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THE USE OF ORIENTALISM IN THE DRAMA OF ELIZABETH INCHBALD

BY

VALERIE DENISE ADAMS

B. A., University of Mississippi, 1987

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of
The University of Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of English

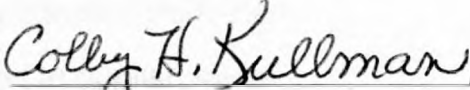
The University of Mississippi
May, 1990




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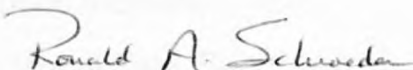
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ABSTRACT

THE USE OF ORIENTALISM IN THE DRAMA OF ELIZABETH INCHBALD

ADAMS, VALERIE DENISE. B. A. University of Mississippi, 1987. M. A. University of Mississippi, 1990. Thesis directed by Dr. Colby H. Kullman.

Throughout the eighteenth century, interest in the East continued to flourish and incentives to travel there increased. As colonial expansion grew, the middle class began touring abroad with their entire families. Returning home full of excitement from their adventures in exotic places, they felt compelled to publish travel books and to share what they had seen. The materials and interpretations of the East that appeared in the travel books captured the imagination of numerous writers in England and created a large body of literature in which the Orient was the background.

One of these writers was Elizabeth Simpson Inchbald. This study closely analyzed three of her plays (The Mogul Tale, Such Things Are, and Wise Man of the East) to show how the Orient influenced her writing and to determine how accurate her depiction of the East was.

Results of this investigation indicated that Mrs. Inchbald probably got exposed to Oriental literature from her study of the

French language and literature. The French were the first to translate Oriental literature. Even though none of Mrs. Inchbald's plays were translations, several Oriental elements were included, such as character names, settings, and customs.

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The Use of Orientalism in the Drama of Elizabeth Inchbald

Introduction

Many outside influences of importance have played a part in the shaping of English literature. The Orient was an early influence. As far back as Roman and Greek culture, in fact, the idea of using the Orient as source material for travel brochures and diaries began to surface. This method was later reborn during the Renaissance as commercial expansion opened the Middle East to European travelers, and scholars who learned native languages collected manuscripts and reported on Oriental life and culture. This commercial expansion continued to grow abundantly in the Restoration period.

With the increase in trade from the success of the East India Company, one of the wealthiest and most commercially prosperous businesses ever, England's interest in the Orient mushroomed. Though other countries had interests in the Orient, England had developed a contact with the East that only France also enjoyed--this was commerce. Yet, the French contact with the East was primarily intellectual. It is estimated that by 1660 the ocean-going shipping of Europe was approximately 20,000 vessels. Of these France only had 600, Holland 1600, and England had a large proportion of all the rest (Clark 1939, 4). Because of the expansion

Orient increased. The Orient so impressed the audiences during this period, that its spirit could be seen in the literature and drama of that age.

In his dictionary Johnson defined the term Orient as "rising as the sun; Eastern; bright; shining; glittering; gaudy; sparkling; the part of the East where the sun first appears" (Johnson 1755). In the broadest sense, an Oriental is one whose native habitat lies within the geographical areas of eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia: in Europe, the Balkan States, Greece, and European Turkey; in Africa, all the lands bordering the southern shore of the Mediterranean, including the modern states of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt; and in Asia, practically the entire continent, from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, including the Oceanic Archipelago. Some characteristics of Orientalism are tales which include motifs of riches, savages, and paganism, exotic lands, remote nations, sensual delights, bright sunlight, and shiny art works.

In any age literature is an important source of information as to what people are thinking about. Accordingly, eighteenth-century literature and drama are particularly representative of the time because how intellectually gifted these writers were was not as important as how hard they tried to please their audiences. During this period the theater's audience began to lose interest in the kings and queens and life at court because the monarch then had to answer to Parliament. As a result, heroic drama declined. Grown tired of stale stories, the reading public had been accustomed to think of the

East as exotic and were attracted to the new scenery, costumes and atmosphere.

The sudden advent of the Arabian Nights, full of life, the color, and glamour of the East--in Antoine Galland's version (1708)--opened a new chapter in the history of Oriental fiction in England (Conant 1908, xxii). The publication of the stories marked a new epoch in the development of popular fiction. According to James H. Hanford, they brought a close-up picture of the Muslim world in infinite variety without heroics:

Their stories were often masterpieces of narrative art. They were rich in human character and motive and moved in a world of supernatural and occult power stranger than anything in the fairy or demonic lore of Latin, Celt, or Teuton, a world naively accepted and as fascinating to the adults as to the child. The way was prepared for interest in such materials by long historic conflicts with the Moor and Turk, as well as by increasingly close contact with the East in trade and travel (1964, 55).

Thus, the Arabian Nights was a permanent factor in the development of the Oriental tale in England.

These changing interests had an effect on the plays of the period, especially on the costumes and pageantry portrayed. Seeking adventure and luxury, enriched middle-class English, families had begun to tour the East. Thus, writers like Aphra Behn, Elizabeth Inchbald, Oliver Goldsmith, Nicholas Rowe, and others attempted to infuse life into their works by using a colorful and florid "Oriental

style." To supplement the loss of the heroic, they chose Turkish, Indian, Persian, Egyptian, and Chinese heroes because the Eastern monarch suited the heroic tradition, which required an arrogant, boasting, firm, absolute monarch.

Oriental plays seem to have thrived during the period between 1670 and 1699--a body of thirty plays within the span of nearly thirty years (Clark 1939,171). Eastern themes attracted almost every writer of heroic drama and tragedy during the Restoration. A number of these plays attack the East India Company or its representatives for their exploitation and oppression of the Indian masses. Playwrights passed from ridicule and scorn to actual abuse in expressing their contempt for the Company's philosophy of laissez-faire and rugged individualism. Because Rousseau encouraged writers to exploit the Company's mistreatment of the Indians, writers like Inchbald, Burney, Lewis, and others opposed the nabobs, rich merchants and officials of the East India Company, and championed the new humanitarianism.

While comedy is scantily represented, lesser authors of the English Restoration sought to use it in their depiction of Eastern culture. For example, T. Blake Clark found in his research on *Oriental England* a play in which a comic Irishman tried to heal a gullible Rajah with potatoes on the grounds that potatoes saved the lives of thousands of his countrymen every year. In another comedy, a roguish, irresistible English girl convinced a Sultan to dismiss his harem of three hundred beautiful women for her (Clark 1939, 120).

Such lively, humorous, juxtaposition of people, places, and customs kept Oriental institutions and manners uppermost in the audience's mind. Some of these writers of comedy included Etherege, D'Urfey, Farquhar, Shadwell, and Vanbrugh.

