munshi* relations that–according to Gilchrist and his pupils–consistently enable Britons to exercise their authority within the colonial context.

In praising a different student for engaging in mutual instruction with a *nawab*, Gilchrist highlights Britons' ability to gain skills that will advance the colonial project through relations with Indians of high rather than low status. The pupil, according to the philologist, "is actually engaged in exchanging a knowledge of English with the Nuwab Mirza Meer Shah Khan, for his Hindoostanee and Persian Tongues" ("Fifth Report" 3). The gerund "exchanging," along with Gilchrist's description of the student and *nawab*'s lessons as "reciprocal studies[,]" present these lessons as benefitting both language learners ("Fifth Report" 3). However, despite the seeming mutuality of this relationship, the British student works for an organization the power of which rises as that of the North

Indian leader declines. The Briton derives authority from his affiliation with the Company (as a cadet), and this group severely weakened the Mughal Empire that the *nawab* represents throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century. Therefore, by presenting their studies as a reciprocal endeavor, Gilchrist argues that exploiting the linguistic knowledge of all Indians (regardless of their political or social position) may bolster the Company's power in India.

Gilchrist argues that, by following his reformatory system for learning Hindustani, Britons may reconcile Indians to colonial subjugation. He constructs this view to mitigate the unruliness that he perceives in students' relations with both himself and various types of Indian people. Aiming to project authority, Gilchrist recommends that all British personnel throughout the Company's armies should study Hindustani. This course of action, he proposes, will "conciliate the affections of the [Indian] people to British supremacy and government in every shape and form" (untitled section 80). Language learning, Gilchrist asserts, constitutes the precondition for secure conquest. Additionally, he states that Britons will engender stability within Anglo-Indian relations by asserting their power. He thus depicts his work as a means of heightening "the image of the Englishman as the one who commands" in India (Cohn 41). However, Gilchrist betrays some concern regarding the potential outcomes of the Company's imposing its authority. He champions language learning because this strategy, unlike more interventionist ones, creates the appearance of reciprocity between ruler and subject. He advocates for this approach so as not to inflame the capacity for resistance that, as his students' letters demonstrate, Indians may exhibit.

Conclusion

Gilchrist's promotion of Hindustani constitutes a preliminary step toward Indian lexicographers' establishment of Hindi as an official language of India toward the end of the nineteenth century. As Walter N. Hakala details, early dictionaries by Indian authors demonstrate that the languages now known as Hindi and Urdu both flourished throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Late nineteenth-century scholars, however, began to champion Hindi over Urdu as an official (or *sarkari*) language.[25] Works such as Sayyid Aḥmad Dihlawi's monolingual (Urdu to Urdu) *Hindūstānī Urdū Luġhāt* (1888) arguably facilitated this process by "asserting word-for-word equivalences" between Hindi and Urdu and thereby understating the latter's distinctiveness (Hakala 116). This scholarly choice, according to post-independence Indian and Pakistani critics of Sayyid Aḥmad, enabled a Sanskritized register of Hindi to ultimately overtake Urdu as a *sarkari* language and thus become a sociolect of India's elite (Hakala 116). Therefore, the works that ensured Hindi's preeminence in India were produced by Indians and did not emerge until after Gilchrist's career (and life) had ended. While he sought to position Hindi and Urdu together (Hindustani) as uniting the Company's territories, later scholars built on this conceptualization of official language in India by narrowing it.

In examining Gilchrist's portrayal of Hindus' and Muslims' use of language, Safadi refutes the notion that he deliberately sought to entrench a religious divide through his presentation of Hindustani. His grammars, as Safadi notes, generally comment on possible distinctions along religious lines "'en passant'" rather than systematically and/or at length (44).[26] For example, he asserts that "Hindoos will naturally lean most to the *Hinduwee* while the Moosulmans will of course be more partial to the Arabic and Persian" whence "two styles [of Hindustani] arise, namely the court or high style, and the

country or pristine style" (qtd in Safadi 44).[27] Beyond this binary, Gilchrist cites a "middle or familiar current style between them[,]" which he deems "the most useful" (qtd in Safadi 44). This recognition of a third linguistic register challenges the notion that Gilchrist incited a system of divide and rule. In the *Tuitionary Pioneer*, his goal of promoting rather than explaining and teaching (as grammars aim to do) Hindustani drives him to elide any potential divisions within that language. Ignoring these divisions enables him to portray Hindustani as the single language that will most effectively advance the colonial project.

