

University of Massachusetts Amherst
ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst

Doctoral Dissertations

Dissertations and Theses

March 2020

ANGELS WHO STEPPED OUTSIDE THEIR HOUSES: "AMERICAN TRUE WOMANHOOD" AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY (TRANS)NATIONALISMS

Gayathri M. Hewagama
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_2



Part of the [Literature in English, North America Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hewagama, Gayathri M., "ANGELS WHO STEPPED OUTSIDE THEIR HOUSES: "AMERICAN TRUE WOMANHOOD" AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY (TRANS)NATIONALISMS" (2020). *Doctoral Dissertations*. 1830.
https://scholarworks.umass.edu/dissertations_2/1830

This Open Access Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dissertations and Theses at ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. For more information, please contact scholarworks@library.umass.edu.

ANGELS WHO STEPPED OUTSIDE THEIR HOUSES: “AMERICAN TRUE
WOMANHOOD” AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY (TRANS)NATIONALISMS

A Dissertation Presented

By

GAYATHRI MADHURANGI HEWAGAMA

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 2020

Department of English

© Copyright by Gayathri Madhurangi Hewagama 2020

All Rights Reserved

ANGELS WHO STEPPED OUTSIDE THEIR HOUSES: “AMERICAN TRUE
WOMANHOOD” AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY (TRANS)NATIONALISMS

A Dissertation Presented

By

GAYATHRI MADHURANGI HEWAGAMA

Approved as to style and content by

Nicholas K. Bromell, Chair

Hoang G. Phan, Member

Randall K. Knoper, Member

Adam Dahl, Member

Donna LeCourt, Acting Chair
Department of English

DEDICATION

To my mother, who taught me my first word in English.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor, Professor Nicholas K. Bromell for his thoughtful guidance and prompt feedback that greatly helped me see my project through to the end in four years; something that would have otherwise taken much longer to complete. Your contribution to my academic development will forever be appreciated. Thank you professors Randall Knoper, Hoang Phan, Adam Dahl and Laura Doyle for your valuable advice and guidance.

Thanks are also due to Professor Joseph Black and Professor Asha Nadkarni who went out of their way to make sure I did not give up on my studies due to trying times. Thank you Professor Black for all the motivation and emotional support you have always given me, from the time of my application process to University of Massachusetts Amherst till the completion of my degree.

Last but not least, I express my heartfelt gratitude to my parents who spared no expense for my education and love to Asanka, my soul-mate, a beautiful human being, who kept me alive through the most difficult time in my life. Thank you all!

ABSTRACT

ANGELS WHO STEPPED OUTSIDE THEIR HOUSES: “AMERICAN TRUE WOMANHOOD” AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY (TRANS)NATIONALISMS

FEBRUARY 2020

GAYATHRI MADHURANGI HEWAGAMA, B.A., UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

M.PHIL., UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

PH.D., UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Directed by: Professor Nicholas K. Bromell

“Angels who Stepped Outside their Houses” examines the fashioning of a gendered white American middle-class Protestant subject called the “American true woman” as a fitting representation of the emerging new American nation, as reflected in the writings of white American women authors from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century.

Locating the formation of this identity on a transnational plane, this work argues that in their myriad texts, these women authors reveal the significant role that imperial Britain and the non-national/not-yet-national colonial Orient played in the (de/)construction/(de/)centering of American true womanhood. For, in the face of a particular Englishness and an Oriental otherness that these texts produce, American true women become interstitial and ambivalent subjects.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER	
INTRODUCTION: TO BE (TRANS)NATIONAL: AMBIVALENCES OF “AMERICAN TRUE WOMANHOOD”	1
1. “AMERICAN TRUE WOMEN” IN PROTEAN SHAPES: THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE DOMESTIC THEORIST AND HER WRITING	11
2. IN SEARCH OF A PRIVILEGED “ENGLISHNESS”: TRAVEL WRITING BY CATHARINE MARIA SEDGWICK, CAROLINE M. KIRKLAND AND HARRIET BEECHER STOWE	46
3. HYBRID HEROINES: SUSAN WARNER AND THE MAKING OF ANGLO-AMERICAN FEMALE SUBJECTS	81
4. MARGINALIA: “AMERICAN TRUE WOMEN” AND AMBIVALENT ORIENTALISMS	109
5. ANTEBELLUM WHITE AMERICAN “MISSION WIVES”: OF FLAWED MIMICRY AND THE MISSION GENRE	142
CONCLUSION	174
NOTES.....	176
BIBLIOGRAPHY	203

INTRODUCTION

TO BE (TRANS)NATIONAL: AMBIVALENCES OF “AMERICAN TRUE WOMANHOOD”

Nineteenth-century Britain-America-Orient¹ is an intriguing trio: one, an imperial super power, the other a newly independent nation, and the last, a non-national/not-yet-national colonial space under the control of the British Empire. Although I do not want to downplay the fact that the representation of their power on a global plane was greatly disproportionate till the late nineteenth century when, for instance, the U.S. became an imperial power to be reckoned with, my study mainly concentrates on how all three of these materially produced metaphorical constructs were participants in a transnational exchange, albeit one characterized by different degrees of authority.² In this large sociopolitical backdrop I will locate my study of the “American true woman,” considered as a fitting representation of the emerging American republic, and show her as an ambivalent (trans)national subjectivity, since other national or non-national/not-yet-national spaces were always already implicated in the making of this specifically gendered (female), racial (white), classed (middle class) and religious (Protestant) identity deemed uniquely American.

National Selves and Transnational Visions

‘In the first place, do not copy foreign distinctions.’

‘How? I do not know what you mean by ‘foreign distinctions.’”

‘I mean the claiming certain airy rights and imaginary vantage ground, which however suited to the spirit of other lands, are out of place here. We have no privileged class; we have no American aristocracy! Heaven forbid we ever should, other than that truly Republican one, the aristocracy of mind and manners.’

Susan Warner (1851)

This is how Susan Warner's essay, "How May an American Woman Best Show her Patriotism?"³ accounts for America's national uniqueness, as perceived in the eyes of her nineteenth-century white American characters. Here, a husband explains to his wife that to be patriotic is to refrain from emulating the "foreign" (meaning, at least in this instance, the British,) assertively positing a distinctive difference between the new republic and the aristocratic Old World. The exchange is exemplary of the American ethos chiefly from around the end of the eighteenth century/the post-Revolutionary years toward the mid-nineteenth-century. This period of nation building and national aggrandizement was characterized and governed by concepts such as the westward movement of civilization, Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, and scientific theories of racism that generated a mainstream discourse of American Exceptionalism, producing an image of a distinctive New World country.⁴ Still, the manner in which George above places the "foreign"/Britain and the U.S in a binary ignores America's sprouting desire at the time to be recognized as a nation among nations in the European world. His positioning of the old motherland and the newly independent colony as stark contrasts does not acknowledge the ties that existed between them well into the nineteenth century. The "American true woman" however, stands in the intersection of these national and transnational pulls and shows us how other nations contributed to the (de/)construction of this gendered subject.

My objective in this dissertation is therefore, to mainly concentrate on the implications of transnational spaces in the (de/)construction/(de/)centering (contributing to both the formation and the dissolution) of a national subject, with special reference to

American relations with Britain and the Orient, from around the end of the eighteenth century toward the 1860's.⁵ My principal argument here is that writings by white American women in the day participating in American true womanhood (by representing, promoting, and/or emulating this ideal) reveal an unambiguous Anglophilia that envisages a common Anglo-American unity, that is both complemented and disrupted by the space of the Orient. The Oriental space not only vitalized the desires for an Anglo-American unity, but also, at the same time, interrupted that desire by drawing attention to the instabilities of American true womanhood. Likewise, by placing a subjectivity deemed nationally unique on a transnational plane, I aim to open up the boundaries of nineteenth-century American self-fashioning, showing it as a space that simultaneously housed its transnational (racial and national) "others."

There is, indeed, an abundance of studies on the internal racial/national dynamic of the white American self, a self-produced in tandem with his/her racial/national others, such as African Americans, American Indians and other white immigrants such as the Irish and the German within America. My work differs from this existing body of research as I look beyond the artificial boundaries of one country and bring together a trio that complicate the white American gendered subject of the nineteenth century. I demonstrate in my work the ways in which a particular Englishness deemed authentic/originary/whole and a specific Oriental otherness worked in tandem to (de/)construct and (de/)center a gendered national ideal. Locating my investigation in the writings of a cohort of white women who participated variously in American true womanhood enables me to intervene in a discourse that was self-reflective, in that it recorded white women's perceptions of themselves via their perceptions of others.

To refer to this national ideal as a (trans)national identity, as I do here, contrasts significantly with the critical repertoire that generally takes the national particularity of this subject as a given. In fact, many scholars point to its infusion in republican values as a mark of its distinctiveness from other nations.⁶ Especially, Linda K. Kerber's "The Republican Mother: Women and the Enlightenment: An American Perspective" (1976) and *Women in the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980) maintain that post-war white American women began to play a nationally significant role as virtuous,⁷ appropriately educated, self-reliant nurturers of future republican citizens. They were differentiated from the aristocratic British women and "lazy" and "languid" Oriental women, since American women were the ones who apparently upheld the republican work-ethic as they did not shy away from industriously and economically 'doing their own work.'⁸

Popular domestic theorists at the time, like Catharine Beecher (1800-1878), Sarah Josepha Hale (1788-1879) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) contributed to the promotion of a particular set of values and a code of conduct for white American women that set the latter apart from their racial, national and religious others. These authors echoed contemporary views as exemplified by writers such as H. D. Kitchell (1850)⁹ who professed the belief that America was to work out "something better and higher in the end than the world has yet seen" (101). Ironically, though, in Kitchell's vision, it was by following in the footsteps of the old motherland that America could achieve greatness. For example, the new nation took part in the Anglo-Saxon mission of "infus[ing] their vigorous life and earnest character to the decaying nations" (Kitchell 104) as the American Foreign Missions exported model white American women to the far corners of

the “uncivilized” Orient. This represents one major instance of a shared Anglo-American responsibility. Further, it takes but a glimpse at the unquestionably British origins¹⁰ of American true womanhood, among many other reasons that this study will clarify in due course, to realize that, rooted in Victorian womanhood this identity was always already transnational from its very inception. In that case, how uniquely “American” was this woman, we wonder.

Scholars like Peter S. Onuf (2012) in this regard, emphasize “Britain’s continuing centrality to [American] national identity,”¹¹ attesting to how America’s Anglophilic variant remained dominant in spite of the strong patriotism of the nineteenth century. As I will elaborate on in Chapter Two, critics like Christopher Hanlon (2013), Daniel Kilbride (2013), Eliza Tamarkin (2008) and Paul Giles (2001, 2006) use “ambivalence” as an appropriate term to characterize (more male-identified) American perspectives on its imperial motherland, from the post-war era toward the mid-nineteenth century. Nevertheless, my argument slightly diverges from theirs, as I see texts by white American women involved in the propagation of an ideal white womanhood as showing an unequivocal/less ambivalent Anglophilia that is reflected by their pro-aristocratic and imperialist tendencies. In other words, what I claim here is that, in confrontation with the older civilization, these white American women’s works express a sense of being inadequate/incomplete, generating in turn an anxiety of being ‘not quite white, yet not wholly other,’ an anxiety that urges them to search for a more authentic/whole subjectivity in the lap of their colonial motherland. Among the causes that prompted this anxiety of self, the then British writers’ Orientalization of certain “backward” aspects of American life such as slavery, held a significant place.¹²

American true women's "anxieties of self" further intensify in their varied associations with the Orient—an(other) space that not only showed them the arbitrariness of the white feminine ideal but also managed to rupture the mainstream narrative of Anglo-American superiority. Hence, providing a counter-narrative to the writings of physicians and scientists of the day, such as Charles Caldwell (1772-1853), Samuel George Morton (1799-1851) and Josiah C. Nott, (1804-1873)¹³ who promulgated the theories of polygenesis and the innate superiority of the white race, (through craniological explanations) white American women authors from the late eighteenth toward the mid-nineteenth century, as I will discuss in chapters Four and Five, resort to an Orientalization of the East, while also critiquing that very act on the metaphorical margins of their texts. They also narrativize Oriental tales of flawed mimicry, wherein, American true womanhood comes through as an impossible ideal that even white American women themselves struggled to follow. This failed mimicry, in turn, ruptures the gendered white subject, revealing its porousness and heterogeneity.¹⁴ Ironically, it is the very advocates of American true womanhood who were thus challenging that ideal, all at once.

The key expression I use here—(trans)national—therefore, means 'to be of multiple nations' and 'transcend nations and nationalities,' while also being a national subject. Such a meaning opens up an ambivalent discourse that seems to reject as well as acknowledge the "nation," and it also invites a reading of American true womanhood that amalgamates a post(/neo) colony's search for political and cultural independence and its need to be recognized as a legitimate nation among nations within the European world.

Context, Methodology and Chapter Summary

My study of the production of a (trans)national gendered white subject in white American women writers' texts is located in the large body of critical works on American women's literary history, U.S Anglophilia and Orientalism. It is informed by post-colonial critics like Homi K. Bhabha and his theories on nation, nationalism and colonial mimicry, as well as deconstructive feminist/gender theories propounded by books like Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990). Not only gender identities but also national identities will be treated here, as I have already explained above, as porous and permeable formations/constructs. Eventually, my hope is that this dissertation will amalgamate areas of varied critical investigation by contributing to research on women's literature and multiple specializations from women's studies, postcolonial studies to transnational studies.

In Chapter One, " 'American True Women' in Protean Shapes: The Curious Case of the Domestic Theorist and Her Writing," I look at the socio-political context in which this gender ideal emerged in the new nation, explaining how some of its cardinal virtues were conceptualized in the backdrop of the then national and religious ethos. However, as a generation of scholars have argued, most or all of these virtues have also been shown to conflict within this identity itself. Contributing to existing criticism, I demonstrate the conflicted, ruptured and subversive nature of American true womanhood, by bringing together domestic manuals and sentimental and/or domestic novels as text and their writers' authorial life as text that relate to each other in a mutually disruptive manner. This chapter will thereby provide a preamble to my primary focus here—the ambivalence of a (trans)national subject—which I examine in the rest of this work with special focus

on white American women writers' production of a particular Englishness deemed authentic/originary/whole, and a rather equivocal Oriental otherness that affirms Orientalist objectification, while at the same time contesting that process of othering. I read my principal authors in this chapter (and elsewhere) somewhat unconventionally, (as I signal below) while I also broaden the representation of this American gender ideal by including a Southern writer in a largely North-centric discourse.

Treating Catharine Maria Sedgwick (1789-1867), Caroline M. Kirkland (1801-1864) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) mainly as "travel writers"—though critics usually concentrate on their involvement with other genres of writing like Sedgwick's novels on American Indian rights and Stowe's abolitionist writing—Chapter Two opens new perspectives into the representation of white American women's desires for their motherland. Hence, "In Search of a Privileged 'Englishness': Travel Writing by Catharine Maria Sedgwick, Caroline M. Kirkland and Harriet Beecher Stowe" draws attention to the unmistakable Anglophilia in the texts of antebellum "lady travelers." They occupied a space of privilege not only because they managed to travel to Europe for entertainment or educational purposes, but also because they wrote about their experiences adopting the persona of genteel ladies. More importantly, I show here how writings on Britain by white American "lady travelers" constructed an upper-middle-class/upper class Englishness shown to be "authentic" and "whole," that at once produced and was produced by a certain anxiety of the gendered white American self of being inadequate/incomplete as national (and even racial) subjects. My play on Bhabha's phrase, 'almost the same, but not quite,' that I have modified into 'not quite white, yet not wholly other' in the context of an ideal white American womanhood will be a running

thread in the entirety of this text, one that surfaces at different points in myriad ways.

Almost identical feelings come through even in the works of an iconic nineteenth century woman writer, Susan Warner (1819-1885), well-known as a domestic and/or sentimental novelist. Thus, in Chapter Three, “Hybrid Heroines: Susan Warner and the Making of Anglo-American Female Subjects,” I argue that even a novelist like Warner, whose narratives set out to represent patriotic white women of the New World, ironically disrupted the identity of this very womanhood through a subtext of Anglophilia. The “English” desires of American heroines are reflected by the pro-aristocratic and imperialist sympathies of her texts that throw into confusion the republican values she generally propounded in her works.

In the remaining chapters, I examine the implications of the Orient and the oriental subject in the making of the American true woman. This amalgamation of an Eastern non-national/not-yet-national space in a study of an identity deemed American questions the racial and national boundaries between the East and West. Chapter Four, “Marginalia: “American True Women” and Ambivalent Orientalisms” shows how writings by white American women authors participating in an ideal white womanhood was Orientalist, while at the same time, offering a critique of that very Orientalism. Here I go on to argue that this ambivalent attitude is evident in the way the Orientalist features of their texts fed Anglophilia by reinforcing the superiority of the white races, while also challenging and disrupting such racial hierarchization. And in the last chapter, “Antebellum White American ‘Mission Wives’: Of Flawed Mimicry and the Mission Genre,” my focus is on the identity of the “mission wife,” rightly seen as the epitome of true womanhood. Here, I use “mimicry” that Homi K. Bhabha’s *Location of Culture*

(1994) posits as an attribute of colonized natives to understand the gendered white American subject who is relocated in the Orient. I argue that the representation/representation of the American “mission wife” in mission memoirs shows them as interstitial and arbitrary subjects. The Orient ruptures her identity, letting it hover between the “ideal” and the “real”/its alternative Oriental versions. This decentering of the Anglo-American white female subject thereby loosens up the boundaries of exclusivity surrounding white American mission womanhood.

In fact, I consider Chapter Five as providing this dissertation with its most significant contribution because it exemplifies one way the national and racial (Oriental) other was implicit in the self-consciousness of an idealized white American gendered subject of the nineteenth century. At different levels of engagement, the Orient presented this Occidental subject with a racial and national other, while also allowing the former to identify elements of otherness in one’s own self, likewise developing a cross-racial and cross-national democratic vision that the white American women authors in my study indicate at least on the margins of their texts. By thus shifting focus from the politics of the representation of the native other to the struggles that white American women went through in representing/re-presenting themselves in the image of an ideal, I lay emphasis on what the Orient taught the nineteenth-century white American gendered subject about herself, rather than on what the nineteenth-century white American gendered subject taught the Orient.

CHAPTER 1

“AMERICAN TRUE WOMEN” IN PROTEAN SHAPES: THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE DOMESTIC THEORIST AND HER WRITING

*“Man must be pleased; but him to please
Is woman's pleasure; down the gulf
Of his condoled necessities
She casts her best, she flings herself.”*

Coventry Patmore (1854)

It is fitting to begin this chapter on American true womanhood with a quotation from Coventry Patmore's (1823-1896) narrative poem, “The Angel in the House” (1854). He was an Englishman and a poet who is considered to have articulated an internationally significant account of an ideal British/Victorian womanhood (based on his own wife, Emily Augusta Andrews) which later came to emblemize true-womanhood values across the Atlantic. His poem projects man as the center of the true woman's universe, revealing how this discourse of ideal womanhood fed the patriarch and patriarchy as a whole, making the home and hearth a woman's private/personal heaven. As numerous literary scholars and historians have shown, American fictional and nonfictional writings from the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century,¹⁵ too, have participated in a mainly North-centric production and promotion of an exclusive white American gender ideal that was largely influenced by Victorian womanhood.

To true womanhood, principally governed by the cardinal virtues of piety, purity, domesticity, and submissiveness,¹⁶ Americans of the young nation added republican values such as self-reliance (perceived to have elevated manual work,) pro-middle-class and anti-aristocratic attitudes and a conception of mothering popularly referred to as Republican Motherhood,¹⁷ in an attempt to distinguish the American woman from her

British ancestor. This discourse on a white feminine ideal also produced, in tandem, her national, racial and class others; not just subjectivities like Oriental women, black women, immigrant servants and working-class women, but also deviant white American women themselves, who were considered as disruptive of this mainstream identity. In such a context, Southern, slave-owning, pro-Confederate white women/plantation mistresses representing the Old South further complicated this North-centric identity, since Southern white women were generally considered as less republican and less democratic in their views in comparison with Northern white women.¹⁸

Nevertheless, recent criticism in the field has been able to challenge most or all of American true womanhood's cardinal virtues as they are shown to conflict with each other within this very subjectivity. Multiple critics over the years, as I will discuss in Part I of this chapter, have pitted purity/virtue with latent sexuality, "private" domesticity with "public" and even imperial motives, submissiveness with subversion and retaliation, self-reliance and the veneration of manual labor with the desire for luxury and leisure; just as many have also deliberated on how this ideal woman's others have been formatively influential in the former's self-fashioning. While building upon the existing critical conversation, my main intention here is to explore the production of American true womanhood in domestic manuals and domestic and/or sentimental novels from the early part of the nineteenth century to the 1860's, juxtaposing these narratives with their authors' life stories, treating the biographical narrative as yet another text. Hence, I aim to bring to light the multiple ironies inherent in this gendered white American subject by bringing together text and authorial life as text in a way that reveals their mutually disruptive dialogue.

I begin with a brief introduction to the emergence of this subjectivity and the development of its principal virtues in writings from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, also dipping into how a generation of critics has contested these very values. Next, I offer a much-required discussion on how the position of “author” complicates true womanhood, since, the white American women writers of my dissertation are always already placed within a dual space that is simultaneously “private” and “public.” I then go onto situate my reading of the domestic narratives by Catharine Beecher (1800-1878) and Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) within the larger context of the historical availability of their own lives as a counter-narrative to what they wrote. The compromises and contradictions implicating these two kinds of text help me demonstrate the conflicted, ruptured and subversive nature of ideal white femininity. Finally, I explore how the Southern novelist, Augusta Jane Evans (1835-1909) produces both her heroines, Beulah in the eponymous novel (1859), Edna Pontellier in *St. Elmo* (1866) and herself as ambivalent subjects, through a reading of her novels as well as her life as narrative. This inclusion of a white woman writer from the Old South, I believe, adds depth and perspective to an otherwise North-centric exploration, by illustrating how Evans’s writing too helps produce the American true woman as a conflicted subject.

As a preamble to our main discussion of this chapter, it would perhaps be correct to say that it was Barbara Welter’s definitive article, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860” (1966) that first named a clearly defined set of values that represented this feminine ideal, an identity deemed fit to represent the emerging New World nation. However, when one considers the years of scholarship that followed from this article, it seems as if Welter only managed to touch the surface of an ideal whose ironies,

contradictions and subversions were left for subsequent critics to explore. Still, it is important to study the nomenclature surrounding this identity before we explore how generations of critics have challenged, nuanced and complicated the values that it stood for, ultimately seeing it as a heterogeneous subject.

The need for a model gendered self for the newly independent nation arose in post-revolutionary America, from around the late eighteenth century heightening toward the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁹ Time was ripe not only for nation-building but also for the fashioning of national selves. And in this era of republicanism emerged the republican woman and mother, who, unlike pre-revolutionary American colonial gentlewomen, were to have a hand in strengthening the new nation by raising its young citizens at home. As Linda Kerber in *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (1980) explains, and as Sarah Josepha Hale (1788-1879) demonstrates in her novel, *Northwood: Or, Life North and South, Showing the True Character of Both*, (1852) morality, domesticity, self-reliance and the national spirit were the cornerstones of the republican home and hearth, the nurturing of which was seen as a white woman's prerogative.

The transatlantic religious revival, the Evangelical Second Great Awakening, further enhanced the need for an idealized gender identity, giving the formation of a national subject religious validation. As Donald M. Scott points out in *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry, 1750-1850* (1978), nineteenth-century Evangelicalism reinforced the gender division between woman's "private" home and man's "public" world, locating the model white American woman in domesticity and motherhood. American true womanhood thus, also came to emphasize the qualities of

Christian piety, virtue/purity, submissiveness/meekness and selflessness that represented a Jesus-like self, establishing the “true” angel in the house as a woman who performed her divinely sanctioned domestic and familial labors of love, but never compromising her femininity.

Domesticating women and reinforcing their rightful place in the household also arose from more practical needs as America was gradually moving from being an agrarian society to an industrialized one. Industrialization enabled/necessitated middle-class familial relationships that were different from those in an agrarian society. If in the latter, woman had a hand in both domestic work as well as work outside home, on the field or farm, the industrial factory increasingly segregated women’s and men’s labor by making professional employment outside home a male prerogative, while domesticity became the exclusive preserve of the middle-class woman. As Carolyn L. Karcher (1994) states in *The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child*, “[i]t is thus no coincidence that an ideology glorifying home making and childrearing arose to confine women to the home at a historical moment when increased leisure might have freed them to take advantage of career opportunities currently opening up for middle-class men” (128).

Nonetheless, it is important to keep in mind that the “angel in the house” was the dominant and pervasive, yet not the only gendered subjectivity found in America during the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, and therefore, cannot represent American womanhood as a whole, in spite of the then understanding and the belief that it could/would. For instance, movements such as Women’s Rights,²⁰ Native American Rights,²¹ Abolitionism²² and even an intellectual and scholarly movement like

Transcendentalism²³ offered American women intellectual, political and activist spaces that were not entirely compatible with the ideals of domesticity and femininity. Let us remind ourselves here of activists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) and the first Women's Rights convention held at Seneca Falls in 1848, where the Declaration of Sentiments was presented; Angelina (1805-1879) and Sara Grimke (1792-1873) who were Southern abolitionists, as well as Transcendentalist intellectuals such as Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) and Elizabeth Peabody (1804-1894). What is ironic is that, in addition to the "radicals," even those very supporters of American true womanhood themselves (with varied degrees of intensity) explored such alternative gender identities, as exemplified by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) and her involvement with the anti-Slavery movement,²⁴ Catharine Maria Sedgwick's (1789-1867) advocacy of the rights of American Indians²⁵ and Lydia Maria Child's Transcendentalist associations.²⁶

Further, American true womanhood attempted to establish itself as an exclusive identity in the backdrop of a host of gendered subjectivities that were othered and discriminated against. One sees the conspicuous and "threatening" presence of such others within and outside American society, in late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century writing in general. First and foremost, there were white women deemed unconventional for the times who were condemned and ostracized for fear of contaminating the code of morality. Anne Royall (1769-1854) is a case in point. Known as the first American "newspaperwoman," Royall was a journalist and a travel writer. Accused of being a common scold and an obnoxious radical critic of convention, she was even threatened with being burnt at the stake.²⁷ There were also texts that openly defied the values that an exemplary white womanhood stood for. Mary Gove Nichols and Thomas Low Nichols's

co-authored text, *Marriage: Its History Character and Results, Its Sanctities and Its Profanities, Its Science and Its Facts* (1854), for example, revolutionized and desanctified the institution of patriarchal marriage and family by sexualizing the “angel in the house,” openly discussing the bodily urges of women that needed fulfillment. Similarly, Fanny Fern’s/Sarah Willis’s (1811-1872) semi-autobiographical novel *Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time* (1854) reveals the limitations of patriarchal marriage, while also fashioning a heroine, Ruth, who shatters the boundaries of literary propriety and decorum and provides for herself and her child by her fiercely satirical writing.

Moving on to racial others, Lydia Maria Child in *The American Frugal Housewife* (1829) and Catharine Maria Sedgwick in *Live and Let Live: Or, Domestic Service Illustrated* (1837) articulate a prevalent concern during the day, where they demonstrate how foreign servants (such as Irish and German immigrants) can become a disruptive force in the white American household. More so, nineteenth-century pro-slavery texts show the stereotyped “black slave woman” as not just a degenerate human but also as incapable of motherhood—dehumanizing the relationship between the slave mother and the slave child—in contrast to white women who are shown to have the potential to become ideal mothers.²⁸ In the late nineteenth century, however, a profusion of writing by African American women challenged the above nullification of black womanhood and motherhood,²⁹ and as early as 1851, we see a freed slave woman, Sojourner Truth (1797-1883), redefining the discourse of American true womanhood in her iconic speech titled, “Ain’t I a Woman?” (1851) by contrasting a form of fragile femininity with masculinized agency.

Outside the borders of America, there were still more others that were considered as diametrically opposed to the gendered white ideal. As I will elaborate in Chapter Five, the then domestic and foreign mission narratives produced the stereotype of the promiscuous and lazy Oriental woman, whose reformation was the prerogative of the antebellum “mission wife.” Meanwhile, on the other end of the racial and class spectrum was the stereotypically indulgent, extravagant and indolent aristocratic British woman, who was contrasted with the supposedly simple and self-sufficient American republican woman who did not shy away from manual labor.³⁰ Is it not then bewildering to find a nineteenth-century supporter of true womanhood like Lydia Sigourney (1791-1865) making a comment as the following, in *Letters to Mothers* (1838), that justifies a woman who does not ‘do her own work’ (a matter I will deal with extensively in Chapter Three): “The remedy is, for the mother to provide herself with competent assistance, in the sphere of manual labor, that she may be enabled to become the constant directress of her children, and have leisure to be happy in their company” (86). “So it is,” as Richard H. Brodhead observes, “that child nurture, the devoted labor of the leisured mother, confirms her moral right and duty to be unemployed and to put someone else to work as a domestic in the service of her domestic idyll”! (23)³¹

Hence, having as backdrop this conflicting and complicated discourse of nineteenth-century white American gendered self-fashioning, a host of contemporary critical works have nuanced, qualified, complicated and disrupted the cardinal virtues of the American true woman, ultimately reading it as an identity that is porous and interstitial, rather than one that is homogenous. If Lori Merish’s *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (2000) shows

how the consumption of sentimental material objects produced the white bourgeois woman of the nineteenth century, likewise contrasting a true woman's selfless piety, simplicity and republican ethics of labor with her desire for material comfort, Jona L. Argersinger's "Family Embraces: The Unholy Kiss and Authorial Relations in *The Wide Wide World*" (2002) infuses the ultra-purity and godly nature of the "angel in the house" with a streak of cautious promiscuity. In a similar fashion, Susan M. Ryan's *The Moral Economies of American Authorship: Reputation, Scandal, and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Marketplace* (2016) discusses how nineteenth-century white American female authors manipulated a private/personal code of morality to fit the then market demands, ensuring publication opportunities and sales for their writing. And as represented by studies such as Monika Elbert's *Separate Spheres No More: Gender Convergence in American Literature, 1830-1930* (2000), scholars have also managed to tear down the stereotypical public-private barrier that stood between the "woman's sphere" or the domestic/private space of sentiment/feeling and the "man's sphere" of the public world of reason/rationality.³²

Building upon the current critical conversation, I would like to draw attention to yet another conflicted space in this section: how early to mid-nineteenth century white American women writers participating in an idealized gender identity negotiated their authorial roles within the triple positions of "true woman" author, true "woman author" and "true author." How then would a white American true woman leave her supposedly "private" sphere of home and hearth and venture onto authorship—a supposedly male-identified "public" sphere—without injuring her modesty?

One principal justification of such sphere-jumping, as it were, was found in 'what

she wrote,' which, in a sense, took away the spotlight from the fact 'that she wrote.' From this attention to content emerged the idea that a "true woman" author would only write about things that were appropriate and relevant to her subject position, key topics being piety, morality, domesticity, and motherhood. In other words, "women may write as much as they please providing they define themselves as women writing when they do so, whether by tricks of style—diffuseness, gracefulness, delicacy; by choices of subject matter—the domestic, the social, the private; or by tone—pure, lofty, moral, didactic."³³ An entire culture of genteel white women's writing emerged constituted largely by domestic manuals and domestic and/or sentimental novels. As Robyn R. Warhol suggests in *Gendered Interventions: Narrative Discourse in the Victorian Novel* (1989), women resorted to "engaging narrators" as opposed to male writers' "distancing narrators," making the writings of the former group more didactic, while also inviting the empathy of the reader (17).³⁴ Sentiment, generally considered by early twentieth century critics as a baser form of moral feeling/emotion, and a code of sympathy/empathy were, therefore, to be their chief mode of persuasion, in contrast to logic/scientific reasoning/"factual" information considered to be a male preserve.³⁵

However, as pointed out by many scholars in the field, sentimentality in white women's writing, especially until around the mid-nineteenth century, is not an indication of the simplistic conjunction between the female gender and sensibility. As June Howard and Marianne Noble elucidate in their articles, "What Is Sentimentality?" (1999) and "Making this Whole Nation Feel: The Sentimental Novel in the United States" (2012) respectively, this particular form of emotion³⁶ was pervasive in nineteenth-century culture,³⁷ as even William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy: Or, the Triumph of*

Nature Founded in Truth (1789)—known as the first American novel—exemplifies. Influenced by Enlightenment ideals and writing as a whole, “sentimentality,” which is said to have stemmed from Scottish Commonsense philosophy, greatly influenced American thinking from the late eighteenth toward the mid-nineteenth century.³⁸ According to the Scottish Commonsense school of thought, a human’s “intellectual powers included those of judgment, perception, reflection, attention, imagination, and memory, while the active powers typically denoted the will as well as the sensibilities, passions, affections, and appetites. The ‘moral sense’ or ‘conscience’ often straddled these two categories”.³⁹ Yet, in spite of the prevalence of sentimental culture during the time in which white American women authors wrote, there seems to have been a hierarchy between the “higher” moral feeling evoked in men’s writing in contrast to women writers’ “emotionalism.”

The domestic manual, perhaps, avoided censure for speaking of topics that were seen as a female prerogative, although, in Part III of this chapter I show how this female-specific genre was also subversive. Yet, the domestic and/or sentimental novel managed to open up a confusing debate.⁴⁰ Not only early critics of the 1940’s and 1950’s such as Fred Lewis Pattee (1935)⁴¹ but also a large number of late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century American male writers condemned the domestic and/or sentimental novel genre for not being worthy even of censure: “worse they could not be, and better they need not be,” (Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1855) and because “a book without art is simply a commodity” (Higginson 29).⁴² Note that such criticism was levelled against women’s domestic and/or sentimental novels at a time when even male authors such as Washington Irving (1783-1859) and James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) resorted to

sentimental features in their writing. The common charges were either that these texts were immoral and/or that they were too didactic, and/or that they offered nothing for the intellect, lacking in aesthetic quality.

In the context of such literary devaluation, “true women” authors humbly claimed in their Prefaces that their didactic novels made available to impressionable young women guidance for good conduct, while also providing them with a deterrent against immorality. Novels they indeed continued to write, but each one of them was careful to profess that theirs were different from and more respectable than the common rung of “sentimental trash” (so named by Nathaniel Hawthorne) and more so, the popular Euro-American novels of seduction—such as Susanna Rowson’s *Charlotte Temple* (1794)—that Americans avidly read in the previous century. Hence, writes Catharine Maria Sedgwick in her Preface to *A New England Tale* (1822), “[t]he original design of the author was, if possible, even more limited and less ambitious than what has been accomplished. It was simply to produce a very short and simple moral tale of the most humble description” (n.pag.).

Still, these domestic and/or sentimental novels, more often than not, did more than what they claimed they would. Instead of being simple moral tales, they were also discussions on significant current issues such as women’s education, financial security, and their national responsibilities. And to the modern reader, they offer insights into the socio-political significance of women in the making of the American republic, their international visions that take them beyond their nation-home, thereby creating sound portrayals of the complexities of nineteenth-century gendered self-fashioning. In fact, scholars of American women’s writing of the so-called “revivalist” period in the late

1970's and 1980's like Nina Baym (1978) and Cathy N. Davidson (1982)⁴³ question the restricting male-identified literary canon and instead explore how women's writing, and especially the woman's novel, produced "powerful examples of the way culture thinks about itself, articulating and proposing solutions for the problems that shape a particular historical moment."⁴⁴

I also see the attitude of supposed feminine humility that these white American women writers tried to infuse within their texts, as giving them cautious entrance into other, more male-identified genres of writing without "damaging" the code of propriety. Of course, women writers unconventional for the times, like Margaret Fuller, Fanny Fern and Anne Royall blew such caution to the winds. Yet, texts by some of those participants in American true womanhood pushed the gender boundary through more subtle and subversive means. According to Naomi Z. Sofer (2003), such texts reflect "the denial, or subordination of artistic ambition in the antebellum model for women, which figured the author as a mere medium, usually for a religious or moral message" (33).⁴⁵ On the contrary, I argue that such denial or self-willed subordination gave these women an entrance into genres and topics that would have otherwise been outside their reach. For instance, as I will illustrate in the next chapter, white American women of the day managed to appropriate the male-identified genre of the travel narrative as "lady travelers," an exclusive and elite group of gentlewomen abroad. Unlike Margaret Fuller who went to Europe for professional reasons and wrote profusely about society and politics abroad,⁴⁶ writers like Catharine Maria Sedgwick and Caroline M. Kirkland made it a point to emphasize that theirs were personal impressions rather than factual or well-informed guide-books for travel. Framing their narrative personas as "genteel ladies" and

their narratives on European travels that took them outside their homely/national borders as feminine impressions gave these women entrance into a characteristically male-identified genre of travel writing, without disrupting the then notions of feminine propriety and decorum.⁴⁷

In spite of their caution and their concerns with how they wrote and what they wrote, though, the defamation of their careers is something that, at least, some white American women authors had to face. Lydia Maria Child, for example, became considerably unpopular after she wrote *An Appeal in Favour of that Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833), just as Harriet Beecher Stowe's rather feminist defense of Lady Byron in *Lady Byron Vindicated: A History of the Byron Controversy from its Beginning in 1816 to the Present Time* (1870) caused much furor. These examples reveal to us the cost of taking risks in the context of white American "true women" authors seeking to stretch the code of feminine appropriateness, perhaps searching to move onward from being a "true woman" author or a true "woman author" to a fully-fledged author/"true" author, free from gender limitations/restrictions.⁴⁸

It is such a group of complexly nuanced subjectivities that is represented by the authors in my selection in this dissertation. These were women whose writing promoted/produced an exclusive white American true womanhood, while at the same time disrupting that identity. Therefore, in what follows, I will contribute to the host of critics who have over the years identified the permutations within this feminine ideal by locating such complexities in the conflicting narratives of domestic manuals, domestic and/or sentimental novels and narratives of authorial life. In the next section, I will treat the biographies/life stories of two key domestic theorists of the day as a narrative space

that helps me unpack/elucidate the areas in their writing where the code of true womanhood gets compromised and even negated in different degrees.

Beecher and Child: From “Text as Life” to “Life as Text”

Lydia Maria Child’s *The American Frugal Housewife* (1829), and *The Mother’s Book* (1831) and Catharine Beecher’s *A Treatise on Domestic Economy: For the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* (1841), as well as its modified version, the Catharine-Harriet Beecher Stowe collaboration, *American Woman’s Home: Principles of Domestic Science; Being A Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, Healthful, Beautiful and Christian Homes* (1869) are some of the key texts that helped consolidate a body of knowledge on the American gender ideal in the nineteenth century. These texts explore the domestic space, the proper organization of home life, motherhood and the rearing of children. They warn against disruptive female subjectivities such as immigrant servants who were seen as threatening the sanctities of the white middle-class home, emphasizing the importance of a white American woman who can ‘do her own work.’⁴⁹ Therefore, in spite of formulating a uniquely American woman rooted in British Victorianism,⁵⁰ their writing, in an unapologetically didactic tone shows how republican virtues differentiated the American concept from the Victorian. Qualities like frugality, industriousness, self-sufficiency, and submissiveness to God rather than to man and the ability to do one’s own work find their way into this gendered American self, where a distinctive difference becomes established between republican womanhood and the aristocratic ways of life in the Old World. Reflecting this tendency, much-reputed domestic theorists of the antebellum era like Beecher and Child criticize aristocratic

British women and their luxurious indolence.

Beecher's work, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy: For the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* (henceforth referred to as *A Treatise*) asks with vehemence,

[s]hall we ape the customs of aristocratic lands in those very practices which result from principles and institutions that we condemn? Shall we not rather take the place to which we are entitled, as the leader, rather than the followers, in the customs of society, turn back the tide of aristocratic inroads, and carry through the whole, not only of civil and political, but of social and domestic life, the true principles of democratic freedom and equality? [...]to oppose the aristocratic feeling, that labor is degrading; and to bring about the impression, that it is refined and ladylike to engage in domestic pursuits. (123-24)⁵¹

Beecher's thoughts fall into place within the democratic visions of republicanism, suggesting how women in the new nation could contribute to a "classless" society that was critical of old-style aristocracies. Yet, how does one account for this potent anti-aristocratic sentiment in the backdrop of Beecher's Hartford Female Seminary, established in 1823, which catered mainly to an elite group of scholars or well-to-do Hartfordians, as well as her bias toward the upper classes that one of her biographers, Catharine Kish Sklar, so clearly indicates in *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (1973)?

More so, *A Treatise* becomes visibly self-contradictory as it tries to localize the American true woman while at the same time it reinforces the global import of this idealized white subject. In fact, Jane Tompkins (1985) famously calls *A Treatise* "a blueprint for colonizing the world in the name of the 'family state' under the leadership of Christian women" (*Sensational Designs* 582). Certainly, in the following extracts from *American Woman's Home: Principles of Domestic Science; Being A Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, Healthful, Beautiful and Christian Homes*, (henceforth referred to as *American Woman's Home*) the politically and globally framed

domestic discourse reaches from the household/home to nation, and then further broadens its radius of influence beyond the nation, making the American idol fit for both worlds as well as for duties above and beyond her “sphere”:

She who is a mother and housekeeper in a large family is the *sovereign of an empire*, demanding more varied cares, and involving more difficult duties, than are really exacted of her who wears a crown and professedly regulates the interests of the greatest nation on earth. (19)

At the present time America is the only country where there is a class of women who may be described as ladies who do their own work. By a lady we mean a woman of education, cultivation and refinement, of liberal tastes and ideas, who, without any material additions or changes, *would be recognized as a lady in a circle in the Old World or the New*. (Emphasis added 307)

Such a viewpoint contrasts with that in Beecher’s *The Duty of American Women to their Country* (1845), published twenty-four years earlier. There, she strongly criticizes the American foreign mission movement that sent white American women to “heathen” corners of the world, not only for endangering their identities but also for being rather myopic in their endeavor to save transnational souls, while many souls were left to be saved right at home in America.⁵² In the lapse of twenty-four years, however, Beecher’s transnational vision matures itself and her perceptions of womanhood develop into seeing American true women as internationally significant.

One becomes similarly confused with Beecher’s reinforcement of the exemplary woman’s conjugal, domestic and motherly responsibilities, as do numerous other texts at the time; most domestic and/or sentimental novels often happily end with patriarchal marriage. Wifely duties to a husband and motherly duties toward one’s children are predicated on being married to a benevolent patriarch, forming a proper Christian family. However, what the following passage from *American Woman’s Home* reveals is the rather democratic possibility of a second option that was being made available from

within the discourse of true womanhood itself. In this extended option, Beecher does not show heterosexual marriage to a male partner as the be-all and end-all of a woman's existence. Instead, if they failed to find such an ideal relationship, true women still had ways in which they could continue to partake in this exclusive identity. Biological motherhood was not the only mode through which they could perform their maternal duties of nurturing future citizens of the republic:⁵³

[T]he distinctive duty of obedience to man does not rest on women who do not enter the relations of married life. A woman who inherits property, or who owns her own livelihood, can institute the family state, adopt orphan children and employ suitable helpers in training them; and *then to her will appertain the authority and rights that belong to man as the head of the family. And when every woman is trained to some self-supporting business, she will not be tempted to enter the family state as a subordinate, except by that love for which there is no need for law.* (Emphasis added 204)

Other writers like Catharine Maria Sedgwick, especially in her novel *Married or Single?* (1857) and Lydia Maria Child also allow their readers to consider the option of being single women. Child says, "I do not say that an unmarried woman can be as happy as one who forms, with proper views and feelings, a union, which is unquestionably the most blessed of all human relations; but I am very certain that one properly educated need not be unhappy in single life" (*The Mother's Book* 60). Still, Beecher's thoughts stand out, in that, in the italicized words, there is a palpably strong message to young women of America. She offers them here almost a bold feminist appeal to train themselves in a "self-supporting business" so they could achieve equal rights, status and authority on a par with men. It is indeed strange to find in a domestic manual such potent instances that promote traits diametrically opposed to those expected from an "angel in the house."

Yet, when we place Beecher's texts on domesticity/text as life—whose values other white American women of the day would have imbibed in their own lives—side by

side with her life as text, it becomes easier for the modern reader to understand the circumstances from which emerges the likeness of an independent and authoritative single woman who challenges some of the cardinal virtues of American true womanhood she preached herself. Beecher never married. And single women like her, therefore, brought into tension not only patriarchal marriage but also Republican Motherhood, since having children out of wedlock was certainly not an approved option for early to mid-nineteenth century white American women. Adoption was the only other way that these single women could mother children in a domestic setting. Not just this fact of her remaining unmarried but also the knowledge of other aspects of Beecher's life that were rather unconventional for her times, helps us make sense of the contradictory visions in her writing. Catherine Kish Sklar in *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity* (1973) deftly sums up a particular stage in Beecher's life, where the authorial self she portrays produces an alternative text that contrasts with much of what *A Treatise on American Woman's Home* endorses for American women:

By 1847 [Beecher's] life was a bundle of contradictions. She was an expert on domestic economy but had no home of her own; she was a writer on the moral education of children, but had no children herself; she was a competent religious writer, but had never experienced conversion; and she urged young women to become teachers, but was herself not willing to teach. The only consistent element in Catharine's life was her role as a publicist of self-sacrifice since she believed that her personal life was one of self-denial and self-sacrifice. (186)

Beecher's writing itself may not reveal the reasons for the self-contradictions and gaps in her theorizations on ideal womanhood that makes it a porous and heterogeneous subject. However, it takes but a glimpse at her life as text as indicated above for us to discern probable reasons why the voice of a woman who opposes conventions surfaces in her texts from time to time, thereby adding yet another dimension to existing critiques of

American true womanhood.

Similarly, an omnibus of Lydia Maria Child's multifarious works may leave its readers with an image of the author that is complex and maybe even confusing. It would be correct to see Child as not only an eclectic reader and writer but also one who brought together personalities that were varied, maybe even opposed in the perceptions of early to mid-nineteenth-century America. She is, foremost, well-known for her abolitionist writing and her sensitivity toward the plight of the American Indians, exemplified in iconic texts such as *An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833), *Slavery's Pleasant Homes: A Faithful Sketch* (1834) and *Hobomok: A Tale of Early Times* (1824). These works participate in a political discourse of equal rights that represent Child's involvement in topics that did not necessarily fall into the "woman's sphere." The same goes for her erudite intellectual works, *The Biographies of Mme. De Stael, and Mme. Roland* (1832), *The History of the Condition of Women, in Various Ages and Nations* (1845), *The Progress of Religious Ideas, Through Successive Ages* (1855), *Philothea: A Romance of the Republic* (1867), and *Aspirations of the World: A Chain of Opals* (1878) that reflect her vast reading, uncharacteristic of a woman of her day. Such texts also reveal the literary and intellectual influence coming from her close association with the generally male-identified, elite, intellectual movement of Transcendentalism. Simultaneously, though, Child also becomes a byword for domesticity and American true womanhood as her works, *The American Frugal Housewife* (1832), *Good Wives* (1833), *The Family Nurse; or Companion of The Frugal Housewife* (1837), and *The Mother's Book* (1844) so well exemplify. Therefore, keeping in mind the diversity of views and visions in Child's writing as a whole is crucial in making sense of the convolutions in her

domestic theories.

In *The American Frugal Housewife*, for instance, Child lays inordinate emphasis on a form of “useful education”—in other words, domestic education—for women going through financial hardship. In fact, she wrote this work with the objective of providing “Hints to Persons of Moderate Fortune” or underprivileged women, as one of its chapters claims. Teaching frugal housewives science and music if they did not have an aptitude for such subjects is shown to develop a “variety of accomplishments of very doubtful value to people of moderate fortune,” (Emphasis added 93). “Young ladies should [instead] be taught that usefulness is happiness” (92). Yet, a text like *The History of the Condition of Women, in Various Ages and Nations* or *The Progress of Religious Ideas, Through Successive Ages* that shows off Child’s eclectic scholarship provides a counter-narrative to her endorsement of a form of “useful education” as best suited for “frugal” women. The conclusion that we can draw from this mis-match of views is either that Child did not consider herself to be of the class of women she writes for in *The American Frugal Housewife* (in which case, there is no contradiction here) or, that what she preached for her readers she did not practice herself.