The following list indicates the types of drama in which Orientalism appears during the Restoration:

Types of Plays	
Heroic plays	12
Heroic plays (operatic)	2
Tragedies	22
Tragi-comedies	2
Comedies	2
Farces	2
Drolls	1
	45
(Wann 1918, 172)	

The sources for these plays derived from numerous origins: travel to the Orient had increased considerably; diplomatic, as well as commercial, relations with the Orient were becoming much more intimate; the French romance writers were publishing numerous volumes with Eastern themes; and European contacts with all parts of the East were growing closer. Moreover, because daily logs of travelers, consuls, and diplomatic officials who had seen things at first hand were more numerous and more accurate than previously,

works on the Orient had increased. The Englishman did his best to imitate the Eastern culture, but he did not always achieve happy results. Though the Englishman was interested in Oriental literature, as his preoccupation in the Eastern tales reveals, he could hardly master its true style. "English literary form does not borrow any devices or technique from the literature of the Orient" (Clark 1939, 56). Still, no English writer of this period ever devoted a major portion of his creative work to an interpretation of the East.

Various classes of sources were employed by playwrights, including historical travel accounts, French dramas and romances, English plays, and novels. The English history and travels, novels, and plays were more numerous than in the Elizabethan period. Louis Wann indicated that the heroic play was the most significant influence on Oriental plays (1918, 174).

Moving from the external to the internal aspects of the Oriental plays (types and sources), scenes of action (which include the nationalities, customs, and life of the Oriental) are worthy of focus. The following summary provides a list of scenes of action to be found in these plays and the number of plays laid in each country.

Scenes of Action	
A. Turkey	10 plays
B. Spain	7 "
C. China, Morocco and the Moluccas, each 3	9 "
D. Rhodes, England, and varied, each 2	6 "
E. Algeria, Arabia, Cypress,	

Persia, Georgia, India, Tartary, "Hungaria Nova", Portugal, Hungary, Austria, France, and Italy, each 1	13 "
--	------

45

In Restoration drama the twenty-two countries represented showed a much wider range of scene and a more intense search for new and strange localities than in earlier periods (Wann 1918, 179).

When considering nationalities, it is interesting to note that Hindus, Chinese, and Georgians were previously left untreated in English drama. Yet, during the Restoration the Hindus were represented in five plays, the Chinese in four, and the Georgians in one play. The greatest center of interest appeared to be on the Turks, who appear in twenty-one plays. However, Restoration dramatists failed to portray their characters accurately. This failure comes from heroic drama's aim at gaining stage effect. As a result, true character was distorted. Some examples of this distortion are found in the characters of Almanzor in Dryden's The Conquest of Granada, the Hindu in Dryden's Aurengzebe, and the Turkish Solyman in Dryden's The Siege of Rhodes.

Because Restoration dramatists knew much about the life, customs, beliefs, and surroundings of the Orient, they chose to exhibit this knowledge in strikingly vivid and concrete ways. They were careful in their presentation of setting, custom, rites, and observances, to give the plays atmosphere. According to Wann these

scenic aspects were emphasized for three reasons: first, there was a general tendency toward the elaboration of individual scenes throughout the Restoration; second, the heroic play depended on novelty and variety of scene, qualities also shared by the opera; finally, increased knowledge of the Orient through histories, travel accounts, diplomats, and French romances made the Orient an exotic and appealing interest.

The appeal of Oriental literature continued from the Restoration and late seventeenth century to the late eighteenth century. One English dramatist who was inspired by the Orient and incorporated it in her work was Elizabeth Simpson Inchbald. She was the eighth child in a family of nine. Because her family was poor and because she wanted to follow her brother's footsteps by pursuing the theater, Inchbald ran away from home at nineteen to seek her fortune on the London stage. Though she was a beautiful woman, her acting career was not very successful because of a speech impediment--a pronounced stammer. She tried to control the stammer when rehearsing lines, but her tone was too monotonous. Furthermore, her beauty was causing difficulties of another kind. She became prey to actors like James Dodd, who tried to molest her when she applied to him for help.

Being out on her own thoroughly frightened Inchbald, so she quickly accepted the marriage proposal of Joseph Inchbald, an actor and a painter. Through her husband, Inchbald was provided with financial security as well as access to the stage. During the first

four years of their marriage, Inchbald served as an understudy in the English theater. At the same time, she was teaching herself French. However, when her husband argued with the Edinburgh audience, they had to move to Paris, where he tried to earn a living at painting, and she tried writing comedies. This period in their marriage was low; money was scarce, and marital squabbles had begun. It was during her stay in France and her study of its literature and language that Inchbald was introduced to the Orient. She started to learn French at twenty-one. The knowledge of a new language would later help her to overcome artistic drought and financial straits. About half of her total output consisted of adaptations and free translations from French and German texts (Schwedler 1989, 9).

Inchbald's earliest effort at writing was an outline of her novel A Simple Story, circulated among her friends in 1777. By 1779, she had completed the first version of the novel, which she offered for publication several times over the next ten years. Meanwhile, she began to succeed in her dramatic writing. The Mogul Tale, her first play, earned her one hundred guineas and played ten days at Haymarket in 1784. This play was popular because of the French craze for ballooning. Her humanitarian interests are revealed in her most successful works. Other plays included in this study are Such Things Are (1787) and Wise Man of the East (1799). I have chosen to focus on these three plays because they best illustrate the exotic Orient in Inchbald's works.

Inchbald achieved an unusual degree of recognition for a

professional woman writer of her period. She was an active playwright for more than twenty years, earning the respect of her contemporaries. Her first novel, A Simple Story, has continued to be reissued since its publication.

The purpose of this study is to present three works in which Oriental elements exist; to summarize briefly the plays and to analyze the sources, nationalities, customs, and scenes of action depicted in each; and to reach some conclusion.

The Mogul Tale

Elizabeth Inchbald's first successful play, a farce entitled The Mogul Tale, or The Descent of the Balloon (1784), though of no major literary value, illustrates her attempt at an Oriental play. With its light plot and thinly developed characters, the play exemplifies humanitarianism which she later developed in her full length plays.

During the period Inchbald wrote The Mogul Tale, the reading public's attention had been captured by the ascent of hot air balloons by the Mongolfier brothers' "flight" near Lyons on June 5, 1783. Inspired by the concept of ballooning, Inchbald capitalized on the popular event and "wove fantasies into flight" (Macheski 1984, 101).

The Mogul Tale, set in the garden of the seraglio of the Great Mogul of the Persian Dynasty, also appealed to public taste for the exotic. The plot, a simple farce, deals with three Englishers: Johnny (a cobbler) and his wife Fanny, who pay five guineas to take a balloon ride, and the doctor, a slightly mad scientist, who pilots the balloon, only to discover that he cannot control its flight path or land at will. As a result, they are forced to land in the garden of the Mogul and are terrified of the danger they face at his hands. The Mogul, however, proves not to be a brute but exhibits a rational frame of mind. He is well informed about world events:

conversation. We were amazed at the miraculous manner of their arrival, but such acts I knew had been lately discovered in Europe (7).