Soon after the *Tuitionary Pioneer*'s publication, Company policies became more hostile toward Indian languages. Lord William Bentinck became Governor-General of India in 1828, and his regime produced changes to colonial governance. For example, the English Education Act that he proposed in 1835 established English as the official language of schooling in India. An argument in favor of this act by Thomas Babington Macaulay asserts that even scholars of Indian languages and literature have acknowledged "that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia[.]" I do not wish to imply that Gilchrist necessarily foresaw these developments. However, I reference them to illustrate measures that the Company took in the 1830s to diminish the work of those who promoted erudite and colloquial languages alike. Gilchrist resists this circumstance, even at the end of his career, by representing Hindustani as the most practical means of securing British dominion in India.

Despite the ramifications of policies such as the English Education Act, the trajectory of colonial rule did not straightforwardly progress from an acceptance of Indian

languages to a repudiation of them. Knowledge of local languages facilitated the Company's conquests of Punjab and Awadh in the 1840s. Additionally, Macaulay's argument in favor of English-medium instruction drew on earlier writings by other Britons who dismissed Indian culture.[28] Hostility toward Indian languages in the 1830s, therefore, emerged from an intellectual context that existed at the time of Gilchrist's writing. Furthermore, his promotion of commonly spoken Indian languages did not vanish from Company thinking as a result of the English Education Act. Gilchrist, in his historical moment, intervened in debates about the role of local languages in the colonial project by arguing that these languages enable Britons to solidify their authority. In Gilchrist's account, this power appears tenuous owing to the agency that Indians and rising Company officials alike exert.

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[1] Despite serving as principal of Fort William College, Gilchrist received only the pension of an ordinary surgeon (his original position when he joined the Company) when he resigned in 1809.

[2] Following is a guide to the different sections of the *Tuitionary Pioneer*. Chiefly, this text consists of eleven annual reports (although the title page mistakenly cites fourteen) that Gilchrist submitted to the Company between 1816 and 1826. Before the reports, Gilchrist includes first an "Address" and then a "Dedication." The reports proceed in the following order: the First, the Second, the "Fifth," the "Seventh," the "Sixth," the "Eighth," an untitled report, the "Ninth," the "Tenth," the "Eleventh," and the "Twelfth." I have put quotation marks only around the reports that Gilchrist titled himself. I have labelled the First and Second Reports as such myself given their placement in the text. Following the reports, Gilchrist provides an untitled section that includes, among other materials, an excerpt from "DISCOURSE III" of "the late celebrated modern Peripatetic's Discourses, well known by the more familiar name of the WALKING STEWART, from his having visited the Old and New World" (10). The text's final section includes philological materials such as a "Panglossal Diorama for a Universal Language and Character" and "A PERFECTLY NEW THEORY OF LATIN VERBS" (title page). Throughout the text, I divide all sections based on where Gilchrist begins his pagination anew.

[3] For additional examples of the argument that Gilchrist deliberately pursued a policy of linguistic divide and rule, see Tara Chand, Sulaimān Nadvī (in Ahmad), and Jyotirindra Das Gupta.

[4] Rai challenges the standard argument that the College pursued a deliberate policy of divide and rule while nevertheless asserting that "the important thing that emerged from Fort William is the idea of two-ness, of linguistic duality. Fort William gave institutional recognition to the notion that there were in fact two ways of doing Hindustani–one which used the available and mixed language, and another from which the Arabic-Persian words […] had been removed in order to produce a language […] more suitable to the Hindus" (22). Rather than this argument, I build on Safadi's assertion that the British promoted a unified image of Hindustani because this view mirrors the *Tuitionary Pioneer*'s representation of that language.