Yet again, for a reader today (or even a nineteenth-century reader who had ample information of the author’s life in addition to her writing) certain details from Child’s life-as-text helps unpack textual contradictions as the above. According to available biographical details of the author, Child is recorded to have undergone several phases of abject financial deprivation herself in her life time; first because of her father’s financial losses and later, because of her husband’s unsuccessful business ventures.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, not even in such periods of her life is there any indication of her achieving happiness in

the “useful.” Instead, Child strives to rise out of her deprivation. In the following passage from *The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child* (1994), Carolyn L. Karcher describes Child at a most exhausted state, desperate to find time for her own writing, to be free from domestic labor and thereby, to find a ‘way out of the whirl’:

Child sank into a mire of never-ending household chores: ‘Rat-gnawed meal bags to mend, straw beds, and coarse out of door frocks to make, old carpets to patch & dam,’ bread to bake, butter to churn, vegetables to pick and prepare, constant supervision to ensure that ‘nothing molds, ferments, or freezes.’ ‘The weeks revolve and find me tired every night, without seeing my way out of the whirl,’ she lamented. (367-68)

This deprived phase of Child’s life-as-text, indeed, complements *The American Frugal Housewife*’s economic concerns. Still, her life-narrative does not show us a woman who curtails her literary accomplishments, nor one who finds happiness in the “useful” even in dire circumstances.⁵⁵ Perhaps, then, what comes through in *The American Frugal Housewife* is a literary fulfillment of something its author was incapable of doing in reality: she offers advice she could never heed herself, as she could never find satisfaction merely in the “useful.”

Child also wrote at a time when black and Oriental motherhood was being dehumanized, if not, demonized. However, the following account of Mandingo mothers in *An Appeal* not only provides a foil to *The Mother’s Book* that delineates the national significance of republican white American motherhood, but at the same time challenges mainstream ideas that sanctified motherhood as the exclusive preserve of white women by placing maternity on a cross racial/national or universal space:

Maternal affection, neither suppressed by the restraints, nor diverted by the solitudes of civilized life, is everywhere conspicuous among them, and creates reciprocal tenderness in the child [...] ‘I perceived, with great satisfaction, that the

maternal solicitude extended not only to growth and security of the person, but also, in a certain degree, to the improvement of the character; for one of the first lessons, which the Mandingo women teach their children is the practice of truth. A poor unhappy mother, whose son had been murdered by Moorish banditti, found consolation in her deepest distress from the reflection that her boy, in the whole course of his blameless life, had never told a lie.' (196)

The presence of “other” racial subjects in Child’s perceptions of American motherhood (as I will discuss in detail in Chapter Four) complements her visions of a broader category of women across class, race, religion and nationality, that comes through in some of her later works. Just as *An Appeal* offers her a chance to counter the typical narratives on black women, challenging the dehumanization of black motherhood, in texts like *The History of the Condition of Women, in Various Ages and Nations*, *The Progress of Religious Ideas, Through Successive Ages* and *Aspirations of the World: A Chain of Opals*, she envisages a global womanhood.

None of these works however, offers a plausible reason why this advocate of a nationally, racially and religiously unique womanhood also disrupted that very ideal through her visions of a cross national, cross racial and cross religious female subject. Particular details of the circumstances in which their author produced her works, though, may shed some light on these textual contradictions. Karcher in a chapter titled “*The Frugal Housewife: Financial Worries and Domestic Advice*” describes the work’s context of production and explains how poverty compelled women like Child to “writ[e] whatever would sell, tak[e] in borders, and even contemplate[e] a return to school teaching” (126). This she says in reading one of Child’s harrowing letters to her sister-in-law, Lydia Bigelow, in 1830: “I have kept thinking that the darkest time had come [...] I have had serious thoughts of taking a school. [...] And if my poor brain will but hold out to meet the demands of booksellers from various parts of the Union, I can do better than I

can with a common-sized school.”⁵⁶ Biographical details like the above, even if they cannot offer definitive reasons for the contradictory visions of Child’s repertoire of works draw attention to the fact that at least some women authors’ choice to write domestic manuals or resort to female-identified genres was made due to financial necessities, in spite of their desires to write different books about different women.

Hence, it is apt to close this section on the ambivalences of the life and works of Child with a look at her novel *Philothea: A Grecian Romance* (1836), a Transcendentalist classical text set in Greece. Although this tale did not receive much commendation (as the critic, Robert E. Streeter amusingly puts it in “Mrs. Child’s ‘Philothea’ a Transcendentalist Novel?” (1943)—“although one cannot conceive of *Philothea* without Transcendentalism, one can conceive of Transcendentalism without *Philothea*” (654))—the work is nevertheless useful to the current discussion, given that it includes three women who represent different or even opposed conceptualizations of womanhood. One is Philothea, Anaxagoras’s grand-daughter, an educated intelligent woman, who curiously dies soon after her ailing husband Paralus, having sacrificed herself in his service.⁵⁷ The beacon of true womanhood is then transferred to Eudora, Philothea’s former maid—who is later found to be Artaphanes’s daughter—who will reform herself, quell her infatuations for Alcibiades and eventually get married to Philaemon. A third type of woman is represented by her antithesis, the vain, coquettish and worldly character Aspasia who marries Pericles.

As the novel suggests, together these three women represent a) a woman that other women could emulate (Philothea), b) a flawed woman with the ability to reform herself (Eudora), and finally, c) a flawed woman who does not even seem to be aware of

her flaws (Aspasia). Whose character Child endorses and whose she does not is rather obvious. Nonetheless, what is significant for our purposes in this classical tale is that Philothea and the values she stands for have clear resonances with Child's own life, echoing her own struggles of having to move back and forth from the "intellectual woman" who is an avid reader and writer immersed in eclectic knowledge, and the "domesticated woman" whose time is spent attending to her home and her familial responsibilities. The nineteenth century did not see any affinity between these two identities. This could be the reason why the novel underplays the intellectual compatibility between Philothea and Paralus⁵⁸ to the point that, eventually, the former sacrifices her life in attending to the physical, psychological and emotional well-being of her ailing husband in true womanhood style, only to die, soon after his passing away.

Yet, *Philothea* also includes attitudes that are in stark contrast to the virtues of modesty, self-sacrifice and submission. Eudora speaks the words quoted below before she is "reformed," and at least at this point in the novel the passage represents three figures who are not portrayed in a positive light: yet-to-be-reformed Eudora, Aspasia the vain coquette, and Alcibiades the cause of Eudora's infatuation. Nevertheless, what is noteworthy here is the very availability of an attitude that evinces women's independence and ambition in a text by an advocate of domesticity and true womanhood. Irrespective of how the tale ends, the fact that the novel puts such independence and ambition out there means that it presents a woman with a "choice" to be who she wanted to be, albeit indirectly:

Eudora answered, [Philothea] in an angry tone, 'I love Aspasia; and it offends me to hear her spoken of in this manner. If you are content to be a slave, like the other Grecian women, who bring water and grind corn for their masters, I have no objection. I have a spirit within me that *demand*s a wider field of action, and I

enjoy the freedom that reigns in Aspasia's house. Alcibiades says he *does not blame women for not liking to be shut up within four walls all their life-time, ashamed to show their faces like other mortals.*' (Emphasis added, Chapter six, npag.).

In sum, then, what comes out from both Beecher's and Child's lives and works is an ambivalent discourse of an identity that is conflicted and ruptured. Their lives and works offer a mainstream white American middle-class Protestant subjectivity that represents virtues such as self-sacrifice and domesticity, while at the same time making available a sub/counter text that lets a woman do what she chooses to do with her life. Since, so far in this chapter, we have looked at two principal domestic theorists of the American antebellum along with some of their key works on the topic, I reserve the following section for an analysis of how a Southern domestic and/or sentimental novelist brings into relief two female identities that the nineteenth century generally saw as opposed—professionally ambitious intellectual woman and the domestic idol—with special reference to the Augusta Jane Evans heroines, Beulah and Edna in her novels *Beulah* and *St. Elmo* respectively. In so doing, my intention is to show how Evans allows the same woman to inhabit both personalities and makes sure that her heroines become the true women they are pushed to become, only after they had achieved their intellectual and literary ambitions.

Augusta Jane Evans: Toward a Female Intellectualism

Although the question of what a woman in the new nation should be like was relevant to both the Northern states and the Southern states, the discourse on American true womanhood can be fairly identified as North-centric, where even in the history of criticism on the subject, we find the majority of critics, as I do, focusing on Northern

writers and their works. Thus, the significance of including and discussing a Southern writer's participation in American self-fashioning. Further, scholarship in the field has also identified several differences between how this white female ideal was treated by writers from the two regions. For one, racial exclusivity and sexual purity of the Southern white woman was of paramount importance for the proper maintenance of the slave system. Given that a child born to a black slave woman gained the status of its mother, white men's sexual relations with black women did not gain excessive censure, although a white woman's sexual relations with a black man would have been catastrophic not only to the slave system but also to white patriarchy. Perhaps, this is why, according to Christie Franham in *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South* (1994), "[b]eing a lady remained relevant in Southern society long after it began to fade in the North [...] because the model was useful in maintaining a biracial society" (176). In a sense, the Southern belle was seen as more Victorian and more genteel than a woman in the North. Moreover, Catherine Clinton in *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South* (1982) argues that since Northern women were not as isolated as Southern ones (and also due to the North becoming industrialized and modernized far earlier, opening itself up also for many migrants), the former had more opportunity to change themselves into different women, confirming that the "Southern true woman" would have perhaps been far more conservative than her Northern sisters.

In spite of the comparatively conservative nature of Southern women's perceptions of gender roles,⁵⁹ I show below how Augusta Jane Evans is not strikingly different in her representations of white womanhood, for, she too, like Beecher and

Child, infuses this gender ideal with qualities that are outside the code, though her novels have conventional endings. As to whether antebellum readers chose to focus only on the traditional denouement of these domestic and/or sentimental novels, where the heroine is brought back into the fold of her domestic sphere, or the entirety of the novel before that finality that projects an ambitious, hard-working and acutely intellectual woman, can only be a matter of conjecture. Yet, the model of the determined woman who fulfills her ambitions against all odds is a conspicuous presence in Evans's novels that no reader would have missed.

Evans's life-narrative⁶⁰ too, like Beecher's and Child's, includes facets that are generally unacceptable by nineteenth-century cultural standards. Born to a Southern aristocratic family, she enjoyed a childhood full of comfort only to be deprived of that life style with her father's financial losses. This is why by the age of fifteen, she, like many other novelists at the time, was compelled to write to make a living, likewise stepping outside onto the "public" world of men. Being an avid supporter of the Confederacy, her writing—especially her novel, *Macaria: Altars of Sacrifice* (1864)—is reputed for having elevated the Old South, its patriarchy and its plantation system, making her heroines, including herself, serve the above three Southern pillars. However, like Beecher and Child, Evans too was an ambivalent female subject who both followed and defied virtues of American true womanhood, not just in the representation of her fictional characters but also in her own life narrative.

Pointing at one such instance which represents how this Southern author challenged the code of female conduct that she herself endorsed, by shifting between traditional gender spheres, Sharon Talley (2014) details in *Southern Women Novelists*

and the Civil War: Trauma and Collective Memory in the American Literary Tradition Since 1861, Evans's sophisticated maneuvers that "further[ed] her dual political and professional interests": "In February 1861, she lobbied the provisional Confederate Congress for an international copyright law in the Confederacy, and, in 1863, she lobbied for a revision to the Confederate copyright act as a means to help her secure copyright protection for a Confederate edition of *Beulah*" (6). As a supporter of the Confederate forces, she is also said to have publicly addressed the troops at the 1861 Convention of the Seceding States, and more importantly, the fact that Evans was a highly intellectual woman, well-read, learned and thirsting for more knowledge—⁶¹ just like Beulah and Edna, her fictional heroines that we will look at shortly—is of immediate significance to my focus in this section.

In a chapter titled, "'Venus in Blue Stockings': Augusta Jane Evans Wilson and Intellectualism," Brenda Ayers (2012) draws attention to numerous critics of Evans's day, who mocked her for her "pedantry" in writing and her "cerebral rhetoric,"⁶² which goes on to show that her largely self-achieved education was not common nor deemed appropriate to a woman during the antebellum. Like Edna in *St. Elmo*, Evans seems to have "obstinately weeded to the unpardonable heresy, that, in the nineteenth century, it was a woman's privilege to be as learned as Cuvier, or Sir William Hamilton, or Humboldt, provided the learning was accurate" (*St. Elmo* 235). Still, Evans, like most of her heroines, was a "very womanly woman,"⁶³ perhaps showing that even highly intellectual women could be desirable and feminine.

It is this primary struggle of a woman who desired to quench her intellectual thirst, while at the same time feeling the need to bow down to domesticated femininity

that comes out in both *Beulah* and *St. Elmo*. Evan's, Beulah's and Edna's principal struggles are similar, thereby making it fair to consider the two novels as being semi-autobiographical, at a certain level. From author to characters, in fact, several critics have read these intellectual women as demonstrating an objective that was rather common to Southern writers of the first half of the nineteenth century: the need to represent Southern women as capable of intellectual success. This was a counter argument against a contemporaneous belief that, unlike Northern women Southern women lacked education and erudition. Ayers for instance explains that in 1847, "there were 58,787 illiterate whites in Virginia compared to 4,448 in Massachusetts. Over 20 percent of white adults could not read or write in the South as compared with only 3 percent in the middle states and 4 percent in New England" (217).⁶⁴ Given this statistical evidence, it is understandable that the educated Southerner would have considered it his/her duty to challenge the view that the South was an intellectual vacuum. However, if Edna finally finds herself home literally and metaphorically once the Olympian heights of literary success are achieved, Beulah shares a similar conflict of identity before she comes back "home" herself. Either way, both heroines bring to light the complexity of the subjectivity of true womanhood and its internal ironies and contradictions by emulating as well as modifying it.

Beulah's conflicts are multiple. We first meet her as an ambitious, head-strong, rather bitter, proud, almost over-confident and rude adolescent who is determined to educate herself so she could make her own living and not have to depend on the mercy of another: "To her proud nature there was something galling in the thought of dependence" (81). (Even Edna evinces a similar desire to be financially independent, making "it so

incomprehensible [for others] that a young girl, who might be Gordon Leigh's happy wife and mistress of his elegant home, surrounded by every luxury [...] should prefer to go among strangers and toil for a scanty livelihood" (*St. Elmo* 286.) In fact, till the very end of the novel, Beulah remains independent, in spite of her marriage to Dr. Hartwell, her guardian, whose sympathy she rejects several times during the course of the novel. Yet, this admirer of genius, the untiring pursuer of knowledge to the ultimate ends of truth also constantly suffers from a perennial sense of lack, or a feeling of something important missing in her life. And even after she succeeds in becoming a renowned writer, not just her body is shown to be weary but also her mind and heart, which Dr. Hartwell fulfills after marriage.

Many characters in the novel like Clara and Dr. Hartwell himself represent/conform to/endorse the mainstream values of the American gender ideal and try at different points of the narrative to draw Beulah back into the "right" direction. Cornelia's death also comes as a warning, portraying a dreary experience of the death of one whose soul is lost due to her faithlessness. What most of them try to point out to Beulah—as Dr. Hartwell does in saying, "Man may content himself with the applause of the world, and the homage paid to his intellect; but a woman's heart has holier idols" (401)—is that literary and intellectual prowess will not alone satisfy a woman, even if it does a man; that, a woman is born for other things. Till the very end of the novel, though, we do not see Beulah budge from her iron resolve. Throughout, we see her keeping to her word, and her sense of strong independence: "there are no creeping tendencies about me. [...] I feel more like one of those pine trees yonder. I can stand up. Very slim if you will but straight and high. [...] stand unaided [...] I feel humbled when I hear a woman

bemoaning the weakness of her sex, instead of showing that she has a soul and mind of her own, inferior to none” (141). To utter such words is to kill the “angel in the house” bit by bit, words quite uncharacteristic to the times in which she lived as well as the times in which Evans wrote. Even Beulah’s valedictory speech when leaving her school is titled, “Female Heroism” and this female heroism, as even *St. Elmo* exemplifies, invariably links itself with female intellectualism. In this manner, Beulah places a woman’s intellectual strengths on a pedestal, not only contesting the common understanding of the day that women were intellectually inferior to men but also suggesting that a woman could reach the zenith of intellectual success and fame only if she puts her heart and mind toward doing so.

Evan’s novels also both defy and consent to the then medical discourse of women’s intellectual inferiority.⁶⁵ As is the case with Edna who suffers from a condition of the heart and almost kills herself by her scholarly ambitions, Beulah too is a mere shadow of herself by the time she gains her share of intellectual and literary achievements. Her nocturnal literary adventures are portrayed in a dark light and are not eventually nurturing. Reading is shown to be an act which ultimately produces a weak, emaciated, frail and almost transparently thin physique in a literary woman. In *St. Elmo*, we find Dr. Howell confirming the above notions as well as becoming a representative of the contemporaneous medical discourse, when he says to Edna, “Refrain from study, avoid all excitement, exercise moderately but regularly in the open air; and, above all things, do not tax your brain. If you carefully observe these directions you may live to be as old as your grandfather” (437). A woman’s mental improvement was proportionate to her physical deterioration: at least, this is what Evans suggests, albeit indirectly, in both

cases of Beulah and Edna, an idea that is consonant with the then understanding that women and intellectualism did not live well together. As Susan S. Williams points out in *Reclaiming Authorship: Literary Women in America, 1850-1900* (2006), a literary woman of the nineteenth century was often associated with unhappiness, and even hysteria.⁶⁶

Somehow, it seems, the uneasy relationship that both novels establish with female intellectualism stems from more a case of a faithless erudition rather than of a useless erudition. Hence, *Beulah* ends with the resounding lines, “Human genius has accomplished a vast deal for man’s temporal existence. [...] Put the Bible out of sight, and how much will human intellect discover concerning our origin—our ultimate destiny?” (508). Mr. Hammond, the good pastor in *St. Elmo*, in a similar manner sees through Edna’s ambitions, where he gently urges the latter to change the course of her worldly desires toward the service of God: “My child, your ambition is your besetting sin. It is Satan pointing to the tree of knowledge, tempting you to eat and become ‘as gods.’ Search your heart and I fear you will find that while you believe that you are dedicating your talent entirely to the service of God, there is a spring of selfishness underlying it all” (293); the moral here being, ‘as a woman, do what you do in the service of God, or at least, someone else, and not one’s own self.’ Throughout *St. Elmo*, Evans thus tries to offer spiritual/religious reasons for Edna’s ambitions. Edna’s most significant literary production is a history of world’s religions. Evans also frames the “vigor and originality of her/[Edna’s] restless intellect” (93) within apt and appropriate intentions, making sure she does not present her character in the image of a “bluestocking.” Instead, Edna’s was “a pure heart filled with humble unostentatious piety, and a clear, vigorous

intellect inured to study, and ambitious of every honourable eminence within the grasp of true womanhood” (Emphasis added 109).

Confusingly, at the same time, the novel reveals how Edna’s scholarly desires, although framed within the grasp of true womanhood, topples over this code of propriety and reaches a new height of individual success. For instance, her time with her mentor, Mr. Hammond, is a time of intellectual growth, education, scholarly and literary upsurge. Defying the common idea that only one branch of study should be approached at one time, he encourages Edna to gain expertise in all branches of study at once— making her read an eclectic array of books not only literary but also scientific, and philosophical, including chemistry, geology, and astronomy—for which she shows great aptitude:

[G]radually her eyes kindled, her cheeks burned, as ambition pointed to a possible future, of which, till this hour, she had not dared to dream; and hope, overlapping all barriers, grasped a victory that would make her name imperishable [...] to tear the veil from oracles and sibyls, and show the world that the true, good and beautiful of all theogonies and cosmogonies, of every system of religion that had waxed and waned since the gray dawn of time, could be traced to Moses and Jesus, seemed to her a mission grander far than the conquest of empires. (136-37)

Edna’s intellectual “mission” that is even grander than “the conquest of empires” speaks of an ambition that has reached its pinnacle and provides a complete contrast to the ideal woman who is selfless. And her desire to make a name that is “imperishable” almost commits sacrilege for wanting to become immortal: “I want to live long enough to finish something grand and noble, something that will live after the hands that fashioned it have crumpled back to dust” (437). This desire for literary and intellectual immortality, she indeed manages to fulfill by the end of the tale. Finally, though the prologue of *St. Elmo* shows the serving of a man as the be-all and end-all of an American true woman’s existence,⁶⁷ and makes the reader ready him/herself for a typical male chauvinist tale of a

woman's submission to patriarchy, the body of Evan's novel, as shown above, does much more than tell a straight-forward tale of female submission. In this case then, to judge an Evans novel merely by its ending or its prologue would be to do great injustice to the complexity of her message, where she complicates American true womanhood by letting different/opposed personalities simultaneously inhabit this gender identity.⁶⁸

Taking the preceding discussion of the permeability of this feminine ideal as a springboard, in the rest of this dissertation my objective is to concentrate on one principal point of equivocation: its unique national and simultaneously transnational configuration/formation. With reference to the American true woman's relations with a specific Englishness and an Oriental otherness, I explore in what follows, the nature of the Anglophilia prevalent in the writings by white American women participating in nineteenth-century gendered self-fashioning, and how their perceptions of the Orient both affirmed and disrupted Anglo-American unity and superiority.

CHAPTER 2

IN SEARCH OF A PRIVILEGED “ENGLISHNESS”: TRAVEL WRITING BY CATHARINE MARIA SEDGWICK, CAROLINE M. KIRKLNAD AND HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

“England! The home of *the noblest race* earth has ever borne; the scene of *civilization without parallel* since time was.”

“What a headlong, *shifting, mercurial, impulsive, imitative, unfinished people* we [Americans] seem to be, compared with the steady, reasonable, stolid, self-complacent English.”

This is how Caroline M. Kirkland (1801-1864) gives expression to her deep veneration for America’s motherland in her travel narrative, *Holidays Abroad: or Europe from the West*, in 1849.⁶⁹ The terminology in the above quotations is critical to what I argue in this chapter, for, the phrases “noblest race” and “unparalleled civilization” that Kirkland here employs to represent an unmatched western civilization invariably spell out a particular “Englishness,”⁷⁰ an identity that is shown as more “authentic” and “whole” than the American. Therefore, my intention here is to delineate how writings on Britain by white American “lady travelers”⁷¹ constructed an upper-middle-class/upper class Englishness that at once produced and was produced by a certain anxiety of the gendered white American self of being inadequate/incomplete. Together, the narratives by these lady travelers exemplify a strong American Anglophilia in the first half of the nineteenth century that resonates with the Anglo-American desires of pre-revolutionary writings on Americans’ Grand Tours to Europe.

In “British Snobberies and American Anxieties,” I begin with an examination of nineteenth-century British critiques of the new republic, arguing that critiques that ridiculed American inelegance and othered Americans using an Orientalist rhetoric fashioned an interstitial image of the white American as ‘not quite white yet not wholly

other.⁷² In “To Waver or not to Waver? American Responses to Britain in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century,” I dip into the larger conversation surrounding pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary American responses to Britain. Here, lady travelers’ strong recognition of the significance of their Anglo-American heritage and unity in the production of a privileged white American gendered self, will show them as sturdy Anglophiles. Finally, I demonstrate with reference to the writings of three key lady travelers, Catharine Maria Sedgwick (1822-1857), Caroline M. Kirkland (1801-1864) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), how their narrative personas were produced by as well as produced an upper-middle-class/upper-class Englishness, that they considered as more authentic and whole an identity than the American. Through acts of acknowledging/desiring and/or mimicking a code of upper-middle-class/upper class “genteel elegance” and “good taste” that reveal an aristocratic bias, these lady travelers fashion an authentic/whole Englishness while letting their ambiguous narrative personas hover between the republican principles propounded by middle-class American true womanhood and upper-middle-class/upper class British gentility.

It is also important to add here that the specific Englishness invoked by lady travelers’ texts was most plausibly “white.” Even though these writers do not conspicuously articulate the terms “whiteness” or “white” in reference to “Englishness/Britishness” or the “English/British,” we can make an intelligent assumption—on the backdrop of craniological studies, Social Darwinism, Anglo-Saxon superiority and racial degeneracy theories which suggested that being “white” was synonymous with being “human”—that to be British or more specifically, English, in the early nineteenth century was invariably to be white. For instance, as Charles Mills (1998)

affirms:

insofar as [...] persons are conceived of as having their personhood uncontested, insofar as their culture and cognition are unhesitatingly respected, insofar as their moral prescriptions take for granted an already achieved citizenship and a history of freedom—insofar, that is, as race is not an issue for them, then they are already tacitly positioned as white persons, culturally and cognitively European, racially privileged members of the West.⁷³

Lady travelers, perhaps, did not think they had to state the “obvious.” Therefore, it would be useful to remember that each time a reference is made to the British/English or Britishness/Englishness in these texts as well as in this chapter, that those references evoke whiteness.

British Snobberies and American Anxieties

British perceptions of America, just like American perceptions of Britain (as I will elaborate shortly) from the immediate post-war years toward the mid-nineteenth century are a complex amalgam of mutual desire, admiration, distrust, and condemnation. In fact, scholars like Paul Giles (2001, 2006) see the two as disorienting mirror images of each other. If the newly independent colony yearned for the great antiquity of the older civilization and Anglo-Saxon lineage, admired the latter’s culture and art, it also denounced British class hierarchies, their aristocratic decadence, pitied the degraded poor and felt relieved by the new nation’s liberal democracy. If the colonial motherland had great visions of the democratic possibilities of the new republic, (like the English writer William Cobbett, who appreciated the greater degree of liberty that Americans enjoyed than the British⁷⁴) it was also disappointed by America’s lack of civilization and culture. Nonetheless, for the purposes of my argument below, I choose to focus on British condemnations of certain “primitive” aspects of the New World in order to show how

such critiques produced an interstitial American subject who was not quite white, yet not wholly other.

Hence, Anglo-American connections, especially in the first half of the nineteenth century, also typify an internal stratification between white peoples, where, for one, the mother-child metaphor that has often been used to describe Britain's colonial association with America makes their relationship always already hierarchical. More importantly, what contributes to British superiority over its ex-colony is a perception common to the early nineteenth century, where the motherland saw her offspring as lacking in culture and civilization. Notable English writers such as Frances Trollope (1779-1863), Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) and Charles Dickens (1812-1870)⁷⁵ helped perpetuate such critiques of America, critiques that Lawrence Buell (2013) expressively terms the result of a reciprocal "generic cross-national misunderstanding."⁷⁶ I enter this well-documented and rather exhausted discussion by arguing that such British critiques of the newly emerging American nation helped fashion the white American subject of largely the first half of the nineteenth century as an ambivalent and interstitial identity.⁷⁷ For at least some British writers, although the Puritan settlers in New England originally came from Britain and therefore from one or the same "stock" as it were, the ex-colony still housed their culture's subordinates. In fact, Buell in "American Literary Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon" (1992), discusses how in their eyes, "America was still comparatively barbarous, the frontier hinterland its dominant reality and its gentry pathetic cardboard Europhiles" (419). It is then this perceived in-betweenness of American identity that gives place to the ambivalent positioning of the peoples of the New World as neither "wholly" white nor "wholly" other. Such ambiguity, in turn, can

be seen to influence the self-perceptions of white American women seeking to fashion an exemplary white womanhood fit to represent the new republic, a self-perception (as I will demonstrate in later sections) that comes through in the sense of lack and incompleteness with which the lady travelers in this chapter see themselves.

Trollope's, Dickens's and Martineau's feelings toward the Americans range from contempt to disappointment, and I identify these feelings as being mainly conveyed in two aspects in their writing. One is the very common and recurring charge against the Americans' lack of true elegance and culture,⁷⁸ a value judgment that the English writer makes from the position of one who is, by contrast, truly elegant and cultured, or, at least, aware of what elegant culturedness is about.⁷⁹ Their writing also makes use of an Orientalist lexicon—one generally employed to characterize people in other British colonies in areas such as Asia and Africa—in order to refer to certain facets of America's culture, politics and life that were seen as bringing the republic closer to the image of the “uncivilized” Oriental other.⁸⁰

Donald Smalley in his introduction to Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832)⁸¹ has the following to offer: “She [Trollope] was an Englishwoman of refined sensibilities, and she beheld with intense curiosity and some alarm the ways of the natives in the youngest section of a young democracy” (Emphasis added vii). In other words, it was only “if refinement once [crept] in among them[/the Americans], if they once learn[t] to cling to the graces, the honors, the chivalry of life, then [Frances and her British audience] shall say farewell to American equality, and welcome to the European fellowship one of the finest countries on the earth” (Trollope 409). More than anything else, it was the lack of elegant, genteel culture and classed hierarchy, as seen through the

eyes of this English gentlewoman that stood against America achieving true greatness.

However, Trollope was a woman who came late into writing due to abject personal circumstances. Married to Thomas Anthony Trollope, she with her husband and children came to America in search of fortune. Unfortunately, their efforts came to nothing as the Oriental bazaar they opened in Cincinnati came to be mockingly called as “Trollope’s Folly.” Returning to England, she published her first work, her travelogue *Domestic Manners*, which gained great popularity in her home country as it was a rather infamous attempt at representing a space that did not fulfill her ambitions.⁸² Therefore, we can safely assume that Trollope’s personal conditions would have considerably influenced her perceptions on all things American, necessitating that her account of the New World be read with caution.

Harriet Martineau, on a different note, begins her narrative with the understanding that to write about another country is to be like “one surveying a continent from a balloon, with only starlight above him” (*Society in America*, Preface iii). Meeting a broad spectrum of American people (from the President, farmers, urban societies, black slaves to factory-workers) while visiting luxurious palaces as well as the degrading slave quarters of the South, Martineau certainly seems to have had a broader view of the American social landscape than Trollope. The maturity of her work is not something to be surprised by, since she was a significant writer of the intellectual circles of her day, producing scholarly and political works like *Illustrations of Political Economy* (1832–34) before she wrote her travelogue on America in 1837. In spite of the different circumstances and contexts in which Martineau and Trollope wrote their travelogues on the New World, though, it is all the more intriguing to note that they complement each

other in their criticisms of several significant facets of American life.

Both writers resort to an Orientalist language to describe certain features of the New World that they considered “uncivilized,” Southern slavery being one of them. As M. B. Hackler (2003) states, “Southern landscapes demanded a movement beyond the limited vocabularies of the picturesque tourist. Fortunately for the traveling Briton, subject of an empire already stretching around the globe at the mid-nineteenth-century, an alternate vocabulary was readily available in writing on that nation’s tropical colonies” (195):⁸³

I never stood on the banks of the southern rivers without being reminded of Daniell’s views in India and Ceylon; the water level, shadowy and still, and the thickets actually springing out of it, with dark green recesses, with the relief of a slender white stem, or dangling creeper here and there [...] There were black women ploughing in the field, with their ugly, scanty, dingy dresses, their walloping gait, and vacant countenance [...] tropical as it was in many respects, it reminded me strongly of the view from Richmond Hills. (*Society in America*, 226)

Martineau here refers to William Daniell (1769-1837), an English landscape painter who visited India and Sri Lanka in the early nineteenth century. His paintings of the Orient are picturesque and full of dark-skinned people from Indian princesses clad in brilliant jewels to cattle-herders and farming women with bare upper bodies. The juxtaposition of such Orientalist paintings with the scene of a Southern plantation uncovers the close relations that the Oriental native held with the African American slave in the British imagination. When Martineau looks over Charleston, South Carolina, there too she “sees Asia”: “The sandy streets, the groups of mulattoes, the women with turbaned heads, surmounted with water-pots and baskets of fruit; the small panes of the house windows; the yucca bristling in the gardens below us, and the hot haze through which we saw the blue main and its islands, all looked so oriental as to strike us with wonder” (195). As Hackler reiterates,

such “placement of the South alongside Britain’s tropical colonies in the Caribbean and Asia situates it outside of an Anglo-American mainstream and reinforces its characterization as exotic and potentially alluring but ultimately dangerous” (198).

Even in Trollope’s *Domestic Manners*, there are several significant moments that use an Orientalist lexicon to reflect on what she encounters in America. Like Martineau’s, Trollope’s descriptions of Southern slavery are infused with the images of a primitive Eastern world; more so her illustrations of the West and the American wilderness, which she believes would have provided Dante with an appropriate setting for at least some parts of his book, *The Divine Comedy* (51).⁸⁴ In addition, Trollope also considers American Protestantism as worthy of censure. She portrays revivals as cult-like and confining, extremely oppressive to women.⁸⁵ In fact, the following description of a revival in *Domestic Manners* strongly echoes a scene of Devil-Dancing⁸⁶ that still takes place in the rural areas of Sri Lanka:

But how am I to describe the sounds that proceeded from this strange mass of human beings? I know no words which can convey an idea of it. Hysterical sobbings, convulsive groans, shrieks and screams the most appalling burst forth on all sides. I felt sick with horror. As if their hoarse and overstrained voices failed to make noise enough, they soon began to clap their hands violently. The scene described by Dante was before me [...] Many of these wretched creatures were beautiful young females. The preachers moved about among them, at once exciting and soothing their agonies. [...] I saw the insidious lips approach the cheeks of the unhappy girls; I heard the murmured confessions of the poor victims, and I watched their tormentors. (143)

What Trollope’s writing conveys here is a regimental American religious ethos. One cannot also miss the sexual indications of the last three lines which suggest that the immoral, in the form of sexual abuse, may have been part and parcel of such scenes of religious revival. It is not surprising then that Trollope believes even a Brahmin from the East would have found a safe heaven in this New World (*Domestic Manners* 126), since,

according to her text, much of America was as “primitive” as the Orient.

In spite of their association of, at least, certain features of American life and certain Americans with the Oriental other, some British authors also struggled to reconcile these acts of othering with the knowledge that, somehow, the New Worlders came from the same stock as the Anglo-Saxons: white Americans could not be easily relegated to the same category as, perhaps, the Africans and the Asians.⁸⁷ For example, evaluating Charles Dickens’s works—such as, *American Notes for General Circulation*, (1842) and *Martin Chuzzlewit*, (1844) which, according to Diana C. Archibald, “soon came to emblemize [...] the women of the new world as deformed and unnatural” (147)⁸⁸—John McBratney⁸⁹ (2013) identifies a curious anxiety in this renowned English author’s perceptions of the ex-colony:

Yet the Americans, even the dirty, morose Westerners whom Dickens disparages, cannot be classified easily under any received degenerist rubric as primitive. [...] White Americans lie, in terms of race and class, within the same general anthropological category as the novelist [...] Americans infuriated him because they packed such a substantial otherness into a cultural difference that, for Dickens, seemed hardly there—indeed, to his mind, should not have been there.

The Neo-European was thus, not “wholly other,” nor was s/he “quite white enough” by British standards in the first half of the nineteenth century.

In contrast to Dickens’s and Trollope’s vehement denunciation of America, Martineau’s is more an outburst of frustration that the new nation had not been able to reach its true democratic potential, which reveals a deep disappointment in the British imagination with the significant gap between what America was and what America could have been. Just as Dickens conveys his disenchantment with Neo-Europe for failing to fulfill his high hopes, Martineau as well uncovers the passion and frustration of an English woman in learning that the New World was following in the footsteps of the Old.

Her critique is noticeably strong in regard to the treatment of women in America, where, she claims,

[t]he Americans have [...] fallen below not only their own democratic principles, but the practice of some parts of the old world [...] While women's intellect is confined, [...] she is told that her lot is cast in the paradise of women; and there's no country in the world where there is so much boasting of the chivalrous treatment she enjoys [...] Philosophy she may pursue only fancifully, and under pain of ridicule; science only as a pastime and under similar penalty [...] Nothing is thus left for women but marriage—Yes, religion is the reply [...] The sum and substance of female education in America, as in England is training women to consider marriage as the sole object in life, and to pretend that they do not think so.⁹⁰ (226-28)

It is this perception of a relative lack of intelligence of American women, although problematic and questionable, that helps Martineau make sense of the New World woman's vulgarities, affectations and ostentations (especially, those of the American aristocratic ladies, who did not embody true elegance by British standards). To Martineau, the lack of true elegance, or the inability to become truly cultured stemmed from a shallowness of character, a character that was not granted the right tools to develop into a human being with more potential.⁹¹ The only time that this author manages to find an American true woman is in a space without affected elegance, the country-home, where there is admirable simplicity and a sense of wholesomeness that showed "some of the best, sweetest manners in existence [...] from the purity and fidelity of the democratic spirit which [America] breathe[d] throughout" (215). Yet, such simple and sweet American women are few and far between in Martineau's text.

What we have here is, then, a writer who is not satisfied with merely commenting on the state of affairs of American women, but who intelligently wonders why things seemed to be going wrong in the new republic. Even if she draws attention to the degrading vices such as legal prostitution that abounded across the Atlantic, Martineau

also claims that “[t]he bottomless vice and the all-pervading corruption of European society cannot, by possibility, be yet paralleled in America.” (237) In such a manner, she avoids resorting to glorifying Europe by using America solely as a point of contrast. However, American socio-political conditions were not deemed “good enough” for a Neo-Europe, which, in her eyes, had more potential to let women reap the benefits of democracy. America was, hence, a duplicitous nation that was built upon the injustices done to those who were deemed less equal, and “the promise of discovery and rebirth within a relatively recognizable world” (H. Frawley 97)⁹² that America was expected to offer the Old World, leaves this Englishwoman considerably unfulfilled. What appears instead is an image of an interstitial space that was neither fully civilized nor wholly primitive.

According to critics like Frank Lauterbach, American responses to British views like the above—that “establishe[d] a clear [...] difference between themselves and the United States [via] a post-colonial rhetoric that stress[ed] the strangeness rather than likeness of America”⁹³—tried to “refute such claims of difference and, in turn, re-assert British hegemony through a colonial rhetoric designed to leave sameness between both countries virtually transparent” (1). Perhaps Lauterbach’s statement fails to tap into the manner in which American writers reacted to British critiques where they did not always thrust “sameness” against “difference,” not to neglect the Anglophobia prevalent during the time as well. As Daniel Kilbride indicates in *Being American in Europe, 1750–1860*, (2013) these varied American responses ranged from “reaffirmations of loyalty to King and Parliament to arguments about the superiority of the colonies to the corrupt Old World. Increasingly, provincials argued that the colonies more perfectly embodied British

ideals than Britain itself' (10). Nevertheless, I would consider Lauterbach's argument as indeed relevant to the specific gendered white American category of lady travelers. At least in their particular circumstances, I argue that a principal aim of these women writers was to contest the strangeness of the American white self not wholly othered nor quite white enough, with a likeness to the English who they represented by an upper-middle-class/upper class manner, taste and attitude. In fact, what Kilbride says below of pre-revolutionary American travelers in Britain, I believe, rings true for the class of post-revolutionary white American lady travelers (as I will elaborate in Part III) who went dangerously close to disrupting core American values:

Postrevolutionary travelers sometimes recoiled at great houses, the opulence of which was impossible to reconcile with republicanism. Colonials expressed no such reservations. To them, manors and palaces signified British wealth, power, and refinement [...] Colonial travelers took gentility very seriously. [...] Its lack signified a flaw in national character. (20)

In the backdrop of such varied American perceptions of/responses to Britain and the British, in what follows, I will begin by briefly tracing more male-identified Anglo-American exchanges till around the 1860's, where I will then locate the specific contribution that the travelogues of American lady travelers made to the above discourse.

To Waver⁹⁴ or not to Waver? American Responses to Britain in the First Half of the
Nineteenth Century

Ambivalence. Perhaps, no other word better characterizes American responses to Britain: Britain in American imagination from the colonial times to the end of the nineteenth century as conveyed in much of the writing by American men—provided leeway is made for the various modifications of intensity and degree—consistently marks a simultaneous

desire for and derision of their old motherland and its ways.⁹⁵ Somehow, no matter how much criticism was levelled against Britain, no American seems to have been able to break all ties with it either, so much so that Eliza Tamarkin (2007) considers reverence for the British as “a legacy of independence itself” (*Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America* 21) that had a formative hand in the production of the new nation. At the same time, she is also quick to remind us that, “[d]eference, in other words, is not dependence,” (93) which qualifies America’s attitudes toward Britain. Since this chapter mainly deals with the genre of travel writing, an exploration albeit brief is in order here of how this simultaneous desire and derision for the colonial motherland is recorded in the travelogues by American writers as a whole. In this regard, Kilbride’s *Being American in Europe, 1750–1860* (2013)⁹⁶ offers us a comprehensive picture of how causes and concerns of American travels to Europe and, more specifically, Britain, shifted and changed from the colonial times to the post-Independence era. Referring to the pre-revolutionary European tour of the Americans, which was influenced by the English tradition of the “Grand Tour” in Europe, Kilbride draws attention to the idea that, through this act of travelling “young Americans laid claim to a deeply aristocratic strain of British identity” (11). Admiration of aristocratic opulence was a characteristic attitude of these early colonial travelers, which however, becomes complicated by the criticisms levelled at the extravagance, the British class structure, the condition of the poor etc., as post-revolutionary American republican values contrasted more and more with Old World ways. Still, even the middle-class republican of the nineteenth century, Kilbride says, “could not shake off the sense that the ultimate source of cultural and political legitimacy was a noble bloodline. [...And t]his unresolved struggle for legitimacy

between aristocracy and republicanism explains travelers' conflicted, contradictory responses to the privileged orders" (111).

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864) in his work, *Our Old Home: A Series of English Sketches* (1863) opens his account with the statement, "I never stood in an English crowd without being conscious of hereditary sympathies," (viii-ix) a sentiment that is later complemented by, "I hope I do not compromise my American patriotism by acknowledging that I was often conscious of a fervent hereditary attachment to the native soil of our forefathers, and felt it to be our own Old Home" (50).⁹⁷ He goes onto rationalize these "hereditary sympathies" and suggests that, "[t]he cause of this peculiar insanity lies deep in the Anglo American heart. After all these bloody wars and vindictive animosities, we have still an unspeakable yearning towards England" (26). However, admiration for Britain is predictably accompanied by repulsion. As James A. Hijiya (1974)⁹⁸ correctly points out, in the last two chapters of *Our Old Home*—"Glimpses of English Poverty" and "Civic Banquets"—the depiction of a pathetic diseased infant in an orphanage stands out as a scathing denunciation of the unjust class divide yet existing in the Old World (270). Hence, what this American writer envisaged was a "broader and more generous [American] patriotism which might almost amalgamate with that of England, without losing an atom of its native force and flavor" (*Our Old Home* 47).

Like Hawthorne, Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) too communicates a similarly dualistic attitude toward Britain. In *America's England: Antebellum Literature and Atlantic Sectionalism*, (2013) Christopher Hanlon uses Emerson to demonstrate, what he calls the "wavering" (19) of American perceptions of Britain at the time. Challenging a host of significant Emersonian critics like Robert Weisbuch and Philip Nicoloff, who,

according to Hanlon, lay inordinate emphasis on Emerson's Anglophobia, the latter demonstrates how, especially in works such as *English Traits*, (1856) Emerson too reveals the characteristic "wavering" of American attitudes toward the motherland (20). A fine example is Emerson's great praise for the Saxon element in the English and his simultaneous derision of the Norman element that together went into the fashioning of this Occidental white race. Emerson's treatment of the British aristocracy is also one of significant ambiguity. He may be vehemently critical of the decadent excesses of the privileged classes,⁹⁹ still, somehow, he also has praise for them: "The upper classes have only birth, says the people here, and not thoughts. Yes, but they have manners, and, 'tis wonderful how much talent runs into manners'; nowhere, and never so much as in England. They have the sense of superiority, the absence of all the ambitious effort which disgusts in the aspiring classes, a pure tone of thought and feeling" (*English Traits* 188). What we have here is an author who knows how to distinguish between authentic upper class English manners and their unsuccessful emulations by the "aspiring classes," and what Emerson finds less unpalatable is fairly clear.

If early to mid-nineteenth century travel narratives that chart Anglo-American relations thus rocked back and forth between a paradigm of desire and derision, American literary writing of the late eighteenth century to the later nineteenth century also followed a similar rhythm. In his notable studies on the topic—*Transatlantic Insurrections: British Culture and the Formation of American Literature, 1730-1860* (2001) and *Atlantic Republic: The American Tradition in English Literature* (2006)—Paul Giles names the Old World and the New as "heretical alternatives," for they "twist[ed] and intertwin[ed] with each other in mutually disorienting ways" (*Transatlantic Insurrections* 2). Bringing

together Jane Austen, Anthony Trollope and Nathaniel Hawthorne in conversation in his last few chapters, Giles points out that Britain reciprocated American indecisiveness in its perceptions of the former.¹⁰⁰ Hence, I see ambiguity as a pervasive characteristic of post-revolutionary American writing on Britain, in general, which, in spite of how much love or hatred was exchanged between the nations, did not seem to have allowed either nation to make an exclusive choice between the two. Yet, was the above true of the lady travelers as well?

Lady travelers are the key concern of this chapter and in response to the above question, and in the backdrop of British critiques that produced the white American as not quite white, yet not wholly other, I argue that lady travelers' narratives on England uncover a largely unambiguous acknowledgment/production of an upper-middle-class/upper class Englishness as an authentic and whole subjectivity, in comparison with the American. This acknowledgment/production of a superior English subject, on the one hand, aligns with British critiques of American lack of culturedness and the notion that the upper-middle-class/upper class English were the mainspring of white civilization. On the other hand, there is also an attempt to carefully mimic a code of gentility that puts the white American lady traveler on a par with the cultured classes of Britain. However, it is important for me to emphasize here that such acknowledgment of a particular Englishness does not necessarily mean that these travelogues were entirely without criticism of the old motherland.¹⁰¹ Rather, what I am drawing attention to here is a pervasive facet of the Anglophilia of these travel narratives. Likewise, between desire and derision, I see lady travelers, at least, as having made their choice.

In what follows, therefore, I begin by a brief exploration of lady travelers' elitist

attitudes face to face with England, along with a preamble to the specific Englishness that their narratives produced, diverging from republican virtues. Thereafter, I will elaborate on how certain features of Sedgwick's, Kirkland's and Stowe's travel narratives fashion a genteel and cultured upper-middle-class/upper class English identity, as well as how, by the use of numerous devices—like mimicking the traditional female apology, resorting to acts of genteel complaining and genteel consuming, employing a code of propriety and decorum and the general neglect of incendiary politics/excessive historical and/or factual information etc.—their travelogues also produce “genteel and cultured” narrative personas.

The white American lady traveler enters the genre of travel narrative with full force somewhere in the middle of the nineteenth century.¹⁰² Much writing on mid-century American women's travels abroad points to the advancement of comfortable foreign travel—which ensured that these women's propriety and decorum were not sacrificed by their developing freedoms of movement—as producing a considerable growth in genteel white women's mobilities. Genteel travel was, then, an endeavor of privilege¹⁰³—rather well expressed by the term “lady”—where, women “with leisure time and money enough sought [among other reasons,] both to confirm their place in American national culture by demonstrating that they too have visited the important sites and to consolidate their identity as genteel women who conform to standards of true womanhood even as they travel out of the country (Roberson 129-30).¹⁰⁴

The privileges of the category of lady travelers, however, as Jennifer Bernhardt Steadman (2007) reminds us, only represented one kind of nineteenth-century American women's crossings of the Atlantic. There were various other forms of women's travel far

different in nature and intention that ranged from “the desperate running of the fugitive slave, [...] the elected journeys of the women who traveled for work [...] to support themselves, to serve their communities, to enter national and international political debates, to criticize social and political institutions, and to demonstrate their own and their gender’s and race’s fitness for the rigors of public life” (3-5). In such a backdrop, genteel travel was a race and class apart from other kinds of women’s (im/)mobilities in nineteenth-century America, where, the lady traveler was carefully differentiated from other travels and othered travelers.¹⁰⁵ Confirming their classed advantage, not only did their travelogues manage to produce a particular Englishness coded in a form of upper-middle-class/upper class “genteel elegance” and “good taste” that they were fortunate to have associated with while in tour, but also (re)produced their narrative personas in that privileged image.