Even though he plans to free them, he first intends to frighten them:

Aggravate their fears, as much as possible, tell them, I am the abstract of cruelty, the essence of tyranny; tell them the Divan shall open with all its terrors. For tho' I mean to see the effect of their fears, for in the hour of reflection I love to contemplate the greatest work of heaven, the mind of man (7).

When the three are brought before the Mogul, the Doctor is introduced as an ambassador from King George III, Johnny as the Pope, and Fanny as a nun who has been sent on a balloon trip for penance.

To increase the newcomers' fear, the Mogul pretends to order several people burned alive and others torn to pieces within their hearing. Moreover, to impress them with his tremendous power and authority, he has his titles read:

Emperor of all India--The Great Mogul--Brother of the Sun and the Moon--of the Right Giver of all earthly crowns--Commander of all Creatures from the sea of Cremons to the Gulfs of Persia--Emperor of all Estates, and Lord of all the coast of Africa--Lord of Ethiopia, Grand Sultan of all the beautiful Females of Circassia, Barbary, Media, and both the Tartaries--Primer of the River Ganges, Zanthur, and Euphrates--Sultan of seventeen kingdoms--King of eight thousand islands, and husband of one thousand wives (9).

Finally, by the end of the farce we see that the Mogul is akin to the noble savage. He releases them and ironically gives these Christians a lesson in Christian virtue:

I am an Indian, a Mahometan, my laws are cruel and my nature savage--you have imposed upon me, and attempted to defraud me, but know that I have been taught mercy and compassion for the suffering of human nature; however differing in laws, temper and colour from myself. Yes, from you Christians whose laws teach charity to all the world, have I learned these virtues? For your countrymen's cruelty to the poor Gentoos has shewn me tyranny in so foul a light, that I was determined henceforth to be only mild, just and merciful. --You have done wrong, but you are strangers, you are destitute--You are too much in my power to treat you with severity--all three may freely depart (19-20).

With the trade expansion of the East India Company, more and more merchants invaded the Eastern market to get rich. However, word got back to the West of how these merchants were exploiting the Gentoos. Therefore, through the Mogul's speech, Inchbald illustrates how the English audience regarded the activities of the East India Company as a poor brand of Christianity. His speech is merely a beginning for Inchbald's expression of humanitarian reform; she further expands this concept in Such Things Are.

Several Oriental elements as well as scenes can be found in this play. The seraglio is one example of an oriental element Inchbald employs. Many plays about the East have scenes of one kind or another showing the Sultan's harem, full of beautiful women from all over the world. In fact the Mogul himself boasts that he is husband to a thousand wives. Plays which use the institution of the seraglio as the principle motivation of the action usually show an English girl, or at

least a Christian girl, who was so clever, and with whose independence the Sultan was so taken that he either became converted to the one-wife idea and asked her to be his Queen or let her and her friends go (Clark 1939, 153).

A topic often discussed among women of the seraglio was the issue of monogamy versus polygamy. Such is the conversation among two women as the play opens. Two of the Mogul's ladies are jealously speaking of a third, who enters and tells the first that she remembers the day when they were kind to her and reveals her knowledge of their jealousy: ". . . The woman who possesses his heart, is sure to have every woman in the Seraglio against her: but there was a time when you was kind to me "(1).

Their reply is that that was when she was in distress. Because the heroines always brought new ideas of conduct to the seraglio, the Sultan, their husband, was fond of them.

Another Oriental element in the Mogul Tale was that of the absolute ruler. The Sultan's word was holy; he could command the deaths of hundreds of people, just as the Mogul did to frighten the Englishers. Likewise, it was a custom of his to drop one of his silk handkerchiefs in front of the mistress he chose for the night. Johnny makes use of this custom when the Eunuch gives him one of the Mogul's handkerchiefs to summon back one of the Mogul's women:

1st Eu. Though I cannot recall the fair fugitive, I can do what you will like as well, take this

handkerchief--it is the Mogul's.

John. Damn his handkerchief.

1st Eu. Cast this at the foot of any woman you please,
and she must accomplish all your desires.

John. Must she! damn me give me my old Miggy's
handkerchief! and you'll see what work I'll
make-but there she goes (14)

The Mogul is an interesting character. Fortunately, he is not a member of the Royal Society, an organization which gave governmental support to scientific investigations, nor an inhabitant of Laputa, a flying island in Gulliver's Travels, whose inhabitants are philosophers devoted to mathematics and music. In other words, he is not so philosophical that he lacks the ability to deal with people on a more humanistic, personal level. Instead he commands the three balloonists to pay a price for their lives; they must drop all false pretenses and claim their real identities. He teaches them a lesson in honesty which they quickly learn when their only alternative is "racks. . . chaldrons of boiling oil--The cage of hot irons, and the trampling elephants" (18). In addition to knowing everything about all three characters, the Mogul possesses the natural virtues of the primitive man. He manipulates incidents in order to teach the English travellers a lesson, the nature of which is implicit in his last speech. The Mogul describes himself as cruel and savage, but he possesses wisdom and nobility that could serve as a model for Englishmen, which he points out.

As an actual exotic, the character reappears, not so omnipotently, as the Sultan in Such Things Are and as Ava Thoanna in The Wise Man of the East. Like the Mogul, the good man who manipulates others around him so that they find truth and happiness also reappears as Haswell in Such Things Are.

Inchbald also makes use of Eunuchs, emasculated black men who serve as guards of the seraglio and do the Mogul's bidding. One of the Mogul's ladies warns the three visitors about the Eunuchs:

1st Lady. . . . the Mogul Eunuchs are constantly on the watch, the time draws nigh, when they will enter this dwelling: be prepared to give an account of yourselves, who, and what you are, and substantial excuses for your being found here, or you assuredly die in misery....

They are severe, but they do but their duty--They obey their master, who meant them to be severe--if possible make them your friends, by all means (5-6).

These Eunuchs prove to be very manipulative. The first tries to frighten the visitors:

Unhappy man I pity you, I was once in Europe, and treated kindly there!--I wish in gratitude I could do any thing to serve you--but the Mogul is bloody minded, and cruel, and at present inexorable (7).

Furthermore, this Eunuch misleads the three visitors by telling them to stand boldly and proudly before the Mogul:

The Mogul is only to be wrought upon by his fears, now if you can alarm him with the danger of taking your lives. . . He will be in the Divan immediately, be firm and bold--seem to know yourselves of consequence--seem to have no fear, and that will alarm him (8).

Another element of the Orient found within the play is the change in style of dress. When the Mogul takes Fanny to be a member of his harem, Johnny, her husband, makes note of how her clothes "are array'd in oriental splendor" (13):

John. What the devil! my own Fan--why who the devil would have thought of seeing you here, dizen'd out in that fine gown, with a sack round your waist--and a long petticoat trailing on the ground--and a turbot on your head, why what's become of your straw hat and linen gown.

1st La. She is altered in that garb to please the great Mogul (16).