[5] See C.A. Bayly, *Empire and Information*, 52, and Teltscher, *India Inscribed*, 204.

[6] To this day, Hindi does not have the status of India's national language. However, the Constitution of India designates Hindi as well as English official languages of that country.

[7] Gilchrist also produced a version of this story, which he transliterates as "Sukoontula," in 1804 ("Address" 2).
[8] For a more detailed discussion of Jones's literary and philological contributions, see Franklin's "*Orientalist Jones*."
[9] Das endorses the Society's own view of its work by asserting that this organization "succeeded in keeping their scholarly persuasion free from their official duties and colonial interests" (xi).
[10] Pindaris were "[l]arge bands of mercenary soldiers who had been dismissed from Indian armies [and] roamed the Deccan plateau, complicating the relations between the Company and its new client states" in the early nineteenth century (C.A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* 80).
[11] The *Succinct Narrative*, though published anonymously and written in the third person, "is almost certainly by Gilchrist himself" (Steadman-Jones 265).
[12] Letters comprise the *devanāgarī* script while *nastaʿlīq* consists of graphemes.
[13] For additional examples of Gilchrist portraying Hindustani as the lingua franca of India, see "Sixth Report," pages 3 and 5, as well as "Eleventh Report," page 4.
[14] I calculated these figures based on Gilchrist's lists of his students in the *Tuitionary Pioneer*. Das provides lists of the pupils in each class at Fort William College in *Sahibs and Munshis: An Account of the College of Fort William* (1978).
[15] See Sudipta Sen's *Distant Sovereignty* (2002) for a detailed account of tensions between the Company and the Crown.
[16] In citing students' letters, Gilchrist generally includes identifying information such as the writer's name and position within the Company. However, an untitled section that appears after the "Twelfth Report" includes a series of extracts from letters that are designated as such only by the use of quotation marks. By removing identifying information from these extracts, Gilchrist blurs the distinction between his perspective and that of his students.
[17] For an extended discussion of British students and teachers at Fort William College viewing *munshis* as their subjects, see Cohn. He cites Gilchrist's *Dialogues, English and Hindoostanee; for Illustrating the Grammatical Principles of the Strangers' East Indian Guide, and to Promote the Colloquial Intercourse of Europeans on the Most Indispensable and Familiar Subjects with the Natives of India* (1809) as an especially strong example of a book of language instruction that seeks to instill in British students a sense of their authority within the colonial context (39-40).
[18] Gilchrist deploys this rhetorical gesture multiple times in the *Tuitionary Pioneer*. For additional examples, see First Report, 5, and Second Report, 2.
[19] *Adab*, an Arabic word, describes various kinds of literatures that prescribe rules for ethics, refinement, and professional conduct.
[20] The bracketed translation is mine. I transliterate it into Urdu as follows: –قاعدے کے موافق
[21] For another example of a different student criticizing *munshis* for lacking the ability to teach elementary Hindustani skills, see "Tenth Report," page 5.
[22] I consulted these documents while conducting original research at the British Library.
[23] Gilchrist again references the possibility that a student may converse with Indian people in England on page 6 of the "Ninth Report."
[24] Although he did not explicitly endorse missionary activity, Gilchrist relates that he did attend a meeting of a missionary society. At this meeting, "one gentleman delivered an admirable speech on the interesting topic of all the probationary Missionaries about to go abroad, learning at home how to speak strange tongues" (untitled section 10). Gilchrist praises this address and argues that the Company should heed the speaker's argument.
[25] This Hindustani adjective, which derives from the Persian and Hindustani noun *sarkar*, describes official matters related to the government.
[26] Safadi cites these quotations from two grammars by Gilchrist: *The Anti-Jargonist* (1800) and *The Oriental Linguist* (1802).
[27] Hinduwee, also known as hindvī or *hindwī*, is "a term used in Persian scholarship until the eighteenth century to describe a spectrum of unwritten dialects spoken from the Indus river eastward to the Bay of Bengal [that] evolved into two competing registers: Urdu and what is sometimes called Modern Standard Hindi" (Hakala 7). While Hakala represents hinduwee as overlapping with Hindustani, Safadi asserts that "Gilchrist used this term for the 'old' language of the Hindus" (47).
[28] See, for example, the discussion of evangelist Charles Grant's *Observations of the State of Society Among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain* in this dissertation's introduction.