What then is this “Englishness” that comes through in the travel narratives of lady travelers? It is important to remind ourselves that to be “English” during the nineteenth century was to inhabit a unitary and fractured identity all at once. On the one hand, in a chapter titled, “Defining the Anglo- Saxon Race,” Daniel Kilbride (2013) details how scientific racism consolidated the purity of one race against another: “In Britain and the United States, race theory invigorated the concept of Anglo- Saxonism, the idea that Germanic peoples [...] constituted a single ethnic or racial family [,and that i]n its purest form, Anglo-Saxonism maintained that those within the circle of ‘blood’ possessed innate biological characteristics elevating them above other peoples” (*Being American in Europe, 1750–1860* 25).¹⁰⁶ Although we now know that race formation is reducible to neither biological essentialism nor cultural constructionism, the fact that Anglo-Saxonism

and Anglo-Saxon superiority made meaning to the then peoples is crucial in understanding white American women's visions of the Old World. On the other hand, to be English in the nineteenth century was also to have a fractured and multivalent subjectivity (as is generally the case with any other materially produced discursive construct based on the categories of race, nationality, gender, class etc.). Unitary notions of Britishness/Englishness, as Christopher Hanlon (2013) points out, were complicated by ideas like the duality of that Anglo-Saxon heritage: even iconic nineteenth-century writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, as mentioned in Part II of this chapter, promoted the notion that the Saxon element of the British was far superior to their Norman lineage. Indeed, it is commonly known that for Emerson, the English were a contradictory, if not hybrid race, since the "English composite character betrays a mixed origin. Everything English is a fusion of distant and antagonistic elements. The language is mixed; the names of men are of different nations [...] the current of thoughts are counter [...] active intellect and dead conservatism [...] with bitter class legislation [...] a country of extremes" (*English Traits* 56).¹⁰⁷ Nonetheless, in the writings of white American lady travelers, there is a more unitary discourse which produces a far more homogeneous notion of the English subject that also establishes a hierarchization of national identities from the less authentic/less whole to the more authentic/more whole.

In this scale, the white American woman seems to have given herself a self-proclaimed lower status, which can be further clarified if we take into account Paul Giles's (2001) discussion of the "perversion" of the white subject westward across the Atlantic. Making references to the vast body of writing on the topic, Giles brings together Gilbert Imlay (1724-1828), an American diplomat and writer from the early nineteenth

century, and a contemporary cultural critic, Jonathan Dollimore, and sheds light on how the notion of the American as a perverted form of the British prevailed in the nineteenth century itself. He shows for instance how Imlay, in a novel called *The Emigrants* (1793) “signifies a deviation or displacement, a swerve away from original virtue: ‘Everything has been perverted,’ laments the narrator” (119). This idea of the degeneration of a supposedly pure element is something that lady travelers subtly suggest in their narratives, rendering the English subject more originary and authentic than the American who was perverted from the *original* stock.¹⁰⁸ Hence, it is by acknowledging/desiring/emulating and likewise (re)producing an “Englishness” considered to be far superior to the American that early to mid-nineteenth century white American lady travelers try to be on a par with the Anglo-Saxon heritage of the old motherland, even if it meant that they were compromising their characteristic republicanism.

On one side was England, the space where a white American true woman’s “curiosity, gratitude and affections, [her] nursery songs, [her] school stories, [her] academic education, [her] studies in history, [her] whole literary experience, have been directing” (Caroline Kirkland, *Holidays Abroad* 25); her “civilization at its fountainhead” (Beatty 31); a space where she needed to put her best foot forward, conveying to the colonial matriarch that her ex-colony and its women too were worthy and that they too were good enough to produce/be a part of a refined white civilization. On another side was the white American true woman’s fear of being associated with the image of the “uncivilized” and “savage” native other of other British colonies. And it is in the intersection of such anxieties that the narrative personas of Sedgwick’s *Letters from*

Abroad, Kirkland's *Holidays Abroad* and Stowe's *Sunny Memories* produce as well as acknowledge, desire and emulate an authentic and whole upper-middle-class/upper class Englishness.

Although contemporaries, Catharine Maria Sedgwick (1789-1867), Caroline M. Kirkland (1801-1864) and Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) come from different contexts. Sedgwick, the most senior of the three, as Mary Kelley (1993) shows, was “[r]anked in the nineteenth century with Washington Irving (1783-1859), James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) and William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878) as a founder of her nation's literature” (“Negotiating a Self: The Autobiography and Journals of Catharine Maria Sedgwick,” 367). Her interests ranged from Native American rights in *Hope Leslie: Or, Early Times in Massachusetts*, (1827) the oppressions of Puritanism that she critiques in *A New England Tale* (1822), American society and etiquette that she portrays in her novel of manners *Clarence: Or, a Tale of Our Own Times*, (1830) domesticity and traditional womanhood that she assents to in *Live and Let Live: Or, Domestic Service Illustrated*, (1837) to the strong patriotism in her historical novel, *The Linwoods* (1835). Curiously, Sedgwick's repertoire of writing conveys an ambivalent mix of democratic and elitist, pro-aristocratic feeling that comes through even in her narrativization of England.

In fact, many critics have shown how Sedgwick's cosmopolitan democratic visions¹⁰⁹ have often been undercut by her aristocratic background.¹¹⁰ Though this daughter of an influential Federalist is believed to have challenged the “political convictions of her father and c[o]me to support the more egalitarian democracy he had found so threatening,” scholars like Kelley (1993) “highlight a lingering elitism that

qualified [Sedgwick's] support for egalitarian democracy" (392). Also, as Philip Gould points out in "Catharine Sedgwick's Cosmopolitan Nation,"¹¹¹ (2005) even one of her most patriotic of works, *The Linwoods*, that warns Americans against the corruptions of the Old World, "refuses definitively to abandon cultural refinement as a laudable goal," (243) as it "newly imagine[s an] aristocratic code of honor" (256).¹¹² According to Melissa J. Homestead, (2012) Sedgwick wrote her novel of American manners, *Clarence: Or, a Tale of Our Own Times* as an act of writing-back to the "colonial condescension directed at her by [Maria] Edgeworth and Edgeworth's friend, [...] Captain Basil Hall [...] and their assumptions about the lack of manners, social distinction, and fashion in American society" (13). Once again, what Homestead suggests is that Sedgwick's anti-aristocratic critique needs a careful qualification, for hers is not an outright condemnation of the upper classes of Britain, but rather, she provides a design to balance out upper class values with the egalitarian values of democracy, a point that I will factor into my reading of her travel narrative as well.

Caroline M. Kirkland, next in line, was a notable nineteenth-century writer who even participated in the intellectual circles of Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1849), William Ellery Channing (1794-1878) and Harriet Martineau. Born to a middle-class literary family that gave her the chance to have an education unusual to a woman of her time, in her later life, she rises to literary fame. Having lost her father at a young age, Kirkland is left to fend for her family; a time of hardship and financial strife that is repeated in the Michigan frontier that she moves to, after her marriage to William Kirkland. However, back in New York, she begins her literary and intellectual life proper which advances to the point that her home becomes a literary salon of sorts for the then literati such as Poe

and Bryant. As for her writing, Kirkland's major contributions were on the theme of frontier life exemplified in works like *A New Home; Who'll Follow, Or, Glimpses of Western Life* (1835), its sequel *Western Clearings* (1845) and *Forest Life* (1842)¹¹³ that realistically yet wittily portray what it was like to make a new life in the western wilderness, especially for a woman. Still, what concerns us here is her travelogue *Holidays Abroad* that she wrote after visiting Europe in 1848, where in spite of her witty and at times hyperbolic descriptions of the ways of the Old World, there emerges a classism that reveals an unmistakable desire for genteel upper class comfort.

The youngest of the three, Stowe, perhaps, can be seen as the most prolifically involved among the three authors on domesticity, morality and American womanhood, subjects that she accords national importance in her writing. For example, Stowe's "The Lady who does her Own Work" (1864) which appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* clearly evinces the import of a republican form of self-reliance and labor to the woman at home, while her attitude toward motherhood and home-making, being a mother of seven children herself, places her definitively within the circle of nineteenth-century American women writers on true womanhood. Still, what is of immediate relevance to the current discussion is that she was a cosmopolitan author. As Denise Kohn, Sarah Meer, and Emily B. Todd point out in "Reading Stowe as a Transatlantic Writer" (2006) "[l]ike other midcentury Americans, Stowe emerged as a writer in a literary culture shaped by British books," (xv) not to forget her cross-Atlantic literary friendships with British writers like Elizabeth Gaskell (1810-1865), Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) and John Ruskin (1819-1900) and her befriending of Lady Byron/Anne Isabella Noel Byron (1792-1860). (This last friendship later led Stowe to write *Lady Byron Vindicated: A*

History of the Byron Controversy, (1870) that is said to have reduced the author's popularity.) In fact, even her renowned abolitionist novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin; Or, the Life of the Lowly* (1852), is believed to have been influenced by Charles Dickens and Walter Scott.¹¹⁴ It brought her international renown and also an invitation from Britain that paved way for the writing of her travelogue on Europe, *Sunny Memories*, and later, her Italian novel, *Agnes of Sorrento* (1861). Both works, as I illustrate later, emit a sense of regard, albeit qualified, for bastions of the Old World such as Catholicism, feudal culture and aristocratic values, which are ironically at loggerheads with the values of the American feminine ideal that she propounded at other times.

When read in the light of the privileged white American subject position of “lady traveler,” all three writers display a certain elitism in their travel narratives on Britain that show the upper-middle-class/upper class English as an authentic and whole national identity, in comparison with the yet “incomplete” white American subject. With a view to demonstrating how they do what they do, in the following sections, I begin by an elaboration of these texts’ pro-aristocratic bias in their acknowledging/desiring of “genteel elegance”—a particular form of classed *culturedness*—that (among other reasons) is suggested as contributing to the “wholeness” of this English identity. This elaboration of genteel elegance will be followed by a study of some narrative features of mimicry in *Letters from Abroad*, *Holidays Abroad* and *Sunny Memories* —the genteel apology, the genteel complaint and genteel consumption—that produce the narrative personas of these texts in the image of genteel subjects. Likewise, the pervasive rhetoric of lady travelers offers a narrative that is different from other views of post-revolutionary America that were more critical of a degenerate Europe.¹¹⁵

In many critical studies on Victorian femininity, the word “elegance” is repeatedly used and interpreted as principal to the production of Victorian womanhood.¹¹⁶ In *Clothing Middle-Class Women: Dress, Gender and Identity in Mid-Victorian England c. 1851-1875* (2014), Ya-Lei Yen focuses especially on vocabulary and terminology and draws attention to how “Mid-Victorian fashionable dress was of course indivisible from questions of taste, and how adjectives such as ‘elegant’, ‘graceful’ and ‘tasteful’ were employed consistently in fashion texts of the period” (82).¹¹⁷ Significantly, even contemporary French fashions that added more embellishment to Victorian attire were not entirely unwelcome in this code of British elegance. Assenting with the preceding view, the following thought in Sedgwick’s *Letters from Abroad* evinces a similar association of English and French elegance in dress, where, it is hinted that “good taste” was the original preserve of upper class Londoners: “The absence of taste in the middling classes produces results that are almost ludicrous. I am inclined to think taste is an original faculty, and only capable of a certain direction. This might explain the art of dress as it exists among the English, with the close neighborhood of Paris” (110).

Elegance was not limited to Victorian attire alone, but it extended over from Victorian men and women’s demeanor, manner, behavior to the household, architecture, food culture, interior décor to gardening. As Johannis Tsoumas states in *Beauty and Morality as Female Values in the Victorian Middle Class Interior Decoration: 1837-1901* (2016), “[t]he concepts of embellishment, beauty and elegance gained paramount importance since they often became synonymous with the values of welfare and orderliness, while the need for the formation of elegant household spaces became more

urgent” (19). Tsoumas also believes that, “[u]nder the influence of Paris in the form of the French Rococo, and the famous Le Style Empire, English fashion that dominated mainly during the 1830s and the 1840s, practically bore the characteristics of pre-revolutionary France, and Napoleonic period” (23). Hence, in spite of being titled as studies on British “middle-class” attire and interior decoration, both Yen and Tsoumas signal how English culture of the early part of the nineteenth century was a convoluted amalgamation of middle and upper class values which brought together Victorian English notions of elegance and aristocratic French conceptualizations of richness and embellishment.

This brings us to an exemplary section in *Letters from Abroad*, where the description of a Mrs—’s lodge in the English countryside reveals not only a desire for what is described, but also how conversant and knowledgeable the narrative persona herself was with this language of upper-middle-class/upper class elegance. The text shows a sensitivity to exhibitions of good taste—conceived here as the complicated act of using rich embellishment albeit with an air of simplicity, in order to avoid shallow showiness—in the Victorian household and the Victorian garden:

There is, for instance, in this place of Mrs.— a neatness, *completeness, perfection* of which we have but the *beginning and a faint shadowing*. Our grounds are like our society, where you meet every degree of civilization. Here every tree, shrub and little flower is in its right place, and nothing present that should not be here. On one side of the house, the garden is laid out in the fantastical French style, in the form of hearts and whimsical figures, but elsewhere it is completely English with noble trees [...] The house is [...] rather a favorable specimen of the residences of the English gentry, spacious and arranged with comfort and elegance, but not surpassing [...] the first class of gentlemen’s country houses in America. *But there are luxuries here we have not and shall not have for many a day.* (Emphasis added 39)

Juxtaposing this passage with the habitual charge against America’s lack of elegance in

British texts shows us how this lady traveler, as will the others discussed in this chapter, assented to a British view on the New World nation. Above all, however, what the passage sheds light on is the acknowledgment/admiration of a sense of “completeness” and “perfection,” qualities with which a particular class of English, their homes and their life styles are associated. Contrastingly, *Letters from Abroad* suggests that America and Americans lack such “wholeness.”

In fact, wholeness was a pervasive concern of the nineteenth-century American ethos in its varied meanings, as in the Transcendentalist repertoire of writing represented in Ralph Waldo Emerson’s conceptualizations of “oneness” and “unity.”¹¹⁸ Still, I use the term here to refer to the above inadequacy felt by the gendered white American self within a context of seeing themselves (as well as being seen by their motherland) as incomplete national subjects/national subjects with a sense of lack. Elsewhere in the text too, we see further additions to this notion of the wholeness evinced by the mother country in contrast to the incompleteness of America:

Coming to the cities of the Old World, [...] with our national vanities thick upon us [...] we are confounded by the extent of London, by its magnificent parks, its immense structures [...] by all its details of convenience and comfort, and its aggregate of incalculable wealth [...] By degrees envy melts into complacency, and we say, ‘they are our relations;’ ‘our fathers had a hand in it;’ we are of the same race, ‘as our new planned cities and our *unfinished towers*’ shall hereafter prove’ (Emphasis added 32).

In comparison with the “immense structures” in London, towers in America can only seem “unfinished,” an impression that Kirkland shares strongly with Sedgwick: “What a headlong, shifting, mercurial, impulsive, imitative, unfinished people we seem to be, compared with the steady, reasonable, stolid, self-complacent English,” (Kirkland *Holidays Abroad* 99). Using expressions like “foreign people” “inexpert ken”

“unsophisticated American” (28) to refer to Americans in Britain, the narrator of *Holidays Abroad* further points to the American’s, more specifically the American woman’s, relative lack of elegance as one factor that contributed to her sense of incompleteness.

If for Sedgwick the model English home is without parallel, so feels Kirkland since “[t]he privacy and quiet of such a home as we enjoy in London cannot be purchased for money in any city of the United States [nor a] hotel [...] can offer in the way of elegance, abundance, service, and comfortable arrangements” (*Holidays Abroad* 60). Describing a breakfast party in Liverpool, Stowe’s travelogue too conveys a similar sense of approval for English etiquette:

[...] breakfast parties are things which we do not have in America [...] The hour is generally somewhere between nine and twelve, [...] Each gentleman had a lady assigned him, and we walked into the dining room, where stood the tables tastefully adorned with flowers, and spread with an abundant cold collation, while tea and coffee were passed round by servants. In each plate was a card, containing the name of the person for whom it was designed. (*Sunny Memories*, Letter II n.pag.)

Even the English landscape is inimitable, for as Kirkland claims, it “has a minutely-finished look; it lacks grandeur; its features are delicate, and the impression left is that of softness and gentle beauty [...] but we have no such miles of cultured and close-fitted scenery” (*Holidays Abroad* 44). “Our[/America’s] very life-blood is English life-blood. It is Anglo-Saxon vigor that is spreading our country [America] from Atlantic to Pacific” (Stowe, *Sunny Memories*, Letter II n.pag.). Yet, America was still incomplete. It was lacking in those qualities that made the Old World (although deteriorating) a great civilization.

Lady travelers’ reverence for the Anglo-Saxon blood line does not come to light

better than in the pro-aristocratic feeling and the inclination toward the English upper classes that Sedgwick's, Kirkland's and Stowe's travel narratives display. In all three of their texts, we find moments like the following, demonstrating an unmistakable admiration for the genteel life. If for Sedgwick her first English dinner had "everything the best of its kind, and served as in a private gentleman's house [...] with an elegance and accuracy found in few gentlemen's houses in our country," (*Letters from Abroad* 16) Kirkland proclaims, "London reminds you everywhere of the aristocracy; [...] in London there is no grand residence that does not speak for itself—not by any intentional showiness, but by a general unmistakable air of elegance" (Kirkland 138). However, it is in Stowe's that the pro-aristocratic bias of these lady travelers' travelogues is at its most acute.

It is important to remember here that Stowe goes to Europe in the capacity of a celebrity-invitee following the immense success of her anti-slavery work, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Once in Britain, she gets the opportunity to meet in person both the working classes and the aristocracy, most of whom were one in condemning slavery. Her aristocratic sympathies become clear not just in her appreciation of the upper class, but also in the romanticization of the working class. If Stowe's admiration for the former stems from the strong anti-slavery stance of the aristocrats like the Sutherlands, her romanticization of the working class too becomes produced almost as a side effect of this appreciation. As Shirley Foster (2006) clarifies, in spite of being aware of how "the very class that most actively supported her campaigns could be— and were—accused of creating and exploiting a protoslave class of oppressed workers,"¹¹⁹ (164) Stowe's narrative conveys a continued belief on how the British upper classes had succeeded in

“elevating and educating the poorer classes” (*Sunny Memories* 326).¹²⁰ The explicit contradiction between the aristocracy’s abolitionist ethos and its simultaneous oppression of the working class is something that Stowe’s text chooses to ignore. Further, as becomes clear in the following thoughts conveyed in *Sunny Memoires*, in an episode where Stowe’s American republicanism meets with Old World chivalry and the feudal spirit, we see no contest between America and Britain, for Stowe shows that she is capable of even making sense of a socio-political system that is supposed to be diametrically opposed to the American one: “I have often been dissatisfied with the admiration, which a poetic education has woven into my nature, for chivalry and feudalism; but, on a closer examination, I am convinced that there is a real and proper foundation for it, and that, rightly understood, this poetic admiration is not inconsistent with the spirit of Christ” (*Sunny Memoires* 63).¹²¹ Also, in witnessing the aristocratic grandeur of old English castles, she says, “[t]he influence of these estates on the community cannot but be in many respects beneficial, and should go some way to qualify the prejudice with which republicans are apt to contemplate anything aristocratic [...] With such reflections the lover of the picturesque may comfort himself [sic], hoping he is not sinning against the useful in his admiration of the beautiful” (239). Similar feelings echo in Stowe’s later novel set in fifteenth-century Italy, *Agnes of Sorrento*, where, the author not only admires an Italian aristocracy but also critiques dominant values of her own nation, such as individualism and utilitarianism.¹²²

Finally, certain narrative features found in the travelogues of Sedgwick, Kirkland and Stowe help produce their narrative personas as elegant subjects, reflective of the authentic/whole English in their texts. In other words, *Letters from Abroad, Holidays*

Abroad and *Sunny Memories* follow conventions of travel narratives on Europe undertaken by white ladies of the day. They mimic the traditional female apology, in addition to which they resort to acts of genteel complaining, employ a code of propriety and decorum to produce their narrative personas as genteel consumers, while also, in general, avoiding incendiary politics, excessive historical and factual information and the like that would have visibly marred the travelogues' "lady-like" charm. Ultimately, what the emulation of the model of the lady traveler by Sedgwick, Kirkland and Stowe does is to carefully distinguish the narrators and prevent them from participating in the attendant discourses of other/questionable and not-so-genteel women's (im/)mobilities during the same era, as mentioned in an earlier section.¹²³

"I was obliged to make a compromise with modesty, by secretly vowing to resist all temptation to put anything in my book which could be suspected of an intent to convey information," (*Holidays Abroad* viii) says Kirkland. Similarly, we see Stowe apologizing to her readers, in her Preface, for being too "sunny" in her visions of Europe, while Sedgwick modestly states that her letters were "published rather with deference to the wishes of others than from any false estimate of their worth" (*Letters from Abroad* x). In spite of these humble Prefaces to their texts, however, they offer us much more than amateur impressions on European travel. Therefore, one could safely assume that they used the traditional apology as a mere matter of convention. However, when considered in tandem with other textual features that denote gentility, such apologies weld together in fashioning a narrative persona who produces an intelligent yet "lady like" account of personal impressions. As participants of American true womanhood, perhaps, resorting to a token textual convention was a way in which these writers reconciled the traditional

expectations of feminine humility with their identities as women writers.

Along with the genteel apology comes the genteel complaint. “Alas! What a contrast between all this poetry and the real prose fact of going to sea! [...] that ship life is not at all fragrant [...] there is a most mournful combination of grease, steam, onions and dinners in general,” laments Stowe at being hard hit by the difference between fantasy and reality (*Sunny Memories* 2). Steam ships may have given ladies more opportunities for safe travels abroad, yet the conditions were not congenial. Drawing the reader’s attention to the petty annoyances associated with foreign travel, Kirkland comments on her dissatisfaction with a late and a particularly bad breakfast at the Craven Arms Inn, “It is wonderful indeed, that a bad breakfast can so starve out one’s romance” (*Holidays Abroad* 39). And adding her share of grievances to the list, Sedgwick’s journey in the overcrowded steamer Soho not only makes her lose her baggage but also compels her to stay in a “cluttered, comfortless apartment” (*Letters* 122). As Susan L. Roberson suggests in *Antebellum American Women Writers and the Road* (2011), “this steady stream of commentary on physical comfort helps to consolidate their[lady travelers’] identity as genteel women by illustrating that they are used to comforts and that they are privy to a certain amount of class and gender privilege” (142).

Roberson’s reference to a form of classed comfort opens up yet another significant feature in lady travelers’ narratives that contributed to the formation of their subjectivities in mimicry of an elegant Englishness: genteel consumption. American lady travelers, though, were not only consumers of the products and services of genteel travel—of English culture in the form of food, art, architecture and the like—but also producers of gentility, all at once. In fact, to be travelling white ladies in Europe was to

take part in a consumerist culture by default, where, acts of consumption were required to be tasteful and not vulgar. Lori Merish's *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (2000) is a useful study on this head.¹²⁴ However, since the principal argument of her work lays emphasis on the fashioning of the white bourgeois woman within America through acts of "tasteful" consumption, my intention here is to draw from Merish's argument while extending it to the transnational plane, where I will show below, how genteel consumption and "good taste" helped produce the white American lady traveler in Europe, via a code of propriety and decorum. Hence, being able to use the proper/right kind of/mode of travel for genteel women, adopting the proper/right kind of manner, style and attitude in consuming European art, architecture, literature, and even food, all, went into the construction of the civilized and cultured American travelling-lady. Sedgwick's, Kirkland's and Stowe's travel accounts not only represent such appropriate acts of consumption, but also include tasteful appreciations of English elegance, conveying the white American woman's desire to mingle with ease among the English elite.

All three authors are invited to numerous upper class social gatherings in the form of dinners, breakfasts and teas, where the dining/breakfast/tea table becomes a space where the narrative subjects not only become consumers—not just of food—but also producers of elegant English etiquette and culture. Being able to mingle, being "proper" while in such civilized circles, in other words, is presented in these travelogues as a validation of the genteel white American gendered self. In two key episodes in *Letters from Abroad*, we see an enactment of the anxieties generating from the failure of such validation. In what Sedgwick herself calls "bitter in its experience and sweet in its

remembrance,” (*Letters from Abroad* 90) she gives us an animated account of an incident where her indecorous two-hour late arrival at a dinner inconveniences at least one member in the dinner party to restart his dinner with Sedgwick all over again, in order to save her from embarrassment (88-99)! The narrative voice that comes through in this episode is one of utter mortification, which is however redeemed by the grace and chivalry of some gentlemen attendant, who go out of their way to make Sedgwick feel at ease. Though the experience was discomfiting, thankfully, she has reasons to remember it with sweetness.

In yet another occasion, another group of gentlemen rescue our author from a form of social anxiety, which Sedgwick somehow frames within a critique of the extravagances of the fashionable circles in London. Attending a concert at a “superb gallery of sculpture, with a carved and gilded ceiling, and other appropriate and splendid accompaniments,” (*Letters* 94) Sedgwick laments her inability to consume these architectural pleasures in peace, for the view of architectural splendor being smeared by sartorial extravagance. “[T]he marble divinities were hidden by the glittering mortals [...] luxuriously dressed and sparkling with diamonds, a sea of faces as strange as their diamonds to me” (*Letters* 95). Yet, these strange “glittering mortals” cause her to sit in a corner, feeling quite uncomfortable, “in my[/her] obscurity,” feeling an “overpowering kind of solitude,” (*Letters* 95) a solitude that clearly stems from being left out of “the most brilliant position in the most brilliant circle in London” (*Letters* 96).¹²⁵ To inhabit the space of such class privilege is also to reach out to an English ancestry, claiming an Anglo-American kinship, as Sedgwick’s thoughts below mark the return of a child to its parents, seeking to quell their estrangement and unite with each other in a warm embrace,

in the “home of our fathers, the native land of one of our dearest friends, and the birthplace of ‘the bright, the immortal names’ that we have venerated from our youth upward,” (*Letters* 13) for “we are of the same race” (*Letters from Abroad* 53):

And it is rather pleasant [...] to be in a country where there are no bad—bad! no imperfect roads, no broken or unsound bridges, no swinging gates, no barn doors off the hinges, no broken glass, no ragged fences, no negligent husbandry, nothing to signify that truth omnipresent in America, that there is a great deal more work to do than hands to do it. And so it will be with our uncounted acres of unsubdued land for ages to come. But we are of English blood, and we shall go forward and subdue our great farm. (119)

In the next chapter, we will see how yet other American true women heroines came home to Britain both materially and metaphorically, where American republican values diffuse themselves in those of the wealthy and the leisured classes of the Old World.

CHAPTER 3

HYBRID HEROINES: SUSAN WARNER AND THE MAKING OF ANGLO-AMERICAN FEMALE SUBJECTS

“We have no privileged class; we have no American aristocracy. Heaven forbid we ever should, other than that truly Republican one, the aristocracy of mind and manners.”

Susan Warner (1851)¹²⁶

Susan Bogert Warner (1819-1885) is a name that immediately comes to mind in the context of the domestic and/or sentimental novel, a female-identified literary genre in the late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth-century America.¹²⁷ The domestic and/or sentimental novel was, generally, a story about the reformation and Americanization or republicanization of a girl child into a “true woman,” mainly qualified by piety, virtuousness, domesticity, self-renouncement and the ability to ‘do her own work,’ a principal tenet of this genre being the denouncement of the values of Old World aristocracies. However, even in the case of an author like Warner, whose writing is commonly seen by critics as patriotic, there is a subtext of Anglophilia. In the chapter that follows, I argue that, by infusing the idealized white American woman with aristocratic and imperialistic values, Warner’s novels fashion their heroines as hybrid Anglo-American true women.

First, I will delineate how Warner’s pro-aristocratic sympathies surface in her writing mainly in two ways. Her novels consistently include a curious trope that I identify as ‘manual work for the freedom from manual work,’ wherein the majority of Warner heroines have an anxious relationship with physical labor, and they work so a life full of comforts and leisure is ensured for them as a just reward for their toil. This vision of an eventual freedom from manual labor contrasts with a primary feature not only of Warner’s texts, but also of works by other classic domestic writers—like Harriet Beecher

Stowe, (1811-1896) Catharine Beecher, (1800-1878) and Sarah Josepha Hale, (1788-1879)—and their invidious distinction between the American true woman and the stereotypical British lady or the Oriental woman, who is often portrayed as languid and lazy.¹²⁸ Warner’s true women start off as/become “labor saving machines”¹²⁹ during the course of the novels—contributing thus to the larger labor narratives of Antebellum America that tried to elevate and venerate labors of the body—but they work so that they could be free of that labor. Secondly, Warner’s fictional heroines imbibe traits that are traditionally associated with a decadent European aristocracy; desire for comfort and luxury and materialistic consumerism. Over and above the lessons on frugality and simple-living that these women are taught, the elaborate purchasing scenes in texts such as *The Wide Wide World* (1850), *The Old Helmet* (1864) and *Wych Hazel* (1876) cannot help offering their readers an alternative narrative. Thus emerge heroines who do thoroughly enjoy the experience of playing genteel consumer which makes them paradoxical subjects self-renouncing yet desiring at once.

Next, I will complement the above discussion on the pro-aristocratic sympathies of Warner heroines with the imperialistic aspects of her writing. Some of her novels certainly seal the deal. Not only do characters like Rollo in *Wych Hazel* invoke typical imperial images—the “great white hunter” in his case—but these texts also make use of jargon and language characteristic of Orientalist British texts. Such imperialistic tendencies in the writings of a white American woman author reputed for her republicanism cannot but bring the New World closer to the ways of the Old. Taken together, these underlying aristocratic and imperialistic values in Warner’s writing reveal the significant role British values played in the production of the white American

gendered self during the nineteenth century, thereby contributing to the making of cross-Atlantic white female subjectivities.

To begin with, Anna Warner's thoughts on her sister's uncomfortable relationship with physical labor offer us below a poignant preamble to Susan Warner's fictional writing that has heroines going through similar trials in life, though, eventually finding comfort and ease. Unfortunately for their author, no such happy ending awaited.

She was a bit of a Sybarite by nature; liking ease and warmth and bright colors and dainty fair [...] doing nothing herself that she could get someone else to do for her. Not that she might sit in idleness; however, but to read, and muse and tend her imagination. Her particular delight was to have a low seat at the corner of the hearth and read by firelight. But all her life long, she liked to have someone else keep up the fire. (Anna Warner, *Susan Warner ("Elizabeth Wetherell")* 88).

Thus, the young life opened into young womanhood. [...] For still she loved power and ease and dreams; and still would have had the work of the world go on without her handling. (Anna Warner, *Susan Warner ("Elizabeth Wetherell")* 200).

As a much-required introduction to the larger nineteenth-century American conversations on labor (with special reference to white American women), I refer to Daniel T. Rodgers's *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920* (1978), which offers a comprehensive account of the "moral pre-eminence of work" (Schocket 41)¹³⁰ in the republican American North that developed from a Puritan work-ethic. In a definitive chapter titled, "Idle Womanhood: Feminist Versions of the Work Ethic," Rodgers traces the historical development of the idea that industrialization wiped out a generation of skilled women, birthing a race of women confined to domestic duties, likewise establishing gender-distinctive spheres of functionality. Yet, on the one hand, if having a wife who leisured at home was symbolic of the wealth and status of the patriarch who could afford to give his spouse such luxury, on the other hand, such leisure was also seen as a form of immoral idleness. Hence emerged the need for a special, (often idealized)

class-appropriate work-ethic for the American “angel in the house.” For instance, in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *The Minister’s Wooing* (1866), we see the author avidly promoting a woman who can do her own work, clearly articulating the type of physical labor that was fit for a woman of the new republic:

To her who has faculty nothing shall be impossible. She shall scrub floors, wash, wring, bake, brew, and yet her hands shall be small and white; she shall have no perceptible income, yet always be handsomely dressed; she shall have not a servant in her house,-with a dairy to manage, hired men to feed, a boarder or two to care for, unheard of pickling and preserving to do,-and yet you commonly see her every afternoon sitting at hei., shady parlor-window behind the lilacs, cool and easy, hemming muslin cap-strings, or reading the last new book. (2-3)

Hustle she certainly would a million chores, but with an unmistakable air of calm, composure and feminine charm; a woman who would, as if by magic, accomplish the physically challenging tasks of scrubbing floors, washing, brewing, managing a dairy etc. yet, without a speck of dirt on her spotless dress!¹³¹

At the same time, true women’s manual work came to be carefully distinguished from that of their classed and racial others. In a study that problematizes the reductionist reading of the white working-class as “male,” Dana Frank in “White Working-Class Women and the Race Question” (1998) shows how white American working-class women engaged in numerous forms of physical labor from seamstressing, farming, timber work to being factory hands. “Lowell Mill Girls” working in the industrial factories of Massachusetts were, in this case, an iconic representation of working-class women’s labor, a form of work that was considered inappropriate for the American feminine ideal.¹³² More so, female black slaves, with their abject state of existence in the plantations, the physical and the sexual labors that were extracted from them to the point of death provided a stark contrast to the domestic chores of the angel in the house.¹³³

Hence, the American true woman showed that she was not afraid to do her own work, while at the same time making sure that she did just enough work in order to overcome the dangers of degenerating into the inappropriate labors of the racially and classed others. As the preceding quotation from Stowe's novel exemplifies, American true women of the nineteenth century were being told it was morally elevating to touch the scum on the floor they rubbed, but that it was not alright to get them on their hands!¹³⁴

American perceptions of bodily labor during the first half of the nineteenth century become further complicated when placed in the context of the then tug of war between the binaries head-hand/mind-body/intellectual-physical. Not only did different types of hand work fall within a scale of superiority and inferiority, but different kinds of labor also became hierarchized, where mental work became elevated over manual work in spite of the republican need to raise the status of the latter.¹³⁵ In this regard, Nicholas K. Bromell in *By the Sweat of the Brow: Literature and Labor in Antebellum America* (1993) persuasively argues that the tendency of nineteenth-century U.S narratives on domesticity and womanhood to spiritualize and aestheticize women's labor rendered non-material the corporeality of the embodied work involved in mothering. The following account in his book of Maria Jane McIntosh and Mrs. A. J. Graves gives clear expression to this contest:

[Mrs. A. J. Graves] is certain that manual labor is less contemptible than complete idleness [...] but she is undecided about the amount of manual labor that is suitable for a woman. [...] Thus, both McIntosh and Graves are caught in a dilemma because they want to praise the bodily labor performed by the middle-class mother in her role as "housekeeper" or "housewife," they make use of the egalitarian Jacksonian rhetoric that ennoble manual labor. But they also fear that any celebration of the embodied aspects of maternal labor risks depriving it of its spiritual aura and elevated status. For here, as in the discourse that tried to make sense of the relation between the "learned professions" and artisanal and factory work, the underlying assumption is that manual labor, being corporeal in nature,

is ontologically distinct from and inferior to the work of the mind or spirit.
(126)¹³⁶

However, in Susan Warner's novels, there is a curious absence of biological mothers. The surrogate mother figures also either die or are forgotten toward the end of the narratives.¹³⁷ In fact, Warner's fictional texts in this chapter, as most other domestic and/or sentimental novels of the same period, do not extend their plot to the point that their heroines attain motherhood. Instead, they end with the trope of the companionate marriage, prosperity and wealth—in other words, the heroines' financially secure present—relegating motherhood to their narrative futures. We do not get to see these heroines at work in the form of mothers, nor do we see their own mothers at work in mothering them. Their varied manual work is important only till they are justly rewarded by the prospect of a marriage to a wealthy bachelor and there ends their labors of the hand. The freedoms, and leisure from manual labor gained therein are not only characterized by a genteel consumerism and the enjoyment of comfort but are used also for spiritual and intellectual cultivation. Fleda is one such woman, the heroine of Warner's *Queechy* (1852), who subtly dismantles the new nation's work-ethic and infuses it with a desire for upper class comfort that echo Old World aristocratic values.

Simply put, *Queechy* is a female bildungsroman that fashions a virtuous, Christian, white American heroine with republican ideals, as innocent as a child, whose marriage to the wealthy Englishman Mr. Carleton is symbolic of an Anglo-American union. We first meet Fleda, a little girl, almost a wood nymph, floating from bough to hillock, brimming with childish innocence. Midway in the novel, we find her an industrious yet elegant farm-girl. And finally, her English marriage clinches her as an Anglo-American subject. Fleda is also nationally versatile. Even before she marries the

eligible English bachelor, she manages to elegantly saunter in the sophisticated European circles in London and Paris and play the role, just as well, of a frugal and industrious farm-girl in an American village. Therefore, the true woman who comes through in *Queechy*, as well as in Warner's writing generally, is not a homogenous white American female subject that provides an absolute contrast to the image of the aristocratic European/British woman, but rather one who has the best of both worlds.

Fleda toils almost till the last pages of the novel. Still, the narrative suggests that her toil is a means to an end. In the following, what the text offers is not Fleda's daily routine in great positive detail, but instead it manages to shift the mantle off aestheticized and spiritualized physical labor and show it for what it is. The passage draws attention to the intense stamina needed for continuous physical work and the endless exhaustion it caused a young girl, likewise indicating that all was not perfect in the laboring woman's paradise:

But the delicate mainspring that kept all this machinery in order suffered from too severe a strain. There was too much running, too much considering, too much watchfulness. In the garden, pulling peas, and seeing that Philetus weeded the carrots right, in the field or the wood-yard, consulting and arranging, [...] in the house, her old housewifery concerns, her share in Barby's cares or difficulties, her sweet countenancing and cheering of her aunt, her dinner, her work [...] No wonder if the energies which owed much of their strength to love's nerving, should at last give out, and Fleda's evening be passed in wearied slumbers. No wonder if many a day was given up to the forced quietude of a headache.
(*Queechy*, Vol. II, 5-6)

One becomes breathless reading out Fleda's unending list of tasks, and the realization that each day brought a repetition of just those tasks is enough to make Warner's readers feel as exhausted as Fleda.

The delineation of the trying nature of Fleda's work-load at the farm is immediately followed by a significant attendant discussion on the importance of

comforting leisure between Fleda and her cousin, Hugh. Hugh and Fleda are both tired. However, Hugh finds solace in religion since reading the Bible makes him less tired; “ ‘I told you this rested me,’ said he, reaching across her for his book; ‘and now I am never weary long. Shall I rest you with it? [...] I thought we were wearing out our lives alone here in a wearisome way, and I forgot that it must be the very straightest way that we could get home’” (*Queechy*, Vol. II, 7). Fleda too attempts to find comfort in religion, contemplating on renouncement and self-sacrifice whenever she feels the weight of her work. Yet, religion does not satisfy her as much as it does Hugh, as the difficult burdens that manual labor puts on her shoulders begin to overwhelm her.

“There was too much running, too much considering, too much watchfulness,” (*Queechy*, Vol. II, 49) and being a farm-girl for the rest of her life was not what Fleda had in mind. Pastoral life may have its own blessings and charms, yet, at times, Fleda’s true frustrations are conveyed through her feelings of confinement within Queechy. She wonders about the “panorama of her life—England, France, New York and Queechy!—half coming to the conclusion that her place henceforth was only at the last and that the world and she had nothing to do with each other” (*Queechy*, Vol. II, 49). This is perhaps why, at different points of the novel, no matter how much she struggles to find fulfillment in her farm life, Fleda yearns for respite from it. Constantly burdened by mundane tasks such as rustling up meals, picking strawberries or tending to the farm, instead of reading a book, she gives expression to this yearning in an emotional exchange with Hugh:

‘Oh, Hugh, this is the worst part of being poor!—the constant occupation of one’s mind on a miserable succession of trifles. I am so weary sometimes! If I only had a nice book to rest myself for a while and forget and forget all these things—I would give so much for it!— [...] That was one delight in being in New York. —I forgot all about money from one end of it to the other—I put all that away; and not having to think of meals till I came to eat them. You can’t think how tired I

get of ringing the changes on pork and flour and Indian meal and eggs and vegetables!’ (*Queechy* Vol. I, 395).

This passage has sad echoes of Warner’s own travails and financial frustrations, which direct the author herself to express in a journal entry, “[W]ithout ready money to go to market, without earning anything, without any brilliant prospects for the future, unless indeed the Wide World should prove to us a richer storehouse than it does to most people. [...] anything but living on nothing, or on borrowed money” (*Susan Warner* (“*Elizabeth Wetherell*”) 323). As the line, “I forgot all about money from one end of it to the other” suggests, we can only assume that, both Warner and Fleda would have desired to have had wealth to the point that their minds did not have to be preoccupied with petty economic/economizing concerns. If at all, they should only be doing “God’s work.”¹³⁸

Queechy, then, is a work that lays great emphasis on the consequential rewards that physical labor was bound to bring in the form of wealth and leisure, as it dwelled on the moral elevation one was to gain from doing one’s own work. By the end of the novel, the author ensures that Fleda learns her lessons in American true womanhood just in time for her to be rewarded with a future of leisure in England. Certainly, the narrative portrays the Fleda-Carleton union—as are many of the marriages that take place in domestic and/or sentimental novels—as a “companionate” one. However, as it frees this worthy heroine from the shackles of tending to petty, mundane trifles, their marriage can also be seen as one of convenience. In order to be deserving of such a reward, Fleda not only needs to prove her worth but also be patient till the end. Comforts she does not inherit, but she earns. We see her folding her hopes in silk: “I have made up my mind that my visit to New York was a dream, and the dream is nicely folded away with my silk dresses” (*Queechy*, Vol. I, 376). Note that her dream is not abandoned or forgotten.

Instead, it is a dream deferred; a dream folded in her silk dresses, only to be unfolded when time was right. This hopeful deferment of a desire for luxury and elegance—symbolized by the luscious comfort of silk—opens up a different facet of an American true woman, a facet that disrupts the identity of the simple, frugal, middle-class, laboring American girl of the New World republic by bringing her closer to the aristocratic images of the Old World.

The fact that genteel elegance, the jewel of the leisured classes, was a quality intrinsic to the American farm-girl, reassures us that Fleda will not miss her step once she finds herself in the lap of luxury. In fact, in an earlier instance in the novel, meeting her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Rossitur in the cultural capital, Paris, we see her easily adapting to European gentility and taste:

There were amusing walks in the boulevards, and delicious pleasure takings in the gardens of Paris, and a new world of people and manners and things and histories for the little American. *And despite her early rustic experience Fleda had from nature an indefeasible taste for the elegancies of life*; it suited her well to see all about her, in dress, in furniture, in various appliances, as commodious and tasteful as wealth and refinement could contrive it. (Emphasis added, *Queechy*, Vol. I, 196)

Her English husband only has to cultivate the elegance and good taste that are inherent to his young American bride. In fact, Mr. Carleton is seen to help Fleda distinguish the difference between a “farm” and a “park,” thereby schooling the latter in the language of class: “The grounds of a farm are tilled for profit; a park is an uncultivated enclosure kept merely for men and women and deer to take pleasure in” (*Queechy*, Vol. I, 86). This heroine of Warner’s greatly popular domestic and/or sentimental novel, having done her part, moves from the farmlands of rural Queechy to the sprawling English parks, not only moving from one nation to another but also from

one class to another.¹³⁹ Fleda may take with her her metaphorical American flag when she settles with her English husband, yet, instead of being a mark of antagonism, the novel claims that the “flags are[/were] friendly” (Vol. II, 391).

Indeed, “flags” are “friendly” even in the Susan Warner classic, *The Wide Wide World* (1850), although this novel is generally known for its strong critique of Britain. It includes as vehement a challenge as *Queechy* and “American Female Patriotism: A Prize Essay” against Old World criticisms of the New, while promoting republican ideals. In spite of the intense patriotic feelings that are evoked, though, and however strong a republican woman Ellen—its female protagonist—is shown to become during the course of the novel, this national narrative as well fashions a transnational heroine. Born to a Scottish mother, Ellen is Euro-American by birth, and like Fleda, Ellen’s manual labors too last only till the promise of a comfortable, upper class life comes true after her marriage to the English-born John Humphreys. Nevertheless, in *The Wide Wide World*, we see a further complication of the republican work-ethic, where Warner places side by side, different varieties of manual labor in order to clarify which kind is most appropriate for an American true woman.

We first meet Ellen, a carefree city girl for whom work is relatively alien. She only knows how to daintily tend to her ailing mother, crisping bread and brewing tea just to please her parent’s tastes. Perhaps, in terms of physical work, she does nothing more, and nothing less in her city home. However, at aunt Fortune’s in the countryside, Ellen has to un-learn her city sophistications and practice the labors of the rustic life; she, too, learns her chores well so she can become free of them. In a sense, then, Ellen returns full circle to the place she started from, still, as a woman reformed.

Aunt Fortune and the kindly country-man Mr. Van Brunt are some of the first to come to her aid in this reformation process. However, Ellen's schooling curiously changes hands from Aunt Fortune's to the Humphreys three-quarters into the novel, as Aunt Fortune's excessive frugality and her regimental and coarse exertions that lack spiritual beauty begin to be heavily contrasted with Alice Humphrey's more beautiful and refined labors of love. Note the starkly different presentations of these two contrasting forms of labor in the following passages quoted at length for elaboration. In one we find a hyper active whirl-wind of a woman whose hard and coarse regime of daily chores—her “indignant housewifery”—puts off everyone who enters her household, while the other offers an aestheticized, spiritualized and beautified labor that does not seem like labor at all. Aunt Fortune's work-ethic makes one huff and puff for its tediousness and is more rooted in the material labors of “this world.” In Alice's perceptions, such work does not look beyond into the spiritual rewards that the venerable act of performing one's duties will bring upon oneself. Instead, work that is worldly merely tires and frustrates the doer as well as the watchers of the deed. The piling up of expressions such as “hissing and spluttering,” “noisy, odorous cooking,” and “spasmodic,” by the use of the sibilance evokes images of ominous violence and a clear absence of grace and beauty:

The noise of *hissing and spluttering* now became quite violent, and the smell of the cooking, to Ellen's fancy, *rather too strong to be pleasant*. Before a good fire stood Miss Fortune, holding the end of a very long iron handle, by which she was kept in communication with a flat vessel sitting on the fire, in which Ellen soon discovered all this *noisy and odorous cooking* was going on. [...] At length the *hissing pan* was brought to the hearth for some new arrangement of its contents, and Ellen seized the moment of peace and quiet to say, "Good morning, Aunt Fortune." (Emphasis added, Chapter 10 n.pag.)

The next passage appears in Chapter Sixteen of *The Wide Wide World* titled,

“Mother Earth rather than Miss. Fortune.” Alice, here, is more aesthetically represented through the echoes of purity in the “whiteness” all about her, the relaxed organization of her work space and the sheer pleasure she has and gives to the little onlooker:

[Alice] led the way across the hall to the room on the opposite side; a large, well-appointed, and spotlessly neat kitchen. [...] *A white moulding-board was placed upon a table as white; and round it soon grouped the pail of flour, the plate of nice yellow butter, the bowl of cream [...]* Half the board was covered with the nice little white things, which Ellen [...] had quite forgotten all possible causes of vexation, past, present, or future, when suddenly a large gray cat jumped upon the table, [...] planted his paw directly in the middle of one of his mistress's cakes. [...] Alice and Ellen were too much amused to try any violent method of relief [...] “Why, yes. He shall have that one baked for his supper.” [...] and when, a few minutes after, the tea and the cakes came in, and *she and Alice were cozily seated at supper*, poor Ellen hardly knew herself, in such a pleasant state of things. (Emphasis added, Chapter 16 n.pag.)

Note the relaxing rhythm of the phrase, “A white molding-board was placed upon a table as white; and round it soon grouped the pail of flour, the plate of nice yellow butter, the bowl of cream, the sieve, tray, and sundry etceteras,” that is significantly different from the violent and jolting movements of the language used in the first. Even the mischievous little cat is welcome in Alice’s organic world of innocence. We can safely assume though, that seeing a cat paw on the dough would have made Aunt Fortune send the cat off flying by a violent kick. In Aunt Fortune’s kitchen, the little animal would have been in danger of sharing the ill fate of Gerty’s cat in Maria Susanna Cummins’s *The Lamplighter*, who is accidentally thrown into a pot of boiling water by the cold-hearted and abusive guardian Nan Grant. Instead, Alice, the Earth Mother, will only shower kindness on all earth’s creatures.

Hence, what *The Wide Wide World* encourages is a form of “cozy” and relaxed work, or “soft” labors that are leisurely performed, rather than toil that is regimentally executed.¹⁴⁰ At the same time, the fact that the Humphreys are English-born while Aunt

Fortune represents a dubious Yankee character is of critical significance, since the contrast that Warner draws between the two also feeds the Anglophilia in this novel. What is appropriate for an American true woman is Alice's kind, whereas Aunt Fortune's work-ethic can only debase Ellen's social status. In this regard, in "Middle-Class Identity and Corporeal Attachments in *The Wide Wide World*" (2013), Rachel DeJmal draws attention to how "Ellen's work in the buttry both connects her with inappropriate working-class labor and implicates her in the production of a commodity that is traded in public capitalist markets. Though Ellen works in a small domestically located buttry, her work here places her in the impasse between public and private" (13). On the contrary, "Alice demonstrates a bourgeois form of domestic labor defined by its invisibility as well as its sentimental merit" (DeJmal 13). What we have in *The Wide Wide World*, then, is an aestheticization of a particular form of venerated (and also English-identified) household work and an organic representation of a woman in labor that encompasses not just the human family but the entire eco-system.