Other elements, which are often a part of the Oriental theme, deal with religion and marriage. First, when Johnny remarks about one of the ladies' "sweet soul," she replies, "Why our religion tells us we have no souls" (13). Likewise, when discussing the concept of marriage and monogamy versus polygamy, one lady says, "No my dear English lady--I have been told in your country, every woman had a lover a piece, but here we have but one between us three and ninety seven of us" (15).

Mrs. Inchbald appears to have been aware of some oriental

customs and motifs. Nevertheless, this play is a weak representation of the Orient. She fails to draw vivid pictures of the gardens, she never places the play in a definite location (like India or Persia), nor does she go into details about the women in the seraglio. Granted, this was her first attempt at writing a play; still, she does not illustrate sufficient knowledge about the Orient. She merely deals with well-known stereotypes.

Such Things Are

Rousseau believed in the inherent good of all mankind and deplored the nabobs' (English merchants of the East India Company) treatment of the Indians. Yet these businessmen found justification for deceiving and exploiting the masses. The strong rationalist movement, grown more powerful in England since the Reformation (which declared that the authority of the church was unnecessary, and each man could be self-employed) carried with it ideas which perfectly fitted the needs of the rising merchant class. Though the church condemned this class for usury, the church was ignored because it had no authority. In fact preachers were willing to compromise with the merchants, but because the merchants were unwilling to move, no compromise was made.

As a result of the church's failure to make these merchants revert to Christian ways, the great humanitarian movement began in England. Individuals like John Howard decided to take a stand and try to improve conditions. Howard worked all over the East in Malta, Smyrna, and Constantinople. To verify reports of the nabob's abusing the natives, he deliberately boarded a plague-stricken ship at Smyrna, incidentally had the excitement of being attacked by a Tunisian Corsair while on voyage, and on arrival at Venice, was quarantined in two lazaretos (public hospitals or pest houses for

persons with contagious diseases) for forty-two (Blake 1939, 126).

Another humanitarian was Lord George Gordon. Gordon would have been familiar to Inchbald, a Roman Catholic, for his role in the riots of 1780. During the weeks of the sober "no popery" demonstrations that turned to anarchic mob violence, rioters actually succeeded in storming Newgate Prison and in releasing felons. After the release of the felons, the prison remained open for public scrutiny. Dr. Samuel Johnson is believed to have seen these quarters first-hand (Macheski 1984, 133). The initial situation rose from the Protestant Association's intolerance towards civil rights for Catholics. By September of 1780, Inchbald had joined the Covent Garden Company, only a few months after the riots, and visited the dungeons of Newgate.

Thus, intrigued with the concept of humanitarian reform and inspired by reformers like Howard and Gordon, Mrs. Inchbald wrote Such Things Are (1788), a play set in Sumatra of the East Indies, which was under British control in the late eighteenth century. The play calls attention to prison reform.

Such Things Are was presented at Covent Garden. It combines the comic element of satire with melodrama. Written in five acts, the play demonstrated Inchbald's improved skill at writing. The play, acted twenty-two times, became so popular that by the end of the century, there had been twelve editions of it published (Clark 1939, 127). Inchbald takes the pressing topical issue of prison reform and creates a popular play without destroying the lesson of

humanitarian effort. Gary Kelly comments on Inchbald's social and moral satire in her popular humanitarian works of the 1780's and 1790's:

As early as 1787 she had displayed her own peculiar blend of satire and sentiment in a play based at once on the trial of Warren Hastings and on the work of Howard, the prison reformer. . . . Even the title of the play, Such Things Are, was a harbinger of such later titles as Man as He Is and Things as They Are. . . . The play also anticipates a favorite theme of English Jacobin novels of the next decade, the reconciling and ennobling power of love and sympathy--what the Jacobin philosophers called philanthropy. . . . The moral of the play is not far from Godwin's argument, expressed six years later, that tyranny corrupts a whole nation and spreads itself to every level of society (Manvell 1987, 54-55).

The plot concerns a tyrannical Sultan, who rules with an iron fist, and English residents and visitors, who make up the social scene. Because type-casting had become popular during the period, Mrs. Inchbald carefully selected the names of the players. Each name had something to do with a particular personality trait of the character. Sir Luke and Lady Tremor are satirized as a socially pretentious couple friendly with Lord Flint, the Sultan's agent who pretends to be very forgetful, and the Honorable Mr. Twineall, a confidence trickster concerned with flattering everyone so that he can get a good place at court. He puts on the latest fads and fashions of London society. Another character is Meanright, a friend of Twineall's who is about to leave the country. Later in the play, we discover the Sultan is an imposter who has

usurped the throne and become a tyrant lamenting a long-lost love, Arabella. The good, "humanitarian" in the play is Mr. Haswell, identified with prison reform and modeled, as Mrs. Inchbald pointed out in an advertisement of the play, after a real-live character, John Howard.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The travels of an Englishman throughout Europe, and even in some parts of Asia, to soften the sorrows of the Prisoner, excited in the mind of the Author the subject of the following pages, which formed into a dramatic story, have produced from the Theatre a profit far exceeding the usual pecuniary advantages arising from a successful Comedy.

The uncertainty in what part of the East the hero of the present piece was (at the time it was written) dispensing his benevolence, caused the Writer, after many researches and objections, to fix the scene on the island of Sumatra, where the English settlement, the system of government, and every description of the manners of the people, reconcile the incidents of the Play to the strictest degree of probability.

Several scenes show Haswell visiting the Sultan's dungeons. Among the prisoners is a woman, who turns out to be Arabella. The Sultan, his conscience fully moved, admits that he is really a Christian. Once he is reunited with his wife, Arabella, his nature is changed, and he adopts Haswell as his advisor. Haswell, then, encourages him to

release the prisoners he has held unjustly.

Others who help make up the prison scene include Zedan, a "tawny Indian" who is held prisoner for political reasons; Elvurus, a young man whose father is dying in prison and who offers himself to the Sultan for battle in exchange for his father's life; and Aurelia, an English-born girl sent to India to find a spouse among the British merchants. Later, we discover that Aurelia and Elvurus are in love. Women fortune hunters, as well as men, were India bound. Sir Luke married one of these girls. Lady Tremor had brought with her two letters of recommendation. So, when the stranger (Twineall) is presented to the Tremors, he has letters of introduction:

Serv. A gentleman, Sir, just come from on board an English vessel, says, he has letters to present to you.

Sir Luke. Shew him in--He has brought his character too, I suppose--and left it behind, too, I suppose.

Twi. Sir Luke, I have the honour of presenting to you, [Gives letters] one from my Lord Cleland--one from Sir Thomas Shoestring--one from Colonel Fril (7).