Conclusion

Contemporary studies of life-writing challenge the exclusive association that previous criticism on that form creates between literary self-representation and ostensibly sophisticated, European cultures.[1] Even early comparative studies make a distinction between works from Europe and elsewhere in which authors depict their own experiences. For example, Georg Misch's *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity* (1907) acknowledges that a variety of cultures produced "writings of the autobiographical type" during the classical era (1:6). Nevertheless, he also asserts that "a history of autobiography, since it has to deal with the more complicated phenomena of mental life, cannot reach back to the primitive peoples" (1:18). He goes on, though, to identify as "primitive" the fact that written self-depictions constitute not only a literary form but also "a method of self-assertion" (1:18). This statement recognizes that writers often depict themselves to pursue aims beyond exercising their intellects and creative talents. In making this claim, Misch posits that an author's methods of situating themself in relation to their cultural and historical environment comprises the chief interest of any literary self-portrayal.

Scholars have built on this notion by debating whether life-writing by Eastern authors typically emphasizes the autobiographical self's individuality or their role within a community. Karl J. Weintraub and Gustav E. von Grunebaum promote the latter view while Stephen F. Dale champions the former. Despite their differences, each claim recognizes the ability of life-writing to define an author's perspective on themself and their place in their society. This dissertation examines the literary strategies that four authors use to describe their connections to the Anglo-Indian relationship of the late

eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Through life-writing, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist proclaim their individuality as well as their ties to various communities and institutions. Doing so enables each author to combat the limitations that their particular subject positions as well as their circumstances engender. Given these conditions, each author seeks to exert control over their experiences of the colonial context. Throughout this dissertation, I have discussed the possibilities and the restrictions that Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist each encounter. Additionally, I have examined how not only their backgrounds but also the techniques that they use to represent themselves distinguish them from one another.

Through their writings, the authors I discuss trace the entrenchment of British colonialism in India as its hierarchies become more rigid toward the middle of the nineteenth century. Mahomet, writing in 1794, asserts that he has extracted from his position as a colonial subject the ability to engage productively with both British and Indian cultures. Hamilton and Fay each respond to Hastings's regime by foregrounding in their narratives interactions, whether positive or negative, among Indians and Britons. Gilchrist's series of reports completed during the early nineteenth century (from 1816 until 1826) conveys his anxiety that refusing to attain local knowledge as a strategy for domination may undermine the Company's authority. These authors foreground the political circumstances of their eras because those realities shape their lived experiences. While each autobiographical subject experiences limitations within the colonial context, Gilchrist depicts a more circumscribed Anglo-Indian relationship than does Mahomet. This difference reflects, in addition to their distinct historical moments, their individual subject positions. Gilchrist may express worry about the Company's path because his ties

to that institution, unlike Mahomet's, give him some hope of influencing colonial policy. Each author, therefore, complicates their relationship to historical circumstances by centering their individual experiences.