The trope of 'manual work for freedom from manual work' in Warner's writing that we have explored so far is complemented by yet another recurrent desire of her heroines for "beautiful things," where their acts of purchasing, spending for and consuming worldly goods challenge the idealized image of the frugal and anti-materialistic white American woman, by defining her subjectivity above her class. Gillian Brown has already highlighted this inclination toward material objects that is at odds with an American true woman's selflessness/self-renouncement—by conceptualizing a domestic woman's "possessive individualism"—in her work, *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (1990).¹⁴¹ However, here, I choose to

build on Lori Merish's more recent discussion of sentimental consumerism and the fashioning of the American bourgeois woman in *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (2000), extending her position to the plane of American transnationalisms, in order to argue that sentimental materialism also reflects the Anglo-American affiliations of Warner's fictional heroines.

In a nutshell, Merish's *Sentimental Materialism* considers productions of nineteenth-century middle-class white womanhood in a consumerist light. The text helps us understand how a true woman could not have only been an object of ownership held by the patriarch as a symbol of bourgeois success and achievement, but was also a desiring subject who fashioned her self through acts of consuming genteel/class-appropriate goods. She suggests further that the promoting of an appropriate form of feminine consumption made these women participate in American capitalism, likewise bringing the so-called separate sphere of spiritual and non-materialistic womanhood closer to the materialistic public world of men. Applied to the current context, as I show below, acts of tasteful and genteel consumption that are part and parcel of the purchasing scenes of Warner's narratives represent women who enjoyed having purchasing power to buy "beautiful things." Such consumption, I argue, by refuting the common British charge against its newly independent colony for its lack of elegance and good taste, infuses these New World women with upper class virtues.

The Wide Wide World offers us an exemplary episode in the following. This is the prolonged parting scene between mother and daughter, Mrs. Montgomery and Ellen—for Ellen was to be sent to Aunt Fortune's in the country as her parents needed to travel to Europe—which includes elaborate detail on the buying of a Bible, a writing desk

and a work box:

“Oh, what a delicious smell of new books!” said Ellen [...] “Mamma, if it wasn't for one thing, *I should say I never was so happy in my life.*” Children's books, lying in tempting confusion near the door [...] *Ellen's wits were ready to forsake her.* Such beautiful Bibles she had never seen; she pored in *ecstasy* over their varieties of type and binding, and was *very evidently in love with them all* [...] Her little daughter at one end of the counter *had forgotten there ever was such a thing as sorrow in the world;* [...] Ellen came to her mother with *a beautiful miniature edition in two volumes, gilt and clasped, and very perfect in all respects,* but of exceedingly small print [...] Mrs. Montgomery came to her help, for *it was plain Ellen had lost the power of judging amidst so many tempting objects.* [...] They now entered a large fancy store. [...] and the articles displayed on every side completely *bewitched her.* From one thing to another she went, *admiring and wondering; in her wildest dreams she had never imagined such beautiful things. The store was fairyland.* Mrs. Montgomery [...] called Ellen from the *delightful journey of discovery* she was making round the store, and asked her what she thought of it. “I think it's a little beauty,” said Ellen; “*but I never saw such a place for beautiful things.*” [...] *She was truly overcome with the weight of happiness. Words failed her, and tears came instead.* [...] *Ellen was speechless; occasional looks at her mother, and deep sighs, were all she had now to offer.* (Emphasis added, Chapter Three, n.pag.)

What we have here is an extended and prolonged moment of desire and pleasure, a perfect experience of shopping in shopper's paradise. There are, of course, attempts to spiritualize this episode and render it non-material by framing it in the act of Bible-buying. Nonetheless, Bible-buying, in this scene, comes out as a materialist pleasure-seeking venture that reveals a desire for a beautiful object, rather than as a spiritual act. In a sense, the moment materializes the spiritual. Besides, there is an unmistakable excitement that is almost sexual. Ellen is overwhelmed by emotion. When she cannot express her admiration by word, she does so by her tears. She is in ecstasy. She is bewitched. And the scene climaxes with, “Ellen was speechless; [...] deep sighs, were all she had now to offer.”

Mrs. Montgomery's love for her daughter, concentrated in the Bible and the writing desk that she buys Ellen as parting gifts is furthered in the greatly detailed

episode of Ellen's buying of the merino that follows. However, the later scene is characterized by frustration, rather than pleasure. What mainly contributes to Ellen's disappointment is her attempt to perfectly match the color and texture of her mother's desired material with a low budget. Hence, her constrained purchasing power throws this episode entirely off balance and provides a stark contrast to the earlier pleasurable wonderings in shopper's paradise. Money may have failed her daughter in the second scene of sentimental purchasing, yet Mrs. Montgomery makes up for it by her last services of love and affection to her daughter as she meticulously packs Ellen's goods.¹⁴² Somehow, by this point, Ellen is not just defined by what she buys and what she owns; instead, she almost becomes her objects, for, to touch Ellen's material possessions here, is as good as touching Ellen herself:

The dark merino, the new nankeen coat, the white bonnet, the clean frill that her [mother] had done up, the little gloves and shoes, and all the etceteras [...] It was with a kind of lingering unwillingness to quit her hold of them that one thing after another was stowed carefully and neatly away in the trunk. She felt it was love's last act; words might indeed a few times yet come over the ocean on a sheet of paper;—but sight, and hearing, and touch must all have done henceforth forever. (Chapter IV n.pag.)

Isabelle White in "Anti-Individualism, Authority, and Identity: Susan Warner's Contradictions in *The Wide, Wide World*" (1990) observes that, "the beliefs of those without economic and political powers are subsumed by the beliefs of those with these kinds of power," (39-40) and she adds:

Married to John [...] Ellen has overall responsibility for the household, [...] and her interior room, where "nothing had been spared which wealth could provide or taste delight in." [...] John assures Ellen that he will never ask how the money was spent and that the drawer will be perpetually re-filled. Representing spiritual reward by material goods is of course not peculiar to Warner; the practice [...] reveals the difficulty the economically disadvantaged have in maintaining an anti-materialistic stance. (39-40)¹⁴³

We can assume then that, in the preceding thoughts, White has in mind Warner's own economic deprivations beginning when her father had one financial loss followed by another and continuing when they moved from the elite neighborhood of New York to Constitution Island. We wonder: do these "consumerist" episodes demonstrate the author's narrative wish-fulfillment, and a desire to regain the luxuries that she lost? Perhaps, Warner is giving her heroines the happy-ending that she could not have herself.

If Ellen and Fleda disrupt the virtue of the American true woman's self-renouncement by the desire for material goods, comfort and leisure, likewise imbibing a feature of upper class ladies that was often criticized in American domestic manuals at the time, although not as popular, *Wych Hazel* (1876), *The Gold of Chickaree* (1876) and *The Old Helmet* (1864) also disclose their female protagonists as desiring, consumerist subjects. Perhaps, it is an "unabashed absorption in the delight of physical things," as Nicholas K. Bromell puts it¹⁴⁴ that comes out in Eleanor, the (English) "mission wife," in Warner's domestic and sentimental mission novel, *The Old Helmet* (1864). This mission wife does not lose contact with comfortable-living, even while living in the *heathen* lands. Hazel too, the worldly and desiring subject in the Anna and Susan Warner co-creation *Wych Hazel* and its sequel, *The Gold of Chickaree*, retains her love for pleasurable shopping even though she becomes rid of her extravagant tastes by the end of the novel.

Eleanor, unlike Hazel the elite gentlewoman, is a "sober" heroine always clad in white dresses, symbolizing simple elegance, beauty, purity and Christian piety. She is trained in the art of self-denial through the influence of the pastor Mr. Rhys, whom she later marries and with whom she expatriates herself to her mission destination in Fiji. Of

course, Eleanor overcomes the worldly temptation of marrying the affluent Mr. Carlisle, who would have brought her “the rank, the caste, the worldly luxury,” (123) and eventually, marking the ultimate renouncement of one’s hearth and home for the salvation of the “brutes in a savage land,” this “true woman” turns “mission-wife” and goes to a heathen space, perhaps, never to return home. Nonetheless, between the lines, the narrative includes an ironical sub-text of wish fulfillment, which, given Eleanor’s goodness of heart and soul, considers it just to reward her by giving back the comforts she renounces. For this, Warner uses a curious mechanism that is similar to the “*deus ex machine*” of Greek plays, where whenever the heroine is in danger of falling into the depths of deprivation, by a sheer striking of luck, one or other benevolent soul saves her from her predicament. Mrs. Caxton, Eleanor’s wealthy aunt, plays this role. First, the danger of Eleanor becoming orphaned and destitute is carefully prevented when the plot takes her to her aunt’s prosperous cheese-making home in Plassey. There, life is idyllic. Later, Mrs. Caxton and Eleanor’s future husband Mr. Rhys also ensure that her new home in Fiji is full of little familiar comforts: “For Mrs. Caxton was bent, not only of supplying Eleanor with all that would be thought of in the way of outfit; but also [...] to transfer England as nearly as possible to Fiji” (Emphasis added, *The Old Helmet* 202). True to her wishes, once in Fiji, our mission wife finds a “lofty, spacious, and by no means inelegant middle apartment of the house, a little table stood spread, [...] Much to her astonishment, there was a piece of broiled chicken and a dish of eggs nicely cooked, and Mr. Rhys was pouring out for her some tea in delicate little cups of china” (*The Old Helmet* 308). Hence, the “disagreeableness, hardships and privations” (324) that a mission wife would have usually encountered on the foreign mission field are absent

here, where Fiji is presented instead as a tropical haven.

Hazel, on the other hand, is an heiress who belongs to the American elite. The challenge that the novel poses is to reform her into a benevolent aristocrat by ridding her of her extravagant frivolities, and her lavish and sometimes even wild parties and dances, which can be called true cosmopolitan feasts including the French elite and the German fashionables. There were many

a shifting scene of French bonnets, a show of delicately gloved hands, and a general breeze of compliments and congratulations, in those soft and indeterminate tones that stir nothing. Mme. Lasalle it was, with a bevy of ladies, older and younger, among whom it was impossible at first to distinguish one from the other. So similar was in every case the display of French flowers, gloves and embroidery; so accordant the make of every dress and the modulation of every tone. (*Wych Hazel*, Chapter 14, n.pag.).

In spite of the transformation of personality that her guardians manage to affect in Hazel by the end of the narratives, there still remain residues of her former self, where instead of having pleasure in the purchasing of things for herself, she takes pleasure in purchasing things for others. In *The Gold of Chickaree* there is a long drawn out purchasing scene where upper class Christian benevolence for the working poor in Mill Hollow is framed in a grand act of purchasing beautiful things in order to cultivate in them “refined tastes.” There is no elimination of the aristocracy, but a benevolent aristocracy is being produced here, whose purchasing power continues to remain intact: “‘I should think their [the mill workers’] eyes must ache to see pretty things!’ [says Hazel] Rollo smiled, making notes on a sheet of paper. ‘I believe in the uses of beauty,’ he said. ‘Let everything be as pretty as possible. I leave the charge of that to you.’” (Chapter 28 n.pag.)

Wych Hazel, *The Gold of Chickaree* and *The Old Helmet* contribute to the

discussion of Anglophilia and nineteenth-century white American women writers also in another way, by the distinct demonstration of their imperialistic affiliations. In fact, to date, very few critics have examined this pervasive pro-imperialism in the domestic and/or sentimental novels of the nineteenth century, although there have been many literary scholars, political theorists and historians like Edward Said, Richard Van Alstyne, and John Carlos Rowe who have drawn attention to a contradictory imperialism in America's anti-colonial moment.¹⁴⁵ For instance, Rowe in *Literary Culture and U.S. Imperialism: From the Revolution to World War II* (2000) states that, "Americans' interpretations of themselves as a people are shaped by a powerful imperial desire and a profound anti-colonial temper" (3). Even though "[s]uch neoimperialism has been traditionally associated with late modernity and postindustrialism, [... he argues] that it is recognizable in U.S. culture of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (11). In what follows, my intention is to add to this discussion on America's ironical anti-colonial yet pro-imperial moment by showing how such ambivalent feelings are prevalent in a significant white American women's literary genre, with special reference to the three novels above.

In fact, all three of these texts, albeit in their own ways, represent and literarily participate in the civilizing of "uncivilized lands," which was a key tenet of the imperial endeavor. If *Wych Hazel* and *The Gold of Chickaree* create a model colony at Mill Hollow, *The Old Helmet* showcases a central imperial exercise—foreign missions to non-Christian areas of the world—in the image of Eleanor, the Englishwoman who turns mission wife. All three texts, therefore, reinforce Anglo-American superiority, where the amalgamation of the visions of the Old motherland with those of the New World

communicates a shared global responsibility across the Atlantic.

Hazel constitutes an American aristocracy, a curious social contradiction during America's republican era.¹⁴⁶ The moral of the tale is predictable, for this extravagant heiress is taught the beauties of plain simplicity at the end of the novel. Still, as mentioned before, instead of gaining a deeper understanding of the futility of material extravagance and worldly possessions, Hazel moves from being luxuriously thrifless to beautifying and romanticizing the lives of the "worthy poor," her mill workers in Mill Hollow. Predictably, the narrative also includes significant male characters, as was the case with most domestic and/or sentimental novels, who are instrumental in the growth of its female protagonist. In *Wych Hazel* and *The Gold of Chickaree*, the lot falls to Mr. Falkirk, Hazel's older guardian, and Rollo, her legal suitor (Hazel is legally bound to marry Rollo or a man Rollo approves of, failing which, she risks losing all her property.) Above all, Rollo is a key symbol that represents the imperial bent of both novels. Firstly, he is a cosmopolitan man, a transnational figure. By his own claims, "I am half Norse, and a quarter German; Denmark has given me a nickname" (Chapter 29, n.pag).¹⁴⁷ Like Mr. Carleton, the Englishman whom Fleda marries in *Queechy*, here too we are face to face with a marriage plot that ends with an American woman marrying a man with a European ancestry, and by endorsing such a marriage and such a man, the Warners project the image of a trans-Atlantic/Anglo-American union.

Rollo, however, is not just a man with an European ancestry; rather, his is the European ancestry that typifies the imperialistic trope of the "great white hunter" in Orientalist narratives.¹⁴⁸ Many scholars over the years, especially in the field of British postcolonialism, have drawn attention to the characteristic features of such writing that

recorded British encounters with the lands they conquered. As Angela Thompsell indicates in *Hunting Africa: British Sport, African Knowledge and the Nature of Empire*, (2015), the “great white hunter,” among other such imperialist symbols, represented not only the superiority and prowess of the white race but also the ultra-masculinity of the white man. Thompsell here draws from the tradition of including “hunting narratives” in British texts on imperial colonies in Africa and South Asia, discussing how these texts contributed to the production of colonialist myths, catering to “contemporary desires for stories of exotic adventures, manly enterprise and colonial conquest” (2). Rollo’s portrayal in *Wych Hazel* and *The Gold of Chickaree* is a clear representation of this “great white adventurer.”

Note the dangerous simplicity with which the Warners frame the following problematic exchanges between Rollo, Mr. Falkirk and Hazel. For any scholar conversant in Edward Said and *Orientalism*, they are an obvious mark of imperialist sympathies: “‘Mr. Rollo; we are on a pretty steep pitch of the hill. Don't you like this wilderness? You want a gun though—or a pencil—to give you the sense that you have something to do in the wilderness.’ ‘Yes!’ said Miss Hazel—‘so Englishmen say: What a nice day it is!—let’s go out and kill something’” (*Wych Hazel*, Chapter 6, n.pag.). The conversation then moves on to a discourse on “control,” with specific reference to the appropriation of land, and ominously talks in jest of the conquering of territories. The vocabulary of ownership used in the exchange only offers one of three options; commodifying land for deriving profit, claiming ownership over the landscape through art, or destroying it. The language of appropriation is not limited to land alone but disturbingly extends to the woman Rollo marries. In a rather titillating scene, Rollo meets Hazel accidentally in the woods and the

former meditates on how difficult it has been to get Hazel's consent for marriage. The image of the hunter is evoked again and again—"Rollo had the craft and skill of a practiced hunter" (*Wych Hazel*, Chapter 17, n.pag.)—and the Warners write:

'I had almost caught my bird!' was his[/Rollo's] thought, pretty bitterly realized,—'and this woman has broken my snares. It isn't the first time!' [...] nor did his hunter's instincts fail him. His game was removed to a distance; *that* he saw; it might be a long distance,—and how much patient skill might be called for before it would be within his grasp again it was impossible to guess. There were odds of another hunter catching up the coveted quarry; other snares might be set, of a less legitimate nature; other weapons called into play than his own. [...] In spite of disadvantages, Rollo had very much in his favour; and this peculiar constitution of mind, among other things. (*Wych Hazel*, Chapter 31, n.pag.)

Rollo's thoughts place man against woman as hunter and the hunted, respectively. Such a binary not only sexually discriminates against Hazel by placing her in the position of a vulnerable and passive victim as opposed to the masculine agent of the scene, but also echoes the typical Orientalist narrative of the white colonizer's exploitation of the native woman.¹⁴⁹

If Rollo fits the image of the "great white hunter," Mill Hollow is the colony that he creates with his heiress wife. Yet, the novel presents this space not as a site of exploitation, but instead as a utopian laboring society that reminds one of the Brook Farm. Mill Hollow, however, let us remind ourselves, is a colony of European migrants who are often referred to in the novel as heathens. Appropriating not just territory but people as well, in the guise of bringing "civilization" to the world, Rollo and Hazel justify their encroachment into the lives of these national others by promising them "useful living," "happiness" and the bounties of religion and culture, in addition to good working conditions. Thus, tells the benevolent master Rollo to his mistress, "in general you are going to see what my friend Mrs. Powder calls 'my experiment.' [...]" the

question being, what can be done with fifteen hundred human beings accustomed only to poverty and hard work, to bring them to their nearest attainment of happy and useful living” (*Chickaree*, Chapter 9, n.pag.).

Just as Mr. Carleton helps Fleda distinguish the ways of the city and the country by explaining to her the difference between a park and a farm, Rollo teaches cultivated living to the workers at Mill Hollow. For this purpose, he builds them a “turf [...] perfectly cared for as if the valley were a park; smooth and rich and luxuriant [...] It is a park, of many acres, for the pleasure-taking of the hands of the Hollow” (*Chickaree*, Chapter 34, n.pag.). After marrying Rollo, Hazel becomes part and parcel of her husband’s social experiment, where “from her odds and ends storehouse [...] she] showered prettiness upon the lives that were dry and dusty with toil” (*Chickaree*, Chapter 34, n.pag.). The Warners’ lack of irony in the presentation of the politics at play in their narrative—which has a master who considers his workers as his experiment and a mistress who takes liberties at showering “prettiness upon lives that were dry and dusty with toil”—is highly problematic. The rewards of culture, religion and civilization which are shown to justify such an unequal relationship makes the suggestion that social hierarchies are unproblematic as long as those who represent the category of “master” are considerate of those who stand for the category of the “governed.”

It is a similar feeling of authoritative benevolence that Eleanor exudes in *The Old Helmet*. With this character, Warner replicates in fiction the antebellum phenomenon of the American “mission wife” (a subject I will look at closely in Chapter Five) who travelled to the heathen world in order to share the Christianizing and civilizing burdens of America’s motherland.¹⁵⁰ In this novel, Warner’s dichotomous portrayal of white

missionaries and the Fijians feeds existing racist and Orientalist narratives of the day that pitted the imperial white race against the natives of the Orient as diametrically opposed subjectivities. John Carlos Rowe (2003) puts it best when he says that, with *The Old Helmet*, “Warner contributes to an ideology of cultural imperialism working simultaneously in national terms towards transnational goals” (56). After all, Christian Protestantism at the time showcased the triple tenets of a “vigorous advocacy of U.S. nationalism, an expansionist zeal uniting spiritual conversion with political imperialism, and an apparently contradictory anti-colonialism” (Rowe 46). Likewise, *The Old Helmet*, which I see as constituting a hybrid American genre of domestic and/or sentimental mission novel, makes use of a typical imperialistic jargon similar to the racially discriminatory vocabulary of British imperialism, yet again creating a common cross-Atlantic Anglo-American unity at the level of text.

What we have below, for instance, is too familiar a depiction of the Oriental other to need much explanation. Resorting to a very common feature of the American Foreign Mission discourse, the following passage from *The Old Helmet* presents its readers with a typically dualistic contrast between the pure Christian virgin and the barbaric savages of her mission destination. In fact, the fear of the native other is one of the first things that comes into Eleanor’s mind as she makes her choice to become a mission wife:

Morally, I think, I never read of a lower fallen set of human beings. Human life is of no account; such a thing as respect to humanity is unknown, for the eating of human beings has gone onto a most wonderful extent, and the destroying them for that purpose. With all that, there’s a very careful respect paid to descent and rank; but it is the observance of fear. [...] Where a man is thought of no more worth than to be killed and eaten, a woman is not thought worth anything at all; and society becomes a lively representation of the infernal regions, without the knowledge and without the remorse. (*The Old Helmet* 145)

In contrast, the novel glorifies the fruits of British colonialism and its civilizational mission. In the following, Warner refers to the prosperity of Britain's Australian colony, giving Sydney a special mention. "[T]he white buildings of the town rose and spread; a white city, with forts and windmills, and fair looking country seats in its neighborhood" (*The Old Helmet* 246). The recurrent references to whiteness are unmistakable.

In such a context of white aggrandizement, Eleanor's emotional outburst on seeing Rhys, her mission husband, for the first time amidst the heathens is telling indeed: He looked like a "white angel [...] coming across a cloud of both moral and physical blackness [...] There was that air of freshness and purity which some people always carry about them, and which has to do with the clear look of temperance as well as with great particularity of personal care, and in part also grows out of the moral condition" (299)! On noticing his hand, she thinks, "it was the same white and carefully looked after hand that she remembered in England. Mr. Rhys's own personal civilization went about with him" (299). This repetitive invocation of "whiteness" in contrast to an uncivilized and amoral "blackness" is an unequivocal symbol of white supremacy. By narrativizing that racial supremacy in her text, and thus, by literarily participating in Empire, Warner communicates to her readers America's and England's joint responsibility of making the world a Christian civilization. Manifest Destiny at play here does not just look to the North American continent alone but encompasses the rest of the globe as well. Hence, writing by the domestic and/or sentimental novelist in this chapter, as well as the "lady travelers" that we looked at in Chapter Two, look to America's colonial motherland for reasons that invariably stem from a strong sense of Anglophilia. In the next two chapters, I will demonstrate that the space of the Orient both reinforced and disrupted this Anglo-

American association, with special focus on a cohort of early to mid-nineteenth-century white American women authors who wrote about Middle-Eastern and Far-Eastern nations.

CHAPTER 4

MARGINALIA: “AMERICAN TRUE WOMEN” AND AMBIVALENT ORIENTALISMS

*Take up the White Man's burden--
Send forth the best ye breed--
Go bind your sons to exile
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild--
Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child.*

...

*Take up the White Man's burden--
Have done with childish days--
The lightly proffered laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years,
Cold-edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgment of your peers!*

Rudyard Kipling (1899)¹⁵¹

Rudyard Kipling's renowned and notoriously resonant poem, "The White Man's Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands" (1899) marks an iconic moment in American history of the late nineteenth century which saw the emergence of the New World as an imperial power that even the Old World had to reckon with. Still, as I have already argued in Chapter Two, and will reiterate later in this chapter, pro-imperial sympathies were manifest in white American women writers' texts even during the first half of the nineteenth century, which shows us that, at least in the early century white American women were indeed already sharing a 'white woman's burden' with their British sisters. Hence, the purpose of this chapter is to answer one major question: What happens when the varied forms of Anglophilia exposed in the writings of white American women on Britain meet with the Oriental other? As a response to this principal query, I

argue that works by this group of authors were Orientalist,¹⁵² while at the same time offering a critique of that very Orientalism. As I will show below, this ambivalent attitude is evident in the way the Orientalist features of these texts feed American Anglophilia by reinforcing the superiority of the white races, while also challenging racial hierarchies.

Given the complexity of this ambivalent Orientalism, I wish to approach my main argument in two parts. In the first half of this chapter, I open with a discussion of how Orientalist writings of white American women allowed them to inhabit the subject position of the superior British/English “self” (as opposed to peoples already named as exotic Oriental others by imperial Britain,) by participating in a common Anglo-American imperial language. The second half examines how the metaphorical marginalia in white American women’s texts disrupt this Anglo-American unity and white superiority, for they offer a sub-text that not only critiques national and racial hierarchization but also produces an American female subject whose expansive/global vision reaches beyond racial/national distinctions. My primary authors here are Maria Susanna Cummins (1827-1866), E.D.E.N Southworth (1819-1899), Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), Augusta Jane Evans (1835-1909), Lydia Maria Child (1802-1880) and Abby Jane Morell (b. 1809). Together, the writings of these participants of American true womanhood will show how the Oriental space that their texts produce contributed to the making and unmaking of the white American gendered subject, all at once.

Orientalist Anglophilia

From the late eighteenth century toward the end of the nineteenth, there were many Orients in the American imagination. Not only did Americans have varied perceptions of

the Near East, the Middle East, the Far East etc., but these perceptions also changed and shifted during the century. For instance, antebellum U.S. Christians produced a large body of American Holy Land Literature, which generally represents America's millennialist vision,¹⁵³ while the equation between America and the Far East needs a separate discussion, especially when one takes into consideration how Hinduism affected the development of Transcendentalism. There were also Indo-American connections of a less scholarly and more commercial nature, where for example, the presence of Bengali sailors/lascars in American port towns such as Salem and Baltimore shows how the Oriental was a tangible presence during the country's post-revolutionary years.¹⁵⁴ Egyptology deserves a separate branch of studies according to Malini Johar Schueller (1998) as it "was a site of enormous ethnographical and phrenological activity [...] often to support polygenesis and justify slavery" (33). In other words,

the interest in Oriental literatures, the travel to the Orient, the popularity of books on Oriental travel, the push for trade with different Oriental nations, and the demand for goods, crafts from China, India and the Near East in the two generations following the revolutionary period are all indicative of a cultural intimacy with the Orient and an eagerness to embrace things Oriental that energized and popularized literary Orientalist works. (Schueller 33)

In sum, therefore, scholars generally accede to the idea that the eighteenth century was constituted by the influence of China and Confucianism, the nineteenth by a Transcendentalist interest in Far Eastern religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism and the twentieth by interest in Japanese "artistic purity."

American Orientalism during the late eighteenth century toward the 1860's is also seen as being different in nature from the British "variety." In his comprehensive study on U.S Orientalisms—*American Orient: Imagining the East from the Colonial Era through the Twentieth Century* (2011)—David Weir explains that

the American Orient was quite unlike the European one that [Edward] Said describes, mainly because the United States was not a colonial power. [...] so eighteenth and nineteenth century Americans experienced the Orient in a *fundamentally different way* than the Europeans did. [...] American imperial force was not felt as fully in Asia as that of the traditional colonial powers until World War II. (Emphasis added 3).

Also factors such as the American need to complete Columbus's original mission, America's millennialist vision, the prevalence of internal colonization of native Americans and African Americans, the couching of American expansionism in a rhetoric of liberty rather than within a civilizational process like the British, are seen to contribute to this fundamental difference. However, Weir explains that American-Far Eastern relations more specifically were in part reflective of a male-identified scholarly or intellectual interest in the Orient, while remaining also in part a "popular" form influenced by the British variety. The category of the "popular," as he elucidates, showed a simultaneous desire for and derision of the Orient, where "[t]he European stereotype of the devious, uncivilized Oriental was kept alive [...] even as the members of the cultural elite found inspiration in Indian antiquity and ancient China" (6).¹⁵⁵

American women writers in this chapter who invoke Middle Eastern and Far Eastern spaces largely make use of this more British identified "popular" Orientalism that in turn fed the Anglophilia in their texts, though writers like Lydia Maria Child also found inspiration in Eastern antiquity through her Transcendentalist engagements. Hence, pro-imperial sympathies that are believed to have brought the New World and the Old together toward the later nineteenth century were already prevalent even in the early part of the century, and perceiving the Eastern peoples from a more European or "British" form of Orientalism gave a number of these white American women writers an opportunity to inhabit the subject position of the imperial British "self" in their texts,

invoking an Orientalist rhetoric and producing and passing judgment on the Oriental other.

None of the observations and arguments above would have been possible, of course, without Edward W. Said's landmark text *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (1978) in which he identifies Western Orientalist views (largely British and French) as being characterized by exoticism, objectification, racial and cultural stereotyping, othering ("them" in opposition to "us,") and a simultaneous derision toward, fear of and desire for a metaphorical space that becomes materially produced as the "mysterious" Orient. In his later work *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) Said broadens his focus on the Middle-East in *Orientalism* to include the Far East, while also dealing with decolonization and resistance, aspects that his earlier study was charged with not giving equal weight to. Together these two books, having infused an existing term with new meaning, have nurtured a whole generation of writers on the topic.¹⁵⁶ To a strong critic of Said like Bernard Lewis (1982), inducing new meaning in "Orientalism" and "Orientalist" may seem like an "intellectual pollution" of words.¹⁵⁷ Yet, even its most powerful dissenters have not been able to halt the surge of writing that came after, informed by Said's conceptualizations as a critical approach.

In what follows, I show how the writings of a white American woman author participating in American true womanhood include Orientalist features as evinced in Said's theorizations that helps her assume the authority of the imperial white self. As "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self," (*Orientalism* 11) such writing produced by white women in the American nineteenth century not only solidified the white

American national self but also a common Anglo-American imperial vision.

Maria Susanna Cummins (1827-1866) was a household name during the mid-nineteenth century and she participated, as many other white women of her day, in the search for an idealized woman representative for the new republic. In a way, her entire career and life are generally encompassed in her immensely successful first novel, *The Lamplighter* (1854) which is often introduced as a classic text in the genre of domestic and/or sentimental novel. However, my intention here is to read *The Lamplighter* as both a novel of domesticity and true womanhood on the one hand, and of American “popular” Orientalism on the other. Both *The Lamplighter* and her later more obviously Orientalist novel, *El Fureidis* (1860) a tale located in Lebanon, are expressive of Cummins’s Orientalist Anglophilia. While *The Lamplighter* shows the British Empire as contributing to its American protagonist’s financially wholesome narrative future, who is transformed from an almost *other* into an American true woman, *El Fureidis* manifests a similar Anglo-American alignment in an Orientalist backdrop that confirms the superiority of the two “white” nations, in spite of the admiration the novel records for a Near Eastern space.

The Lamplighter is a female bildungsroman, and it introduces us to Gerty, its (at least initially) racially-dubious protagonist, the “witch-like” dark and plain girl who seems to turn “whiter” during the process of becoming an exemplary woman. It is almost as if the darkness of her stubborn spirit clears up as she is taken away from the degraded and dreary quarters of Nan Grant, the exploitative matriarch under whose orders Gerty lives many of her childhood years. She is on the margins of a society that is very clearly racially defined as white. Consider for instance, a scene that clearly shows how Gerty is both physically and metaphorically outside the “white dream” that it depicts; a scene that

Gerty and Willie—Gerty’s childhood friend and later husband—observe with great admiration; an ideal white domestic set up complete with a beautiful blue eyed blonde:

A table was bountifully spread for tea; the cloth of snow white damask, shining plate, above all the home-like hissing tea kettle [...] A gentleman in gay slippers [...] a lady in a gay cap was superintending a servant-girl’s arrangements [...] and the children of the household smiling and happy [...] sweet, lovely-looking little creatures; especially a little girl the same age as Gerty [...] her fair hair fell in long ringlets over a neck as white as snow; she had blue eyes, a cherub face, and a little round plump figure. (61)

This marginalization threatens our “witch-like” female protagonist with degeneration into the status of other marginals to the likes of African Americans and Oriental natives.

Constantly under threat of being stripped off of her whiteness, this ‘not quite white yet not wholly *other*’ subject thus needs a timely rescue not only from the clutches of poverty, but also from the clutches of racial perversion, so that she may be fashioned in the image of the white American Protestant republican woman, soon enough in the tale.

As in most domestic and/or sentimental novels, in *The Lamplighter* we see characters like Trueman Flint, Willie and Emily Graham reforming Gerty into an exemplary American woman in their own ways. While Trueman and Willie provide the latter with infrastructure and companionship for her material and moral well-being, Emily gives her culture, education, and upward social mobility. By extension, they also contribute to Gerty’s return to the “right” racial cohort that she was being fast shunned from. Still, I see the novel suggesting that the fashioning of this white American gendered subject cannot be achieved solely and exclusively within the material and metaphorical space of the American nation. Extra-national forces too have a hand in Gerty’s reformation process, in which British imperialism comes to her aid, at least in an indirect manner. In fact, some critics point at Gerty’s own imperial heritage. Susan S. Williams is

one of them, who in her work *Reclaiming Authorship: Literary Women in America, 1850-1900* (2006) draws attention to the information that Gerty was born in Brazil to the daughter of a sea captain. What is significant here is that she comes from an ancestry of sea-voyagers, a profession that is definitively symbolic of world travel, discovery, and conquering of other lands. At least indirectly, therefore, through her seafaring lineage the female protagonist of *The Lamplighter* participates in Empire as well as the imperial British white self.

I see the British Empire being formative in Gerty's life in yet another way—in that, she is herself involved in a patriarchal structure that is complicit in the imperial exploitation of the Orient. A typical characteristic of the domestic and/or sentimental novel genre is that it generally culminates with the female protagonist turned true woman marrying a worthy bachelor. In *The Lamplighter* as well we see this happening in the form of Willie's and Gerty's union. What facilitates a financially wholesome marriage between the two is Willie's financial success after he leaves for Calcutta, India, and manages to find employment in this British colony as a shipping clerk in a U.S. trading house.¹⁵⁸ Nothing is said though in the novel of the imperial exploitation of the Eastern nations. The major concern instead is the need to make sure that the Willie who went is the same Willie who returns. The exotic Orient should not have corrupted this American youth by the time he returns home to marry a reformed American woman. What comes to Willie's rescue, as Mark B. Kelley argues, is the Imperial India Mail Service which contributes to the American lover's memory remaining alive and well in Willie's heart through the letters that Gerty writes to her future husband. As detailed in Kelley's "Everyday India Mail": *The Lamplighter* and the Prospect of U.S. Transoceanic (Postal)

Empire, 1847-1854” (2017)¹⁵⁹ the letters exchanged through the “Indo-America imperial circuit,”

mark Gertrude’s moral development. Willie’s access to the India mail lessens his emotional separation from Gertrude, and her letters allow her to care for his family. The post also motivates her to reject an ill-conceived trip to Cuba [...] Ultimately, Gertrude faces her foremost crisis of sympathy when Willie stops using the India mail. [...] The novel concludes with two marriages that Cummins ascribes to Christian morality. And yet, [...] this domestic vision is predicated on the India mail. (142)

Hence, if Calcutta helps this New World couple with financial security, the British Raj ensures that that financial security comes without the cost of racial degeneration in the lap of Oriental “non-civilization.”

In *El Fureidis*, not only Calcutta and Britain but one can say that the entire world is present. Here, the host of transnational characters representing France, England, Lebanon, Greece etc. make available a far broader transnational canvass of America, Europe and the Near East. Its male protagonist Meredith, who is an Englishman, and its female protagonist, Havilah, a Lebanese-Franco-American (who, as I will show later, is Americanized using qualities of true womanhood) get married eventually, signaling what looks like an Anglo-American-Oriental amalgamation. However, the Orient, which is present throughout the novel, is an ambivalent space that is desired and derided at once until it seems to finally fade out of the Anglo-American-Oriental equation altogether, contributing to Anglo-American aggrandizement and affirming the superiority of western white civilization. Steven Hamelman puts it well when he says that (2008)¹⁶⁰ this “simultaneously affiliative and expansionist” text, reveals a trans-American discourse where, “even texts encoded in [...] ‘a language of sublime transcendence’ can harbor imperialistic qualities (26).

Before examining the claims I make above with regard to *El Fureidis*, I would like to draw attention to the significance of how Cummins as an Occidental author positions her authorial/narratorial self in this novel, where the East is strongly and conspicuously present. As Said posits, the “strategic location” of the writer/writer’s voice within his/her text helps one

identify the problem every writer on the Orient has faced: how to get hold of it, how to approach it, how not to be defeated or overwhelmed by its sublimity, its scope, its awful dimensions. Everyone who writes about the Orient must locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient; translated into his text, this location includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in his text all of which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking in its behalf. (*Orientalism* 28)

In the case of Cummins, her appropriation of a classic Orientalist rhetoric in her novel makes her participate in an imperial Occidental self. One aspect of *El Fureidis* that represents the racial superiority of the West over the East is Cummins’s portrayal of “native” characters, amongst whom Abdoul holds a significant place. She uses a typical Orientalist jargon that has been used in abundance in Anglo-American writing in representing the Oriental *other*, to describe Abdoul, who is named in the novel as the “prince of darkness” (26). He is the fitting image of Frantz Fanon’s depiction of the native in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961):

The native is declared insensible to ethics; he represents not only the absence of values, but also the negation of values. He is, let us dare to admit, the enemy of values, and in this sense he is the absolute evil. He is the corrosive element, destroying all that comes near him; he is the deforming element, disfiguring all that has to do with beauty or morality; he is the depository of maleficent powers, the unconscious and irretrievable instrument of blind forces. (41)

Abdoul is, in fact, dehumanized in an animal guise as reference is made to “the lithe, wiry form of the Arab boy [...] the intense brightness of his eyes, and more than

once a fierce scowl, perhaps of malice, perhaps of defiance,” (25) and his accent, which “became deep guttural and harsh [...and] his long white teeth [which] were fiercely set” (142). Although Abdoul is Meredith’s rival in taking Havilah’s hand, the “prince of darkness” cannot match Meredith’s personality. The fastidious wealthy Englishman who pays a visit to the Near East too cannot escape Cummins’s irony. Yet, he is not incorrigible. He needs just the hand of a woman like Havilah to reform himself, for Meredith has no irrecoverable weaknesses in his personality. “He had a mind too vigorous and refined, a heart too fresh and sensitive, to permit him to mold his life on the stereotyped plan, but he had not yet learned the noblest use for which that life was given.” (60)

Cummins’s presentation of Meredith and Abdoul, however, is a slightly more nuanced portrayal of two individuals representing different nations, rather than a strict binary of the “white self” versus the “exotic other.” For instance, Meredith is our typical superficial and fastidious tourist in the Holy Land, who Cummins ironically shows as forgetting himself as he prostrates with reverence on his ship’s deck when he sees Syria; “And all the while breathing in an atmosphere whose purity and fragrance are nowhere else inhaled, the East-bound traveler acknowledges all his longings satisfied, all his day dreams realized” (2). The term “day dream” here signals Cummins’s critique of the hyperbolic cum unrealistic western perceptions of the Near East. Meredith is also our incredulous, suspicious and cautious white man in the Orient, who, at the slightest rustle of his hair fears that a “dark native” is standing behind him aiming a spear at his back. In one heavily dramatized scene, Meredith finds himself stranded on a bridge, face to face with Abdoul, where the former mistakenly assumes that the latter wants to kill him. Still,

it is the “dark prince” himself who saves the Englishman’s life by escorting him out of a bridge that was on the verge of collapsing.

But the same episode, read another way, unquestionably feeds a discourse of racist objectification, since the author cannot help using racial stereotyping to contrast the images of the menacing native and the cautious white man. The scene begins with thunder and lightning as the two men stand on the opposite sides of the stone bridge. As the reader fears the worst, the narrator continues:

Each was the fitting type of his own race and nation. The resolute determination which marked both the face and figure of the European, the calm caution and deep-seated distrust evinced both in his countenance and air, were met with equally characteristic indications on the part of the Arab youth, who, with his head thrown back, his thin lips compressed, and his loose garments floating over the verge of the precipice, shot from his eyes such a glance of scorn, that the piercing orbs might have been deemed the central fires from which radiated the mountain lightning. (9)

The Arab “boy’s” description, in comparison with that of the English “man,” not only infantilizes the former while attributing the latter a higher level of maturity, but it is also certainly larger than life. Note also how the narrator draws attention to Abdoul’s ominous bodily features and his garment, which she does not seem to consider important enough to mention in the case of the European. This inconsistency in detail makes the above passage a classic example of the marking of the other, which, by extension, makes the unmarked white self the master signifier in reference to which the other becomes a mere “difference.”

If Abdoul’s Orientalist characterization in *El Fureidis* feeds American Anglophilia, Havilah, the Lebanese Rose herself adds yet another dimension to the discussion of the novel’s imperial bent. Read one way, the marriage between Meredith the Englishman and Havilah the Lebanese woman seems like an easy re-

enactment/repetition of the common Orientalist trope of the desire of the white man for the native woman, one that represents an unequal patriarchal and imperial relationship. Still, it only takes a glimpse at the Anglo-American ancestry of the heroine of *El Fureidis* to realize that the tale is not as straightforward as it may seem, and that it contributes to the imperial narrative in a far deeper manner than just reiterating a much-exhausted Orientalist trope. The Lebanon Rose may have been born in the East and she may have the exotic in her, but as the novel clearly suggests she is indeed more Occidental than Oriental. There is Euro-American blood running in her veins because of her Franco-American father and Greek mother: “Born beneath an Indian sun, but with the fresh life of the West glowing in her veins, Havilah was at once the imaginative, impassioned child of the Orient, and the active, intelligent representative of a race as diverse to the Asiatic type as is the point of the sun’s rising to that of his going down” (53). Note here the stereotypical contrast that is produced between the “imaginative and impassioned” East and the “active and intelligent” West. And later, we also see Havilah being infused in the qualities of American true womanhood, for, not only “at home the meditative repose, the gentle grace, the intense sensibility of the maternal character were reflected in that of the child,” (53) but she is also self-reliant and does not shy from doing her own work.

Above all, *El Fureidis* shows how Havilah herself thinks of her western roots with great ardour. She considers herself as part and parcel of the American nation via the ancestry of her father who was born in Massachusetts, and she dreams about “the land which she cherished and loved as her father’s birthplace [...] boundless prairies [...] and of streams so broad and so long that the boasted rivers of Damascus and of Lebanon, were as feeble rills in comparison” (69). Not just her father, but also the man Havilah

marries belongs to a “worthy” western white race, since,

[t]here can scarcely be a nobler tribute to Great Britain than is contained in the fact that, even in remote but partially civilized lands, [/meaning Lebanon] her representatives, [such as Meredith] whether in a public or private capacity, almost invariably receive that respect which is due to the sons of a nation renowned for its wealth, its moderation, and the protection which it affords to human rights and freedom. (121)

This, then, is why the marriage between Havilah and Meredith becomes symbolic of the uniting of two great white civilizations, once again bringing us back to the Anglo-American desires in the writings of nineteenth-century white American women advocating an idealized gendered subject. The Lebanon Rose may represent a token hybrid identity—a mix of the East and the West—and she may be nurtured by the teller of the tale as a fictional character who matures in an Oriental space. However, other than perhaps generating a fascination for the exotic in the Englishman and possibly in the text’s American audience, the Orient has nothing substantial to offer in this Cummins novel since it suggests that the true paradise in *El Fureidis* lies somewhere farther West.

Nonetheless, in the above context, or rather, in spite of the above context, what can one make of the following account?

Representations of various nations and lands were met together in fraternal relations; and in the quiet converse beside the rippling stream, the French missionary, the cosmopolitan American, the self-exiled Englishman, and the Syrian Turk all bore their part, and bore it well, for all were men of refinement, culture, and experience. So, they talked of life, politics, of travels, of things new and old, of things that had been, and of things that were to be. *Neither strove to exalt his religion, his country or the government to which he owed allegiance; for all had learned liberality in the wide school of the world [...] talked together as brethren united at last in good-will towards each other, and humanity at large.* (Emphasis added, Cummins, *El Fureidis* 260).

This passage marks a moment somewhere on the margins of Cummins’s novel, toward the end of her tale. Out of which magician’s hat does this vision of a mutually respectful,

racially equal transnational community materialize? Is this an unwitting manifestation of the democratic values that the new republic stood for? Somehow, views that simultaneously attested to as well as contested Anglo-American superiority were not so uncommon in white American women's writing. Therefore, I identify in the following several possible reasons, which I believe contributed to the ambivalence of the Orientalisms in the early to mid-nineteenth-century writings of white American women who promoted/emulated/produced an ideal American womanhood.

Ambivalent Orientalisms

Thus, racially liberal visions on the margins of white American women's Orientalist writing are a curious facet that not only managed to fashion the white American national subject as an interstitial identity, hovering between the white self and the non-white other, but also open up an anti-discriminatory discourse that at least symbolically brought Eastern and Western nations in the world on to one platform.¹⁶¹ First, I delineate how Orientalist self-critiques of white American women cause their much-desired Anglo-American unity to become unsettled from within, while in the last half, I demonstrate, through an analysis of Lydia Maria Child's and Abby Morell's texts on the Orient, how they critically engage with the construction of a racial hierarchy that positions "us" over "them."

We have already looked at how Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*, Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners* and Charles Dickens's *American Notes* facilely resorted to an Orientalist lexicon already available to the British writer through the imperial discourse, in their descriptions of American spaces such as the slave South and the

western wilderness. Curiously, either being influenced by such a readily available rhetoric of othering, or manifesting a deep contempt toward those national evils that brought America closer to the “uncivilized” corners of the “primitive” world, we find American writers like E.D.E.N Southworth in *India: Pearl of Pearl River* (1853), Harriet Beecher Stowe in *Agnes of Sorrento* (1862) and Augusta J. Evans in *St. Elmo* (1866) echoing a similar discriminatory language in their critiques of certain aspects of America, which shows us that the other was not always outside the American national space/self. Instead, these texts complicate the oppositional relations that Orientalism establishes between (Western) “us” and (Eastern) “them” by suggesting that the other had already infiltrated within the white American self.

In Southworth’s *India*, Stowe’s *Agnes of Sorrento* and Evans’s *St. Elmo*, we see the authors resorting to objectification and exoticizing whenever they need to vividly mark what the texts present as an intruder/foreigner on American soil. Southworth, for instance, seems to suggest that pro-slavery elements are foreign to America while abolitionist sentiments are truly American, and this she does by othering her anti-abolitionist heroine in her eponymous novel *India*, till she is infused with the cardinal virtues of an “angel in the house.” First and foremost, there is a curious mix-up of origins. India, said to have been born to a West Indian mother, is yet presented as an exotic dark-skinned “East” Indian princess. She is the anti-thesis of the true woman in the novel, Rosalie. Above all, she represents the slave South with her pro-slavery sentiments and provides a contrast to the American gender ideal who sacrifices her life in the name of her lover’s abolitionist cause. For Southworth, then, the Orient and the degraded slave quarters have similarities to the point that she uses the two spaces alternatively in her

text. Both spaces represent a degenerate humanity that the national subjects of the new nation would be wise to keep away from.¹⁶²

Southworth depicts India's suite (called Cashmere) almost as if it were a stereotypical Oriental harem, "a chef d'oeuvre of artistic genius, a casket worthy to enshrine the Pearl of Pearl River" (47):

There [India] reposes in the recess of the bay window, 'silk curtained from the sun.' this bay window is the only one in the apartment; it is both deep and lofty [...] It is curtained off from the main apartment by drapery of purple damask satin, lined with gold colored silk, and festooned by gold cords and tassels. The interior of the recess is draped with thin gold colored silk alone; and the evening light, glowing through it, throws a warm, rich, lustrous atmosphere around the form of Oriental beauty, reposing on the silken couch in the recess. (47)

If the abode is indulgent and in excess, the slave-holding woman who reigns in this exotic space is even more luxuriously decadent:

It is a rare type of beauty, not easy to realize by your imagination, blending the highest charms of the spiritual, the intellectual and the sensual, in seeming perfect harmony; it is a costly type of beauty, possessed often only at a fearful discount of happiness; it is a dangerous organization, full of fatality to its possessor and all connected with her; for that lovely and voluptuous repose resembles the undisturbed serenity of the young leopardess, or the verdant and flowery surface of the sleeping volcano. (47)

The woman we have here is an ominous enchantress from the Orient. She is a hot-house plant, the threatening foreigner/the outsider in an American space: "with her glorious physique, [she] is still a delicate daughter of the sun; she is like a gorgeous, brilliant exotic that can bloom only in a luxurious conservatory" (240). Her exotic beauty can do no good to Mark—the abolitionist male hero of the novel—at least till she is reformed by the self-renouncing and angelic Rosalie who proves to be an ideal wife for the hero, but conveniently dies at the end of the novel so Mark can be reunited in marriage to his original love, India, now humbled, less Eastern, more American.