As previously mentioned, the plot centers on the humanitarian notions of penal reform, and Haswell serves as the reformer. Howard visited the lazarettos; Haswell visited the dark, drafty cells of the prison. As he passes through the prison, the keeper must hold up a

light so that he can see. The dialogue between the keeper and Haswell emphasizes that large fees, both legal and bribes, determine the prisoners' true sentence:

Keep. . . . that man yonder, suspected of disaffection, is sentenced to be here for life, unless his friends can lay down a large sum by way of penalty, which they find they cannot do, and he is turned melancholy (20).

As the scene continues, the keeper offers Haswell a cloak, warning him that they must pass a "damp vault, which to those who are not used to it--" (21). The keeper does not complete this line, and thus Inchbald evokes horrors of jail fever and other contagious diseases rampant in the prisons while at the same she time illustrates Haswell's courage as he brushes off the keeper's conclusion (Macheski 1984, 138):

Keep. . . . or will you postpone your visit?

Has. No--go on (21).

Zedan is one of the prisoners Haswell meets first. He picks Haswell's pockets so that he can buy his freedom. Because he has been in prison so long, he is motivated by unusual inclinations. Zedan's speech on why he steals fulfills Mrs. Inchbald's humanitarian purpose; basically, she is arguing that an individual's circumstances shape the person's character:

Zed. And then the pleasure it will be to hear the stranger fret, and complain for his loss!--O, how my heart loves to see sorrow!--Misery such as I have known, on men who spurn me who treat me as if (in my own island) I had no friends that loved me--no servants that paid me honour--no children that revered me--who forgot I am a husband--a father--nay, a man (22).

Zedan's outburst tells the reader that because his captors have denied his humanity and forced him into this behavior, he is a thief.

However, once Zedan meets Haswell, he is so moved by Haswell's goodness that he returns the wallet and confesses a new emotion:

Zed. 'Tis something that I never felt before--it makes me like not only you, but all the world besides--the love of my family was confined to them alone; but this makes me feel I could love even my enemies (28).

Haswell is so elated that he has helped to reform someone that he exclaims: "Oh, nature! grateful! mild! gentle! and forgiving!--worst of tyrants they who, by hard usage, drive you to be cruel!" (28)

Haswell's speech is fitting for one believing in the tenets of Rousseau and the idea of the inherent goodness of man in a state of nature (Clark 1939, 126).

Haswell's goodness and compassion for his fellow man are further highlighted when he appeals to the Sultan for better conditions for the prisoners. When the Sultan thanks Haswell for his

kindness and offers a reward, Haswell replies:

- Has. Sultan--the reward I ask, is to preserve more of your people still.
- Sul. How more? my subjects are in health--no contagion reigns amongst them.
- Has. The prisoner is your subject--there misery--more contagious than disease, preys on the lives of hundreds--sentenced but to confinement, their doom is death.--Immured in damp and dreary vaults, they daily perish--and who can tell but that amongst the many hapless sufferers, there may be hearts, bent down with penitence to Heaven and you, for every slight offense--there may be some amongst the wretched multitude, even innocent victims.--Let me seek them out--let me save them and you (38).

Haswell could be compared to Christ. Like Christ, Haswell:

"visited each sick man's bed,--administered [himself] the healing draught,--encouraged our savages with the hope of life, or pointed out their better hope in death.--The widow speaks [his] charities--the orphan lisps [his] bounties--and the rough Indian melts in tears to bless [him] (39)."

When the Sultan asks why he has acted as he has, Haswell replies that it was his duty as a Christian. At this crucial moment the Sultan confesses that he, too, is a Christian, who has turned from the principles of Christianity because of the loss of his wife, Arabella:

. . . in peaceful solitude we lived, till, in the heat of rebellion against the late Sultan, I was forced from my happy home to bear a part.--I chose the imputed rebels side, and fought for the young aspirer.--An arrow, in the midst of the engagement, pierced his heart; and his officers, alarmed at the terror this stroke of fate might cause amongst their troops, urged me (as I bore his likeness) to counterfeit it farther, and shew myself to the soldiers as their king recovered. I yielded to their suit, because it gave me ample power to avenge the loss of my Arabella, who had been taken from her home by the merciless foe, and barbarously murdered . . . I joyfully embraced a scheme which promised vengeance on the enemy--it prospered,--and I revenged my wrongs and her's, with such unsparing justice on the foe, that even the men who made me what I was, trembled to reveal their imposition; and they find it still their interest to continue it (40).

Like the sinner who repented and confessed his sins to Christ, the Sultan confesses his secret to Haswell, who then asks the Sultan to "permit me, then, to be your comforter, as I have been theirs" (41). Later, Haswell and the Sultan work out a plan for the release of the prisoners once the Sultan, in disguise, visits them. Three of these include Zedan, Elvirus' father, and a woman who has been locked up for 15 years (Arabella).

The sub-plot of the play is concerned with sentimental love as well as the comic character of Twineall. First, there is a love interest between Elvirus and Aurelia. In Act IV Elvirus admits to Aurelia that he loved her the first time he saw her, but because of the family crisis

caused by his father's imprisonment, he has been unable to see her. Furthermore, he has made arrangements to be shipped off to do battle for the Sultan in exchange for his father's release:

Yes--and that caused the silence which I hope you have lamented.--I could not wound you with the recital of our misfortunes--and now, only with the sad idea that I shall never see you more, I am come to take my leave (43).

Because their love is a secret, Elvurus plays the role of Aurelia's visiting friend in front of Lady Tremor, Sir Luke, and Haswell. But Haswell immediately recognizes Elvurus as the man who entreated Haswell's assistance for his father's release. As the scene becomes more tense, it looks as if Elvurus might be exposed, leaving no hope for the couple's love, but Aurelia recognizes a chance to save it through Haswell. She knows of his forgiving heart and urges Elvurus to speak with him:

Aur. Aye; let his virtues make you thus repent; but let them also make you hope forgiveness.

Elv. Nay, he is just, as well as compassionate--and for detected falsehood-- . . . Yet he shall hear my story--I'll follow him, and obtain his pity, if not his pardon (56).

Nevertheless, once Haswell secures the release of the prisoners and reads Aurelia's letter explaining their (Elvurus' and her) predicament, Haswell saves them, too:

Has. [Going to Elvirus] Aurelia , in this letter to me has explained your story with so much compassion, that for her sake, I must pity it too.--With freedom to your father, and yourself, the Sultan restores his forfeited lands--and might I plead, Sir Luke, for your interest with Aurelia's friends,--this young man's filial love, should be repaid by conjugal affection (73).

The other love interest in the play is between the Sultan and his long-lost wife, Arabella, who has been imprisoned for many years. In the scene where the couple is reunited Haswell again plays the savior role:

Ara. Is this the light you promised?--[To Haswell.]--Dear precious light!--Is this my freedom? to which I bind myself a slave forever.--[Embracing the Sultan.]--Was I your captive?--Sweet captivity!--more precious than an age of liberty (68)!