Along with their subject positions, these authors define their participation in the contact zone through their relationships to the field of eighteenth-century colonial knowledge production. This field, as Robert Travers argues, comprises openness toward Indian culture as well as the drive to create boundaries between Indian and British societies. The former attitude, according to Rozina Visram and others, characterized the regime of Warren Hastings and especially his support for the scholarship of the Asiatic Society.[2] While Hamilton had a biographical connection to that group, she could not join its ranks owing to her gender. Mahomet and Fay each had more distant ties to Orientalist studies. *Travels* references this field to endorse a British rendering of Indian history, and *Original Letters* disavows scholarly perspectives on India. Even Gilchrist, though he received patronage from the Company and acted as the principal of Fort William College, defends his work in comparison to that of prominent figures like William Jones. To varying extents, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist locate themselves outside the center of colonial knowledge production. I argue, however, that they nevertheless each contribute to eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century debates about Indian history, literature, religions, and languages.

Patricia Meyer Spacks, focusing on European literary traditions, argues that the creation of eighteenth-century novelistic characters and autobiographical subjects alike enables authors to foreground the role of the individual within a society. The writers I examine pursue this aim by declaring their ties to various cultures (English, Scottish,

Irish, and Indian). Additionally, they emphasize the distinctiveness of their individual backgrounds, experiences, and historical moments. Their works, when considered together, detail not only their connections to different cultures and institutions but also their roles within a colonial relationship that becomes increasingly restrictive and interventionist toward the middle of the nineteenth century. In this situation, they strive to manage the limitations that they encounter as a result of their individual circumstances and subject positions. Life-writing affords them the means of so doing. Therefore, they recognize that, as Spacks states, the "conversion of life into story reflects the human need to declare not only the identity but the larger-than-life significance of the self" (*Imagining a Self* 18). Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist relate their stories because, to varying degrees, they doubt their capacity to influence the Anglo-Indian relationship.[3] They combat this circumstance through transforming themselves into autobiographical subjects.

In applying a postcolonial lens to life-writing, critics represent this form as one that resists the asymmetrical power dynamics of colonialism. As C.L. Innes asserts, literary self-representation "sidesteps entering into dialogue on the colonizer's terms by grounding the text in autobiography, starting from the self as the central point of reference" ("Authorizing the Self" 56). This strategy enables authors in postcolonial societies to portray themselves often "as the embodiment of a new nation's struggle to come into being and its establishment of a cultural and ideological identity" (56). With this statement, Innes identifies the specific possibility that life-writing affords authors in formerly colonized lands to shape emerging national cultures. The historical contexts of Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist lead them to develop a different perspective on

literary self-depiction. Writing during India's colonial period, they do not construct visions of independence for that country even as they question to varying extents aspects of the colonial project. Like postcolonial authors, however, they view themselves as representing a transitional moment. In the early stages of Company rule, Mahomet, Hamilton, Fay, and Gilchrist create openings for themselves to center their particular subjectivities in relation to the burgeoning colonial context.

The authors I discuss present distinct selves as a result not only of the individual experiences, backgrounds, and subject positions that they depict but also of the different literary modes and genres that they use. Deploying strategic essentialism to construct his relationship to Indianness and Britishness, Mahomet connects himself to both Eastern and Western literary traditions of travel writing. Hamilton uses satire to accentuate the complex views on women's rights and the Anglo-Indian relationship that her background and lived experiences instilled in her. For Fay, creating the effect that she narrates her experiences as they occur enables her to emphasize her affective responses. These responses include suffering in captivity, antipathy toward Indian people, and frustration with her perceived marginality within Calcutta's British community. To justify his scholarly work, Gilchrist not only describes his own experiences but also appropriates his students' testimonies as evidence of his success. He thereby seeks to mitigate the extent to which his implementation of a monitorial system of learning challenges his pedagogical authority. In using various literary strategies to delineate their roles within the Anglo-Indian relationship, the authors I examine develop their perspectives through governing their presentation of self.

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[1] See Innes's "Authorizing the Self" as well as Moore-Gilbert, Anderson, and Huddart for studies of life-writing that draw on postcolonial theory.

[2] See Dalrymple, Das, and Franklin.
[3] Even Gilchrist, despite receiving patronage from the Company, expresses anxiety because he wishes to exert further influence over that institution's policies.

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