Many critics who read the contrast that Stowe draws between Southern Italy and Northern Italy in *Agnes of Sorrento* also believe that her critique of the Italian South is evocative of her anti-slavery critique of the American slave South. It is hard to miss Stowe's Orientalization of southern Italy—similar to Southworth's Orientalization of her pro-slavery heroine—which represents an exotically alluring and thus dangerous space that almost mars one's ability to think rationally. In fact, the similarity of tone and the texture of the sensuous vocabulary in Southworth's quotation and Stowe's below is rather striking:

The climate of Southern Italy and its gorgeous scenery are more favorable to voluptuous ecstasy than to the severe and grave warfare of the true Christian soldier. The sunny planes of Capua demoralized the soldier of Hannibal, and it was not without a reason that ancient poets made those lovely regions the abode of Sirens whose song maddened by its sweetness, and of a Circe who made men drunk with her sensual fascinations, till they became sunk to the form of brutes. [...] It was not from dreamy, voluptuous Southern Italy that the religious progress of the Italian race received any vigorous impulses. These came from more Northern more mountainous regions, from the severe clear heights of Florence, Perugia, and Assisi, where the intellectual and the moral both had somewhat of the old Etruscan earnestness and gloom. (186-87)

The exoticizing of the American slave South, therefore, brings both Southworth's and Stowe's narratives together in a shared anxiety for the American white self, as their texts share the view that the true potential of the New World cannot be achieved as long as a primitive form of slavery persists within its shores: for slavery brought the U.S into dangerous proximity to the heathen lands. As long as a primitive form of slavery lasted within its shores, how different would America be from the backward East? And, as long as America housed such primitivism, how could American true women participate in the superiorities of an Anglo-American whiteness? Thus seems to go the critique.

Evans too in *St. Elmo* offers a scathing criticism of the influences of the foreign in

American life. This is especially demonstrated in instances of her presentation of the male protagonist, Elmo, who is a wealthy, aristocratic, well-travelled, erudite man, but who is at the same time, hard-hearted, inflexible and reclusive, before he is reformed by the woman of the tale, Edna. Evans portrays Elmo's library, a towering presence as significant as the human characters of the novel, as a space of dreary, sterile, coldness and intellectual decadence that only spurs on Elmo's vanity. The library is full of relics from the past and is shadowed by heavy drapery producing an effect that does not entice but enervate. In a word, it represents excess and not balance. Much comes to light when Evans chooses to name this space, the "Taj Mahal," a grand yet cold Oriental tomb—a space of decadence and excess—a space characterized by typical Eastern qualities.

Evan's Orientalist critique of the American man extends even to his garden, Le Bocage, which can be seen as an amalgamation of the nations of the world. Hot house plants abound and exotic animals walk about:

The elaborate and beautiful arrangement of the extensive grounds showed with how *prodigal a hand the owner squandered a princely fortune*. The flower garden and lawn comprised fifteen acres, and the subdivisions were formed entirely by hedges, save that portion of the park surrounded by a *tall iron railing*, where congregated a motley menagerie of deer, bison, a Lapland reindeer, a Peruvian llama, some Cashmere goats, a chamois [...] And a large white cow from Ava. [...] Such was Le Bocage, naturally a beautiful situation, improved and embellished with everything, which refined taste and world-wide travel could suggest to the *fastidious owner*. (Emphasis added 62-64)

Yet again, the mode of presentation, language and tone here offer us a scene of fastidious excess in spite of its seeming refinement. Besides, nothing is indigenous here. Nothing is spontaneous or natural. Everything is imported. And Edna, the exemplary white American woman protagonist of the novel,

[w]hile dazzled by the glitter and splendor of 'Le Bocage', [...] shivered in its silent dreariness, its cold, aristocratic formalism, and she yearned for the soft,

musical babble of the spring branch [...] the [...] boundless spontaneity of nature [...] a sense of companionship almost of tender, dumb sympathy which all the polished artificialities and recherche arrangements of man utterly failed to supply (64).

Elmo's global garden could only be an encroachment on American simplicity, bringing into the American territory transnational intruders. By contrast, the pastor Mr. Hammond's home is depicted in a forgiving light, with a more authentic Americanness, for "around the slender pillars twined honeysuckle and clematis tendrils, purple with clustering bells; while the brick walls were draped with luxuriant ivy that hung in festoons from the eaves" (85). In opposition, a foreign territory like Le Bocage could only render the white American subject anxious, threatening not only America's national integrity but also the virtues of American womanhood, since it is in this luxurious aristocratic garden that Elmo almost sexually assaults Edna. Hence, the New World, according to this novel, had to be kept pure and insular with no contact with the corrupting influences of the rest of the world, especially the Orient.

Ultimately what *India*, *Agnes of Sorrento*, and *St. Elmo* reveal by using an othering language used to portray the Orient, to describe certain aspects of their own nation is that this non-American, non-white other had already infiltrated the white American nation, which in turn brings to light the anxiety of the white American national subject who was hovering between the subjectivities of the white self and the non-white other. And as far as the white American subject inhabited this ambivalent space, it goes without saying that the achievement of the desired Anglo-American unity was a difficult challenge.

Yet another factor that disrupts Anglo-American affiliations in the texts of early to mid-nineteenth-century white American women is that their Eastern tales also question

racial hierarchies by bringing the West and the East on the same platform. In certain instances and moments, these texts move beyond the classic features of Orientalism (racial/racist stereotyping, exoticizing and objectification), opening up a less-restricted vision of the East that is informed by critical-thinking rather than by limited received knowledges of the East. This vision manifests itself in Lydia Maria Child's and Abby Jane Morell's works, a presence encouraged by numerous reasons: Child was involved in the rights discourse during her day like African American, Native American and women's rights, participated in intellectual circles like the Transcendentalists and had academic and personal interests in Oriental religions, while Morell voyaged the world and had first-hand exposure to native cultures and peoples in the East. In spite of being steeped in the othering Orientalisms of the day, Child and Morell are cognizant of the arbitrariness of racial and national boundaries and question racial hierarchization at least on the margins of their writing.

Child, named "the first woman in the republic" in 1833 by the *North American Review*, reveals a largeness of vision/open-mindedness in her writings of Oriental peoples that reaches beyond the republic, and also across the East-West divide. As discussed in Chapter One, hers was a personality rife with multiple ironies, at once managing to endorse the code of the angel in the house and disrupting it by drawing attention to the limitations of this exclusive identity. In that chapter we focused on her works on domesticity and womanhood—*The American Frugal Housewife*, *The Mother's Book* and *Philothea: A Classical Romance*. In this chapter on the American-Oriental imaginary, we will look at *Progress of Religious Ideas through Successive Ages* (Vol. III-1855), *The History of the Condition of Women, in Various Ages and Nations* (1845), and *Aspirations*

of the World: A Chain of Opals (1878)—works that seldom come to the limelight in contemporary criticism due to the popularity of her anti-slavery and domestic writing—which are fine examples that reveal how a white American woman author’s engagement with national womanhood is informed by her understanding of Oriental nations.

This racially liberal vision that frees the Orient from the restricted, not to mention false binary of the ‘Civilized West vs. the primitive East’ further becomes clear when we consider what Carolyn L. Karcher’s definitive biography on Child—*The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child* (1994)—offers on the latter’s “progressive” thoughts. Karcher suggests that such thoughts and views may have gradually developed over her long career from Child’s concerns with issues like abolitionism, women’s rights, Native American rights, and her opposition against American expansionism, all of which were movements that catered to the marginal on the basis of “universal equality” (3).¹⁶³ Child perhaps turned from the wronged in her own country to the wronged beyond the shores of her home when she regarded the Oriental heathens of the non/un-Christian lands. In fact, Karcher suggests that in reflecting back on her career, Child drew an analogy between *The Progress of Religious Ideas* which is focused on other parts of the world and *An Appeal* that is mainly centered on the abolitionist cause closer to home. The following passage from *An Appeal*, for instance, is resonant of any group of down-trodden and bonded humans and reaches from one race/nation to a space that transcends races/nations. There is sympathy for all:

It might seem wonderful that the descendants of wise Ethiopia, and learned Egypt, are now in such a state of degradation, if history did not furnish a remarkable parallel in the condition of the modern Greeks. The land of Homer, Pericles, and Plato is now inhabited by ignorant, brutal pirates. Freedom made the Grecians great and glorious—tyranny has made them stupid and miserable. Yet their yoke has been light, compared with African bondage. In both cases the wrongs of the

oppressed have been converted into an argument against them. We first debase the nature of man by making him a slave, and then very coolly tell him that he must always remain a slave because he does not know how to use freedom. We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling on them forever, because they are prostrate. Truly, human selfishness never invented a rule, which worked so charmingly both ways!” (*An Appeal*, Chapter 6, “Intellect of Negroes” n.pag.)

The nature of the reading and scholarship that made this woman, as well as the degree of intellectual and academic exposure she had to various knowledges of the Orient produced and available during the day—though, these texts were mostly written from the subject position of the white outsider looking into a non-white space—also influenced Child’s perceptions of the Eastern other. On a section titled, “List of Books Used in the Preparation of These Volumes” in *Progress of Religious Ideas*, Child lists texts such as “Rammohun Roy’s Translation of the Vedas,” “Maurice’s History of Hindostan,” “Oriental Memoirs by Sir James Forbes,” “Journal of a Residence in India by Bishop Herber,” “Eastern Lands: Past and Present by Harriet Martineau,” “Enfiled’s History of Philosophy” and “Sale’s Translation of the Koran”. Because we have no records of the author’s physical travels to the Eastern lands she refers to in her writing, we must assume that she drew much of her information and inspiration from her vast reading.

Child’s familiarity with the Transcendentalist engagements of the literary elite of her time, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Margaret Fuller, would have also developed in her a particularly philosophical attitude toward Eastern religions.¹⁶⁴ For instance, the Conclusion of Volume III of *Progress of Religious Ideas* begins with an Emersonian quotation, where she goes onto use a great amount of Transcendentalist vocabulary—“great souls of humanity,” “Spirit,” “No portion of truth ever did die, or ever can die. Its spirit is eternal, though its forms are changing” (118-

19)—that works on the Transcendentalist belief in the multiple forms of God’s presence in nature. She also evokes the constant references in Transcendentalist texts to the mystic antiquity of Hinduism and other Oriental religions by drawing attention to the “[d]reamy contemplations of devout mystiques in the ancient forests of Hindostan; the vague sublimity of Egyptian thought [...] Hebrew proneness to the supernatural [...] moonlighted glimpses of the infinite, revealed to Plato [...] All these are fused into our present mode of thought” (*Progress of Religious Ideas* 420).

However, I agree with Karcher when she claims that *Progress of Religious Ideas* is not merely an accumulation of Child’s academic and intellectual research, since this work “like her early narratives of interracial marriage and appeals against racial prejudice had originated in the impulse to unify humankind” (375). Her emotional investment in respecting different belief systems across the world also contributed to that impulse. As the writer herself explains,

[w]hile my mind was yet in its youth, I was offended by the manner in which Christian writers usually describe other religions; for I observed that they habitually covered apparent contradictions and absurdities, in Jewish or Christian writings, with a veil of allegories and mystical interpretation, while the records of all other religions were unscrupulously analyzed, or contemptuously described as “childish fables,” or “filthy superstitions.” [...] I recollect wishing, long ago, that I could become acquainted with some good, intelligent Bramin, or Mohammedan, that I might learn, in some degree, how their religions appeared to them.
(Emphasis added, Preface, *Progress of Religious Ideas* vii)

Early on in her life, therefore, Child was conscious of the religious bias in western perceptions of Eastern religions, and the only solution she finds in order to overcome this bias is to make an attempt to understand the belief systems of the “Brahmin” or the “Mohammedan,” as an “insider” from within the community to which the other religion belonged.

This open-mindedness and broad intellectual attitude, I identify as coming through in Child's texts in primarily two ways: one is her understanding of the importance of one's 'point of view'/stand point that affects the ways in which things are perceived, and the other is her critical engagement and ability to rationalize on the new and the foreign, instead of resorting to outright condemnation by faithfully relying on received mainstream knowledges of the inferiority of Eastern races and nations. Note how she describes an oft ridiculed aspect of Oriental religions—idol worship—in this case, with special reference to the practice in Buddhism: “Sculptors embodied their own ideas of these spirits in marble forms of immortal beauty; and poets told manifold stories of them, most of which probably had at the time an allegorical significance, now lost to us. The ignorant populace worshipped the marble images and believed the fables in a literal sense. But it was not so with thoughtful and cultured men” (*Aspirations* 5). The closest we can get to understanding the nuances of Child's account on idol-worship would be to perhaps call it Orientalist, in that it does presume the ignorance of the incredulous swarms of exotic natives. Yet it is also critical of discriminatory thinking, in that, it does not draw attention to the incredulous swarms of exotic natives, and instead, makes the above a discussion on the specific meanings associated with and the functionality of symbolism and allegory in representing different religions. Child's description does not categorically demean Buddhist practices, but rather, she suggests that idol-worship should be understood for what it means and what it serves, using one's intellect.

In yet other instances in her writing, the author foregrounds the significance of understanding the mechanism of 'point of view,' where seeing things from an/other's

perspective becomes a recurrent trope. Indeed, she can be considered as an advocate of what is known today as “cultural relativism” and the school of Standpoint theory,¹⁶⁵ where Child sheds light on not only how one can understand the meanings produced by different cultures only by approaching those meanings from the situated “logic” of that particular culture, but also how multiple truths can be generated by shifting one’s positionality and the point of view from which something is regarded. In the following, she compares two instances from different religions, where certain material symbols are infused with religious value—Lotus in Buddhism and the Lamb in Christianity—and says that, “[i]t would require a long explanation to make them understand what we mean by our prayer, ‘O Lamb of God [...]’ and after we had done our best [...] their ideas of it would probably be as vague as ours are concerning the lotos” (*Aspirations* 7). Child’s ability here to grasp the relativity of the symbolic system and the allegorical nature of religious symbology and the significance of one’s perception in the making of meaning is indeed intellectually complex.

Of course, this does not mean that Child did not believe in the superiority of Christianity, for she universalizes the import of that religion in many instances in her writing. “After making due deductions, on account of the iniquitous practices of Christendom, we are still compelled to admit that there only do we find sympathy, benevolence and active exertion for the improvement of all mankind,” (*The Progress of Religious Ideas* 478) says Child at one point. However, she continues to reiterate the Transcendentalist belief of the interconnectedness of Eastern and Western religions and the possibility of their mutual benefit to each other, if they were not so quick to judge each other. Views like the following challenge the utter disgust with which Muslims,

Buddhists and Hindus were generally portrayed in Orientalist narratives popular during the American antebellum:

Buddhist countries have been little known to Europeans, until within the last century. As soon as they came in contact with each other, the close resemblance in many religious ideas, customs and forms of worship, immediately attracted attention [...] If Christians habitually looked at themselves, and at the followers of foreign religions, from the same point of view, there would be much less exultation over their own superiority. (*Aspirations* 435-39)

Supplementing Child's use of 'point of view' as a springboard to a larger understanding of other cultures and religions is her ability to critically engage with culture-specific knowledge of the Orient, without jumping to hasty critical judgments on the "foreign." In fact, she dissuades other authors too from resorting to petty value judgments: "[t]here has been some unfairness in our manner of representing the sacred books of nations outside of Christianity [and that t]he poorest specimens of their Holy writings have been frequently brought into comparison with the Best of ours" (*Aspirations* 3). She also posits that, "[i]f the Koran declared that God said to Mohommad [...] 'slay man and woman infant and suckling' the text would doubtless have been quoted thousands of times by theologians to prove the cruelty of Moslems" (*Aspirations* 435-39). This here is indeed a brilliant moment; a moment where Child in 1878 is modelling a critical approach to cultural studies that looks very similar to what Said proposed in *Orientalism*, hundred years later in 1978.

The History of the Condition of Women in Various Ages and Nations (1835) too offers us examples of Child's critical and analytical thinking. At first, however, we see the narrative predictably making use of multiple familiar charges against certain Oriental practices; in this case, especially those that involve women.¹⁶⁶ She draws attention to the Zananah and the beauty of the many wives of Hindu chiefs who resided in

this woman's space. As Reina Lewis claims in *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem* (2004), prominence given to female beauty is a "structural feature of orientalist discourse" on harem women (8).¹⁶⁷ Child represents the women in the Zananah as not only beautiful but also shallow, spiteful and strongly enticed by luxury, jewels and splendor. Nevertheless, what is unpredictable about what the author does in this instance is that she does not hold these Oriental women's negative characteristics against them. Instead, she frames the character flaws of the Hindu wives in such a manner that blame is laid elsewhere; "[h]ow can it be wondered at that women, with all the feelings and faculties of human nature, and unnaturally deprived of objects for their passions, affections or thoughts, should seek excitement in petty stratagem and restless intrigue" (88).

The History also includes a section on the Indian "sati" but refreshingly, in a tone that is largely descriptive in contrast to the scathing Orientalist denunciations and sensationalizations of the practice in genres like the mission narrative. *The History* instead indicates different kinds of sati: some women performing the act with dignity, some being forced into the act. It also discusses the merits of the deed as rationalized by the locals, instead of being judgmental, dramatic or sensational (*The History* 112-17). What her approach to sati reveals is Child's awareness of heterogeneity, which helps her narrative generally avoid representing monolithic Oriental phenomena that are unidimensional and therefore lack nuance. A contemporary postcolonial critic like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak would have most probably approved of Child's approach to the Indian sati, for in her well-known article, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988) it is precisely the lack of complexity in the manner in which the British archives recorded

“satis” that Spivak criticizes.

How Child’s narrative frames infanticide, a common practice among the Hindus, is also noteworthy:¹⁶⁸ “The Hindoo character is proverbial for patient mildness; yet their religious superstitions continually lead them to the most ferocious deeds. Fond as the women are of their children, they make a great merit of throwing them to the sacred crocodiles [...] in fulfilment of some superstitious vow” (112). This shows no absolute contempt for ways of the non-Christian or a blatant criticism of primitive Hindu men and women, but an attempt to make sense of why they did what they did. In other words, Child does not present these acts as a consequence of the intrinsic barbarism in Indian character but as the effects of a certain belief system that justified such acts. Therefore, we do not see a demonization or a brutalization of the women who performed the deed; rather, the act and the belief system that promoted this act are seen as brutal, not the women themselves.

I claim, therefore, that Child’s projection of the Orient and its women is one of curiosity rather than contempt, and it is this difference of tone and approach to her subject matter that makes space for a narrative sub-text that avoids discrimination based on race, nation and religion, in contrast to typical nineteenth-century Orientalist writings on the East.¹⁶⁹ At least her “strategic location” within her writings manages to subvert the authority of the white author, to a certain extent. Yet, in so far as she inhabits the space of the agent or the one who produces knowledge of the Orient rather than the one who receives it, the white American woman as writer/agent of knowledge production cannot avoid the inevitable intellectual dilemma of appropriating the non-white native other she speaks for in her texts. However, I choose to end her account with the following lines

from *Aspirations of the World* that succeeds in summing up Child's expansive vision, where she reiterates with conviction the oneness of all humanity across nations:

In this book I have collected some specimens of the moral and religious utterances of various ages and nations; [...] In doing this my motive is simply to show that there is much in which all mankind agree. [...] I merely attempt to show that the primeval impulses of the human soul have been essentially the same everywhere, and my impelling motive is to do all I can to enlarge and strengthen the bond of human brotherhood. (1-2)

If Lydia Maria Child's *Orient* reflects the vast amount of knowledge she amassed on Eastern lands, Abby Jane Morell's travel narrative on whose margins we can see glimpses of what seems like a broad vision on world's peoples arises from her first-hand experiences in the countries of the East. Morell was a well-to-do New Yorker, who had a relatively higher degree of independence than perhaps your average true woman. If her act of joining her husband's sea voyage was not enough to make her somewhat unconventional, the fact that she left her toddler behind as she voyaged with her husband for two years would cause some eye-brow raising even in 2019. Nonetheless, on the one hand she was a "second citizen" to the men aboard, confined to her berth during bad weather, transporting a form of domesticity with her by passing her time in reading, sewing and other little homely engagements that were in stark contrast to the more masculinized activities of navigating the wild oceans. On the other hand, though, she also had a sense of feminine authority as she domesticated the ship's crew to a certain extent by her very presence/female presence that is suggested to have kept the latter's "immoralities" in check.¹⁷⁰ Still, she also had the opportunity to meet Oriental natives in person and experience native cultures and people. And her Oriental travel narrative, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Ethiopic and South Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Chinese Sea, North and South Pacific Ocean, in the Years 1829, 1830, 1831* (1833), by giving her

an opportunity to record her first-hand experiences with the *other*, also gave her a chance to develop a receptive consciousness in relation to the Oriental native.

Her life and works are certainly not entirely absent of white-aggrandizement. In addition to Morell's (at least indirect) participation in Empire-building through her husband, Captain Benjamin Morell¹⁷¹ (Abby's father, John Wood, was also a Sea Captain) early on in the text, we see her unambiguously hailing western superiority and the joint responsibility of the Anglo-American races to save the non-Christian people from falling into the miserable pits of degradation. For one, all English-speaking people, according to Morrell, should stick together, since "[i]t is impossible for those who speak the same language not at times to love one another" (35). She also affirms the prowess of a joint Anglo-American empire and says that,

[i]t is my belief that these two nations [England and the U.S] are to govern the world, so far as to have their policy and laws adopted in regard to commerce, and liberty extended to all nations, particularly in regard to the abolition of slavery [...] The East India Company, whatever politicians may say about monopoly and exclusive privileges, has done more to make safe the navigation of those seas, than all the world besides. (112-13)

Morell acknowledges what she claims as immense service that English missionary women did to the heathens in civilizing the latter, and applauds "the accomplished females who had left all the comforts of society and the charms of friendship in England, to come to these shores of Heathenish ignorance and ferocity, for the sake of extending the Redeemer's kingdom, [...] Their labors were incessant" (35-36). In other words, the Orient makes available to this white American woman a terrain where whiteness is displayed in its best guise; a space where she meets white superiority face to face.

In spite of her endorsement of white superiority, though, Morell's mind is expansive enough to be willing to learn from the other. The following thoughts that

appear in a section that discusses the Orient's respect for nature, juxtaposed with her idea that "I believe human nature is the same in every age and nation, and all of good hearts feel alike, whether it is called romance or fact," (17) show an uncommonly anti-utilitarian view which challenges mainstream American ideals of the day:

It is amusing to think how soon we become enamored with the thought of natural society, and in moments of contemplation wish to be found among people of a primitive cast. The thousand evils of a social life crowd upon us when we look at these forests and their inhabitants; there is no vulgar wretchedness, as seen in crowded cities—no squalid diseases; there is nothing of aristocratic contumely, and the laws of nature are only slightly regulated by convention or necessity [...] No bird of paradise ever spread his wings on the hills of North America or on the mountains of Switzerland or Scotland, where man has reached the highest moral and intellectual perfection. And even when civilized man takes possession of the bowers of Eden, he does not suffer the original features of nature to remain, but sacrifices every grace and beauty to the rigid laws of utility and productiveness. [...] The aborigines look with pity on these tasteless occupants of their soil, and sigh to think that power and prosperity do not suffer the lovely face of nature to remain as it was in the days of their fathers. But utility should be paramount to taste in a world whose object is gain. (74-79)

Reading this passage in the larger context of Morell's text that favors Anglo-American superiority, then, we can identify a complicated duality in the perception of the Oriental space rather than one governed by the rigid binary of a whole white self and its wholly other. Her narrative voice reveals a considerable flexibility of approach to the foreign where emerges a personality who is willing to change her views after due consideration. Although she is a representative of a Protestant nation, Morell is even willing to see Catholicism in a fair light, which by extension, shows an openness to acknowledging different creeds of Christianity as well as other world religions. Her attitude here in fact echoes Child's treatment of Oriental religions that we saw earlier,¹⁷² while her narrative voice represents a persona who is not reluctant to correct her mistaken notions. In a sense, meeting with other cultures and peoples and religions seems to open up her vision

to new possibilities. Once again, it is a transnational Oriental space that so reforms the American Protestant woman, that Morell is able to say, “I was born a Protestant and I trust in heaven that I shall die a Protestant; but hereafter I shall have more charity for all who profess to love religion, whatever may be their creeds” (44).

Thus, what comes about in this chapter’s consideration of Orientalisms of white American women’s writings on the East from the early nineteenth century to the 1860’s is an ambivalent discourse. Not only do these texts consolidate an Anglo-American unity through the contrast between a superior white subject and the Oriental native, but also disrupt that unity through a counter-narrative that critiques racial hierarchies and questions white superiority. They resort to a readily available Orientalist lexicon to describe their visions of the Orient (thereby producing a particular version of Eastern lands) but at the same time, also critique that very rhetoric, expose its limitations, restrictions and biases and develop a receptive consciousness that is able to critically and respectfully engage with the other. In the next chapter, my aim is to show how a specific genre of Orientalist writing, the mission memoir, further muddies the waters. If Abby Morell’s voyages to the East brought on herself a particular understanding of the Oriental native, texts by antebellum American “mission wives” contribute a unique viewpoint by their expatriations to different parts of the Orient, which therefore deserves a separate engagement.

CHAPTER 5

ANTEBELLUM WHITE AMERICAN “MISSION WIVES”: OF FLAWED MIMICRY AND THE MISSION GENRE

The American foreign missions of the early to the mid-nineteenth century epitomize a project that allowed white American women to share a Kiplingesque white woman’s burden with British sisters to civilize the heathen world, which gave the former a chance to share in an Anglo-American white identity.¹⁷³ This imperial endeavor required of them to represent/re-present or produce/reproduce¹⁷⁴ supposedly the most fitting incarnation of American true womanhood, the American “mission wife,” a subjectivity that was reflective of the presumed superiority of white civilization, possibly offering an ideal model for the heathen women to emulate as well.¹⁷⁵ Hence, this chapter is more concerned with the manner in which a particular white women’s genre—the “mission memoir”—fashions a specific cohort of white American women in the Orient—American “mission wives”—rather than with a typical Saidian narrative of the West’s production of the native subaltern/Eastern other, something that we have already looked at in Chapter Four.

Instead, here, I use “mimicry,” which Homi K. Bhabha’s *Location of Culture* (1994) posits as an attribute of colonized natives, as characteristic even of the American mission wife who is relocated in her foreign mission destination. Her representations/representations in narrative reveal her identity to be a form of flawed mimicry/performance, where the Orient, by letting it hover between the “ideal” and the “real”/its alternative Oriental versions, renders this subject interstitial and ambivalent. The rupture of the Anglo-American white female subject thereby loosens up the boundaries of exclusivity surrounding white mission womanhood, making such borders

arbitrary. In what follows, I begin with a brief introduction to this ambivalent identity, delineating how she contributed to the Christianizing and civilizing of the non-Christian world, a shared responsibility between the British and the Americans at the time. The second half of this chapter explores—with special reference to Emily Judson’s *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson of the American Mission to Burma* (1852), and Miron Winslow’s *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet Winslow: Thirteen Years a Member of the American Mission in Ceylon* (1840)—the multiple ways in which American mission memoirs reveal the flawed mimics of their gender idols.¹⁷⁶

American “Mission Wives”

*Who’d be a missionary’s Bride,
Who that is young and fair
Would leave the world and all beside,
Its pomp and vanity and pride,
Her savior’s cross to bear?*

*None-save the whose heart is meet
Who feels another’s pain
And loves to wipe from sorrow’s cheek
The trickling tear-and accents speak
That soothe the soul again.*

*She who feels for them that need
The precious bread of life.
And longs the savior’s lambs to feed
O, such an one would make indeed
A missionary’s wife!¹⁷⁷*

Written by Betsey Learned in 1832, this poem aptly sums up the cardinal virtues of a mission wife, whose selfless, all-renouncing and empathizing nature was best suited for the purposes of the Christianizing of the heathen world through example. Believed to be the forerunner of the more professionalized single mission woman of the postbellum years—who had duties and responsibilities that were more formalized and organized than

was the case with the women whose marriage to a missionary became their passport to the Orient—a mission wife, “[r]ather than being remembered for ‘preaching the gospel’, the quintessential ‘male’ task, [... has] been noted for meeting human needs and helping others, sacrificing themselves without plan or reason, all for the sake of bringing the world to Jesus Christ” (Robert xvii).¹⁷⁸ Framed in the traditional and idealized quality of women’s self-renouncement, I feel it is fair to see these women even as American versions of the Indian sati—hence, a curious amalgam of the West and the East—who were expected to sacrifice their selves in the salvation of the non-Christian. Hence, it would be right to claim that mission wifeness was the version of American true womanhood that had the largest global reach and was therefore the most symbolic of its transnational bearings.¹⁷⁹

Though participating in an ideal white American gender identity, mission wives are believed to have gone through heterogeneous experiences on the foreign mission field, experiences that at times even disrupted the division between characteristically male-identified and female-identified duties of the cause. Dana L. Robert’s “Evangelist or Homemaker? Mission Strategies of Early Nineteenth-Century Missionary Wives in Burma and Hawaii,”¹⁸⁰ (1993) for instance, explains how wives of American missionaries abroad had varied responsibilities, even ones that defied male and female spheres, depending on the locations where the missionaries were commissioned: “[d]espite tensions over the appropriate role for women in ministry, the Baptist missionary women in Burma [such as the three Adoniram Judson wives, Anne, Sarah and Emily] did everything the male missionaries did except administer the sacraments and preside as a permanent pastor of a church” (6). In Hawaii, though, the more conservative

Congregationalism of the ABCFM (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions) did not approve of itinerant preaching by mission wives, encouraging them instead to become exemplary Christian gender ideals/idols for the Eastern women to emulate.

The imperialist bent of the women's missionary project is also rather ambivalent, since women missionaries were not "a homogenous group of cultural imperialists but [...] people who reinvented the meanings of American nationalism and imperialism," (Ellington, Sklar and Shema 2)¹⁸¹ a view that Amy Kaplan shares as well in the following (2002):¹⁸² "the anarchy of empire suggests ways of thinking about imperialism as a network of power relations that changes over space and time and is riddled with instability, ambiguity, and disorder, rather than as a monolithic system of domination" (13-14). Especially, white American mission wives had to negotiate the hierarchical power dynamic of the multiple roles they had to play face to face with not only the Oriental native other, who may have mirrored to them their own colonial history, but also the hegemonic British colonists and missionaries at their foreign destinations. Relations between mission wives and Orientals were also a complex amalgam of white authority, religious indoctrination as well as native affiliation and resistance: Oriental others benefited from school education, improved literacy, caste dissolution, women's empowerment etc. that came alongside the Christianization process, while some native populations discriminated against the whites as non-castes, and used their Christian education to revive indigenous religions, like Arumuga Navalar who is believed to have developed a form of evangelical Saivism laying emphasis on the scripture and individual salvation instead of religious rituals and customs. (The white American mission wife's

Christianizing cum imperial endeavor beyond the borders of her country in the early nineteenth century also becomes complicated by the memory of the parallel movement of the British Puritan missionaries Christianizing American Indians in the new North American colonies, close to two centuries before.¹⁸³) Likewise, it is fair to consider the American foreign missions, as does Mary Renda, as a development that “both fed and undermined empires, national states [...] It reinforced racism and exclusion [...] But it also served to strengthen anti-colonial nationalisms and even to trouble missionary women’s own racism” (368-69).¹⁸⁴

However, irrespective of the complexity of the varied circumstances in which these antebellum American mission wives fared in the Orient, back at home in America, aspiring young females of the new republic were being fed with an idealistic grand narrative of women martyrs rescuing Oriental peoples from degradation, a narrative popularized by the genre of the mission memoir, in order to fashion these young women in the image of an ideal white woman well-suited to serve the purpose of Christianizing the world. Marriage to a missionary that served as a passport to the Orient was one major strategy of legitimizing a woman’s act of leaving not just her hearth and home but her country. In fact, in early American foreign mission history, most American mission wives’ expatriations to the Orient were considered as a predictable and legitimate extension of women’s involvement in the home missions during the time (Robert 215). In a sense, the “unwomanly” act of leaving one’s domestic sphere, albeit to another domestic sphere in a foreign space, could only be made right by being incorporated within the conventional institution of patriarchal marriage. Once married, the expectation was that these mission wives would perform their female-identified duties of keeping

home, bringing up children, educating the unenlightened and being an exemplary helpmeet to their husbands, all done in a foreign space that was shown to be starkly different from their republican homeland.¹⁸⁵

Ironically, though, the mission wife could almost be another name for the Indian *sati*, in that, like the self-immolating Indian woman, her American counterpart represented renunciation that at times even reached the extent of self-annihilation. What one did in the name of her patriarch, the other did for the mission cause, and those who died, like Harriet Newel (1793-1812), were martyred for posterity in the mission annals. Mortality was high in the tropical foreign environment, and the white American women who left their motherland had at least an inkling that their lives themselves were possibly at risk. In such a context, Rev. Jonathan Allen's advice to the wives of the first ever American foreign missionaries, Harriet Newell, Ann Judson, and Roxana Nott, that one of their main responsibilities was "subverting indigenous customs deemed injurious to women, such as the burning of widows in India" (Robert 3) is strangely odd. According to mission logic, what made Indian females primitive made white American women pious.

This ambivalent phenomenon of the mission wife, however, was not the sole prerogative of Americans, since, before the first of such women left for their Eastern destinations with their respective husbands in 1812—Samuel Newell, Adoniram Judson and Samuel Nott—British women had already ventured out into the Orient as wives of missionaries, although the practice became popular only during the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁸⁶ Likewise, the first white American mission wives who left America were following the footsteps of their British sisters, and their mission posts also being located

in the British colonies, these American women were indeed participating in a common Anglo-American Christianizing cum civilizing endeavor. As Eadaoin Agnew explains in *Imperial Women Writers in Victorian India: Representing Colonial Life, 1850-1910* (2017), different classes and hierarchies of colonial British women such as mission wives, *memsahibs* and imperial housewives were already living in the Oriental colonies, and they were “expected to exemplify British superiority through a visible and verifiable assertion of Victorian femininity,” (6) an expectation that American women in the Orient tried to meet in their own way by representing/re-presenting an ideal white American marriage, home and family. However, as recorded in mission memoirs, neither British nor American women managed to replicate model “mission wifedom” to the letter. Out of the numerous reasons for this setback that scholars have pointed out, Agnew above refers to factors such as the fear of contamination by the close relations between whites and the supposedly immoral, uncivilized and non-Christian native people,¹⁸⁷ the climactic conditions far different from the West, and inaccessibility to domestic resources etc., as hindering the making of Victorian homes in the Oriental wilderness. Patricia Grimshaw, Peter Sherlock and Emily Conroy-Krutz also draw our attention to the constant absence of mission husbands on proselytizing tours, the endless work and daily duties of the mission women, tropical illnesses and the death of children born to mission families and the death of the mission wives themselves as detrimental to the successful reproductions of the white marriage, home and family.¹⁸⁸

A point of equivocation here is that, on the one hand, white American women’s participation in the subjectivity of the “mission wife” brought them both materially and metaphorically in close proximity to British women engaged in similar duties, while on

the other hand, white American women's failure to produce/reproduce the ideal, as I will elaborate in the next section, can only be logically seen as an upsetting of the above unity, and by extension unsettling that cross-Atlantic relationship as well. Yet, the flawed mimicry of the American mission wife, seen another way, also shared an eventuality that was common to British women who encountered similar obstacles in mimicking/performing an ideal white marriage, home and family in the foreign mission field. Therefore, to participate in the identity of the mission wife was invariably also to participate in an inevitable failure of the mimicry of the ideal, where white American women, in adopting this identity as well as by unsettling it, shared a common destiny with their British sisters. In what follows, I will demonstrate how such mimicry/performance failed, with specific reference to the two mission memoirs, Emily Judson's *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson of the American Mission to Burma* (1852), and Miron Winslow's *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet Winslow: Thirteen Years a Member of the American Mission in Ceylon* (1840), drawing attention to how not only gender but also genre reveals a gap between what the white American woman in the Oriental mission field was expected to be and what she became, thus throwing a common Anglo-American white woman's subjectivity into crisis.

Of Mimicry and the Mission Genre

Irrespective of how well or how badly mission wives fared in the heathen lands abroad, the genre of the early century mission memoir¹⁸⁹ was a bridge between the women who left and the women who stayed, making martyrs of mission wives and in turn winning many thousands of American women at home to sacrifice themselves in

order to salvage the unenlightened.¹⁹⁰ In fact, ones like Harriet Newell were memorialized as holy saints in the American foreign mission discourse, not for their great services abroad, but really for having died on their way to the foreign mission field. Still, as I argue below, these narratives also reveal, perhaps, what should not have been revealed—the gap between the “ideal” and the “real” as it were—and thereby unsettle not only the subjectivity of the mission wife but also the genre of the mission memoir itself. This unsettling of gender and genre, likewise, projects the antebellum American true woman in the Orient as a conflicted and ambivalent identity.

It is in order that I explain the meanings of my key terms mimicry/performance, in the specific manner in which I have put them to use here. Homi K. Bhabha popularized the term “mimicry” and “mimic men” in *The Location of Culture* (1994) with reference to colonial natives fashioning themselves in the guise of their colonial masters. In the context of British colonialism, the Anglicization of the native Indian elite did not just bring the former closer to a British identity, but at the same time, it stood as an unequivocal mark of the otherness of the Indian native. This was so because, in Bhabha’s words, “to be Anglicized was emphatically not to be English,” (87) which works on the logic that it was those who were not English that required Anglicization. Mimicking/performing the identity of a white man could only render the native “mimic man” a subjectivity hovering somewhere mid-way toward the white “ideal.” In other words, what was to bridge the “gap” ended in reinforcing the differences between the white self and the native other. Therefore, using mimicry to describe the fashioning of white American women’s selves in the Oriental space, I too draw attention to a discursive gap in the production of this identity that allows it to be self-critical. I treat mission

wifeness as a gendered white ideal that even white American women themselves as “mimic women” were to emulate, where mimicry as well as its failure reveal a rupture in the subjectivity of the American true woman, producing her as an interstitial identity.¹⁹¹ For indeed, ‘to be Americanized, was emphatically not to be American.’¹⁹²

“Performance” as well has a special resonance in this chapter which alludes to the “performativity of gender” as theorized in Judith Butler’s groundbreaking work, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (1990). In this work she explains how a gender identity becomes/comes into being through performativity. Just as a performative act in a linguistic sense is deemed to alter “reality” or cause a change in the “world” through an utterance, Butler sees gender as a certain kind of “performance,” or a series of acts that go into the production of a gender identity. She is careful, though, to differentiate the performativity of gender from theatrical acts of putting on costumes and acting out a part, at the end of which the actor goes back to being his/her former self, whatever that is. Rather, performativity of gender is more about an everyday manifestation—for want of a better word—of dress, manner, habit etc. that is inscribed with gendered meanings. Therefore, by alluding to Butler’s theory of gender performativity in white American women’s performance of mission wifeness in the Orient, I too refer to a more organic process of identity formation through multiple “acts” of self-fashioning; for, it is not a case of an empty signifier donning a costume. In the following sections, I present readings of two key mission memoirs of the first half of the nineteenth century that epitomize, at one level, the performance of mission wifeness, and at another level, the struggles the mission memoir itself went through in emulating the conventions of the genre.

As Lisa J. Pruitt (2005) argues, both Emily Judson's *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson of the American Mission to Burma* and Miron Winslow's *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet*

Winslow largely succeed in fulfilling the primary requirements of the mission memoir:

they had twin objectives: providing exemplars of feminine virtues for American women to emulate and stirring those women to exert themselves for the temporal and eternal benefit of the women of Asia. The memoirs' compilers accomplished those objectives by tracing the spiritual development of the women from birth to rebirth, and then following them to the mission field. Furthermore, juxtaposing the condition of American Christian women with that of "Oriental" women served as an extended illustration [...] that "Christianity alone teaches the true rank of woman; and secures to the loveliest and best portion of our race, the respect and influence which belong to them. (42)¹⁹³

Hence, *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson* and *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow* may reveal much about their subjects—Sarah B. Judson's and Harriet Winslow's lives as mission wives in Burma and Ceylon¹⁹⁴ respectively—or, they may reveal nothing new at all, given the heavily standardized nature of the genre. These memoirs also, at the same time, shed light on their authors in spite of the literary restrictions put upon their narrative voices. In many occasions the genre does much more than what is expected of it. In the case of Emily Judson, what her text reveals by throwing itself into excess is its author's multiple selves that eventually bring into crisis both Sarah Judson and herself as mission wives, as well as the mission memoir itself.

Emily Judson was not just a writer: she also inhabited the subjectivity of the mission wife herself, sailing to Burma in 1846 as Adoniram Judson's third wife, an identity that she would have been expected to be true to as she wrote her memoir on Sarah B. Judson (who was Adoniram's second wife). In fact, in a definitive biography on Emily Judson—*The Life and Letters of Emily Chubbuck Judson: Fanny Forester* (Vol.1-V-2009)—George H. Tooze presents us with the fascinating details of the multiple

transformations of Emily's 'self.' She was "Emily Chubbuck" during her early career, mostly writing children's books, "Fanny Forester" in the period when she was contributing to popular magazines, and "Emily Judson" during her missionary period and her later years. Somehow, as I will explain shortly, she was all three of these subjectivities all at once.

Mimicry is at the core of Judson's own identity. She needed to be transformed from "Fanny Forester," the witty and sprightly writer—the "great trifler and world-lover[... one who] could never be serious and sober minded as a missionary ought to be"¹⁹⁵—into "Emily Judson," the mission wife (with the aid of her husband, Adoniram and her mission circuit,¹⁹⁶) before she became qualified to go to Burma, let alone write a mission narrative. Tooze goes on to say in this regard that, in spite of her rather scandalous life as Fanny Forester and her romance with Nathaniel P. Willis, reforming this woman writer into a model who fitted the Christianizing project was considered to be worthwhile, since her writing talent so far utilized for worldly entertainment could be channeled into a new direction (Vol. I-200.) Yet, this transformation is left incomplete: I will show how in many instances of *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson*, both narrative and author fall short of the mimicry that is required of them by genre and gender due to the presence of subversive narrative strategies in this text.

Judson begins her narrative conventionally, validating great praise for Sarah by claiming that, "[i]t has been written of her [Sarah] that her English friends, [...] regarded her as the 'most finished and faultless specimen of an American woman that they had ever known'" (58). The author of *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson* is required to keep this superlative promise throughout the text and she does so to a large extent. Not only does

she infuse Sarah profusely in qualities characteristic of American true womanhood such as “patient industry and quiet endurance,” (Judson 9) but also contrasts her with Burmese women and children in a typically dualistic self-other/East-West dichotomy:

degraded women of the wilderness [...] with no loveliness [...H]er wildness, untouched by the slightest refining influence, from within or without, and her freedom, that of the profligate son [...] a creature of impulse-such impulse as springs from the innate depravity of a thoroughly debased nature [...only] animal beauty and animal grace [...] her face mirror[ing] a vacant mind [...] general blackness and deformity [...] Oh! It sickens the very soul to look upon the vice and misery, into whose fearful depths all nations of the earth, unblest by gospel light, are plunged. Let the highly favored daughter of America step from her refined Christian circle, into one of these heathen scenes. (23-25)¹⁹⁷

Judson reiterates above a common mission content, rhetoric, jargon, and technique that aggrandized white superiority and reinforce Oriental degradation. At other instances, however, she overdoes it too, where the memoir moves from being one of balance to one of excess. Dramatization, sensationalism and even possibly titillation offered by the descriptions of some key episodes in her text, hence, make her throw caution to the winds.

It was generally understood that white American women who wrote mission memoirs in the nineteenth century needed to restrain their writerly selves from giving into excessive sensationalism, lest that enticed impressionable young American women to join the cause of the foreign missions for the wrong reasons.¹⁹⁸ In fact, we find Miron Winslow himself warning writers engaged in this genre by suggesting that, “[i]t is time that the romance of missions is done away [...] no attraction from its novelty [...] will bear up and carry forward anyone, amidst long continued labors of almost uniform sameness [...] A young lady [...] should either chasten her imagination, or invigorate her principles, before she goes forth (*Memoir of Mrs. Harriet Winslow* 68). Emily Judson, though, is unstoppable. In the first of the following passages, she dramatizes the bloody

scene of the murders that take place in the boat that is taking baby George—Sarah’s son—back to America, while the latter theatricalizes an episode of Burmese marauders looting the mission camp while everyone is asleep in the middle of the night.

What a gleam of fiendish eyes! A moment of rapid action succeeds—a push—a plunge—and the kind fruit giver is struggling with the waves which have closed above his head [...] The little boy from his hiding place, beneath a bench, marks every thrust; and his flesh creeps, and his blue eyes glitter and dilate until they assume an intense blackness. And now the form of his protector sways and reels, and the red blood trickles from his wounded side to the bottom of the boat. [...] The marauders stand with drawn cutlass, or brandishing the curved crease [...] Their tones are those of infuriated madmen, and their gestures, hah! (193-94)

[A]nd there had the desperate villains stood, glaring on the unconscious sleeper with their fierce, murderous eyes [...] the sharp knife or pointed spear glittered in their hands [...] regarding with callous hearts the beautiful tableau [...] (68-69)

The first is indeed a horror-filled thrill-ride of native violence and brutal heartlessness which is contrasted with the innocent babe in the boat, while the second recreates a scene of the ominous gaze of the savage brutes falling on an innocent white woman and her child in vulnerable slumber—which is surely a fictional reproduction since there is no plausible way in which either Sarah while asleep, nor Emily, would have been able to see by themselves the “glint” in the marauders’ eyes—possibly titillating a young woman’s heart back at home in America, in the safe lap of civilization. Either way, none of the above is put there to deter other American women from venturing into the foreign mission fields in the Orient. Rather, such episodes, by making an otherwise arduous tale more exciting would have tapped into the thrill-seeking consciousnesses of young women at home, enticing them to the foreign mission cause through a spirit of adventure rather than of humble piety.

In a way, Judson’s narrative gesture of infusing a sense of adventure in a difficult, arduous, and monotonous life is rather strange, as we can conjecture that, by the time she

wrote her memoir in 1850, she herself may have learnt from her mistaken notions of a mission romance. In fact, before her time in Burma, Emily Judson herself, I believe, was part and parcel of the impressionable young American audience, since she too at first has visions of adventure and excitement related to her journey across the seas hand in hand with her new husband. In a letter from Emily to her friend Anna Maria Anabel in 1846, just before she leaves for Burma, we find her writing, “I fancy he [Adoniram Judson] will think my playing the heroine sooner than he expected. That Burmah is a great bug-bear” (Tooze 49). There is fear, yet there is thrill in playing the role of adventurous heroine. At another point, she also writes hopefully of a life of relative comfort in her new mission home, for “they have servants do all their work, and I could be freer from the care” (Tooze 13). This excitable hopefulness of Emily’s nature as recorded by what I see as her epistolary persona tallies well with her narrative persona in *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson*, when we take her dramatic and sensational re-enactments of Oriental scenes into consideration. However, she is sadly disappointed once in Burma. Unlike in the case of Eleanor, Susan Warner’s mission wife heroine in *The Old Helmet* we looked at in another chapter, Emily has no aunt swooping down, transporting a bit of America into the heathen space, bringing in dainty tea things and making everything right.

Thus, what we see emerging in dramatic episodes like the above is the subject position of “Fanny Forester,” the sprightly writer, story-teller and sensationalist, rather than that of the all-renouncing American true woman in the Orient. In fact, there was constant criticism being thrown around on Judson’s fitness to serve the mission cause, let alone write about it, which her friend Anna Maria Anabel gives expression to in a letter from 1848: “So you think Miss FF that you will give up writing! I should like to see you

do it. I think a person who writes poetry when her child is ten days old is likely to give up writing. Your book I hear sells very well, but the critics lash you unmercifully. They are mortally offended because you are still Fanny Forester” (Tooze 53). Such criticism would have troubled our author, I suggest, for we find her defending her writing style in an apologetic letter to Rev. Dr. Solomon Peck in 1849, saying that, “I sometimes embellish my style, I never have been guilty of embellishing facts, except when I have presented them in the guise of fiction [...] I had my reasons, and I believe them good and sound ones, for departing from the beaten track of compilers” (Tooze 216). Only if Emily Judson knew that embellishing style could indeed embellish and thereby change the facts, could one assume that she would have pulled the reins of her authorial excesses and returned to the beaten track.