Inchbald juxtaposed the characters Haswell and Twineall. While Haswell is a serious, helpful, and good-natured character, Twineall is a comical fop. He is a parasite, flatterer and a hypocrite. Twineall, Mrs. Inchbald says, is modeled on Lord Chesterfield's "refined gentleman," a concept outlined by his Lordship in letters to his son. Mrs. Inchbald had read these letters and obviously been amused by them (Dugan 1978, 43). A great deal of comedy can be found in his conversational style. He sounds like a babbling idiot:

Why, Madam, for instance, when a gentleman is asked a question which is either troublesome or improper to answer it, even though you speak to an inferior--but you say--"really it appears to me e-e-e-e-e [mutters and shrugs]--that is--mo-mo-mo-mo-mo-[mutters]-if you see the thing--for my part--te-te-te-te-and that's all I can tell about it at present (9).

The scene in which he is arrested for an offense against the state (because he had publically expressed disbelief in the true identity of the Sultan to the Tremors) also serves as a good example of Mrs. Inchbald's comic convention:

Guard. Sir, you are our prisoner, and must go with us.

Twi. Gentlemen, you are mistaken--I had all my clothes made in England, and 'tis impossible the bill can have followed me already (57).

Actually, he has told nothing; he knows nothing. Twineall's main concern is flattering his way into a good position at court, whatever the political climate. In an attempt to get the Tremors to like him, he asks Meanright to inform him of their secret dispositions and all their connections.

Meanright seeing an opportunity to teach Twineall a lesson, tells the exact opposite about the Tremors. He says Sir Luke is a brave, courageous war hero, and Lady Tremor comes from ancestors of high stature in society. Actually, Sir Luke is a coward who ran away

from battle, and his wife's father was a wig maker. So when Twineall tries to flatter them by pointing out their weakness, they take an immediate dislike to him. In fact, Lady Tremor wants his head chopped off by the Sultan.

When Twineall is arrested for treason and condemned to lose his head, it is Haswell who has to save his life. Haswell, first, informs him that it is his constant flattery that has made him disliked by the others and has led to his present situation:

Flattery!--a vice that renders you not only despicable, but odious (70).

After listening to Haswell's reproach, Twineall vows never to flatter again:

I wou'd--I wou'd never say another civil thing to anybody--never--never make myself agreeable again (70).

Macheski suggested that all of Inchbald's characters in Such Things Are are in some type of prison. Of course, it is obvious that Arabella, Elvirus and his father, and Zedan, are physically incarcerated, but the Europeans are in a prison of their own--trapped by their ambition and indebtedness to fashion. The Tremors are trapped by the lies they wish to conceal; Twineall is trapped by his scheme of flattering his way to a place; and Flint is trapped by his loyalty to the tyrannic Sultan. Haswell tries to rescue them through his humanitarian efforts of selfless behavior, but to no avail. Lady

Tremor still takes delight in seeing prisoners tortured:

The Tremors are metaphorically imprisoned, then, by their anti-humanitarian nature; their crime is selfishness and hypocrisy. . . . The prisoners, in contrast, . . . still display superior hearts. Their first concern, in the case of two prisoners named Elvirus and Arabella, who enter later in the play, is not self-interest but precisely the opposite. Elvirus offers his life in exchange for his father's freedom; Arabella decides to remain in prison because her husband will benefit from her act. Even Zedan considers his suffering as more miserable than the mere physical surroundings make it because his family suffers as a result (1984, 141).

Unlike The Mogul Tale, Such Things Are is not filled with many Oriental practices, and customs. In fact, only a few are readily visible. First, the story revolves around English people living in Sumatra, an island in the East Indies. The exotic appeal is heightened by the presence of the mysterious and cruel Sultan. His cruelty is first observed in Act I when Lady Tremor asks, ". . . is it true that the Sultan cut off the head of one of his wives the other day because she said, 'I won't'" (12)? Finally, while the drop of a handkerchief could get the Mogul any woman he wanted for the night in The Mogul Tale, the Sultan's signet had similar power--it could "redress the wrongs of all who suffer" (68). Haswell uses this signet to get the prisoners released.

Mrs. Inchbald was definitely a humanitarian reformer influenced by Christianity and Rousseauism. Her portrayal of Haswell

represents the best in Christian principles. James Dugan does not like Haswell's character because he is too good to be true:

Indeed, the idealized portrait of the hero is perhaps this play's greatest weakness. His unflagging goodness and industry on other's behalves, and the encomiums heaped on him grow very nearly unbearable. Furthermore, the extent to which he manipulates the characters although always to good ends, is disconcerting (Dugan 1978, 46).

In my opinion, since Haswell is modeled after John Howard, he is a believable character as a reformer; perhaps Inchbald's message was that people should act more like Haswell to improve society.

Such Things Are marked a dramatic shift in the writing of Elizabeth Inchbald. Her interest in farce was gradually diminishing. Her skill lay in her ability to combine two plots, prison reform and sentimental love, and to keep the action moving at a brisk pace. The play is didactic; the moral is that vice leads to serious consequences. Such Things Are is a definite improvement over her first play.

Wise Man of the East

In 1799 Kotzebue, a German playwright, wrote Das Schreibepult (The Writing Desk). During that same period Mrs. Inchbald was given a rough translation of this play by her editor, Harris, and she set about adapting it for the English stage (Boaden 1833, 24). The following is an excerpt of a letter from Mrs. Inchbald to Mr. Harris concerning the play:

Leicester Square, August 29, 1799

Sir,

According to your desire I send you the terms as fairly as my calculation can make them, on which it will be worth my while to hazard the success of the German play I have been altering; and if there should be any thing in my demand which does not meet with your perfect concurrence, I will most willingly submit to the arbitration of any two persons you and I shall appoint, and suffer that our agreement be regulated by their judgment. . . .

I beg leave to mention that this play has given me equal trouble of invention than any one wholly my own ever did; and that I have gained more by one of my own on the twentieth night, than I could now gain upon the thirtieth; and that the original manuscript will be saleable in proportion to the success of mine, and no doubt will repay the

Your most humble servant,
E. Inchbald (Boaden 1833, 24-26)

Mrs. Inchbald completely cut out several elements in Kotzebue's play and made many major alterations to the plot. A summary of Kotzebue's play will be given first to form a basis for discussion of Mrs. Inchbald's play.

Kotzebue's play portrays the growth of Diethelm, a young merchant, from a gullible, rakish gamester into a mature and humane benefactor. Of equal importance to the plot are the family of Mr. and Mrs. Erlen and their children, Karl and Sophie. Mr. Erlen, having lost a large sum of money many years earlier, has caused the family to live in poverty. He had given his money to Diethelm's father to invest, but the old man died on the same night leaving no records behind indicating Erlen's claim to the money. The executors had given Erlen the old man's writing desk as a memento. While this seems to be a small consolation, at the end of the play we find the desk contained Erlen's money in a secret compartment. So when the soldier's came to confiscate Erlen's possessions for debts, the money was discovered by accident.

Two more hard luck characters are added to Kotzebue's play, both of whom tell lengthy stories full of pathos and suffering. First, Hadebrath attempts to fleece Diethelm by conjuring up a ghost of a dead friend. When the hoax is discovered, Hadebrath confesses that he is desperate for money for his children. Diethelm agrees to help him. Second, Fernau, warns Diethelm of the dangers of gaming, and tells his own story of a fortune lost at the tables. Diethelm, remembering that his father owed

Fernau money, pays him. Such incidents as these help to reveal Diethelm's character.

In another incident, a gypsy woman, Mme. Lupnitz tries to trap Diethelm in a compromising situation with Emilie, her daughter, in whom Diethelm has a mildly dishonorable interest. The trick does not work, however, and Kotzebue impresses on Mme. Lupnitz a few lessons regarding honesty and true virtue.

Finally, Diethelm has a mildly dishonorable interest in the chambermaid at the chateau where he gambles. It is she who reveals to him a plan to rob him at the tables. He interprets this confidence as a sign that she is in love with him and grows ardent. Yet, she rebuffs him. This chambermaid, unknown to him, is the daughter of Mr. Erlen, his father's old friend.

At the conclusion of the play, with Erlen's money recovered, Diethelm becomes engaged to Sophie.

The Writing Desk is full of episodes, but Wise Man of the East is not. In her adaptation of the German play, Mrs. Inchbald strove for simplicity and a fast-moving plot. During the period in which Mrs. Inchbald's play was written (1799), she incorporated writing techniques that were in vogue, such as the benevolence in disguise character and the Oriental figure. First, benevolence in disguise can be identified in old Clarendon's pretending to be a psychic Indian in order to teach his son to be moralistic and responsible. Second, the use of type names, like Bankwell, Lawley, and Starch, had become dated by the end of the eighteenth century. This practice suggested that the old humours

psychology still flourished in this form. Moreover, it finally led to the maintenance of type casting and type performance (Manvell 1987, 46). Third, the use of foreign names and settings was as widespread in the eighteenth century as it had been in Elizabethan times. Wise Man of the East places particular interest in the Far East. For example, Old Clarensforth has supposedly died in India. An aged, exotic Indian friend of his from Cambodia has mysteriously shown up in London to visit his son, young Clarensforth. Furthermore, this Indian claims to have the power to conjure up the dead. Inchbald's employment of foreign elements such as these excited the interest of her audience.

This five-act comedy presented at Covent Garden and set in London, deals with Clarensforth, who is determined to enjoy life now that his rich father has died in India, and left him a fortune. The family's financial advisor, Bankwell, pleads with Clarensforth to help an old friend of his father's, Metland, who has become impoverished after placing his fortune of 12,000 pounds in the elder Clarensforth's hands, without receipt, and losing it when Clarensforth's home abroad was burned to the ground.

Meanwhile, Bankwell introduces young Clarensforth to a "Wise Man from the East" called Ava Thoanna, another of his father's contacts. The Wise Man claims he knows all about Clarensforth's way of life--his intentions to seduce Ellen Metland, now waiting maid to Lady Mary Diamond.

To set the young Clarensforth up for the disguise, Ava Thoanna strikes up a conversation about ghosts:

Ava: Would you believe it was one, if you did?

Clarens: No!

Ava: Yet you will own, wiser people than you have believed in the return of departed friends.

Clarens: I own it! (9)

Furthermore, this "Wise Man" claims he can conjure up his father's spirit:

Ava: It was in my own lodgings, here in London, that the spirit came while I was merely reciting a few words, to see if I remember'd the charm my Indian friends reveal'd to me: and I had proofs that I did remember it, with all the ceremony belonging to the spell, by the form that appear'd The figure which appear'd to me . . . was that of my late friend, your father (10).

Then, he convinces Clarensforth of his power by telling the young man something only his father knew:

Ava: He [old Clarensforth] said, that in the last hours of your mother's sickness, on her dying bed, she conjured him to never abandon you for any vice that youthful frailty might commit.

Clarens: Indian, you amaze me: for certainly my mother did leave this injunction, and my father revealed it to me as a secret he would tell no one else, lest it might give the world reason to suppose that my mother fear'd I deserved to be

disinherited (11).

Among the other characters in the play are Lady Mary Diamond, who runs a gambling house and uses Ellen's beauty to attract young, gullible spendthrifts, like Clarensforth, to her pharo-table. Others include the Starchs, a Quaker family with a daughter named Ruth. Ruth is in love with a young ensign, Metland's son. The Starchs are the target of some rather crude satire, as they speak in an exalted Biblical idiom as they try to get their daughter married to a rich merchant, like Clarensforth:

Tim: What will our elders say to such a marriage? For neighbor Clarensforth is not of the faithful.

Rach: But he is one of the rich.

Tim: It is asked of pious speakers, "Of what value are riches?"

Rach: And it is answered by other pious speakers, "Of a great deal."-- How can man give to the poor, while he is poor himself? (22)

Inchbald pokes more fun at the Quakers through Timothy's speech on man's state:

Tim: And it is a precept thou art bound to follow . . . to feel either joy or sadness, grief or merriment; but pass life in an uniform dullness, and insensibility to all around . . . for, though I never felt love, I have likewise never known hate. Though I am steeled to pity, I am also proof against anger: and I never in my life did any harm, though I never did any good (23).

According to Dugan, the Starch's presence in the play was totally gratuitous, and this alteration from Kotzebue's Mme. Lupnitz was singled out as objectionable by more than one critic (Dugan 1978, 140).

At the second meeting of the "Wise Man" and Clarendon, Clarendon tells Ava there is someone else he would like to see, that he will exchange the possibility of seeing his father's ghost for the sight of the real girl he is thinking of. Ellen walks in and warns him of the loaded dice used by Lady Diamond. Clarendon takes advantage of Ellen's loyalty to him by pretending to take her home. Instead, he takes her to "a house of ill fame." When she discovers where she is, she goes to Ava Thanoa for help.

The next time we see Clarendon, he is sorry for what he has done and seeks Ava for advice. He admits taking Ellen to this house, only to discover that she is Metland's daughter, a friend of his family who lives in poverty. When Clarendon tells Ava he wants to see his father now, Ava takes Clarendon to his apartments, where many people are waiting to consult him. After a while, Ava reveals to Clarendon that he is his father. The play ends with pairings off (Clarendon with Ellen and Ensign Metland with Ruth) and expressions of filial love and duty.

It is interesting to note the scenes which Mrs. Inchbald retains from the original. Two scenes of pathos, both involving the Metland family, are carried over almost without change. The first one occurs when Metland explains to his children how he lost his fortune (I,ii),

and the second is found in the last scene when the family goods are confiscated.

This play, like Such Things Are, is didactic. Injustice is forced to confront itself in public as in private matters, so that in Wise Man of the East it is not only the would-be seducer, Clarensforth, who is brought around to mend his ways, but also the older generation in the Quaker Starch family, whose hypocritical disapproval of their daughter's love for the young ensign, has to be unconditionally changed.