Even her time on the mission field in Burma (1846-1854) does not seem to have transformed her entirely from “Fanny Forester” to “Emily Judson.” In the following thoughts recorded in a journal entry from 1847 and a letter to Anna Maria Anabel in 1850—where, the author does not seem to be confined by the dictates of a genre—there is merely a slight modification of attitude rather than a complete transformation of self into a benevolent, self-sacrificing soul:

[T]housand and one other botherations! [...] This taking care of teething babies, and teaching darkies to darn stockings, and talking English back end foremost to teetotum John [...] is very odd sort of business for Fanny Forester [...] But I begin to get reconciled to my minute cares [...] But the person who would do great things well, must practice daily on little ones. (Tooze Vol.III,- 382-83)

It is more painful for me to return to America, to leave all here, than it was to come away originally [...] my heart is here, *I love missionaries, love the work,* and love the precious Christians that have been accustomed to gather about me for prayer and instruction-They sobbed like so many children when I announced to them my intention of returning [...] and then *my knowledge of the language,* though slight, is *too important to become thrown away for a trifle;* and *my*

knowledge of the character and habit of the people is probably [...] greater than that of the others who have been longer in the field. (Emphasis added 439-40)

In the first extract, Judson gives vent to her “true” feelings about her life in the foreign mission field that she may not have dared to write of in her memoir. Her frustrations are revealed in an outburst of disappointment. In the second, however, her emotions are more in control, even favorable toward her duties. Although patronizing to a large extent, she acknowledges a bond with the heathen other. Nevertheless, if the voice of the exasperated woman in Burma from 1847 in the first passage nullifies the image of the all-renouncing, selfless savior of non-Christian peoples that she was to emulate as a mission wife, the voice from 1850 too does the same, since what we see emerging out of this later Emily who begins to love her cause and the Oriental natives is a woman who has not yet renounced her ambition for greatness. A close examination of her letter to Anna Maria (as I have signaled by my emphases in the second passage) reveals that the former’s love for her work, the “knowledge” garnered of the foreign peoples and their language and culture, her experience and her expertise in the mission field are dear to her heart, perhaps even more than her “precious Christians.” In the contest between Fanny Forester and Emily Judson, then, Fanny Forester seems to have won all the way through.

If “Fanny Forester” thus keeps appearing where “Emily Judson” needs to show her pious self, in both private letters as well as in *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson*, the writer does something yet more unconventional by including the humanized voice of the native other at least in one instance in her text, while also revealing an American mission wife’s willingness to forge deep bonds with Oriental women, which Judson, however, takes pains to carefully invalidate through her mediating voice. Mah Doke, a Rangoon woman prays with Sarah for her loss after the death of her child and pacifies the latter, “I have

been telling Moug Shwayben, that now you would be more distressed than ever, and he sent me to speak soothing words,” (154) which makes Sarah consider their exchange as “one of the pleasantest prayer meetings we ever had” (154). They sit together and speak the name of God albeit in different languages,¹⁹⁹ bonding in a common female community that surpasses national, racial, religious and even linguistic differences.

Judson though is quick to reduce the significance of this democratic moment:

From some of the extracts just made, showing the sympathetic disposition of the native Christians, and Mrs. Boardman’s affection for them, the truth of some remarks on the heathen character, a few chapters back, may be called in question. But perhaps it will require no more than a sentence from her, to show that it was only as Christians that they were companionable and worthy of affection. ‘Surely’ she says [...] ‘it requires the patience of a Job, and the wisdom of a Solomon, to get on with this people, much Grace does not give those, who have been all their lives shackled in heart and soul, groping in darkness more than Egyptian.’ (156-57)

Here is a clever use of quotation, strategically placed to validate the narrator’s thoughts in the guise of the thoughts of the narrated, where the author skillfully maneuvers her textual objectives using Sarah’s own words. An episode that would have otherwise brought the East and West together in a common humanity, hence ends instead in reinforcing the superiority of the white races.

Nonetheless, after a particularly unflattering observation on Oriental women which debases them, Judson wonders, “Can this indeed be my sister? And is this but an exhibition of my own nature, in its uncleansed nakedness?” (25). This moment of self-doubt I see as a moment where the white racial subject considers her own inner evils, projecting othered or externalized sin within one’s own self, gaining knowledge of the permeability of the boundaries between self and other. What is vital here is that, Judson’s rhetorical question suggests the possibility that the Oriental woman could be the

American true woman's sister, albeit deformed. The narrator of *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson* is here on a sure path to developing a broader and more progressive vision of the world that challenges Anglo-American superiority, though, unfortunately, she does not pursue this moment any further.

Eventually, then, what we have in the trio, Emily Judson, her memoir and Sarah B. Judson is an author whose multiple selves bring into tension her fitness to serve the mission, a text that unsettles the mission genre through its excesses, and a subjectivity that becomes ambivalent through authorial mediation. Together, they cause a disruption of both gender and genre, not only loosening up the boundaries of exclusivity surrounding the ideal white American gendered subject but also a genre that represented the superiority of white civilization and its women. The Orient, therefore, presented white American mission wives with not so much a binary space but an ambivalent and subversive one. In the final section on Harriet Winslow below, I will show how the mission memoir records the flawed mimicry of three cardinal facets of American true womanhood—wifhood, homemaking and motherhood—that yet again throws gender and genre into disarray.

Then, what of Harriet Winslow? No other name can represent Harriet²⁰⁰ better than her married name, “Mrs. Winslow,” in the specific manner in which she is represented by her husband Miron Winslow, in *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow: Thirteen Years a Member of the American Mission in Ceylon*. To memorialize a subject is also to mediate the representation of that subject. Like Emily Judson, Miron Winslow's attempt is also to ensure that Harriet exemplify the truest of American womanhood, wifhood and motherhood. In fact, by his own claims, he writes her biography with a

view to “kindl[ing] a spark of missionary zeal in one youthful breast [... offering an example] of early consecration, and patient and self-denying activity and perseverance in the service of Christ [, illustrating...] the usefulness, responsibility and encouragements of Christian mothers, and especially the wives of missionaries” (*Memoir of Mrs. Harriet* 4-5). In compiling these “delicate touches of a female hand[, t]hose portions that were less important [were] omitted or condensed, [...] giving place to new and valuable matter,” (3-4) something which brings to light the degree of patriarchal intervention that one can expect in the representation of Harriet’s voice. However, I demonstrate in the following how, in spite of this considerable patriarchal authorial mediation, a subversive voice breaks through in *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow* that drastically alters the feminine ideal that the mission memoir set out to memorialize.

Fashioning of the mission wife brings together three overlapping images that are the cornerstones of American true womanhood: wife, homemaker and mother, although, none of the above subjectivities come easy to Harriet in Ceylon.²⁰¹ For one, her memoir records the numerous ways in which it was made difficult for a wife of a missionary to emulate the exemplary conjugal relations that American true women were expected to forge between themselves and their husbands, in creating a model family; nor was the “mission compound” an exact replica of the ideal middle-class home.²⁰² In addition, the Oriental space was not conducive to the performing of American republican motherhood, since both British and American women on foreign missions in one or all three ways below failed to fulfill the dictates of “true motherhood”: either by dying children who dwindled “away under a tropical sun,” (Winslow 422) by children being sent away to America back home to “civilization,” and/or by children being brought up by others to

accommodate mission wives' tireless efforts for the salvation of heathens. In the case of Harriet Winslow, motherhood becomes compromised by all three of these eventualities.

The "mission marriage" was a curious kind. It challenged, from the outset, the companionate union that was deemed as supreme in America during the early nineteenth century.²⁰³ Simply put, as the term itself claims, it was a marriage to the mission cause, since the conjugal union between the true woman and the benevolent patriarch was second to the responsibilities of the Christianizing and civilizing project. As Dana L. Robert (1996) clarifies, "[m]arriage to a clergyman opened for his wife a realm of public service, albeit one officially limited to work among women and children [...] Most of the time, the commitment to mission preceded commitment to the husband" (18-21). She goes into detail on how in 1812, Harriet Newell, Ann Judson, and Roxana Nott, the first three mission wives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions met their husbands—Samuel Newell, Adoniram Judson, and Samuel Nott respectively—in circumstances that can be called more impersonal and professional than emotional or romantic. Offering a more current validation of mission marriage as vocational marriage, Emily Conroy-Krutz (2018)²⁰⁴ reiterates Robert's claims by showing unions such as Roxana Nott's with her husband in the likeness of marriages "arranged" by the foreign missions board.²⁰⁵ By pointing out how such marriages were central to western imperialism, she also demonstrates the way in which a private institution furthered a visibly political cause (66).²⁰⁶

The voice of Mrs. Winslow that manages to seep through the nooks and crannies of her husband's text conveys this failure to replicate ideal conjugal unions in the Orient. Likewise, the mission memoir textualizes the instrumental nature of the mission

marriage, showing it as more of a professional arrangement rather than a companionate unification of a man and a woman. One such instance in *Memoir of Harriet L. Winslow* is telling for its brevity, and even more for the uncharacteristic silence that Miron Winslow keeps on the subject; the subject of the numerous times that the mission wife had to fend for herself and her children on her own due to her husband being away on mission duty for considerable periods of time. “Mr. W left home on the 1st inst for a missionary tour on the continent, in company with Mr. Woodward, who is going to the Neilgherry Hills, for his health, and *I have been for four long weeks alone,*” (Emphasis added 356) writes Harriet in one of her journal entries. Though short, the highlighted line manages to capture an emotion that may have been the lot of many a white American woman in their foreign homes. It could also signal the curtailment of emotion, since a mission wife was not expected to lament and complain of her plight, as she was symbolic of the highest level of self-renouncement. Still, at the same time, she was also expected to represent an ideal model of conjugal bliss, and this tension/mis-match between renouncement and desire for emotional comfort comes to light in Harriet’s brief yet impactful phrase.

The preceding moment in Harriet’s memoir also draws attention to a far more serious threat to the mission marriage brought on by the long absences of husbands; that of the marauding native thieves:

As soon as he[/Miron] was gone, thieves began to come every night to their [neighbors’] houses, and throw stones at them to ascertain if the people were asleep. [...] They were reprimanded and charged to keep the peace, and not to disturb the *Ammah* while the husband was absent. [...] especially as it was supposed that the object was to draw the domestics from the house [...] and then come and attack our premises. [...] It is said that there has been much less thieving in this neighborhood since we came than before, and probably there would have been no disturbance now if Mr. W had been at home. (356-58)

What gives significant meaning to this incident is a couple of lines that Harriet seems to

casually throw in, in between her description of imminent danger: “I have felt little apprehension of them myself [...] the poor natives, though, [...] are glad to escape without their ears cut off for the jewels in them, or some other serious injury done to their persons” (537-38). Clearly, there is an attempt here to rationalize her fears, or even project them onto others, stripping not just loneliness but also anxiety from her account. However, her words vividly bring out her own proximity to bodily harm and even sexual assault, revealing how an absent husband on mission duty could endanger the honor, safety and even the life of a mission wife, in turn fracturing the desired model of “conjugal bliss” that was expected to inspire native families.

In a related yet different context, Eadoin Agnew mentions one Florence Marryat, a British officer’s wife who travels to India, which she holds responsible later for having destroyed her marriage:

Marryat believed that India was partly responsible for the breakdown of her first marriage. She argued that efforts to mimic metropolitan culture in the colonial outpost only led to a distortion of British lifestyles. She was particularly scathing about how attempts to export English domesticity affected marriage and motherhood and perceived that family life in India was a mimicry of the Victorian original. In Marryat’s experience, husbands and wives in India could not carry out ‘normal’ family practices, predominantly because they were frequently forced apart for long periods of time by their colonial duties. And according to this *memsahib*, there were no happy-ever-afters in Victorian India. (*Gup: Sketches of Anglo Indian Life and Character* (1868) 82)

Similarly, the mission family could not observe “normal” family practices that Americans may have carried out back at home, given the differences of condition, circumstances, duties and responsibilities between a typical white American middle class family and a mission family. Like Victorian *memsahibs*, mission wives could only produce altered forms of white American marriages, as the Orient, as a space of flawed mimicry, ruptured British and American marriages.

In tandem, Harriet also demonstrates how challenging it was to replicate a model American home in Ceylon, because a “mission home”—generally known as the “mission compound” that housed the mission family and the native borders—was structurally different to the American one. They “were usually constructed on large plots, which would house one or more bungalows, and even a day school within the compound. The locations were often picturesque-in all probability” (Singh 50-51).²⁰⁷ Oriental homes of course provided the mission wife with alternative domesticities. Predictably though, in most cases, she devalues these native alternatives as absent of civilization and culture. For instance, Harriet tries to wrap her mind around the “one roomed huts” of the poor: “It is the parlor, dining room and bed room [...] here they sit cross legged on the floor [...] conveying [food] to their mouths with the right hand [...] and here they sleep almost promiscuously” (205). What she mainly draws attention to here is a lack of privacy inside the native home, an arrangement that would have symbolized communality, or perhaps even poverty and deprivation, if seen through an indigenous perspective. Jaffna upper classes though, lived in larger and less promiscuous domestic spaces, something that Harriet fails to mention here. In fact, as we shall go onto understand in the rest of this section, her perceptions of Ceylon and the Ceylonese will continue to be based on her relations restricted to the underprivileged classes in Jaffna, the cohort of natives that American missionaries primarily catered to.

Hence, the mission home was a reconfiguration of the model American home, since the Orient managed to change the face of the American household and produce an alternative version of domesticity suited to the new circumstances. In a section detailing her household affairs in Maulmain, that is too lengthy to quote here, (268-74) we read

how Harriet being in charge of not only her family but also an extended family of boarding native children and scores of domestics is constantly nagged by petty annoyances such as thieving servants who would “slip a lime or some curry seeds into their clothes” (270) if she did not watch them at all times, or by a breaking well-rope or a stolen water-basket (272) that she needed to replace. Her entire day is occupied with such numerous cares uncharacteristic of an American middle class home but certainly common for a mission home. The latter space was inevitably infiltrated by native presence,²⁰⁸ and Harriet complains:

I know not how much we may alter our habits in these things. In almost all respects you may expect us to deteriorate, for we are in a destructive atmosphere [...] disadvantage to our mental progress, to have the stimulus of refined social intercourse taken away, and to be shut up mostly to a strange language, so barren of useful thought as is the Tamul. (225)

The Orient also transformed white motherhood. “I could spend many pleasant hours with these dear ones, but if they are well, I do not feel justified in giving time to them which I can employ in something more important. While so young, with a little of my care, they are comfortable in the hands of others. I therefore give them up almost entirely,” (261) writes Harriet of her children at one point of the memoir. This rhetoric of renouncement resounds well with the image of the mission wife whose ability to sacrifice is one of her cardinal virtues. At the same time, it also shows a deep rupture in the white American mission family that parted children from parents—more importantly, their mothers—for several reasons that were accommodated by the missions themselves.²⁰⁹ In *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries tried to Change the World but Changed America* (2017) for example, David A. Hollinger includes a substantive section on missionary children and their psychological ailments due to being parted from their parents as they

were sent back home to America to be educated and “Americanized,” going through the “culture shock” of readapting to American life, or for being brought up in confinement in a foreign environment.²¹⁰ Ironically, the mission cause that set out to represent model American families to be emulated by the Oriental uncultured ended instead in decentering the cornerstones of western civilization in the service of the mission cause itself. In suggesting that the only time that she felt justified in spending time with her children was when they were unwell, Harriet shows that she considered duties to her mission as more important than her duties as mother. Of course, this act of renunciation does not brutalize or demonize her motherhood as is often done in mission rhetoric in the representation of heathen women who sacrificed their children due to their superstitious faiths.²¹¹ Yet, the Oriental space that ruptures the bond between the white mother and the white child also ruptures American true womanhood by infusing it in later century “New Womanhood” qualities, because of the prominence Harriet places on her cause before her family.

Like Sarah Judson who sends some of her children to the lap of western civilization, Harriet and Miron too send away their child Charles to America when he is merely eleven years old, which disintegrates their family structure. (This causes a twin tragedy as Charles dies mid journey.) Wiping away any possible doubts in the mind of the reader of the appropriateness of thus parting a young child from his parents, Miron Winslow authoritatively adds the following explanation to his narrative, rationalizing the choice that missionary parents made in sending their children back home:

The reasons which induced all the missionaries to consider such a course necessary, in regard to their children, were entirely satisfactory to her [Harriet’s] mind. Some of the principles are, 1. The children cannot be *properly educated* in Ceylon. 2, The state of society endangers their *moral and religious character*. [...] 5, There are not opportunities for their forming *suitable connections in marriage*. 6, They cannot, as a general thing, remain in the country with the

prospect of usefulness and happiness. [...] Southern Asia is no place for Northern people to colonize. They dwindle away under a tropical sun. (421-22)

What the above passage displays is a scathing white prejudice and intolerance toward an Eastern space deemed degraded and degenerate. It is this othering Orientalist discourse that helps justify the disruption of the mother/parent-child bond on the mission field. Accordingly, mission parents had only that single option of sending their offspring back to western civilization, so these children could return to serve the mission, if they so wished later.

In spite of the untiring dedication to the mission cause, however, Harriet's maternal side finds its way. In the following journal entry, she pines for her absent son, struggling at the same time to reconcile her emotions, curtailing them and controlling their force:

Your papa is absent with Mr. Spaulding near Point Pedro to preach and distribute tracts. I am very glad to have him able to go, though it leaves me very lonely; I think so much more of you when he is gone. Not that I am sorry to have you go to America [...] But I have no more of those precious evenings when we sat down together at my table, read and prayed together. [...] May angels guide my beloved boy. (429)

Such moments that mark the absence of loved ones in the life of the mission wife are too common for consideration. Miron, though, is quick to offer an alternative; motherhood by proxy. He elaborates on the significance of the Maternal Society in Uduvile that Harriet led as part of her mission responsibilities, of which, she was the secretary till her death. Assistance and encouragement from other mothers were necessary in conditions uncondusive to the bringing up of white children. In Harriet's life at least, as motherhood halted with her parting son, involvement with the Maternal Society, according to Miron, seemed to have made do.

Likewise, both Emily Judson's *Memoir on Sarah B. Judson* and Miron Winslow's *Memoir on Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow* represent the obstacles that American true women met with as they were being physically and metaphorically transplanted on heathen spaces across the seas. If Emily keeps reverting to her former spirited self of Fanny Forester from the model of the mission wife, Harriet symbolizes the unsettling of not only the idealized American marriage and family but also American motherhood. Nevertheless, mention must be made at least in passing here of Roxana Nott (1785-1876), one of the first three ABCFM mission wives in the East, who, perhaps, did not fail to mimic/perform the ideal, rather defied the ideal. Known in mission history for being the "wrong sort" of woman to marry a missionary, she is often referred to in criticism as the "forgotten wife." Referring to Roxana Nott's autobiography, "A Little Story" published in the ABCFM archives in 1874, Emily Conroy-Krutz in "The Forgotten Wife: Roxana Nott and Missionary Marriage in Bombay" (2018) delineates the feud between Roxana and the missionaries Samuel Newell and Gordon Hall over the management of the mission household, where this mission wife at least is said to have defied the authority of the male missionaries by exercising a "petticoat government" (77). Making a brief yet significant reference to this conflict, Nott herself states in her text, "they [Newell and Hall] assumed authority that I did not accept—they meddled in with household affairs—which I was *'eak [letter unclearly typed] enough to resent" ("A Little Story" 8).²¹² The feud is thus between a woman who needed complete authority over her domestic space and men who "meddled" with that female sphere. However, what disrupts Nott's feminine self is the meekness that she sheds in her retaliation with missionaries, to whom a woman was a clear subordinate.

I close this chapter by drawing attention to the mission memoir's many telling silences/narrative lacunae with special reference to *Memoir on Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow*. If filled, these silences would have further thrown both gender and genre into disarray. For one, neither *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson* nor *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow* makes even a remote reference to how the American mission wife herself was othered by the Oriental native, an act that muddles the "white self"- "native other" binary. In fact, in the larger context of British colonial and imperial relations with the East, there are numerous accounts of white women being perceived as the "caste other," especially in countries like India, where a strict caste-system was being observed. The first female medical missionary to the colonies from Britain, Dr. Anna Sarah Kugler states that,

it was not pleasant to be constantly reminded as one entered high caste Hindu homes, that one was an unclean object, defiling everything one touched. It was not pleasant to have all the bedclothes put to one side while one examined the patient, or to have a very ill patient to have taken out and brought into the courtyard because the doctor was too unclean to go inside [...] Neither did one enjoy stooping down and picking up the medicine bottle because one was too unclean to take it directly from the hand of the Brahman.²¹³

In the context of the then Ceylon where Harriet Winslow situates herself, Arumuga Navalar (1822-1879), a Sri Lankan Tamil who is considered as the backbone of the Saivite Revival in nineteenth-century Jaffna, where most of the American mission activities were located, used the word *mleccha*, meaning "a non-Aryan or person of an outcaste race; a barbarian [...] a person who does not conform with conventional Hindu beliefs and practices; a foreigner,"²¹⁴ as a derogatory term to refer to white missionaries. "His activities are a major reason why Protestant conversions among the high castes in Sri Lanka decreased notably in the mid-nineteenth century" (Hudson 96).²¹⁵

However, other than vague references to the difficulties in luring upper caste

Jaffna women to attend a religious meeting, let alone getting them to convert to Christianity, *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow* makes no mention of this crucial factor of class disproportion in the America-Ceylon mission's accessibility to the native other. Using a particular restricted class of ethnic Ceylonese—underprivileged Tamils—belonging to only a particular area in Sri Lanka—Jaffna, in the very North of the country—*Memoir of Mrs. Harriet L. Winslow* under-represents an entire country with far more complex colonial realities, portraying Jaffna as an intellectual vacuum full of “primitive” natives.²¹⁶ An uninformed reader would have also had the impression that the North of Ceylon was a backward territory before Christianity was first introduced to it by the Americans. In fact, not just Jaffna but much of the rest of the country as well had already been under Portuguese (1505-1658), Dutch (1658-1796) and British (1796-1948) rule for centuries before the American missionaries found themselves in this Oriental space.²¹⁷ In 1627, around thirty Portuguese Catholic missionaries/priests are recorded to have been proselytizing in the Jaffna peninsula. Out of most of the forced conversions, the higher castes (the *Vellalas*) are believed to have desired financial and political gains, while the lower castes are considered to have found salvation and upward social mobility within the Portuguese Catholic community who did not honor the code of caste discrimination (Gunasingham 154-155).

Therefore, from around 1658, according to Murugar Gunasingham, (2016) “[t]he presence of numerous Catholic churches and schools in the Peninsula made the task of converting the people to another Christian faith comparatively easy,” especially for the Protestant priests, who came alongside the Dutch invaders of Ceylon (196). The British Protestants who followed suit not only pursued their own Protestant proselytizing

missions in Jaffna, but they also put efficient infrastructure in place in the peninsula, consisting of lanes, bridges and roads. Hence, Jaffna was in no sense a “wilderness,” metaphorically nor materially when American mission wives wrote their accounts of it. The conspicuous absence of significant information as the above—on the complex class structures in the Oriental colony, its history, or native resistance that unsettled the white subject—could have only safeguarded the interests of the American foreign missions.

One needs only to casually dip into early nineteenth-century British-Ceylonese colonial relations in the Southern part of the majoritarian Sinhalese areas for the limitations of such reductionist narratives to become further explicit. As K. Ishwaran and Smith Bardwell clarify in *Contributions to Asian Studies: Tradition and Change in Theravada Buddhism: Essays on Ceylon and Thailand in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (1973), the British by the nineteenth century had already helped fashion a “New Rich” class, “the Sinhalese upper-middle class [educated in British missionary schools, who were] more Westernized than any other Asian group outside the Philippines” (21). At private girls’ schools that were modelled after British public schools, women belonging to the Ceylonese elite were trained to become “angels in the house,” modelled on the values of Victorian womanhood. As Alexander Watkins (2015) explains in “In Fear of Monsters: Women’s Identities and the Cult of Domesticity in British Ceylon,” these women were taught in the colonizer’s language that being true women was another way to be Anglicized, thereby offering them a far superior social status than of the Ceylonese masses.²¹⁸

Hence, before American missionaries took on their Christianizing responsibilities of the heathen natives of the Northern most areas of Ceylon, imperial Britain had already

“westernized,” i.e. “civilized” a class of native elites in the model of Macaulay’s interpreters.²¹⁹ Elite Ceylonese women in the Southern areas of the country had already embraced Victorian domesticity and the merits of a western-style patriarchal family, creating a racial fracture in a female ideal springing from a superior white race. To fill up the gaps left by the absence of such information would only have been to the detriment of the mission memoir that served American aggrandizement as well as America’s global importance in civilizing the non-Christian world.

CONCLUSION

“Angels who Stepped Outside their Houses” is an exploration of how the American republic sought to fashion a gendered white American self as a fitting representation of the new nation, as reflected in the writings of white American women authors from the late eighteenth century to the 1860’s. Locating the formation of this gendered national self, called the “American true woman,” on a transnational plane, I have shown how through the production of a particular Englishness and an Oriental otherness, such texts reveal the significant role that imperial Britain and the non-national/not-yet-national colonial Orient played in the (de/)construction/(de/)centering of American true womanhood.

While this work by no means represents a comprehensive or exhaustive account of white American women’s writing from the post-revolutionary years to just after the American Civil War, given the specific manner in which texts by white American women who participated in myriad ways in the (de/)construction of a particular feminine ideal have been treated here, I hope this dissertation will open up fresh avenues of inquiry into women’s studies that both acknowledge racial and national difference, and surpass rigid racial or national boundaries. Looking forward, it would be especially worthwhile to explore the dynamic structures of global patriarchy that “ideal” womanhood has always served, bringing together, for instance, Victorian womanhood, American true womanhood, and the elite Southern Ceylonese woman who allow us not only to examine the transnational workings of patriarchal socio-cultural structures across the world but also how they informed each other in the fashioning of their women.

Further, I also hope that research on the “New Woman” who emerged from

around the end of the nineteenth century in America will continue to work on the transformations of the American feminine ideal through the centuries, exploring, like my study on early to mid-nineteenth-century American true womanhood, how different nations in the world informed each other in the (de/)construction of their gendered subjects.

NOTES

¹ The “Orient” is a politically loaded and discriminatory term. However, given its critical resonance to my study, I choose to use this problematic term alternatively with, perhaps, the less problematic term “East.”

² As Andrew Preston & Doug Rossinow (2017) suggest, “Do not ignore the nation-state, but instead enfold nations within wider analyses [...] that are not bound by the strictures of national sovereignty, [...] reflect a desire to opt for a larger frame [...] to demonstrate the ways in which the history of the modern United States can be reconceived internationally and transnationally (3). In a sense, this is my intention too.

³ Pp 318-20. *Ladies’ Wreath*, 5 (1851): 313-27.

⁴ James W. Ceaser’s delineation of the “exceptionalist” ethos in “The Origins and Character of American Exceptionalism” (2012) is helpful here in understanding the new republic’s need for a uniquely national representative subject. Tracing the development of the term from John Winthrop in 1630, who is generally considered to have originated the concept, to Alexis de Toqueville and Ronald Reagan, Ceasar concludes with “something different and something special” (8) as exceptionalism’s true meaning. He goes onto analyze “specialty” and suggests that it refers to a “special quality or task or mission,” (8) a mission being either religious or political, and on the wings of such an idea of a *special* religious, national and political mission, we see conceptions such as Manifest Destiny, for example, seeking to justify acts like internal colonization and the displacement of indigenous Americans.

Belief in Social Darwinism, scientific theories of racism and Anglo-Saxon superiority also fed this “different” and “special” Americanness. On the one hand, Charles Darwin’s ground-breaking work, *On the Origin of Species* (1859) claimed that only the fittest species survived through natural selection. (Although Darwin concentrated on animal species, later Darwinists used his theories of evolution in order to validate the superiority of one race over another, such as the social Darwinist Francis Galton (1892), the father of the eugenics movement). White races in both the Old World and the New jumped at the chance and made use of such racist theories to rationalize the *othering* of peoples—American Indians, African Americans and Oriental *natives*—in turn reinforcing Anglo-Saxon superiority. “Social Darwinism was accepted in England and the United States because it supported policies and practices that both countries justified as congruent with their national interests. Though England lacked the internal racial problems that existed in the United States, its vast empire required it to develop external racist colonial and imperialist policies based on Social Darwinist principles”: Rutledge M. Dennis, “Social Darwinism, Scientific Racism, and the Metaphysics of Race.” *The Journal of Negro Education* 64. 3 (1995): 243-252 (245).

⁵ I concentrate on the period between the last decade of the eighteenth century to around the 1860’s, a time span, when “American true womanhood” was in the limelight of nation building. This periodization stems from the fact that, from the late 1860’s onward we see a transformation of the socio-political conditions of America—such as the gradual emergence of the identity of the “New Woman,” heightening American imperial endeavors, increasing international travel, professionalization of mission work for women, the flowering of African American women’s domestic novels—that invites an exploration in its own right of the specific character America took during the last few decades of the nineteenth century.

⁶ Writers from the earlier generation to more modern times, such as Herbert Ross Brown, *The Sentimental Novel in America 1789-1860* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1940), Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860,” *American Quarterly* 18. 2 (1966): 151-74 and Lori Merish, *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), Susan. M. Ryan, *The Moral Economies of American Authorship: Reputation, Scandal, and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Marketplace*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016) seem to take the “American true woman’s” national uniqueness for granted

⁷ Virtue and morality had a far-reaching/more expansive meaning than just sexual purity, since they can be seen as “national characteristics” that the new republic saw itself as having at the time. These

characteristics were to define the United States as a finer place than the decadent Europe whose morals were seen to have deteriorated. Who better to represent virtue and morality than women?

⁸ See Chapter Three for an elaboration on the republican work-ethic.

⁹ From H. D. Kitchell, "The Anglo-Saxon Element in England and America," *Wellman's Literary Miscellany* (1850) as quoted in Christopher Hanlon, *America's England: Antebellum Literature and Atlantic Sectionalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 25-27.

¹⁰ It is believed that the term gained validity through Coventry Patmore's poem, *The Angel in the House*, (1854) an identity believed to have originated from the conceptualization of Victorian womanhood in Britain. Much of these origins will be discussed in Chapter One.

¹¹ *American Political Thought* 1.1 (2012): 77-100.

¹² Meanwhile, the presence of other white immigrant races in the New World would also have generated the need for the search for an authentic whiteness in the white American subject. See Thomas Walker, "The Causes of Earlier European Immigration to the United States," *Journal of Political Economy* 19.8. (1911): 676-93.

¹³ See Reginald Horsemann, "Scientific Racism and the American Indian in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *American Quarterly* 27. 2 (1975):152-68.

¹⁴ As I will show later in the dissertation, white American women writers disrupted numerous facets of the "American national romance," as is well expressed in Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The Rise of the American Civilization* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927): "It [America] was a marvelous empire of virgin country that awaited the next great wave of migration. As the waters of the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile had invited mankind to build its civilization along their banks so the valley of the Mississippi now summoned the peoples of the earth to make a new experiment in social economy in the full light of modern times. The rolling tide of migration that swept across the mountains and down the valleys, spreading out through the forests and over the prairies, advanced in successive waves. [...] In this immense domain sprang up a social or a social order without marked class or caste, a society of people substantially equal in worldly goods, deriving their livelihood from one prime source—labor with their own hands on the soil. In its folkways and mores there was a rugged freedom—the freedom of hardy men and women, taut of muscle and bronzed by sun and rain and wind, working with their hands in abundant materials, shaping oak from their own forests and flax from their own fields to the plain uses of a plain life, content with little and rejoicing in it, rearing in unaffected naturalness many children to face also a career of hard labor, offering no goal in great riches or happiness in a multitude of things all satisfied by the unadorned epic of Christianity inherited from their fathers" (26). As quoted in David W. Noble and George Lipsitz *Death of a Nation: American Culture and the End of Exceptionalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

¹⁵ Here, I mainly refer to domestic and/or sentimental novels, (a genre I will elaborate on later) domestic manuals, conduct books and women's magazines such as the famous *Godey's Lady's Book*, largely written by and written for white American women.

¹⁶ Barbara Welter is generally considered to have brought this identity together in her well-known article, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18. 2 (1966): 151-74.

¹⁷ See Linda K. Kerber *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1980) for more information on the fashioning of the identity of the Republican woman.

¹⁸ Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988), Mary Jo Buhle, Teresa Murphy, and Jane Gerhard (eds.) *Women and the Making of America* (Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, 2009), and Catherine Clinton

The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South (New York: Pantheon, 1982) together offer a comprehensive account of the white woman of the Old South.

¹⁹ See Elizabeth J. Clapp, "American Women" in *A New Introduction to American Studies*, (eds.) Howard Temperley and Christopher Bigsby (New York: Routledge, 2013), 326-50, and Carrol Lasser and Stacey Robertson, *Antebellum Women: Private, Public Partisan (American Controversies)* (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010).

²⁰ For instance, Kathryn Kish Sklar, "'The Throne of My Heart': Religion, Oratory, and Transatlantic Community in Angelina Grimké's Launching of Women's Rights, 1828-1838" shows how "women's right-seeking activity [was] associated with efforts to end human bondage" (xv). In *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Anti-Slavery in the Era of Emancipation*, ed Kathryn Kish Sklar, (New Haven: Yale University, 2007), 211-33. Also, Susan M. Cruca, "Changing Ideals of Womanhood During the Nineteenth-Century Woman Movement" offers a comprehensive account of women's rights activism in *General Studies Writing Faculty Publication* (2005): 187-203. <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/gsw_pub/1>

²¹ In "Reading and Writing 'Hope Leslie': Catharine Maria Sedgwick's Indian 'Connections,'" Karen Woods Weierman elaborates on Catharine Maria Sedgwick's visions and understanding of the rights of American Indians, *The New England Quarterly* 75. 3 (2002): 415-43.

²² See Rachel Filene Seidman, "Women and the Abolitionist Movement," (a review essay) for a critical compilation of different American women who participated in the abolitionist movement during the nineteenth century: *NWSA Journal* 5. 2 (1993): 253-90.

²³ Steven A. Carbone, "American Transcendentalism and Analysis of Ralph Waldo Emerson's 'Self-Reliance'" offers not only a useful introduction to the movement as a whole, but also Emerson's unique contributions to it: *American Literature* 2. 1 (2010).

²⁴ A literary representation of which is her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852).

²⁵ A literary representation of which is her novel, *Hope Leslie: Or, Early Times in the Massachusetts* (1827).

²⁶ A literary representation of which is her novel, *Philothea: A Grecian Romance* (1836).

²⁷ Elizabeth J. Clapp, *A Notorious Woman: Anne Royall in Jacksonian America* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016) offers a comprehensive portrayal of her life. Anne Royall was, in fact, a crucial symbol of the nineteenth century who exemplified the fate of a woman who dared to break most gender dictates of her society. From being rejected, thrown out of houses to even being threatened by death, the then American society attempted in many ways to "tame" this "shrew."

²⁸ Caroline F. Levander, *Cradle of Liberty: Race, the Child, and National Belonging from Thomas Jefferson to W.E.B Du Bois* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006) discusses how the black child was shunned from the conceptualization of the American nation.

²⁹ Claudia Tate, *Domestic Allegories of Political Desire: The Black Heroine's Text at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992) elaborates on how novels by African American women in the last half of the nineteenth century, especially in the last decade, challenged racist notions of American womanhood. For instance, Tate draws attention to how Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) counters the claim that black mothers were not *real* mothers, and how Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig: Sketches from the Life of a Free Black* (1859) critiques white women and their inability to tend to their household without the help of their racially *othered* servants.

³⁰ As Frances B. Cogan claims in *All American Girl: The Ideal of Real womanhood in Mid Nineteenth Century* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989) qualities such as self-reliance and the ability to do one's own work transformed "true womanhood" to "real womanhood." However, I find the breach she

draws between “true” and “real” womanhood difficult to accept. Self-reliance is a feature that Americanized Victorian womanhood when this British ideal was being transplanted in the new nation. If at all, self-reliance infused Americanness in the ideal white American female subject, rather than make a British ideal more “real” on American soil.

³¹ Brodhead, *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

³² For instance, Monika Elbert’s compilation of articles, *Separate Spheres No More: Gender Convergence in American Literature, 1830-1930* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000), draws attention to how involvement with the “public,” “male identified” spheres of the anti-slavery movement, nationalism, imperialism, etc. defies the distinction of women’s domestication, while, Jana L. Argersinger and Phyllis Cole (eds.), *Toward a Female Genealogy of Transcendentalism* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014) discusses nineteenth-century white American women authors’ involvement in the male-identified elite movement of Transcendentalism. Gillian Brown, *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990) shows how the domestic ideals of privacy and the personal contributed to American individualism, which is in stark contrast to selflessness and self-sacrifice the woman presiding over this home was supposed to embody. G.R. Thompson, *Reading the American Novel 1865-1914* (New York: Blackwell, 2012) reads the domestic space as a feminist space, with special focus on Louisa May Alcott’s novels. Also see Amy G. Richter *At Home in Nineteenth-Century America: A Documentary History* (New York: New York University Press, 2015) for an elaboration of how the nineteenth-century home was at once a private as well as a public space.

³³ Nina Baym, *Novels, Readers, and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 21.

³⁴ Warhol, *Gendered Interventions: Narrative Discourse in the Victorian Novel* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1989). “By taking up the strategies that men used in real-world discourse—the earnest exhortation, the personalized direct address to an audience, the insistence on speaking a *truth* the women transformed those rhetorical moves into feminine codes in literary discourse” (165).

³⁵ See Shirley Samuels (ed.) *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), as well as William Hunting Howell, “In the Realms of Sensibility” *American Literary History* 25. 2 (2013): 406-17 for an account of the specific use to which sentiment was put in nineteenth-century American writing.

³⁶ “As emotion, embodied thought that animates cognition with the recognition of the self’s engagement; as sympathy, firmly based in the observer’s body and imaginatively linking it to another’s; as domestic culture, in the peculiar intimacy of the print commodity; sentimentality at the same time locates us in our embodied and particular selves and takes us out of them”: June Howard, “What is Sentimentality?” *American Literary History* 11. 1 (1999): 63-81 (77). See also the section titled “Sentimentalism and Enlightenment Political Theory” in Marianne Noble, “Making this Whole Nation Feel: The Sentimental Novel in the United States,” *A Companion to the American Novel*, ed. Alfred Bendixen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), 170-86.

³⁷ Sentimentalism was prevalent in British literary culture mostly during the eighteenth century, exemplified by works such as Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa* (1748), Hugh Mackenzie’s *The Man of Feeling* (1771), Rousseau’s *The New Heloise* (1761), Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), Laurence Sterne’s *Sentimental Journey* (1768), and Johann Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). In the nineteenth century, Charles Dickens himself used sentiment as a vehicle of expression, although he is not conventionally considered as a “sentimental writer,” a derogatory term reserved for mostly female writers.

³⁸ Elizabeth Maddock Dillon offers a comprehensive account of Scottish Commonsense philosophy’s impact on America: “Sentimental Aesthetics,” *American Literature* 76. 3 (2004): 495-523.

³⁹ Susanna L. Blumenthal, "The Mind of a Moral Agent: Scottish Common Sense and the Problem of Responsibility in Nineteenth-Century American Law," *Law and History Review* 26. 1 (2008): 99-159.

⁴⁰ When domestic and/or sentimental novels are taken into consideration, one initial clarification may have to be made, given that it is not always easy to strictly identify what critics refer to by this term. Domesticity and sentiment are diffused in its different uses by different women authors. For example, early "seduction novels" such as *Charlotte Temple* (written by the British American writer Susanna Rowson in 1791 and a pioneer of seduction fiction in the early nineteenth century in America) are written in the sentimental vein, yet principally convey an *anti*-seduction moral instead of laying great emphasis on domesticity. Still, most women's novels that conspicuously engage with the separate sphere of the home, such as Susan Warner's *The Wide Wide World* (1850) and *India: The Pearl of Pearl River* (1856) by E.D.E.N Southworth are also sentimental and are commonly seen as being written more "from the heart." Then again, there are novels such as *The Lamplighter* (1854) by Maria Susanna Cummins, which discusses the gendered separation of spheres without presenting an elaborate account of domesticity, as much as *The Wide Wide World* does; domesticity is treated as a part of the discourse of women's private realm rather than as its principal focus in this novel. To add to the above, Harriet Wilson's autobiographical novel *Our Nig: Sketches from the Life of a Free Black* (1859) as well as Hannah Crafts, *A Bondswoman's Narrative* (1853/61) and Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861) complicate the terrain at multiple levels: a) by intervening in an exclusive white middle class identity of "true womanhood", b) by entering the white middle class genre of domestic and sentimental novel as African American women, and c) by modifying the genre by, for example, amalgamating the forms of slave narrative, semi-autobiography etc. with domestic and sentimental features. For the purposes of this study, therefore, I would like to use a somewhat flexible and broad working definition of the genre, as literary works written in the sentimental vein, focusing on the concept of "true womanhood" and the gendered separation of spheres. These works would also pay attention to the spaces of the private/home/emotion/inward life and intervene in the discourse of domesticity, however, to different degrees.

⁴¹ *The First Century of American Literature: 1770-1870* (1935; rpt. New York: Cooper Square, 1966). Herbert Ross Brown, *The Sentimental Novel in America 1789-1860* (North Carolina: Duke University, 1940) offers a similar argument that from a twenty-first century perspective can only be called sexist. Both works refer to American women's novels of the nineteenth century with a tone that is unmistakably condescending and patronizing.

⁴² Thomas Wentworth Higginson's (1823-1911) "Literature as an Art," *Atlantic Monthly* (1867) offers a nineteenth-century account of the significance of aesthetic style in literary writing; a lack thereof was a principal charge made against women's writing at the time.

⁴³ Nina Baym, *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-70* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978); Cathy N. Davidson, "Flirting with Destiny: Ambivalences in Form in the Early American Sentimental Novel," *Studies in American Fiction* 10.1 (1982): 17-39. Susan K. Harris, *Nineteenth-Century American Women's Novels: Interpretive Strategies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990) also offers an account of the different phases of criticism with regard to nineteenth-century American women's writing.

⁴⁴ Jane Tompkins. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), xi. Her "Masterpiece Theatre: The Politics of Hawthorne's Literary Reputation" (Elliston Lecture, May 9, 1984) also works on the same premise.

⁴⁵ Zofer, "'Carry[ing] a Yankee Girl to Glory': Redefining Female Authorship in the Postbellum United States," *American Literature* 75.1 (2003): 31-60.

⁴⁶ See Margaret Fuller *At Home and Abroad, or, Things and Thoughts in America and Europe* (1864; rpt. (ed.) Arthur B. Fuller, New York: Kennikat, 1869).

⁴⁷ I see similar resonances even in the more visibly politicized women's narratives of abolitionism. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) is a fine example of such an infusion of a political discourse in

sentimental and feminine feeling. Still, let us not forget that, as mentioned earlier, politics and sentiment were not entirely incompatible during the era. Yet, sentiment was considered, without a doubt, as a female-identified vehicle of persuasion, and I see the above women as using a female-identified expression in order to appropriate male-identified genres of writing. “Sentimental writing enabled women to wheal enormous cultural power; it gave them a political voice, empowering them to transform cruel or emotionally unresponsive policies of the public sphere, according to women’s values, at a time when women had no other real public voice” (Noble, 171). Marianne Noble says the above with reference to Jane Tompkins’s *Sensational Designs* (1985).

⁴⁸ I say this not with an aim to undermine the significance of writing that offers gender/race/class-specific insights and views, but to draw attention to the negative repercussions of restrictions based on different identity categories.

⁴⁹ Consider Stowe’s emphasis on the importance of American women learning to take care of their own homes, in order to eliminate the danger of employing the unsubmitive Irish and German servants who disrupted the harmony of the American home. *Household Papers and Stories*, (1868; rpt. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1896).

⁵⁰ In fact, the phrase, “angel in the house” that was consonant with an ideal white womanhood is said to have originated in the title of the English poet and critic Coventry Patmore’s eponymous long narrative poem published in 1854. English writer and philanthropist Hannah More’s *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education* (1799) too was a key British text that influenced the American imagination on this head.

⁵¹ Child too has similar reservations against “our wealthy people [who] copy all the foolish and extravagant caprice of European fashion [...] foolish vanities” (80) of well-to-do Americans. *The American Frugal Housewife*, (1829; rpt. New York: Samuel S. & William Wood, 1838).

⁵² “But among Protestants there is no system or organization instituted, thus to secure and employ the benevolent energies of the female sex in the cause of education. If a woman finds it in her heart to turn missionary and go away from her country to instruct the *heathen*, in most case, every facility is provided [...] But let a woman be interested *in her own country*” (116).

⁵³ Many other antebellum women’s texts challenge the dictates of patriarchal marriage. Though they do not strictly belong to the domestic and sentimental narrative genre, I offer here a brief sketch of those texts to show the degree of availability of this anti/non-marriage option to a white woman living during the early to mid-nineteenth century. Some key examples are Mary Gove Nichols and Thomas Low Nichols’s co-authored text, *Marriage* (1845), mentioned earlier; Tabitha Tenney’s novel, *Female Quixotism: Exhibited in the Romantic Opinions and Extravagant Adventures of Dorcasina Sheldon* (1801) a much earlier counter-narrative to domestic and sentimental novels which almost discourages women from any type of marriage, companionate or otherwise; Fanny Fern’s semi-autobiographical novel *Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time* (1854) which provides an instance of a white woman challenging most of the dictates of “true womanhood” by becoming a fiercely satirical writer who does not shy away from criticizing her own family when compelled to make ends meet by writing by fireside light after her husband dies, leaving her financially deprived. This underlying negative discourse on marriage then mars the aura of sanctified heterosexual patriarchy by desanctifying, secularizing and professionalizing it to the point that one can ask, ‘Is it possible to create an ideal domestic space/home in the absence of the benevolent patriarch?’ Is this then an underlying hint that promotes matriarchy?

⁵⁴ See Karcher (1994).

⁵⁵ Karcher (1994) further states that,

[i]n assuming the vocation of a writer for mothers and children, she[/Child] would step symbolically into her mother's role and offer a generation of young readers the mothering she herself had not received. She would even devote one of her domestic advice books, *The Family Nurse* (1837), to the household care of the sick - the very service she had rebelled against rendering. [...] The experience of helping to bring up the Preston children also taught her much of

the wisdom she distilled into *The Mother's Book* (1831) and the *Juvenile Miscellany* (1826-34), which together made this motherless child and childless woman a national authority on childrearing. (5-10)

“Motherless child and childless woman”; perhaps, there would be nothing more ironical than such a woman becoming a reputed writer on motherhood. Perhaps, in yet another sense, there may be no irony whatsoever in this unlikely combination. Only a “motherless child and a childless woman,” who, nevertheless, was a mother by proxy could claim to have a more vivid sense of what she had missed in these absent relationships than one who had and took them for granted.

⁵⁶ As quoted in Karcher 126. According to biographical accounts, Child faces much of her financial worries at this point, due to the court case against her husband David Lee Child for libel.

⁵⁷ “Philothea's tall figure was a lovely union of majesty and grace. The golden hair, which she inherited from a Laconian mother, was tastefully arranged on the top of her head, in a braided crown, over the sides of which the bright curls fell, like tendrils of grapes from the edge of a basket. The mild brilliancy of *her large dark eyes formed a beautiful contrast to a complexion fair even to transparency. Her expression had the innocence of infancy; but it was tinged with something elevated and holy, which made it seem like infancy in Heaven*” (Emphasis added, n.pag.).

⁵⁸ Philothea was “bound to Paralus by ties stronger than usually bind the hearts of women. My kind grandfather has given me an education seldom bestowed on daughters; and from our childhood, Paralus and I have shared the same books, the same music, and the same thoughts, until our souls seem to be one” (n.pag.).

⁵⁹ For the pro-slavery and conservative stance of Southern women writers, see Daphne V. Wyse, “To Better Serve and Sustain the South: How Nineteenth Century Domestic Novelists Supported Southern Patriarchy using the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’ and the Written Word,” *History Theses* (2012), paper 8; Sharon Talley, *Southern Women Novelists and the Civil War: Trauma and Collective Memory in the American Literary Tradition Since 1861* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014); and Anne Goodwyn Jones, *Tomorrow is Another Day: The Woman Writer in the South, 1859-1936* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982).