Still, some problems remain with Mrs. Inchbald's development of Ava Thoanna. His character is so incredible that it is almost unacceptable. First, the play never clears up how Ava knows so much about Clarensforth. Likewise, since old Clarensforth did not die, it still remains questionable as to why he let the Metlands suffer so long in poverty. Was he trying to teach Metland a lesson, too? Or, was Metland merely a victim of his plan? Problems such as these were brought on by the old man's alleged death. They are the result of Ava Thoanna's benevolence in disguise. In one of his last speeches, Ava/Clarensforth says, "I have been enabled (through the use of disguise) to prove all your hearts" (60). However, the only person he has tested is his son by spying on him.

Running several evenings and receiving two Royal Command performances, the play was considered very good, and added to the fame of the actors in it. In a review in Universal Magazine, December, 1799, one critic had this to say:

The dialogue is in many parts pointed and humourous, and there are some strokes of pathos very affecting. The players were all entitled to commendation, but particularly Murray, Mrs. Mattocks, Lewis, Mrs. H. Johnston, and Miss Murray. The last indeed is likely to prove one of the chief ornaments of the theatre in pathetic simplicity (Clark 1939, 115).

Wise Man of the East differs a little from Mrs. Inchbald's other oriental tales. First, it is set in London, and the Eastern nations, India and Cambodia, are vaguely mentioned. Such Things Are had a definite oriental setting, Sumatra. Likewise, The Mogul Tale was set in the gardens of the Great Mogul's seraglio. Another difference in this play from the others is its characters. The other two plays had definite Eastern players. First, The Mogul Tale was full of beautiful maids, eunuchs, and an absolute monarch, the Mogul. Moreover, Such Things Are had an absolute monarch, the Sultan. Such Things Are was concerned with the humanitarian efforts of John Howard. Yet, Wise Man of the East shifts from humanitarian social reform and focuses more on personal or individual reform from vice.

Mrs. Inchbald did one other adaptation from Kotzebue, Lover's Vows. His influence on her left a definite impression. As a result, Wise Man of the East was a significant play that helped to mark Mrs. Inchbald as an influential and important writer of her time.

Conclusion

The Orient attracted unique individuals, challenged their scholarship, and fired their imaginations. During the eighteenth century, the Oriental style flourished in drama. Many consisting of tragedies, comedies, heroic plays, pantomimes, and spectacles were produced. Gradually, emphasis shifted from the raging heroes of heroic drama to Oriental settings that were supposed to lend the plays dignity and elevation and make their heroic emotions believable. Writers who dabbled in the Orient wrote merely pseudo-Oriental tales. They endeavored to preserve the exotic and mysterious settings and the strange customs, beliefs, emotions, and style of the Orientals. Their sources mainly came from Oriental tales in translation, travel accounts, and scholarly works of the Orientalists. Byron is the only major writer to have actually visited the Orient and have direct, personal knowledge of it. Moreover, he is the first English writer to use Orientalism in the stricter sense of "Oriental scholarship" (Knipp 1974, v).

Of course, many Oriental tales had been written before the eighteenth century, but the Arabian Nights (1706-1718) represented a uniquely successful act of translation, for no other Oriental work during the century was so widely read. It gave "a better account of the customs, manners, and religion of the Eastern nations than . . . any work hitherto published" (Haddawy 1962, 18).

For some writers, to study the Orient was to discover the universality of human nature below the surface. For others the Orient served as a land of enchantment and escape. They were convinced that as long as they chose to remain there, they were truly in a different world. This new taste for the Orient was part of a general movement towards the exotic, the picturesque, and the Gothic.

The pseudo-Oriental tale was directed more at moral instruction, like humanitarian reform, than at satire. These domestic tales had their own socio-critical viewpoint which was inseparable from controversies over genre (Ekhtiar 1985, 27). All through the century critics heatedly debated the issue of where the Oriental tale belonged in the genre hierarchy. This debate created problems not only because these tales violated Neo-classical principles of decorum and propriety, but also because the "new" genre was clearly a mixed literary form like other didactic forms.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, emphasis shifted to careful depiction of local color. As a result, emphasis was placed on Oriental scenery, costumes, and other devices used in the imitations of Oriental tales--devices such as allusions to names, customs, and beliefs as well as the adoption of the Oriental style. The following is a list of some Oriental costumes Mrs. Inchbald used in The Mogul Tale:

COSTUMES

THE MOGUL: Long green velvet and ermine robe--white gold vest--sash--white

trousers--turban--yellow morocco boots.

OSMIN: White shirt and Turkish trousers--scarf, turban, and crimson fly--scimitar--green boots.

FIRST AND SECOND EUNUCHS: White shirts and trousers--black arms and legs--brass collars and armlets--red sashes--blue flies.

ALMEIRA: White satin and linen Turkish dress--turban, scarf, and slippers.

ZAPHIRA: Blue satin, Ibid.

IRENE: Pink satin, Ibid.

FANNY: Second dress--white spangled Turkish dress--trousers--slippers, turban, and veil (Inchbald 1784, 8).

The purpose of these pseudo-Oriental tales was to provide a vehicle for expressing European issues and concerns while presenting a controlled, ordered vision of the East grounded in some degree of reality. Moreover, they served as entertainment for the audience while instructing them. Because of their love for cultural comparisons in their fiction, writers often wrote about the East. The Eastern cultures they chose to write about served as a means to verify the myths their audiences had heard about. This fiction was not so much intended to introduce new concepts or information about the Orient as to confirm convictions or even prejudices that the reader already had.

Elizabeth Simpson Inchbald wrote no further Oriental tales. Aside from her interests in the East and her humanitarian interests, she raised questions about marriage and divorce in I'll Tell You What (1786). Her best known play is considered by some to be Lover's Vows (1798) which scandalizes Fanny Price in Mansfield Park (Schlueter 1988, 244).

Her literary output was enormous considering her late start. She completed a four-volume autobiography but burned it shortly before her death (Highfill 1982, 84). Moreover, she contributed critical articles to the Edinburgh Review and other publications.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Valerie Denise Adams was born December 30, 1966, in Chicago, Illinois to Alvernica Adams. During her early childhood, she moved to Cleveland, Mississippi where she was raised by her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. James P. Adams, Sr. She attended the public school system of Bolivar County District 4, and graduated from Cleveland High School in May 1984. After graduating from high school, she enrolled in the University of Mississippi and earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and Political Science in December of 1987. During the Spring of 1988, she began graduate studies at the university in the English department and was awarded the Master of Arts in May 1990.

While attending the University of Mississippi, she was a member of Sigma Tau Delta, an English honor society, and a recipient of a Masonic Scholarship and a university Fellowship.

Her interests include literature, drama, politics, music, travelling, and aerobic dance.

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