⁶⁰ Biographical details in this section derive from Brenda Ayres *The Life and Works of Augusta Jane Evans Wilson, 1835–1909* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

⁶¹ “At the forefront stood Evans herself, exhibiting her knowledge and intellectualism as a Southerner. She was an intelligent, well-read woman who made frequent trips to the cultural mecca of America, New York City. In nearly all of the letters she wrote to friends and acquaintances, she made ready reference to classical mythology and to a plethora of broad subjects that indicate she continued to be an avid reader throughout her life. For example, in one short letter alone, she casually refers to Voltaire, Frederick the Great of Prussia, Enceladus and Minerva, Count Giovanni, William Evelyn, John Stuart Mill, Henry Thomas Buckle, the Bible, John Ruskin, and Jean Ingelow” (Ayers 216).

⁶² Amongst whom were James Wood Davidson, Charles Henry Webb (who also wrote a parody of *St. Elmo* named *St. Twel'mo; or, the Cuneiform Cyclopedist of Chattanooga*) and Allen Tate.

⁶³ Dr. Jerome Cochran of Mobile as quoted in Ayers, 207.

⁶⁴ Here, she draws largely from Drew Gilpin Faust *A Sacred Circle: The Dilemma of the Intellectual in the Old South, 1840–1860* (1977) that mainly deals with a group of male thinkers—George Frederick Holmes, Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, Edmund Ruffin, William Gilmore Simms, James Henry Hammond—who considered themselves as a part of a “sacred circle” that could enlighten the South.

⁶⁵ Spurred on by medical or scientific “evidence,” the general consensus of society at the time was also that women were intellectually inferior to men. Mr. Manning gives expression to the above idea in *St. Elmo* as follows: “women never write histories nor epics; never compose oratorios that go sounding down the

centuries; never paint 'Last Suppers' and 'Judgment Days;' though now and then one gives to the word a pretty ballad that sounds sweet and soothing when sung over a cradle, or another paints a pleasant little genre sketch which will hang appropriately in some quiet corner, and rest and refresh eyes that are weary with gazing at the sublime spiritualism of Fra Bartolomeo, or the gloomy grandeur of Salvator Rosa" (234).

⁶⁶ *St. Elmo*'s author shared a similar fate. However, to Ayers's mind, "Lorenzo Wilson, Evans' new husband, thought that he could persuade her to give up her writing career and [...] many scholars think that she did not produce the volume and quality after her marriage as she did before her marriage. However, as I have mentioned before, she did write five more books after *St. Elmo*, and in my opinion each of those novels has powerful messages and narrative technique. *At the Mercy of Tiberius* (1887) was her best-crafted novel" (117).

⁶⁷ The novel begins with a quotation on women by John Ruskin, the leading English art critic of the Victorian era, as well as an art patron, draughtsman, watercolourist, prominent social thinker and philanthropist:

A true wife in her husband's house is his servant; it is in his heart that she is queen. Whatever of the best he can conceive, it is her part to be; whatever of the highest he can hope, it is hers to promise; all that is dark in him she must purge into purity; all that is falling in him she must strengthen into truth; from her, through all the world's clamour, he must win his praise; in her, through all the world's warfare, he must find his peace.

⁶⁸ In the above context, I wonder whether, the "contradictions" within "true womanhood" that I have so far discussed in this chapter, can, in fact be treated as such. Or, is it that our intellectual conditioning does not allow us to move past binary thinking, and to perhaps understand that the constructions of human identities have always been and always will be conflictual (reminding ourselves that the disruption of the binary, thereby, also disrupts the concept of the 'conflictual' as it is used here); in other words, that, one's subjectivity can simultaneously inhabit two different spaces or multiple spaces, and by the extension of that logic, could American "true womanhood" be *uniquely* American while at the same time being utterly *transnational*, all at once? Of course, my aim here is not to embark on a debate on binary thinking, let alone calling for its annulment in critical discourse, for, indeed, organizing knowledge into binary models has its own uses, and it is perhaps too rooted in intellectualism to be wiped out in the course of a single dissertation. Instead, my aim here is to make use of the binary while also questioning and therefore disrupting the binary.

⁶⁹ Kirkland, *Holidays Abroad: or, Europe from the West* (1849), 25, 99 (emphasis added in both epigraphs).

⁷⁰ I will also use "Britishness" alternatively with "Englishness" at times given that the former offers a larger scope and inclusiveness than the latter, and also because America's colonial relationship was, more accurately, with Britain as a whole. Besides, the admiration of "lady travelers" for the Old World went beyond England. However, "Englishness" is what the examples that I use in this chapter continue to reinforce.

⁷¹ In this chapter, I focus on this specific category of white American female travelers of mainly the first half of the nineteenth century, who participated in the discourse of "American true womanhood." An elaboration of this category of writers is included in a later section.

⁷² My allusion here is to a phrase in Homi K. Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, where he discusses colonial native-elites' "mimicry" of white identities, a mimicry that made the former 'white, but not quite white' (London: Routledge, 1994). Of course, British critiques alone do not account for the white American's anxieties of self in the antebellum. For instance, the anxieties during the era of the white American "working" self, or the white working classes is an interesting angle in the study of the production of the white American self which deserves a separate engagement: see David Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1999) for an elaboration on how white wage workers produced a space racially different from the non-waged black slaves, juxtaposing a white privilege over black discrimination. However, since my main intention in this dissertation is to bring

an American, British and Oriental trio together in the investigation of a model of white womanhood, I focus on a specific anxiety of the white American gendered self as reflected in the travelogues of “lady travelers,” in the context of the white American subject being produced in British texts as an interstitial identity.

⁷³ Mills, *Blackness Visible: Essays on Philosophy and Race* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 45. See also Kilbride 135.

⁷⁴ See Giles (2001), 119.

⁷⁵ See also Basil Hall, *Travels in North America, In the Years 1827 and 1828*, Vol. I & II (Philadelphia: Carey Lee & Cary, 1829) and Captain C. B. Marryat, *Diary in America with Remarks on its Institutions* (Philadelphia: Cary & Heart, 1839).

⁷⁶ Buell, “Prologue: Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic (Mis)Understandings: From Washington Irving and Frances Trollope to Mark Twain and Lord Bryce,” *Transatlantic Traffic and (Mis)Translations*, eds. Robin Peel & Daniel Maudlin (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2013), 1-13 (4).

⁷⁷ See Aurelian Craiutu and Jeffrey C. Isaac, eds., *America Through European Eyes: British and French Reflections on the New World from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* (State College: Pennsylvania State University, 2009), Christine De Vine, ed., *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), and Lawrence Buell, “American Literary Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon,” *American Literary History* 4. 3 (1992): 411-42 for more information on British critiques of America.

⁷⁸ Lawrence Buell puts it well when he says the following on European critiques of American culture: “For this there was much evidence. Foreign visitors denied America refinement (the want of which was, for Frances Trollope in *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, the greatest American defect). Nineteenth-century travelers on the notorious American practice of tobacco chewing and spitting, for instance, sound like V. S. Naipaul on Indian shitting. European travelers acknowledged American skill at practical calculation (deprecating it as part of the apparatus of American materialism) but tended to depict Americans as more irrational than rational, as an unphilosophical culture whatever its legislative genius, as hasty and slapdash nation builders. They regularly denied America a voice in a culturally substantial sense a la mode Sydney Smith. (‘If the national mind of America be judged of by its legislation, it is of a very high order ... If the American nation be judged by its literature, it may be pronounced to have no mind at all’ [Martineau 2: 200-01]. They even denied the Americans language in the spirit of Rudyard Kipling’s remark that ‘the American has no language, only ‘dialect, slang, provincialism, accent, and so forth’ (24). It was common for foreign travelers to frame their accounts as narratives of disillusionment, to stress that they started with hopeful, even utopian, expectations of finding a model nation-in-the-making only to discover a cultural back water” (418-19). Buell, “American Literary Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon,” *American Literary History*. 4. 3 (1992): 411-42. Also see Marek Paryz for additional information on British critiques of the lack of civilization and culture in America, where she says, that, “[p]redictably, major criticism expressed by British travelers was targeted at the American lack of refinement, the harshness of manners, the evidence of which the British criticized virtually at every step” (596). “Beyond the Traveler’s Testimony: Emerson’s *English Traits* and the Construction of Postcolonial Counter-Discourse.” *The American Transcendental Quarterly*. 20.3 (2006): 122-43.

⁷⁹ As we shall see in a later section of this chapter, white American “lady travelers” writing of their journeyings in Britain also confirm the sense of superiority of the elegant circles of the British upper classes and intervene in a classed discourse by making their narrative personas acknowledge, desire and mimic a genteel, elegant *culturedness* coded as upper-class-English-white. Hence, for the white American during the day, to be seen as inelegant and uncultured by the English whites was, by extension, as bad as being seen as “non-white.”

⁸⁰ Daniel Kilbride, *Being American in Europe, 1750–1860* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013) mentions cases of other Europeans not being able to distinguish between white Americans and the British whites, which was not acceptable to the latter (36). This information makes me wonder whether it

was a cause for a British anxiety of self or not: a reason why, perhaps, it was all the more important for some British writers to treat white Americans in the parallel image of Oriental *native others*, thus distancing the New World from the Old.

⁸¹ Henceforth referred to as *Domestic Manners*.

⁸² See Brenda Ayres, ed. *Frances Trollope and the Novel of Social Change* (Westport: Greenwood, 2002).

⁸³ In M. B. Hackler, "Condemned of Nature": British Travelers on the Landscape of the Antebellum American South," *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World*, ed. Christine De Vine (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 185-202. In Chapter Four of this dissertation, I will also show how American authors themselves, curiously, make use of a similar Orientalist lexicon to refer to the slave South. Either being influenced by such a readily available rhetoric of othering, or manifesting a deeper contempt toward those national evils that brought America closer to the "uncivilized" corners of the "primitive" world, even American women authors such as E.D.E.N Southworth in *India: Pearl of Pearl River* and Harriet Beecher Stowe in *Agnes of Sorrento* echo a similar Orientalist rhetoric in their references to the slave South.

⁸⁴ Marek Paryz (2006) comments that, "[f]or crude reasons, the American backwoods settler is a necessary figure for English travel writers, enabling them to articulate cultural difference and to justify their sense of superiority" (572).

⁸⁵ "[S]urely there's no country in the world where religion makes so large a part of the amusement and occupation of the ladies. Spain, in its most catholic days, could not exceed it [...] nothing more conspicuous than in the number of chains thrown across the streets on a Sunday to prevent horses and carriages from passing" (*Domestic Manners* 275).

⁸⁶ See <<http://lankapura.com/2010/11/devil-dancers-sri-lanka/>> for more information. In fact, religious fanaticism and superstitions are shown to abound in the Orient as recorded in nineteenth century British and American narratives on the East, which are features commonly used to represent "uncivilized" nations. More of this will be discussed in Chapter Four and Five of this dissertation.

⁸⁷ De Vine's Introduction to *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World* (2013) offers the same argument, where, she further qualifies the specific *otherness* that was attributed to the New World subject by saying that, "European Americans [were] not seen as others in the same way as Africans or Orientals were" (1).

⁸⁸ *Domesticity, Imperialism, and Emigration in the Victorian Novel* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002).

⁸⁹ McBratney, "The Failure of Dickens's Transatlantic Dream in *American Notes*," *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World*, ed. Christine De Vine (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), 69-86 (84).

⁹⁰ "New England women [married] men old enough to be their fathers" (Martineau 237).

⁹¹ See also Diana C. Archibald's *Domesticity, Imperialism, and Emigration in the Victorian Novel* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002). It is a study focused on Victorian novels and how these novels record British perceptions of American women, ("Neo-European women" as referred to by the author) seeing them as masculinized and aberrant monsters unfit for Englishmen to marry, while at the same time, showing a subtle desire for the former. (In later nineteenth century, however, we see British men searching for wealthy American brides!) She also talks about the notion prevalent in most Victorian novels, that an Englishwoman in America would only mar her reputation, which I believe, curiously contrasts with the idea that an American "true woman" in Europe was in danger of being corrupted by feudal and aristocratic values, as indicated in some American writing at the time, such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Marble Faun: Or, The Romance of Monte Beni* (1860).

⁹² H. Frawley, *A Wider Range: Travel Writing by Women in Victorian England* as quoted in Kendall A. McClellan, "National Adolescence and Imaginative Freedom: The Traveling Desires of Martineau and Bird," *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World*, ed. Catherine De Vine (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013).

⁹³ Frank Lauterbach, "British Travel Writing about the Americas, 1820-1840: Different and Differentiating Views," *Comparative Literature and Culture* 3. 2 (2001): 1-11.

⁹⁴ I allude here to a term used in Christopher Hanlon's *America's England: Antebellum Literature and Atlantic Sectionalism*, which he uses to characterize American Anglophilia, particularly in the mid-nineteenth century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁹⁵ John Carlos Rowe in *Literary Culture and U.S. Imperialism: From the Revolution to World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) also taps onto yet another ambivalence in America's relations to Britain, "Americans' interpretations of themselves as a people are shaped by a powerful imperial desire and a profound anti-colonial temper [...] I argue that it is recognizable in U.S. culture of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (3-11).

⁹⁶ See also William W. Stowe's *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994) for more information on, mostly male travelers to Europe from America in the nineteenth century.

⁹⁷ Even in Washington Irving's "English Writers on America: 1890-20" (1819; rp. Blacksburg: Virginia Tech, 2001) we see pronounced a clear consciousness of an Anglo-American unity, where Irving goes onto say, "Throughout the country there was something of enthusiasm connected with the idea of England. We looked to it with a hallowed feeling of tenderness and veneration, as the land of our forefathers- the august repository of the monuments and antiquities of our race- the birthplace and mausoleum of the sages and heroes of our paternal history. After our own country, there was none in whose glory we more delighted- none whose good opinion we were more anxious to possess- none towards which our hearts yearned with such throbbings of warm consanguinity. Even during the late war, whenever there was the least opportunity for kind feelings to spring forth, it was the delight of the generous spirits of our country to show that, in the midst of hostilities, they still kept alive the sparks of future friendship [...] But it is hard to give up the kindred tie! and there are feelings dearer than interest- closer to the heart than pride- that will still make us cast back a look of regret, as we wander farther and farther from the paternal roof, and lament the waywardness of the parent that would repel the affections of the child" (6-7). We see him advising his fellow countrymen that, in spite of the stereotyping misrepresentations and deprecating remarks made on them by "course and obscure writers" (5) from Britain, they should not be influenced "by any angry feelings [...] We are a young people, necessarily an imitative one [...] We may thus place England before us as a perpetual volume of reference" (5).

⁹⁸ In "Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Our Old Home*." *American Literature*. 46.3 (1974): 363-73.

⁹⁹ "Gaming, racing, drinking and mistresses, bring them down, and the democrat can still gather scandals, if he will. Dismal anecdotes abound, verifying the gossip of the last generation of dukes served by bailiffs with all their plate in pawn; of great lords living by the showing of their houses; and of an old man wheeled in his chair from room to room, whilst his chambers are exhibited to the visitor for money; of ruined dukes, and earls living in exile for debt (*English Traits* 871).

¹⁰⁰ "America, [was] a land beyond the bounds of British decency and a country which many English Victorians felt an intense attraction to and repulsion from simultaneously" (*Atlantic Republic* 137).

¹⁰¹ For instance, representing a common critique levelled against Britain, Sedgwick draws attention to its rigid class hierarchies; "The system of rank here, [is] as absolute as the Oriental *caste*" (*Letters from Abroad* 117). Hence, Orientalization and an Orientalizing lexicon seem to be thrown back and forth between the mother country and its newly independent colony almost like an expletive.

¹⁰² See Mary Suzanne Schriber's *Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830-1920* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997) and Jennifer Bernhardt Steadman's *Traveling Economies: American Women's Travel Writing* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007).

¹⁰³ The fact that some white American women made the European tour in search for moneyed men to marry is yet another paradigm of such travels which is not analyzed here. See Bess Beatty's *Traveling Beyond her Sphere: American Women on the Grand Tour, 1814-1914* (Washington: New Academia, 2016).

¹⁰⁴ *Antebellum American Women Writers and the Road* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

¹⁰⁵ For instance, there were African American women and their segregated conditions of travel (Nancy Prince's travelling on decks of ships and almost freezing to death being a case in point) as well as *unconventional* white women's trajectories to Europe (for example, Margaret Fuller was in Europe as a war correspondent to *New York Tribune*). Their writing on Britain deserves a separate study given the varied relations to their old motherland that they represented, which were affected by different factors such as a shared abolitionist sentiment, different conditions and causes of travel etc.

¹⁰⁶ "Racialists assigned to Anglo- Saxon peoples a variety of positive qualities. Some were simply physical traits, such as fair skin, blue eyes, and high foreheads. Others were debatably biological, such as the common conviction that Anglo- Saxons surpassed all other races in their capacity for intelligence. But racial nationalists went well beyond those qualities. They attributed to race a wide variety of virtuous character traits. [...] Anglo- Saxons were marked by 'the fearless courage, the indomitable energy, the love of adventure, the inventive genius, the patient industry, the world- wide spirit, sustained and quickened by moral and religious principle.' These commentators made it clear that Americans were fully as Anglo- Saxon as Britons. England had transferred to 'her offspring,' the United States, all of the positive and negative qualities of her national character, a Virginian argued in 1844. Americans must always make it their 'greatest boast that we share her blood and are not unworthy of our lineage'" (Kilbride 135).

¹⁰⁷ Hanlon also points to the amalgamation of Saxon serfs in the parallel image of the African slaves in abolitionist discourse as something that challenges the unitary notion of the white British race. Given that the master race of the British whites was also one-time slaves to the Normans, British whites are shown to have the dual identity of being the subjugated (at least at one time in history) as well as the subjugators (*America's England* 2013).

¹⁰⁸ Contrast this thought with Emerson's general perception that Americans were British "bettered." In *English Traits*, (Boston: Philips & Sampson, 1856) he makes statements such as, "England tends to accumulate her liberals in America, and her conservatives in London" (57).

¹⁰⁹ See Lucinda L. Damon-Bach's "'My Readers will Thank Me': J.C.L. Simonde de Sismondi, Civil Liberty, and Transatlantic Sympathy in Catharine Sedgwick's *Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home* (1841)," *Transatlantic Conversations: Nineteenth Century American Women's Encounters with Italy and the Atlantic World*, eds. Beth L. Lueck, Sirpa Salenius & Nancy Lusignan Schultz. (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2017), 3-22.

¹¹⁰ "Descended from one of the most distinguished families in the Connecticut River Valley, Pamela Dwight [Catharine's mother] had married Theodore Sedgwick in 1774. She had chosen a husband who rapidly achieved the standing of her parents, the socially prominent Joseph and Abigail Dwight. Theodore's election to the Massachusetts legislature, first the house and then the senate, had elevated the Sedgwicks to one of the state's leading families prior to their daughter's birth. [...] His proud daughter recalled that Theodore and his allies in the 'Federal party loved their country and were devoted to it, as virtuous parents are to their children.' However much these powerful Federalists may have been dedicated to their nation, they found their claims to leadership in a newly independent America challenged by those who sought a more egalitarian society. The hierarchy, the finely graded stratification, and the deference to a gentlemanly elite that had prevailed in colonial society no longer seemed secure. [...] One of Stockbridge's prominent residents and trustee of its Indian school, Joseph's [Catherine's maternal grandfather] status had been conveyed to posterity in a painting that displayed his 'most delicately beautiful hands.' Sedgwick presumed that her grandfather had simply wanted to show his descendants that he 'had kept 'clean hands,' a com

mendable virtue, physically or morally speaking.' Perhaps he did, but those hands, free of the marks of hard labor, also served to distinguish Joseph as a member of the elite, a leader among his contemporaries. Virtually everything about Abigail Dwight [Catharine's grandmother] had performed the same service. Described in terms of readily identifiable signifiers of status, the woman who shared in the management of the Indian school was 'dignified,' 'benevolent' and 'pleasing.' Like the hands that her husband displayed, the apparel that Abigail donned confirmed her social standing. The 'dress, of rich silk, a high-crowned cap, with plaited border, and a watch, then so seldom worn as to be a distinction, all marked the gentlewoman, and inspired respect'" (360-370). (Kelley 1993).

¹¹¹ *New England Quarterly* 78.2 (2005): 232–58.

¹¹² It is also important to note that the mistress-servant relations that she promotes in *Live and Let Live*, reflect a form of aristocratic class hierarchy.

¹¹³ See "Portrait of American Women Writers that Appeared in Print before 1861" <<http://librarycompany.org/women/portraits/kirkland.htm>> and "Kirkland, Caroline M(tilda): American Women Writers: A Critical Reference Guide from Colonial Times to the Present." *Encyclopedia.com*. <<https://www.encyclopedia.com>> for biographical information, and Annette Kolodny *The Land before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984) for a critique of Kirkland's frontier novels.

¹¹⁴ According to Denise Kohn, Sarah Meer, and Emily B. Todd, "Reading Stowe as a Transatlantic Writer," *Transatlantic Stowe: Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*, eds. Denise Kohn, et al., (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006), xi-xxxii.

¹¹⁵ This is well reflected perhaps by a text such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Marble Faun: Or, The Romance of Monte Beni*, (1860) which tells a "gothic tale of the evil threatening innocent American women in decadent Europe" (Beatty 21).

¹¹⁶ Elizabeth Langland, "Nobody's Angels: Domestic Ideology and Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Novel," *PMLA* 107.2 (1992): 290-304, and Radhika Mohanram, *Imperial White: Race, Diaspora, and the British Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007).

¹¹⁷ Yen draws on a broad range of sources, including prescriptive literature and women's magazines, novels, letters, diaries, account books, clothing bills etc.

¹¹⁸ See Charles R. Metzger, "Emerson's Religious Conception of Beauty," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 11.1 (1952): 67-74 and Michael J. Altman, *Heathen, Hindoo, Hindu: American Representations of India, 1721-1893* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

¹¹⁹ Foster here refers to the Highland clearances, where many tenant farmers were forced to give up their lands, an act spearheaded by aristocrats like the Sutherlands. See R.J. Ellis, "Joseph Sturge, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the Free-Labor Movement," *Transatlantic Conversations: Nineteenth Century American Women's Encounters with Italy and the Atlantic World*, eds. Beth L. Lueck, Sirpa Salenius & Nancy Lusignan Schultz (Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2017), 177-194, for an account of how her travels in Britain influenced Stowe further in the direction of accepting "free-labor" of the working classes as a better option for slavery.

¹²⁰ Indeed, Stowe's perceptions of the British class structure are starkly positive not only in comparison with Margaret Fuller's, but also British authors themselves such as Charles Dickens and Harriet Martineau, who saw the degradation of the British working classes for what it was. For instance, in contrast to Stowe's romanticization of the British class relations, we see Fuller delving deeper into how poverty affected not only working-class women but also upper class women, in turn leading to the disruption of the ideal home: "by night in the streets of Manchester [...] the girls of the Mills, who were strolling bear headed, with coarse, rude, and reckless air [...] see [...] through the windows of the gin-palaces the women seated drinking, too dull to carouse [...] The homes of England! Their sweetness is melting into fable [...] for

Woman, the warder, is driven into the street, and has let fall the keys in her sad plight” (*At Home and Abroad Or, Things and Thoughts in America and Europe* (Boston: Crosby & Nichols, 1856), 47.

¹²¹ Elsewhere too, Stowe shows an unambiguous awe for the feudal spirit in her descriptions of feudal mansions such as the Speke Hall (Letter III). Also, in “Walter Scott in America, English Canada and Quebec: A Comparison” Eva-Marie Kroller states that “[James Fenimore] Cooper’s aversion to [Walter] Scott’s alleged feudalist tendencies became a leading and persistent argument in American criticism against the influence of Scott” (34-35). *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*. 7.1 (1980): 32-46. This information is not only relevant to Stowe, but also other “lady travelers” who are seen to have attitudes close to veneration for the British and other European authors, among whom Walter Scott looms large, which points, by extension, to an appreciation of the feudal spirit.

¹²² [I]t certainly was far more consoling than that intense individualism of modern philosophy which places every soul all alone in its life battle” (*Agnes of Sorrento* 141). In fact, *Agnes of Sorrento* can be considered as presenting Stowe’s paean to European civilization as a whole. Its main plot line—one about a simple and innocent Italian “true girl/woman” being finally rewarded with marriage to an Italian nobleman—reveals a desire and nostalgia for an idyllic past, where Agnes, who stands as an Italian representation of America’s “true woman” is finally rewarded for her goodness by being married to Agostino—a man who represents Italy’s noblest and wealthiest manhood. “If the legends of Rome’s ancient heroes cause the pulse of colder climes and alien races to throb with sympathetic heroism, what must their power be to one who says, ‘These were my fathers?’” (117) says the narrator, thus suggesting that, being kin to an awe-inspiring western civilization, even America could have a hand in such greatness. See Annamaria Formichella Elsdén’s *Roman Fever: Domesticity and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Women’s Writing* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004) for more information on American women’s perceptions of Europe.

¹²³ See my account in Chapter One of the need for white American women participants in the discourse of “true womanhood” to reconcile their gender ideals with their writing profession.

¹²⁴ Merish’s argument ties up well with Yen’s and Tsoumas’s delineations above of the contemporary Victorian notions of elegance and good taste in dress and household décor, in that, all three critics have managed to identify consumption’s key role in the production of a nineteenth century bourgeois white subject irrespective of which side of the Atlantic they were located.

¹²⁵ In a different but related context, it is perhaps with a similar desire to project and preserve the image of a proper, and genteel white American woman, thereby gaining her seat in the British aristocratic circles who promoted her abolitionist work, that Stowe in *Sunny Memories* avoids behavior and attitude that would have been seen as class/gender-inappropriate. Likewise, Stowe goes to Europe accompanied by her husband Calvin Stowe and her son, Charles, and it is known that she got her husband to read out her speeches at anti-slavery meetings, imagining that to speak herself in public would mar her modesty. Not only does she thus regulate her manner according to a code of propriety and decorum but she also observes with joy British servants, whom she unambiguously sees as a class apart from the American ones: “They look very intelligent, are dressed with great neatness, and though their manners are very much more deferential than those of servants in our country, it appears to be a difference arising quite as much from self-respect and a sense of propriety as from servility” (Emphasis added, *Sunny Memories* 38). See Shirley Foster “The Construction of Self in *Sunny Memories*.” *Transatlantic Stowe: Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*, eds. Denise Kohn, Sarah Meer, Emily B Todd (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009): 149-67.

¹²⁶ From “How May an American Woman Best Show her Patriotism?” *Ladies’ Wreath* 5 (1851): 313-27. This closely echoes Catharine Beecher’s much quoted nationalistic ideals from her *Treatise on Domestic Economy: For the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* (1856) discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation—“Shall we ape the customs of aristocratic lands in those very practices which result from principles and institutions that we condemn?” (123)—that is exemplary of the principles upheld by the narratives on domesticity and womanhood during the antebellum era.

¹²⁷ See Chapter One for an explanation of this genre.

¹²⁸ Common stereotypes of Oriental women such as these will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

¹²⁹“Cultivated, intelligent women, who are brought up to do the work of their own families, are labor saving institutions”: Harriet Beecher Stowe, *House and Home Papers* (1865; rpt. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1896), 96.

¹³⁰ “Puritanism—established a doctrinal connection between work in one’s calling and spiritual salvation. [...] labor was an act valued in and of itself—valued intrinsically—above what it could or did achieve in the world. The loss of this intrinsic valuation, which came about with the advent of a new capitalist ethic and the turn to extrinsic valuations for labor, prompted a search for an adequate language for labor in the 1850s and, more generally, propagated what we now call the “labor narrative [...] Even if the combination of diligent labor and asceticism led to the accumulation of wealth, such worldly goals could not be labor’s purpose [...] The Republican Party would, in the early 1850s, bring this attitude to its apotheosis, unifying disparate political interests around the glorification of labor and gaining electoral victories with the platform of “Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men”: Eric Schocket, *Vanishing Moments: Class and American Literature* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 38-39.

¹³¹ However, it is interesting, and at the same time ironic that, Stowe went through a harsh struggle in managing her own household, providing a counter narrative to the ease and skill with which her ideal householders tend to their chores. Charles E. Stowe, *Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe: Compiled from her Letters and Journals* (1889; rpt. Detroit Gale Research, 1967), 90-98.

¹³² See Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991) and Stephen P. Rice, *Minding the Machine: Languages of Class in Early Industrial America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) for more information on this head

¹³³ See Dana Frank (1998).

¹³⁴ Rice’s discussion of Seth Luther in *Minding the Machine* (2004) is significant here, for he draws attention to a significant quotation by the latter, who was “a carpenter by trade and who would become one of the most radical voices in the antebellum American labor movement,” where Seth Luther is said to have commented that “the wives and daughters of the rich manufacturers would no more associate with a ‘factory girl,’ than they would with a negro slave. So much for equality in a republican country” (3). Gerda Lerner’s observations in her resonantly titled text, “The Lady and the Mill Girl: Changes in the Status of Women in the Age of Jackson” (1969; reprinted in *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History*, 10–34 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 10-34 are also quite relevant to the sub-text of *Queechy*, where she states that industrialization in early nineteenth century America created the classes of the “lady” and the “mill girl.” Mechanization resulted in the “increasing differences in life styles between women of different classes. When female occupations, such as carding, spinning and weaving, were transferred from home to factory, the poorer women followed their traditional work and became industrial workers. The women of the middle and upper classes could use their newly gained time for leisure pursuits: they became ladies” (n.pag.). The division between the subjectivities of the bourgeois lady and the “mill girl” may not be as simple as the above comment may make it seem. However, both critics certainly emphasize the idea that an “American true woman” was not expected to perform labors of the hand to the point that she would be relegated to the level/status of a working-class woman, here represented by the figures of the “mill girl,” and “factory girl” and, *Queechy*’s “farm girl.” Thomas Dublin in *Transforming Women’s Work: New England Lives in the Industrial Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994) adds to this discussion by showing how new social relations emerged due to industrial capitalism, where a working-class of females working in the Lowell mills, or as servants, seamstresses or factory operatives got differentiated from bourgeois women who were pushed to doing more delicate domestic work.

¹³⁵ Rice in *Minding the Machine* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004) explains how “American men and women who were coming to perceive themselves (and be perceived by others) as middle class in the decades before 1860 consolidated their authority and minimized the potential for class conflict in part

by representing the social relations of the industrial workplace as necessarily cooperative rather than oppositional. They did this by participating in a popular discourse on mechanization in which they defined the relation between proprietors [...] and wageworkers as analogous to three other sets of relations: *between head and hand, mind and body, and human and machine*. By mapping a vexed social relation onto a series of less contested relations understood to fall outside the social realm, middle-class Americans offered a conception of class that authorized the relative power of owners and managers without seeming to undermine the autonomy and dignity of workers” (Emphasis added 4).

¹³⁶ As quoted in Carol Lasser and Stacey Robertson, *Antebellum Women: Private, Public, Partisan (American Controversies)* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), historian Jeanne Boydston suggests that “The pastoralization of housework, with its emphasis on the sanctified home as an emanation of woman’s nature, required the articulation of a new way of seeing (or, more exactly, of not seeing) women as actors, capable of physical exertion”: Jeanne Boydston, *Home and Work: Housework, Wages, and the Ideology of Labor in the Early Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 149. Lasser and Robertson add that, according to Boydston, the ideology that categorized domesticity as woman’s sacred calling essentially blinded men and women from seeing the actual toil it required from women. For the vast majority of American women, North and South, urban and rural, their most time-consuming labors, in the service of the maintenance of their households, no longer appeared to be “productive.” (n.pag.)

¹³⁷ Ellen’s mother Mrs. Montgomery in *The Wide Wide World*, goes away in the first couple of chapters. Fleda in *Queechy* is an orphan as is Hazel in *Wych Hazel*. Eleanor in *The Old Helmet* is almost disowned by her parents for choosing the mission cause. Alice Humphreys, the surrogate mother figure in *The Wide Wide World* dies leaving Ellen in the charge of her brother John. Fleda’s aunt in *Queechy* cannot even help herself, let alone Fleda, while Eleanor’s aunt whom the former constantly relied on is left in America as Eleanor travels to Fiji.

¹³⁸ “[S]he might have been made something much better than a farmer’s wife” (30) says Mrs. Evelyn at one point of the novel, regarding Fleda.

¹³⁹ However, this is not to say that Susan Warner’s texts pays obeisance to Britain in a similar manner to Caroline Kirkland or Harriet Beecher Stowe as discussed in another chapter. Warner’s narrative includes vehement criticisms against Britain, which is exemplified in patriotic episodes such as the heated debate between Mr. Stackpole and Fleda on the topic of slavery, at the end of which the little heroine says that Englishmen “should be very gentle in speaking of wrongs which we [Americans] have far less ability to rectify” (*Queechy* Vol. II- 87). Still, the very same arguments made by Mr. Stackpole that Fleda so vehemently denies are confirmed in Warner’s later anti-slavery novels, *Daisy* (1868) and *Daisy in the Field*, (1874) which seek to offer a rectification for slavery.

¹⁴⁰ In “Middle-Class Identity and Corporeal Attachments in *The Wide Wide World*,” (2013) Rachel DeJmal says, “a “true woman” – of middle class identity – can only endure so much as Ellen reveals through this trial: ‘there was a measure of care constantly upon Ellen’s mind; she felt charged with the welfare of all about the house; and under the effort to meet the charge, joined to the unceasing bodily exertion, she grew thin and pale’ (*The Wide Wide World* 363). Excessive labor also detracts from a woman’s opportunity for moral and intellectual growth; a “true woman” must necessarily balance labor with religion and education. Ellen’s access to her study and spiritual material suffers at this time: ‘Her morning hour of prayer was very precious now; and her Bible grew more and more dear’ (*The Wide Wide World* 363). (11-12) <https://soar.wichita.edu/bitstream/handle/10057/12094/t15066_DeJmal.pdf1>

¹⁴¹ “The title of this study joins two heretofore rarely linked traditions: nineteenth-century domestic ideology and possessive individualism. By proposing this conjunction I mean to illuminate the character and function of the nineteenth century rise of domesticity as a development within the history of individualism [...] It is the organizing premise of this book that nineteenth century American individualism takes on its peculiarly ‘individualistic’ properties as domesticity inflects it with values of interiority, privacy, and psychology” (1). From the Introduction to Gillian Brown’s *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California, 1990).

¹⁴² All this and her writing desk and her work box become Ellen's treasures later, and at one point, after Miss. Fortune dyes her snow-white socks brown, Ellen "seemed in imagination to see all her white things turning brown. She resolved she would keep her trunk well locked up," (115) symbolizing, I believe, not only an attempt to protect the material goods that ties her to her absent mother, but also to keep the coarse hands of the coarser country house-keeper away from the genteel knick knacks from the city.

¹⁴³ Isabelle White, "Anti-Individualism, Authority and Identity: Susan Warner's Contradictions in *The Wide Wide World*," *American Studies* 31.2 (1990): 35-50 persuasively draws attention to the unpublished last chapter of *The Wide Wide World* and shows how Ellen recovers, in the end, all she lost at the beginning of the novel. Bromell too, in *By the Sweat of the Brow*, (1993) makes use of the same extract from the novel that White refers to above in discussing an "unabashed absorption in the delight of physical things" (146) that one can find in *The Wide Wide World*:

John has provided Ellen with her own study [...] and in her description of it, Warner seems to delight in a fantasy that is full of contradictions. On the one hand, the place will be a room for prayer and study. On the other, it is much more richly furnished and decorated than the rest of the house. [...] Not surprisingly, however, Warner [...] qualifies the dangerous and regressive sensuality of Ellen's bower; "though luxuriously comfortable, luxury was not its characteristic. It was the luxury of the mind" (575). Thus, Warner allows Ellen to acquire a sumptuous Victorian room, so crammed with furnishings—"cabinets and tables and bureaus of various material and structure—a little antique book case...an old fashioned but extremely handsome escritoire...easy chairs, foot stools and lounges" [...] by claiming that its 'luxury' is aimed for the 'mind' only. [...] Certainly, she[Ellen] will not clean it. [...] Apparently, Ellen's work will consist of reading and [...] writing [which is] best performed in an environment of material luxury, or at least, material abundance. (147-148)

¹⁴⁴ Bromell, *By the Sweat of the Brow: Literature and Labor in Antebellum America* (1993).

¹⁴⁵ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Pantheon, 1978), Richard Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire: A Provocative Analysis of the Origins and Emergence of the United States as a National State* (New York: Blackwell, 1960).

¹⁴⁶ At least brief a mention must be made here on the scholarship on the nineteenth century American elite, since it provides the larger context within which a woman like Hazel can be placed, and also helps us understand how she becomes defined by multiple acts of worldly consumerism. Thus, in her study, "Making the American Aristocracy: Women, Cultural Capital, and High Society in New York City, 1870-1900," (2009) Emily Katherine Bibby offers us a comprehensive picture of the tensions between the New York high society elite women and the women from the New Rich classes who sought admittance into this prestigious circle:

High Society women distinguished themselves from these social climbers by obeying restrictive codes of speech, body language, and dress that were the manifestations of their cultural capital. However, in a country founded upon an ethos of egalitarianism, exclusivity could not be maintained for long. Mass-circulated media, visual artwork, and etiquette manuals celebrated the Society woman's cultural capital, but simultaneously popularized it, making it accessible to the upwardly mobile. By imitating the representations of High Society life that they saw in newspapers, magazines, and the sketches of Charles Dana Gibson, Nouveau Riche social climbers and even aspirant middle and working-class women bridged many of the barriers that Society women sought to impose. (Abstract)

In tandem with the above, then, texts such as Edward Rob Ellis and Jeanyee Wong *The Epic of New York: A Narrative*, (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 2004), Jerry E. Patterson *The First Four Hundred: Mrs. Astor's New York in the Gilded Age*, (New York: Rizzoli, 2000), Gail MacColl, and Carol McD Wallace, *To Marry an English Lord, Or How Anglomania Really Got Started* (New York: Workman Publishing, Co., 1989), too, echo the inverse of the popular Jane Austenian line, "It is a truth universally acknowledged that, a single man with a large fortune must be in want of a wife"; towards the latter part of

the nineteenth century, therefore, certain states in America such as New York had produced a breed of 'classy' American ladies who could rise in status as they brought in money for the land-rich yet cash-poor Englishmen, by marrying them. In this context at least, 'it was a truth universally acknowledged that, a single landed Englishman short on cash must have been in want of a wealthy American wife.

¹⁴⁷ "My mother, [...] was also a Norse woman. My father's business at one time kept him much in Denmark and at St. Petersburg; and at Copenhagen he met my mother, who had been sent there to school. And when my mother forsook her country, the old nurse, not old then, left all to go with her" (*Wych Hazel*, Chapter 27-29, n.pag.).

¹⁴⁸ In Chapter Four, I will elaborate on British Orientalisms with special reference to imperialist writing.

¹⁴⁹ At the same time, Rollo is also symbolic of the patriarchal white male who controls white womanhood. In fact, his notions of ultra-femininity and female purity are mindboggling. If John Humphreys in *The Wide Wide World* dramatically ends a scene with the line "Don't read novels"—a common advice to all "American true women" of the nineteenth century—Rollo tops it by a great margin by saying "Don't waltz," lest it mars Hazel's purity by the touch of another man's fingertips. Hazel, in other words, should be prey to him and him alone.

¹⁵⁰ Though the plot includes an English heroine by birth and is set in England, reasons such as infusing of this English woman in the qualities of American "true womanhood," and the fact that Warner writes this novel at a time when American women's foreign missions were thriving, allows us to regard this narrative as representative of the New World sharing the burdens of civilizing the heathen world, showing a strong affinity with the ways of the British Empire. The representation of the white American woman in nineteenth century mission narratives by American women is the central concern of the next chapter, and this last section on Susan Warner's *The Old Helmet* offers only a preamble to the former.

¹⁵¹ "The White Man's Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands" was written about the Philippine-American war (1899-1902): *Rudyard Kipling's Verse: Definitive Edition* (1899; rpt. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1940), 323-24. In this regard, Gretchen Murphey, *Shadowing the White Man's Burden: U.S. Imperialism and the Problem of the Color Line* ((New York: New York University Press, 2010) states that:

Readers of the poem expressed a surprising amount of confusion about its meaning and at the root of this confusion, [...] was their ambivalence about the idea of the United States taking up a "white" imperial mission [...] celebrating whiteness as both an explanation and a goal of the civilizing mission, [...] Kipling's language [...] is striking for the way that it describes empire building's benefits for the United States as a step toward their own civilization and racial maturation: [...] What is more, it will "justify" them not only as grown men but also as white men, suggesting whiteness and manhood are not stable and presumed qualities but ones that must be proven, made official through acts and deeds. [...] In terms of social Darwinism, carrying out the acts and deeds of the White Man affords the United States a chance to evolve toward a higher state of racial perfection. (26-37)

What is suggested here is that, Empire will help white Americans become *whiter*. The imperial process would not just civilize the native, but also the "American" imperialist, in so far that, by following the footsteps of the Old World the white Americans of the New World could, by extension, participate in a more *authentic* racial whiteness.

¹⁵² My use of the terms "Orientalism" and "Orientalist" as well as "Orient" comes from the discourse generated by and surrounding Edward Said's iconic text, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*, (1978) a brief discussion of which follows in Part I.

¹⁵³ See for instance, Hilton Obenzinger *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

¹⁵⁴ See Rajendar Kaur, “The Curious Case of Sick Keesar: Tracing the Roots of South Asian Presence in the Early Republic,” (*Journal of Transnational American Studies*. 8. 1. (2017): 1-27) for an account of the Bengali lascar Sick Keesar’s petition against his captain, on the grounds that Keesar and his 35 men were forcibly kept in America in abject conditions.

¹⁵⁵ Though, in this context, Weir is careful enough to point out that, “the matter cannot be fully explained as yet another conflict of low culture and high,” (6) it goes without saying that finding inspiration in the Orient was more a matter of the educated, scholarly elite Americans than it was the lot of the other Americans, especially women, who saw the Orient as a space to be simultaneously desired and derided.

¹⁵⁶ *Orientalism*’s critiques have a vast range. Some scholars have pointed out how the strict East-West divide indirectly reinforces Western superiority over a passive East; some consider “Orientalism” too broad a term, while others see the lack of gender specificity in the approach as an impediment. Bernard Lewis for instance, contests the culpability of Orientalists, while also seeing Said’s Middle-Eastern focus as restrictive and as homogenizing the East. “The Question of Orientalism,” *The New York Review of Books*. (1982): 1-20. Reina Lewis in *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004) argues that the “West was never the sole arbiter and owner of meanings about the Orient” and that “Orientalist knowledges were challenged at their very ‘historical moment of inception’ not just from a postcolonial perspective” (2). In her work, she studies the “selective take up of Orientalist styles, forms and teachings” in complicated ways by Ottoman women writers themselves and challenges “masculinist histories of Orientalism” (3).

In the past, Orientalism was used mainly in two senses. One is a school of painting—that of a group of artists, mostly from Western Europe, who visited the Middle East and North Africa and depicted what they saw or imagined, sometimes in a rather romantic and extravagant manner. The second and more common meaning, unconnected with the first, has been a branch of scholarship. The word, and the academic discipline which it denotes, date from the great expansion of scholarship in Western Europe from the time of the Renaissance onward. There were Hellenists who studied Greek, Latinists who studied Latin, Hebraists who studied Hebrew; the first two groups were sometimes called classicists, the third Orientalists” (Bernard Lewis 3). Also see Said’s *Orientalism* (10) for the distinction he makes between the older uses of the term and his: “Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (11).

¹⁵⁷ Lewis 5. Lewis offers valid criticism in the following. However, not even the inadequacies that he refers to have been able to completely dismiss the significance of Said’s contribution to the reading of East-West relations:

No doubt there were some Orientalists who, objectively or subjectively, served or profited from imperial domination. But as an explanation of the Orientalist enterprise as a whole, it is absurdly inadequate. If the pursuit of power through knowledge is the only or even the prime motive, why did the study of Arabic and Islam begin in Europe centuries before the Muslim conquerors were driven from Eastern and Western European soil and the Europeans embarked on their counter-attack? Why did these studies flourish in European countries that never had any share in the domination of the Arab world, and yet made a contribution as great as the English and French—most scholars would say greater? And why did Western scholars devote so much effort to the decipherment and recovery of the monuments of ancient Middle Eastern civilization, long since forgotten in their own countries? (17)

¹⁵⁸ Note here that like in Susan Warner’s case, Cummins’s presentation of the American true woman’s frugality was only till the latter was rewarded with a life of comforts at the end of the plot. In a way then, the Empire helps in fulfilling this final vision of bringing together the financially secure hero and heroine. Cummins herself, unlike Warner who fell from her fortune, is said to have lived in comfort all throughout her life. Echoing Ellen’s and Hazel’s enjoyment of shopping for “beautiful things” as mentioned in the previous chapter, it takes only a glimpse at the letters she wrote to her mother from her “business” trip to

London (to publish her novel *El Fureidis*, with the aid of the British publisher, Samson Low) of how much at ease she was with the ‘shopper’s paradise’: “If London shops are so fine what must Paris be? Mrs. Low & I coveted things enough to cost a small fortune. [...] French cashmere is very genteel in England & I bought one in stripes resembling India borders, enough blue & white mixed with it to look well with blue—always my color you know. [...] it is soft, large, & warm enough for immediate wear & good enough to wear with the richest silk dress. I think I shall like it always. It reminds me of the colored cashmere Kate had except that mine is all in stripes. [...] London, Grove Terrace, Monday, 9th April 1860” (247-248). “Maria Susanna Cummins’s London Letters: April 1860,” ed. Heidi L. M. Jacobs, *Legacy*. 19.2 (2002): 241-54.

¹⁵⁹ *India in the American Imaginary, 1780s-1880s*, eds. A. Arora & K. Kaur. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017): 141-171. This article is based on the postal exchanges between the U.S. and India that heightened and got formalized after a 1848 British-American agreement.

¹⁶⁰ “Orientalism and Sympathy in Maria Susanna Cummins’s *El Fureidis*,” *Legacy* 25. 1. (2008): 62-82.

¹⁶¹ In her Preface, she thanks many people who had provided her with the required information on writing her novel, the author having largely based her presentation on the existing discourse on popular Orientalism. In a way, this locates *El Fureidis* in the early phase of the American fascination with the Near East as is shown by Weir above. However, given that Cummins is writing this tale in the 1860s shows us that this variety of American-Oriental conversation that Weir locates in the later 18th and early 19th centuries has certainly managed to prolong itself in Cummins’s perceptions of Lebanon and Damascus. Still, Cummins too is nostalgic contrasting contemporary conditions with a glorious past, which, according to her, can only be saved by the intervention of true Protestant Christianity. Hamelman (2008) in “Orientalism and Sympathy in Maria Susanna Cummins’s *El Fureidis*” elaborates on what may have influenced Cummins’s texts: “Walter Keating Kelly’s *Syria and the Holy Land*, an account that declares Lebanon to be ‘one of Nature’s favourite models, in which she delights to blend together her most sublime creations with her tenderest grace and loveliness’ (78). George Washington Chasseaud’s *The Druses of the Lebanon* echoes the superlatives: ‘[T]he shores of Palestine from Sidon to Beyrout are one inexhaustible chain of treasures [. . .] a picture finished off and framed by that incomparable artist, the Great Workman whose word created the universe’ (2). Chasseaud teaches Cummins about the silk industry in Lebanon, spends twenty-five pages on a bridal procession (reduced in scale in *El Fureidis*), touches upon gazelles, and often reverts to the kind of stereotype that Cummins rehashes” (77).

¹⁶² David R. Jansson, “Internal Orientalism in America: W.J. Cash’s *The Mind of the South* and the Spatial Construction of American National Identity,” *Political Geography* 22 (2003): 293-316 David R. Jansson considers America’s *othering* of the slave South as a mechanism of “internal Orientalism.” He also goes on to state that, “Internal orientalism would also consist of a deeply embedded tradition and practice of representing the subordinate region as afflicted with various and sundry vices and defects. This representational style would have an internal consistency, a common imagery and vocabulary which writers, artists, scholars, business leaders, and government officials all draw upon in producing their representations of the inferior region. The latter would also be viewed as an object for study, as rational, scientific methods and techniques are applied to study the region’s problems with the hopes of bringing it into line with the national standard. The people of the subordinate region might even be characterized as a different race, with distinct physical characteristics. This region would certainly be construed as different, so as to set it apart from the rest of the state and allow it to serve as an other against which a positive national identity may be derived” (297). However, contrary to what Jansson claims, I read this internal Orientalization as being produced as well as producing an anxiety of the white American national self.

¹⁶³ Karcher states that:

The same reliance on her own inner convictions would again and again lead her to challenge time-honored institutions - in the 1820s by exploring the tabooed subject of interracial marriage and championing the cause of the Indians, in the 1830s by calling for the immediate abolition of slavery and denouncing all forms of racial discrimination, in the 1840s by taking up the defense of “fallen women” and demanding the extension to women of sexual as well as civil and political

rights, in the 1850s by denying the historical truth of Christianity and urging respect for the world's other religions, and in the 1860s and 1870s by crusading for a genuine Reconstruction of American society on the basis of universal equality. [...] Ultimately, Child would extend her nurturing far beyond the domestic sphere to embrace nearly all the wronged and oppressed of her society. (2-5)

¹⁶⁴ Tiffany K. Wayne, *Encyclopedia of Transcendentalism: The Essential Guide to the Lives and Works of Transcendentalist Writers* (New York: Facts on File Inc., 2006) explains that Child:

participated in Transcendentalist activities in Boston of the 1830's and 40's and regularly engaged Transcendentalist themes in her literary works. Along with her brother, Converse Francis, a Unitarian minister and one of the founding members and hosts of the Transcendentalist club, she was drawn to the philosophy and formed lasting friendships with several Transcendentalists, including John Sullivan Dwight, Margaret Fuller, Theodore Parker [... etc.] Child attended Margaret Fuller's "Conversations for Women" in the 1840's. [...] Child's interest were varied, however, and she did not identify explicitly or exclusively as a Transcendentalist writer. (46).

¹⁶⁵ See Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is 'Strong Objectivity'?" *The Centennial Review* 36. 3 (1992): 437-70. What she says here of the specific dynamic of situated knowledges as opposed to "objective truths" in the context of feminism is useful in understanding Child's racial visions as well. The latter suggests in her writing that shifting the racial and cultural standpoint from which a phenomenon is regarded can help one understand better another racial and cultural system of values and meanings.

¹⁶⁶ Mention is made of the Turkish Pacha's harem in Syria, who would segregate his women and even kill them for offences such as adultery (35). In Hindoostan/India, a place which had a Golden age where women were relatively free, the advent of Islam is shown to have curtailed women's freedom. Idleness is shown as abounding, for India is a luscious and prosperous land with beautifully mild weather. Notwithstanding the above stereotypical discrimination though, we see a more intellectual, respectful and considerate voice materializing at different points of her text, since Child does not merely indicate these common charges against the *heathen* world with the sole intention of devaluing the Orient. In fact, Child does something else with her information.

¹⁶⁷ See Reina Lewis (2004) for an elaboration of the colonial appropriation of the harem, "the most fertile space of the Oriental imagination"(4).

¹⁶⁸ Incidentally, infanticide is an act that was often used in Orientalist texts of the day such as the mission narratives (that will be looked at in the next chapter,) to heighten the image of the "primitive" heathen world, portraying an instance where an Oriental woman's motherhood becomes demonized as it is juxtaposed with the American Republican mother.

¹⁶⁹ "[*Moral Conditions and Prospects of the Heathen* (1833) was] a missionary paper published by the American board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; the heathens were first and foremost 'without natural affection' and were 'given up to vile affections. According to this view, 'infanticide,' polygamy and 'sodomy' were the familial sign of heathenism": Taketani, *U.S Women Writers and the Discourse of Colonialism, 1825-1861* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003), 10-11.

¹⁷⁰ See Anita J. Duneer, "Voyaging Captain's Wives: Feminine Aesthetics and the Use of Domesticity in the Travel Narratives of Abby Jane Morell and Mary Wallis," *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance*, 56. 2. (2010): 192-230.

¹⁷¹ "Captain Benjamin Morrell, whose mission included mapping uncharted territory in the Southern Hemisphere in the interest of establishing trading posts, concomitant with procuring seal skin, tortoise shell, and bêche-de-mer (also referred to as sea slug or sea cucumber), was touted by one contemporaneous reviewer of his journals as the 'American Cook'": Anita J. Duneer, "Voyaging Captains' Wives: Feminine

Aesthetics and the Uses of Domesticity in the Travel Narratives of Abby Jane Morrell and Mary Wallis,” *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 56.2 (2010): 192-230 (199).

¹⁷² “While in Manila I visited several churches and one of the convents. [...] The light in these gothic temples is softened, and the whole appearance is that of solemn grandeur. To a Protestant there seems to be too much pomp and circumstance in the Catholic worship; but if one can get rid of this impression upon his mind, the ceremonies are imposing. The scripture pieces that ornament these churches are not so numerous as I expected to find them [...] I was at first inclined to think that paintings in churches were out of place, however solemn and scriptural the subjects; but I soon became pleased with examining them as works of art, and at times thought they made wholesome impressions on my mind in moments of devotion [...] I must confess, too, that my impressions of a convent were not quite correct, I had only known them as represented in novels, the prison-houses of beautiful girls, thrust there by proud or hard-hearted parents” (90).

¹⁷³ A reference is made here to the beginning of Chapter Four of this dissertation, where, I explain how white American women participated in the “white man’s burden” that Rudyard Kipling gives life to in his poem, “The White Man’s Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands” (1899).

¹⁷⁴ These key terms will be explained in Part II of this chapter.

¹⁷⁵ African American women’s participation in the American foreign missions deserves a full-fledged study on its own right. Given the constraints of space, and my focus in this chapter being the rather “self-reflective” production of a specific white American identity and its relations Britain and the Orient, I will not be dealing with the implications of African American women missionaries’ identities to the production or disruption of white American “mission wives.” See for instance, Vaughn. J. Watson’s and Robert J. Steven, eds. *African-American Experience in World Missions: A Call Beyond Community*, (California: William Carey Library, 2002) where the authors talk about several reasons why African American foreign missions were not popular during the antebellum: “White mission boards were fearful that colonial governments during these early years might reject their agencies because free and outspoken people of color would undermine their economic interests. Furthermore, conservative boards were still uncomfortable allowing mixing of the races especially when this might result in people of color assuming administrative roles” (12). Sylvia M. Jacobs, “Three African American Women Missionaries in the Congo, 1887-1899: The Confluence of Race, Culture, Identity and Nationality,” *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, eds. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo (Durham: Duke University, 2010. 318-43) discusses how African American women were mistakenly seen as more physically fit to serve in African mission destinations, blending with one’s ancestors and easily adapting to the climatic conditions and the environment.

¹⁷⁶ For a comprehensive account of British foreign missions and the involvement of British women in this project in the first half of the nineteenth century, see, Anna Johnston’s *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁷⁷ A poem titled, “The Missionary’s Bride” written by Betsey Learned in 1832 in Abigail Smith’s album. As quoted in Dana L. Robert *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice* (Macon: Mercer University, 1996), 1.

¹⁷⁸ Robert, 1996.

¹⁷⁹ Mention must be made here of the involvement of African American women in the foreign mission movement even from the beginning of the nineteenth century, though limited in number. For instance, Betsey Stockton (1798-1865) went to Hawaii in 1822. Vaughn. J. Walston, and Robert J. Stevens, eds. *African-American Experience in World Missions: A Call Beyond Community* (California: William Carey Library, 2002) offer a collection of essays in this regard which tries to fill a racial gap in the official American mission narrative that was invariably white. In the early part of the nineteenth century, African American involvement in American foreign missions was rather low by comparison: “White mission

boards were fearful that colonial governments during these early years might reject their agencies because free and outspoken people of color would undermine their economic interests. Furthermore, conservative boards were still uncomfortable allowing mixing of the races especially when this might result in people of color assuming administrative roles” (12). However, this did not stop white mission boards from sending African American missionaries to Africa, which was “because whites thought they possessed greater resistance to the malaria infested climate of West Africa,” (27) and also due to “providential design,” “the idea that blacks had been brought to America for slavery so that they might be Christianized and “civilized” to return to Africa with the light of “civilization”” (30). However, my focus here being the transnational bearings of a specific white American identity called “true womanhood,” I will concentrate mainly on the white American identity of the “mission wife.”

¹⁸⁰ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. (1993): 1-12.

¹⁸¹ *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, eds. Barbara Reeves Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010)

¹⁸² *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (London: Harvard University Press, 2002).

¹⁸³ See Henry M. Knapp’s “The Character of Puritan Missions: The Motivation, Methodology and Effectiveness of the Puritan Evangelization of the Native Americans in New England,” *The Journal of Presbyterian History* 76. 2 (1998): 111-26.

¹⁸⁴ “Conclusion: Doing Everything: Religion, Race, and Empire in the U.S. Protestant Women’s Missionary Enterprise, 1812-1960,” *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*, eds. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 367-74.

¹⁸⁵ Emily Conroy-Krutz in “The Forgotten Wife: Roxana Nott and Missionary Marriage in Bombay,” (*Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 16. 1 (2018): 64-90, offers information on the inauguration of the mission marriage and the identity of the “mission wife”:

Rufus Anderson, one of the leading officers of the ABCFM, would explain this logic in his 1836 introduction to the memoir of Mary Mercy Ellis, a British missionary wife in the South Seas. Mission wives, Anderson wrote, were necessary for four reasons. Most important, they provided companionship (sexual and otherwise) for male missionaries, which allowed their husbands to maintain proper sexual relations with racially, religiously, and culturally appropriate partners. (18) Additionally, mission couples were essential for modeling correct gender and family systems to potential converts, particularly the importance of monogamy. Wives also provided important domestic labor for the mission, and the ABCFM was sure that a good mission wife could combine the household concerns of the mission with other duties—especially running schools for young children of both sexes as well as for older girls” (71-72).

¹⁸⁶ For information on British missions see Rhonda Anne Semple, *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission* (Suffolk: Boydell, 2003), Delia Davin’s “British Women Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China,” *Women’s History Review* 1.2 (1992): 257-71, and Anna Johnston’s *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁸⁷ “Englishness in Victorian India was a carefully constructed ideal that did not necessarily reflect the home culture because, at home, national identity was ostensibly untroubled by contaminating influences and contentious spaces” (Agnew 44).

¹⁸⁸ See for instance Patricia Grimshaw and Peter Sherlock, “Women and Cultural Exchanges,” *Missions and Empire*, ed. Norman Etherington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 173-93. Conroy-Krutz also explains in “The Forgotten Wife Roxana Nott and Missionary Marriage in Bombay” how:

In an 1806 letter published in the *Panoplist*, [Mrs. Marshman, a British “missionary wife”] described the daily life of a missionary wife. Marshman described busy days marked by the demands of forty or more students in the mission school: they had to be awakened, washed, and dressed in time for seven o’clock classes, followed by worship and breakfast, more school time, dinner, school, tea, worship, and bed at nine. Only then did Marshman begin what she called “my holy-day, to read, write or work.” Her description did not paper over the difficulties of missionary life. Even that time for reflection was limited: often she was “so overcome with fatigue, and the scorching heat of the day, that [she felt] neither will nor power to do any thing at all.” By the end of the day, she felt that she had “a weary body, a stupid soul, and dim eyes. (69)

Quoted from “Extract of a Letter from Mrs. Marshman, Wife of One of the Missionaries,” *Panoplist* (1806): 138.

¹⁸⁹ Both Patricia Ruth Hill, *The World their Household: The American Woman’s Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation, 1870-1920* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985) and Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015) offer accounts of the genre of the mission memoir and the women who either wrote them or were their subjects.

¹⁹⁰ Barbara Reeves Ellington, “American Women’s Foreign Mission Boards, 1800 to 1938: Over a Century of Organizing Denominationally, Ecumenically, Transnationally” (Alexandria, VA: Alexander Street, 2012) is useful in the current context, since it gives a concise overview of the genre, where Ellington identifies not only the defining features of the mission memorial/narrative and their impact on their audience, but also makes references to the differences between early century mission texts and later century accounts of professional mission women:

Overtly hagiographical, antebellum memorials were based on the correspondence of dead women missionaries (no living missionary was memorialized), which initially led to particularly gloomy narratives of religious devotion, self-sacrifice, and martyrdom [...] narratives about the lives of women missionaries exerted an extraordinary impact on women’s financial and organizational contributions to the global missionary endeavor in the first half of the nineteenth century. In contrast to antebellum memorials with their emphasis on sacrifice, the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century writings of women missionaries offer more optimistic views of missionary work. In some instances, they have become part of the canon in the genre of American travel-writing. (n.pag.)

¹⁹¹ Radhika Mohanram, *Imperial White : Race, Diaspora, and the British Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007) focuses on the discursive production of the whiteness of British women, and explains how even the white Victorian woman in Britain was an ambivalent identity that swung between the white self and the *other*; given that whiteness was represented by British masculinity in the context of imperialism, contrasting with the white woman’s proximity to the *other* in the “corrupting” images of the working-class woman or the woman prostitute (“White women were chameleons who turned black quite routinely and in so doing eroded the invincibility and purity of whiteness. Whiteness was always already black as well. The invulnerability and superiority of whiteness was under siege, under threat, questionable” 43):

If whiteness was reencoded within a militaristic masculinity, then white women were not white in themselves but could be linked to whiteness only as a supplement. Their whiteness was retroactively conferred upon them due to their heterosexual relationships with white men, not because they were white. In short, they could not perform whiteness as this term was already incorporated within masculinity; they could only ever mime it. Their bodies, marked by gender, emulated and exceeded midcentury whiteness. It is white-in-difference. (25)

¹⁹² My intention here is not to suggest that a monolithic “Americanness” exists out there, for an empty subject to inhabit. Instead, I am using Bhabha’s ideas of mimicry and Anglicization as a premise using

which one can unravel how the white American gendered self in the Orient came to be disrupted in her attempt to project herself as a superior white self.

¹⁹³ Mary Kupiec Cayton, "Canonizing Harriet Newell: Women, the Evangelical Press, and the Foreign Mission Movement in New England, 1800-1840," *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 69-92 discusses the significance of women's stories in the evangelical press as well as the key differences between men's and women's rhetoric, content and purpose in writing about the mission cause:

News of missionaries appeared monthly in the magazines, most often in the form of excerpts from their shipboard letter. Letters written by males were attributed to the author by name, those by females simply to 'the wife of one of the missionaries.' American Board publications positioned male missionary correspondence within a public realm, presenting it as official reportage from commissioned agents to the organization. Women's correspondence in contrast took the form of letters to family friends, their transformation into print making the reader party to an intimate exchange. While the men reported on the logistics of the mission and the formal progress of the party, the women focused mainly on feelings about departure for a strange land and longings for home and family. (82)

¹⁹⁴ Although "Ceylon" is a dated as well as a colonially loaded term to use in the place of its modern equivalent, Sri Lanka, I choose to invoke the undesirable here since "Ceylon" has more resonance in a section that discusses Sri Lanka's colonial realities in the nineteenth century.

¹⁹⁵ Judson says this in a letter to her friend Anna Maria Annabel (Tooze 4): *The Life and letter of Emily Chubbuck Judson: Fanny Forester*, Vol. I (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2009).

¹⁹⁶ Adoniram Judson does not approve of "Clinging to Earth" saying "It went against the image of piety and commitment they were trying to present in Emily" (Vol I, Tooze 203).

¹⁹⁷ Children were a conspicuous symbol used to establish a contrast between the white self and the *native other*. Multiple references are made to little Sarah's (Sarah's daughter) bright blue eyes, yellow hair, and rosy cheeks formed in striking contrast to the little dark faces around her, and as a flower among weeds etc. (88). Miron Winslow too says in his memoir of his wife that, "The Anglo Saxon blood seems to degenerate under the influence of an Asiatic sun; and the child must be sent away to develop under more favorable circumstances, or arrive at manhood, crippled in mind and muscle; and in this enfeebled state ... run the gauntlet of every vice (189).

¹⁹⁸ At one point of the novel, we are told by the writer that Sarah herself refrained from divulging details of wild adventure to other women, perhaps due to the fear of encouraging them for mission work for the wrong reasons.

¹⁹⁹ In fact, Sarah claims that in the Burmese translation of the Bible, "doctrinal passages are expressed with a force and perspicuity entirely wanting in our version," (165) giving due recognition to the power of the Burmese tongue.

²⁰⁰ Since I will make references to both Miron Winslow and Harriet Winslow, I will use the first name Harriet and Winslow to refer to her husband, in order to avoid confusion.

²⁰¹ In Robert, "Evangelist or Homemaker? Mission Strategies of Early Nineteenth-Century Missionary Wives in Burma and Hawaii," Robert illustrates one example of such a failure in Hawaii; Sybil Bingham. Bingham says in "A Brief Sketch of the Missionary Life of Mrs. Sybil Moseley Bingham" (1823) "There are those on missionary ground who are better able to realize their anticipations of systematic work. But not a mother of a rising family, placed at a post like this [...] A feeble woman in such circumstances must be content to realize but little of the picture her youthful mind has formed of sitting down quietly day by day, to teach heathen women and children" (8).

²⁰² How nineteenth century America conceptualized an ideal “middle-class home” was discussed in Chapter One.

²⁰³ In fact, Conroy-Krutz shows in her article, “The Forgotten Wife: Roxana Nott and Missionary Marriage in Bombay” (2018) how “Roxana Nott revealed, [that] missionary marriages were not easy facsimiles of American Protestant marriages, and the aspects that remained and those that shifted in response to missionary conditions could be difficult to parse” (88).

²⁰⁴ “The Forgotten Wife: Roxana Nott and Missionary Marriage in Bombay” (2018).

²⁰⁵ “He was ordained a missionary on February 6, 1812, married Roxana two days later, and within two weeks the couple was on their way to India” (Conroy-Krutz 67).

²⁰⁶ Rufus Anderson, one of the leading officers of the ABCFM, is said to have come up with a set of “official” reasons for supporting women’s presence in the foreign missions:

Mission wives, Anderson wrote, were necessary for four reasons. Most important, they provided companionship (sexual and otherwise) for male missionaries, which allowed their husbands to maintain proper sexual relations with racially, religiously, and culturally appropriate partners. [...] Additionally, mission couples were essential for modeling correct gender and family systems to potential converts, particularly the importance of monogamy. Wives also provided important domestic labor for the mission, and the ABCFM was sure that a good mission wife could combine the household concerns of the mission with other duties—especially running schools for young children of both sexes as well as for older girls. [...] Piety and an unblemished character alone, though essential, were not sufficient. Prudence, diligence, zeal for God, a background in teaching, and a willingness to live modestly were all requirements. (71-72)

As quoted in Conroy-Krutz (2018).

²⁰⁷ “[T]he aesthetic appearance was to symbolize the ‘beauty’ of Christianity and heightened the contrast with the ‘squalor’ and ‘dirt’ that missionary discourses always associated with ‘heathenism’ and ‘native culture.’ [...] Surely the missionary compound marked a boundary of race and culture. To the families within, it represented a haven, protected from the ‘heathenism’ outside, coming closest to an ideal world, they could hope to reconstruct away from home. [...] Though conceived to serve as ‘models’ for the ‘unchristian’ Others, many missionaries—especially missionary wives—perceived the mission compound as a necessary oasis for *themselves* and for the socialization of their children” (50-51). Maina Chawla Singh, *Gender, Religion, and “Heathen Lands”: American Missionary Women in South Asia (1860s-1940s)* (New York: Garland, 2000.)

²⁰⁸ Maina Chawla Singh (2000) also goes onto contrast the mission compound with the colonial bungalows of the British memsahibs, revealing the class distinctions that these American mission homes and British colonial homes managed to establish:

Unlike the colonial bungalow with its retinue of local servants who guarded the status of the Sahib and Memsahib, the mission home with its easy accessibility disturbed colonial spatial arrangements, possibly the most visible markers of race and power. [...] Frequently targets of suspicion for identifying too closely with local people, even ridiculed for going ‘native,’ missionaries were mostly treated with aloofness by the colonial community. (48)

²⁰⁹ In this context, Amy Kaplan’s theorizations of the “Empire of mothers” as well as domesticity’s imperial reach, in her works *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*. London (2002) and “Manifest Domesticity” (1998) become a moot point, since, motherhood was a key facet of the white American woman’s subjectivity in the Orient that fell short of its mark. Though she shows how the process of “domestication” “entail[ed] conquering and taming the wild, the natural, and the alien [...] related to the imperial project of civilizing, [as] the conditions of domesticity often become markers that distinguish

civilization from savagery,” (282) the “mission mother” too reciprocated the feeling of her life, her family and her home being infiltrated by the *native other*. However, I would like to emphasize that this is not an attempt on my part to invalidate or downplay the significance of the hegemonic authority that white women in the Orient held over *native* communities. Rather, my intention here is to show how lack of attention to white women’s struggles in a space that was foreign to them may simplify our understanding of an otherwise complicated power structure, and see them solely in the image of perpetrators doing violence unto the Oriental *natives*.

²¹⁰ Hollinger also indicates that, “[a]lternating between one household abroad and another in an American community made some children feel that they lacked a single and stable home. Some missionary parents left the impression that their labors were so important that the needs of children became secondary (17).

²¹¹ Lydia Maria Child *The History of the Condition of Women in Various Ages and Nations* (Boston: J. Allen, 1835) refers to the numerous mentions of the degradation of *native* motherhood in writings on the *Orient*.

²¹² “A little Story: Recollections from her Earliest Years of Mrs. Roxana Nott,” *Nott Family Papers*, Box 1, Yale Divinity Library Special Collections (1-16).

²¹³ As quoted in Maina Chawla Singh (2000), 65.

²¹⁴ <<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/mleccha>>

²¹⁵ As D. Dennis Hudson explains in “Tamil Hindu Responses to Protestants: Nineteenth-Century Literati in Jaffna and Tinnevely” (1995).

²¹⁶ Even in the much later writing by missionary women in Ceylon, we see similar lacunae, Mary Leitch and Margaret Leitch’s *Seven Years in Ceylon: Stories of Missionary Life* (New York: American tract Society, 1890) being a case in point. Like Winslow, their only focus is also the North and their ideas of the *natives* are mainly based mainly on underprivileged Tamil people.

²¹⁷ See Murugar Gunasingham *Tamils in Sri Lanka: A Comprehensive History (c. 300 B.C. – 2000 A.D.)* (Sydney: MV, 2016).

²¹⁸ Also see Swarna Jayaweera, “European Women Educators Under the British Colonial Administration in Sri Lanka,” *Women’s Studies International Forum*, 13. 4 (1990): 381-94.

²¹⁹ Allusion made to Thomas Babington Macaulay’s “Minute on Indian Education” in 1835, where, he declared:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern,—a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population. (14)

Bureau of Education. Selections from Educational Records, Part I (1781-1839), ed. H. Sharp. Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, (1920; rpt. Delhi: *National Archives of India*, 1965): 107-17.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agnew, Eadaoin. *Imperial Women Writers in Victorian India: Representing Colonial Life, 1850-1910*. Kingston: Palgrave, 2017.
- Alstyne, Richard Van. *The Rising American Empire: A Provocative Analysis of the Origins and Emergence of the United States as a National State*. New York: Blackwell, 1960.
- Altman, Michael J. *Heathen, Hindoo, Hindu: American Representations of India, 1721-1893*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Archibald, Diana C. *Domesticity, Imperialism, and Emigration in the Victorian Novel*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2002.
- Argersinger, Jona L. "Family Embraces: The Unholy Kiss and Authorial Relations in *The Wide Wide World*." *American Literature* 74. 3 (2002): 252-85.
- and Phyllis Cole (eds.). *Toward a Female Genealogy of Transcendentalism*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014.
- Ayres, Brenda. *Frances Trollope and the Novel of Social Change*. Westport: Greenwood, 2002.
- . *The Life and Works of Augusta Jane Evans Wilson, 1835-1909*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2012.
- Baym, Nina. *Novels, Readers, and Reviewers: Responses to Fiction in Antebellum America*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.
- . *Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-70*. London: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- Beatty, Bess. *Traveling Beyond her Sphere: American Women on the Grand Tour, 1814-1914*. Washington: New Academia, 2016.
- Beecher, Catharine Esther. *A Treatise on Domestic Economy: For the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1856.
- and Harriet Beecher Stowe. *American Woman's Home: Principles of Domestic Science; Being a Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, Healthful, Beautiful and Christian Homes*. New York: J.B. Ford and Co. 1869.
- . *The Duty of American Women to their Country*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1845.

- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Bibby, Katherine Emily. *Making the American Aristocracy: Women, Cultural Capital, and High Society in New York City, 1870-1900*. Blacksburg: Virginia Polytechnique Institute and State University, 2009.
- Blumenthal, Susanna L. "The Mind of a Moral Agent: Scottish Common Sense and the Problem of Responsibility in Nineteenth-Century American Law." *Law and History Review* 26.1 (2008): 99-159.
- Brodhead, Richard H. *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth Century America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Bromell, Nicholas K. *By the Sweat of the Brow: Literature and Labor in Antebellum America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Brown, Gillian. *Domestic Individualism: Imagining Self in Nineteenth-Century America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990.
- Brown, Herbert Ross. *The Sentimental Novel in America 1789-1860*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1940.
- Brown, William Hill. *The Power of Sympathy: Or, the Triumph of Nature*. 1789; rpt. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- Buell, Lawrence. "American Literary Emergence as a Postcolonial Phenomenon." *American Literary History* 4.3 (1992): 411-42.
- . "Prologue: Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic (Mis)Understandings: From Washington Irving and Frances Trollope to Mark Twain and Lord Bryce." *Transatlantic Traffic and (Mis)Translations*. Eds. Robin Peel & Daniel Maudlin. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2013. (1-13)
- Buhle, Mary Jo, Teresa Murphy, and Jane Gerhard (eds.) *Women and the Making of America*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson Education, 2009.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. London: Routledge, 1990.
- Carbone, Steven A. "American Transcendentalism and Analysis of Ralph Waldo Emerson's 'Self-Reliance.'" *American Literature* 2.1 (2010): n.pag.
- Cayton, Mary Cupiec. "Canonizing Harriet Newell: Women, the Evangelical Press, and the Foreign Mission Movement in New England, 1800-1840." *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*. Eds. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010. (69-92).

- Child, Lydia Maria. *An Appeal in Favor of That Class of Americans Called Africans*. Boston: Allen and Ticknor, 1833.
- . *Aspirations of the World: A Chain of Opals*. Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1878.
- . *Good Wives*. Boston: Carter, Hendee and Co., 1833.
- . *Hobomok: A Tale of Early Times*. Boston: Cummings, Hillard and Co, 1824.
- . *Philothea: A Romance of the Republic*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1867.
- . *The American Frugal Housewife*. 1829; rpt. New York: Samuel S. and William Wood, 1938.
- . *The Biographies of Mme. De Stael, and Mme. Roland*. Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1832.
- . *The Family Nurse; or Companion of The Frugal Housewife*. Boston: C. J. Hendee, 1837.
- . *The History of the Condition of Women, in Various Ages and Nations*. Boston: J. Allen, 1835.
- . *The Progress of Religious Ideas, Through Successive Ages*. New York: C.S. Francis and Co, 1855.
- . *The Mother's Book*. Boston: Carter, Hendee and Babcock, 1831.
- Clapp, Elizabeth J. "American Women." *A New Introduction to American Studies*. Eds. Howard Temperley and Christopher Bigsby. New York: Routledge, 2013. (326-50)
- . *A Notorious Woman: Anne Royall in Jacksonian America*. Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2016.
- Clinton, Catherine. *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South*. New York: Pantheon, 1982.
- Cogan, Frances B. *All American Girl: The Ideal of Real Womanhood in Mid Nineteenth Century*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1989.
- Conroy-Krutz, Emily. *Christian Imperialism: Converting the world in the Early Republic*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015.
- . "The Forgotten Wife: Roxana Nott and Missionary Marriage in Bombay." *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 16.1 (2018): 64-90.

- Craiutu, Aurelian and Jeffrey C. Isaac's (eds.) *America Through European Eyes: British and French Reflections on the New World from the Eighteenth Century to the Present*. Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009.
- Cruea, Susan M. "Changing Ideals of Womanhood During the Nineteenth-Century Woman Movement." *General Studies Writing Faculty Publication* (2005): 187-203. <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/gsw_pub/1>
- Cummins, Maria Susanna. *El Fureidis*. Leipzig: B. Tauchnitz, 1860.
- . "Maria Susanna Cummins's London Letters: April 1860." Ed. Heidi L. M. Jacobs. *Legacy* 19.2 (2002): 241-54.
- . *The Lamplighter*. Boston: J. P. Jewett, 1854.
- Davidson, Cathy N. "Flirting with Destiny: Ambivalences in Form in the Early American Sentimental Novel." *Studies in American Fiction* 10.1 (1982): 17-39.
- . *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Davin, Delia. "British Women Missionaries in Nineteenth-Century China." *Women's History Review* 1.2 (1992): 257-71.
- Damon-Bach, Lucinda L. "'My Readers will Thank Me': J.C.L. Simonde de Sismondi, Civil Liberty, and Transatlantic Sympathy in Catharine Sedgwick's *Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home*," *Transatlantic Conversations: Nineteenth Century American Women's Encounters with Italy and the Atlantic World*. Eds. Beth L. Lueck, Sirpa Salenius & Nancy Lusignan Schultz. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2017. (3-22).
- Dejmal, Rachel. "Middle-Class Identity and Corporeal Attachments in *The Wide Wide World*." 2013. <https://soar.wichita.edu/bitstream/handle/10057/12094/t15066_Dejmal.pdf1>
- De Vine, Christine. *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2013.
- Dillon, Elizabeth Maddock. "Sentimental Aesthetics." *American Literature* 76.3 (2004): 495-523.
- Duneer, Anita J. "Voyaging Captains' Wives: Feminine Aesthetics and the Uses of Domesticity in the Travel Narratives of Abby Jane Morrell and Mary Wallis," *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance* 56.2 (2010): 192-230.

- Elbert, Monika M. (ed.) *Separate Spheres No More: Gender Convergence in American Literature, 1830-1930*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2000.
- Ellington, Barbara Reeves. "American Women's Foreign Mission Boards, 1800 to 1938: Over a Century of Organizing Denominationally, Ecumenically, Transnationally." Alexandria, VA; Alexander Street, 2012. (1-24).
- , Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo (eds.) *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Ellis, R.J. "Joseph Sturge, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and the Free-Labor Movement." *Transatlantic Conversations: Nineteenth Century American Women's Encounters with Italy and the Atlantic World*. Eds. Beth L. Lueck, Sirpa Salenius & Nancy Lusignan Schultz. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2017. (177-94).
- Elsden, Annamaria Formichella. *Roman Fever: Domesticity and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century American Women's Writing*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2004.
- Emerson, Ralph, Waldo. *English Traits*. Boston: Philips & Sampson, 1856.
- Evans, Augusta Jane. *Beulah*. 1859; rpt. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992.
- . *Macaria: Altars of Sacrifice*. New York: Richmond, West and Johnston, 1864.
- . *St. Elmo*. 1866; rpt. New York: G.W. Dillingham Company, 1896.
- Franham, Christie. *The Education of the Southern Belle: Higher Education and Student Socialization in the Antebellum South*. New York: New York University Press, 1994.
- Foster, Shirley. "Construction of Self in *Sunny Memories*." *Transatlantic Stowe: Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*. Eds. Denise Kohn, et al. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006. (149-66).
- Fox-Genovese, Elizabeth. *Within the Plantation Household: Black and White Women in the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Fuller, Margaret. *At Home and Abroad, or, Things and Thoughts in America and Europe*. 1864; Rpt. (ed.) Arthur B Fuller. New York: Kenia, 1869.
- Frank, Dana. "White Working-Class Women and the Race Question." *International Labor and Working-Class History* 54 (1998): 80-104.

- Giles, Paul. *Atlantic Republic: The American Tradition in English Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- . *Transatlantic Insurrections: British Culture and the Formation of American Literature, 1730-1860*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
- Gould, Philip. "Catharine Sedgwick's Cosmopolitan Nation." *New England Quarterly* 78.2 (2005): 232-58.
- Grimshaw, Patricia and Peter Sherlock. "Women and Cultural Exchanges." *Missions and Empires*. Ed. Norman Etherington. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. (173-19).
- Gunasingham, Murugar. *Tamils in Sri Lanka: A comprehensive History (c.300 B.C. – 2000 A.D.)* Sydney: MV, 2016.
- Hackler, M. B. "Condemned of Nature': British Travelers on the Landscape of the Antebellum American South." *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World*. Ed. Christine De Vine. Surrey: Ashgate, 2013. (185-202).
- Hale, Sarah Josepha. *Northwood: Or, Life North and South: Showing the True Character of Both*. New York: H. Long and Brothers, 1852.
- Hall, Basil. *Travels in North America, In the Years 1827 and 1828*. Vol. I & II. Philadelphia: Carey Lee & Cary, 1829.
- Hamelman, Steven. "Orientalism and Sympathy in Maria Susanna Cummins's *El Fureidîs*." *Legacy* 25.1 (2008): 62-82.
- Hanlon, Christopher. *America's England: Antebellum Literature and Atlantic Sectionalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Harding, Sandra. "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is 'Strong Objectivity'?" *The Centennial Review* 36.3 (1992): 437-70.
- Harris, Susan K. *Nineteenth-Century American Women's Novels: Interpretive Strategies*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Our Old Home: A Series of English Sketches*. 1863; rpt. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1865.
- Higginson, Henry Wentworth. "Literature as an Art." *The Atlantic Monthly* 20.122 (1867): 745-55.
- Hijiya, A. "Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Our Old Home*." *American Literature* 46.3 (1974): 363-73.

- Hill, Patricia Ruth. *The World their Household: The American Woman's Foreign Mission Movement and Cultural Transformation; 1870-1920*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1985.
- Hollinger, David A. *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries tried to Change the World but Changed America*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017.
- Howard, June. "What is Sentimentality?" *American Literary History* 11.1 (1999): 63-81.
- Hudson, Dennis D. "Tamil Hindu Responses to Protestants: Nineteenth-Century Literati in Jaffna and Tinnevely." *Indigenous Responses to Western Christianity*. Ed. Steven Kaplan. New York: New York University Press, 1995. (95-123).
- Irving, Washington. "English Writers on America: 1890-20." 1819; rpt. Blacksburg: Virginia Tech, 2001.
- Ishwaran, K and Smith Bardwell (eds.) *Contributions to Asian Studies: Tradition and Change in Theravada Buddhism: Essays on Ceylon and Thailand in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. Leiden: Brill, 1973.
- Jacobs, Sylvia. M. "Three African American Women Missionaries in the Congo, 1887-1899: The Confluence of Race, Culture, Identity and Nationality." *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*. Eds. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010. (318-43).
- Jansson, David R. "Internal Orientalism in America: W.J. Cash's The Mind of the South and the spatial construction of American national identity." *Political Geography* 22 (2003): 293-316.
- Jayaweera, Swarna. "European Women Educators Under the British Colonial Administration in Sri Lanka." *Women's Studies International Forum* 13.4 (1990) 381-94.
- Johnston, Anna. *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800-1860*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Jones, Anne Goodwyn. *Tomorrow is Another Day: The Woman Writer in the South, 1859-1936*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982.
- Judson, Emily. *Memoir of Sarah B. Judson of the American Mission to Burma*. New York: L. Colby, 1852.
- Kaplan, Amy. "Manifest Domesticity." *American Literature* 70.3 (1998): 581-606.
- . *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*. London: Harvard University Press, 2002.

- Karcher, Carolyn L. *The First Woman in the Republic: A Cultural Biography of Lydia Maria Child*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994.
- Kaur, Rajendra. "The Curious Case of Sick Keesar: Tracing the Roots of South Asian Presence in the Early Republic." *Journal of Transnational American Studies*. 8. 1. (2017): 1-27.
- Kelley, Mark B. "'Everyday India Mail': *The Lamplighter* and the Prospect of U.S. Transoceanic (Postal) Empire, 1847-1854." *India in the American Imaginary, 1780s-1880s*. Eds. A. Arora & K. Kaur. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. (141-71).
- Kelley, Mary. "Negotiating a Self: The Autobiography and Journals of Catharine Maria Sedgwick." *The New England Quarterly* 66.3 (1993): 366-98.
- Kerber, Linda. K. *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.
- Kilbride, Daniel. *Being American in Europe, 1750–1860*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013.
- Kipling, Rudyard. "The White Man's Burden: The United States and the Philippine Islands." *Modern History Sourcebook*. 1899.
<<http://source.books.fordham.edu/mod/kipling.asp>>
- Kirkland, Caroline. *A New Home; Who'll Follow, Or, Glimpses of Western Life*. 1835. Boston: J.S. Francis, 1850.
- . *Forest Life*. London: Longman, 1842.
- . *Holidays Abroad or Europe from the West*. New York: Baker and Scribner, 1849.
- . *Western Clearings*. 1845; rpt. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1846.
- Knapp, Henry M. "The Character of Puritan Missions: The Motivation, Methodology and Effectiveness of the Puritan Evangelization of the Native Americans in New England." *The Journal of Presbyterian History* 76.2 (1998): 111-26.
- Kolodny, Annette. *The Land before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontiers, 1630-1860*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.
- Kohn, Denise, Sarah Meer and Emily B. Todd. *Transatlantic Stowe: Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006.

- Langland, Elizabeth. *Nobody's Angels: Domestic Ideology and Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Novel*. PMLA 107.2 (1992): 290-304.
- Lasser, Carrol and Stacey Robertson. *Antebellum Women: Private, Public Partisan (American Controversies)*. Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010.
- Lauterbach, Frank. "British Travel Writing about the Americas, 1820-1840: Different and Differentiating Views." *Comparative Literature and Culture* 3.2 (2001): 1-11.
- Leitch Mary and Margaret Leitch. *Seven Years in Ceylon: Stories of Missionary Life*. New York: American Tract Society, 1890.
- Levander, Caroline F. *Cradle of Liberty: Race, the Child, and National Belonging from Thomas Jefferson to W.E.B Du Bois*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.
- Lewis, Bernard. "The Question of Orientalism," *The New York Review of Books* (1982): 1-20.
- Lewis, Reina. *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2004.
- Martineau, Harriet. *Illustrations of Political Economy*. London: Charles Fox, 1834.
- . *Society in America*. 1837; rpt. Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1842.
- Marryat, C.B. *Diary in America with Remarks on its Institutions*. Philadelphia: Cary & Heart, 1839.
- McBratney, John. "The Failure of Dickens's Transatlantic Dream in *American Notes*." *Nineteenth-Century British Travelers in the New World*. Ed. Christine De Vine. Surrey: Ashgate, 2013. (69-86).
- Merish, Lori. *Sentimental Materialism: Gender, Commodity Culture, and Nineteenth-Century American Literature*. London: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Metzger, Charles R. "Emerson's Religious Conception of Beauty." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 11.1 (1952): 67-74.
- Mohanram, Radhika. *Imperial White: Race, Diaspora and the British Empire*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
- Morell, Abby Jane. *Narrative of a Voyage to the Ethiopic and South Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Chinese Sea, North and South Pacific Ocean, in the Years 1829, 1830, 1831*. New York: J. and J. Harper, 1833.

- Murphey, Gretchen. *Shadowing the White Man's Burden: U.S Imperialism and the Problem of the Color Line*. New York: New York University Press, 2010.
- Nichols, Mary Gove and Thomas Low Nichols. *Marriage: Its History Character and Results, Its Sanctities and Its Profanities, Its Science and Its Facts*. New York: T. L. Nichols, 1854.
- Noble, Marianne. "Making this Whole Nation Feel: The Sentimental Novel in the United States." *A Companion to the American Novel*. Ed. Alfred Bendixen. Oxford: Blackwell, 2012. (170-86).
- Nott, Roxana. "A little Story: Recollections from her Earliest Years of Mrs. Roxana Nott." *Nott Family Papers*, Box 1, Yale Divinity Library Special Collections (1-16).
- Obenzinger, Hilton. *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- Paryz, Marek. "Beyond the Traveler's Testimony: Emerson's *English Traits* and the Construction of Postcolonial Counter-Discourse." *The American Transcendental Quarterly* 20.3 (2006): 122-43.
- Patmore, Coventry. *The Angel in the House*. 1854; rpt. London: John W. Parker and Son, 1858.
- Pattee, Fred Lewis. *The First Century of American Literature. 1770-1870*. 1935; rpt. New York: Cooper Square, 1966.
- Pruitt, Lisa J. *A Looking Glass for Ladies: American Protestant Women and the Orient in the Nineteenth Century*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 2005.
- Reeves-Ellington, Barbara, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo (eds.) *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Renda, Mary A. "Conclusion: Doing Everything: Religion, Race, and Empire in the U.S. Protestant Women's Missionary Enterprise, 1812-1960." *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960*. Eds. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010. (367-74).
- Rice, Stephen P. *Minding the Machine: Languages of Class in Early Industrial America*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Richter, Amy G. *At Home in Nineteenth-Century America: A Documentary History*. New York: New York University Press, 2015.

- Roberson, Susan. *Antebellum American Women Writers and the Road*. New York: Routledge, 2011.
- Robert, Dana L. *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 1996.
- . "Evangelist or Homemaker? Mission Strategies of Early Nineteenth-Century Missionary Wives in Burma and Hawaii." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (1993): 1-12.
- Rodgers, Daniel T. *The Work Ethic in Industrial America 1850-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- Roediger, David. *Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. London: Verso, 1999.
- Rowe, John Carlos. *Literary Culture and U.S. Imperialism: From the Revolution to World War II*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Ryan, Susan. M. *The Moral Economies of American Authorship: Reputation, Scandal, and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Marketplace*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1993.
- . *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. New York: Pantheon, 1978.
- Samuels, Shirley (ed.) *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender and Sentimentality in Nineteenth Century America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Schriber, Mary Suzanne. *Writing Home: American Women Abroad, 1830-1920*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997.
- Schueller, Malini Johar. *U.S. Orientalisms: Race, Nation, and Gender in Literature, 1790-1890*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998.
- Scott, Donald M. *From Office to Profession: The New England Ministry, 1750-1850*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1978.
- Sedgwick, Catharine Maria. *A New England Tale*. New York: E. Bliss and E. White, 1822.
- . *Clarence; or, A Tale of Our Own Times*. 1849. Eds. Melissa J. Homestead and Ellen A. Foster. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview, 2012.

- . *Letters from Abroad to Kindred at Home*. London: Edward Moxon, 1841.
- . *Live and Let Live: Or, Domestic Service Illustrated*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1837.
- . *Married or Single?* New York: Harper and Brothers, 1857.
- Seidman, Rachel Filene. "Women and the Abolitionist Movement." *NWSA Journal* 5.2 (1993): 253-90.
- Semple, Rhonda Anne. *Missionary Women: Gender, Professionalism and the Victorian Idea of Christian Mission*. Suffolk: Boydell, 2003.
- Schocket, Eric. *Vanishing Moments: Class and American Literature*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2006.
- Sigourney, Lydia. *Letters to Mothers*. Hartford: Hudson and Skinner, 1838.
- Singh, Maina Chawla. *Gender, Religion, and "Heathen Lands": American Missionary Women in South Asia (1860s-1940s)*. New York: Garland, 2000.
- Sklar, Katherine Kish. *Catharine Beecher: A Study in American Domesticity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973.
- . "'The Throne of My Heart': Religion, Oratory, and Transatlantic Community in Angelina Grimké's Launching of Women's Rights, 1828–1838." *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Anti-Slavery in the Era of Emancipation*. Ed. Kathryn Kish Sklar. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007. (211-33).
- Sofer, Naomi Z. *Making the 'America of Art': Cultural Nationalism and Nineteenth-Century Women Writers*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2005.
- . "'Carry[ing] a Yankee Girl to Glory': Redefining Female Authorship in the Postbellum United States." *American Literature* 75.1 (2003): 31-60.
- Southworth, E.D.E.N. *India: Pearl of Pearl River*. Philadelphia: T.B Peterson and Brothers, 1856.
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*. Eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg. London: Macmillan, 1988.
- Steadman, Jennifer Bernhardt. *Traveling Economies: American Women's Travel Writing*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007.

- Stowe, Charles E. *Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe: Compiled from her Letters and Journals*. 1889; rpt. Detroit Gale Research, 1967. (90-98).
- Stowe, Harriet Beecher. *Agnes of Sorrento*. Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1862.
- . *Lady Byron Vindicated: A History of the Byron Controversy from its Beginning in 1816 to the Present Time*. Boston: Fields Osgood and Co., 1870.
- . "The Lady who does her Own Work." 1864; rpt. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1896.
- . *The Minister's Wooing*. 1859; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1999.
- . *Uncle Tom's Cabin; Or, the Life of the Lowly*. Boston: John P. Jewett and Co, 1852.
- . *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands*. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Company, 1854.
- Stowe, William W. *Going Abroad: European Travel in Nineteenth-Century American Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Streeter, Robert E. "Mrs. Child's 'Philothea' a Transcendentalist Novel?" *The New England Quarterly* 16.4 (1943): 648-54.
- Talley, Sharon. *Southern Women Novelists and the Civil War: Trauma and Collective Memory in the American Literary Tradition Since 1861*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2014.
- Tamarkin, Eliza. *Anglophilia: Deference, Devotion, and Antebellum America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Taketani, *U.S Women Writers and the Discourse of Colonialism, 1825-1861*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003.
- Tate, Claudia. *Domestic Allegories of Political Desire: The Black Heroine's Text at the Turn of the Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- Tenney, Tabitha. *Female Quixotism: Exhibited in the Romantic Opinions and Extravagant Adventures of Dorcasina Sheldon*, 1801; rpt. Boston: George Clark, 1841.
- Thompson, Angela. *Hunting Africa: British Sport, African Knowledge and the Nature of Empire*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.
- Thompson, G.R. *Reading the American Novel 1865-1914*. New York: Blackwell, 2012.
- Tompkins, Jane. *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction 1790-1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

- Tooze, George H. *The Life and Letters of Emily Chubbuck Judson: Fanny Forester: Vol. I-V*. Macon: Mercer University Press, 2009.
- Trollope, Frances. *Domestic Manners of the Americans*. 1832; rpt. (ed.) Donald Smalley. New York: Vintage Books, 1949.
- Truth, Sojourner Truth. "Ain't I a Woman?" *Women's Convention*. 1851; rpt. *Modern History Sourcebook* <<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/sojtruth-woman.asp>>
- Tsoumas, Johannis. "Beauty and Morality as Female Values in the Victorian Middle Class Interior Decoration: 1837-1901." *Art Sensorium* 3.2 (2016): 19-31.
- Walston, Vaughn. J and Robert J. Stevens (eds.). *African-American Experience in World Missions: A Call Beyond Community*. California: William Carey Library, 2002.
- Warhol, Robyn R. *Gendered Interventions: Narrative Discourse in the Victorian Novel*. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1989.
- Warner, Anna. *Elizabeth Wetherell*. New York: G.P Putnam and Sons, 1909.
- Warner, Susan. "How May an American Woman Best Show her Patriotism?" *Ladies' Wreath* 5 (1851): 313-27.
- . *The Gold of Chickaree*. New York: G. P. Putnam, 1876.
- . *The Old Helmet*. New York: Robert, Carter and Brothers, 1862.
- . *The Wide Wide World*. 1850; rpt. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co, 1877.
- . Anna Warner. *Wych Hazel*. 1876; rpt. New York: G.P. Putnam, 1888.
- . *Queechy*. New York: G.P. Putnam, 1852.
- Watkins, Alexandra. *Problematic Identities in Women's Fiction of the Sri Lankan Diaspora*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Watson, Vaughn. J. and Robert J. Stevens (eds.) *African-American Experience in World Missions: A Call Beyond Community*. California: William Carey Library, 2002.
- Weierman, Karen Woods. "Reading and Writing 'Hope Leslie': Catharine Maria Sedgwick's Indian 'Connections.'" *The New England Quarterly* 75.3 (2002): 415-43.
- Weir, David. *American Orient: Imagining the East from the Colonial Era through the Twentieth Century*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2011.

- Welter, Barbara. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly* 18.2 (1966): 151-74.
- White, Isabelle. "Anti-Individualism, Authority and Identity: Susan Warner's Contradictions in *The Wide Wide World*." *American Studies* 31.2 (1990): 35-50.
- Williams, Susan S. *Reclaiming Authorship: Literary Women in America, 1850-1900*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.
- Willis, Sarah. *Ruth Hall: A Domestic Tale of the Present Time*. New York: Mason Brothers, 1854.
- Winslow, Miron. *Memoir of Mrs. Harriet Winslow: Thirteen Years a Member of the American Mission in Ceylon*. New York: American Tract Society, 1840.
- Wyse, Daphne V. "To Better Serve and Sustain the South: How Nineteenth Century Domestic Novelists Supported Southern Patriarchy Using the 'Cult of True Womanhood' and the Written Word." *History Theses* (2012), Paper 8.
- Yen, Ya-Lei. *Clothing Middle-Class Women: Dress, Gender and Identity in Mid-Victorian England c. 1851-1875*. Ph.D. Dissertation University of London, 2014.