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# British Orientalism and Representations of Music in the Long Nineteenth Century

Ideas of music, otherness, sexuality  
and gender in the popular arts

Claire Mabilat

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Doctoral Thesis

Department of Music, University of Durham

2006

11 DEC 2006



Claire Mabilat

## British Orientalism and Representations of Music in the Long Nineteenth Century

Ideas of music, otherness, sexuality and gender in the popular arts

### Abstract

This thesis explores issues of orientalism, otherness, gender and sexuality that arise in artistic British representations of non-European musicians during the long nineteenth century; it utilises recent theories of orientalism, and the subsidiary (particularly aesthetic and literary) theories both on which these theories were based and on which they have been influential. The author uses this theoretical framework of orientalism as a form of othering to analyse primary source materials in the forms of opera libretti, popular fiction and the visual arts (alongside contextualising non-fictional materials), and in conjunction with musicological, literary and art theories, and thus explores how ideas of the Other were transformed over time and between different genres and artists.

Section I *The Musical Stage* discusses elements of libretti of this period, and the occasionally contradictory ways in which the Other was represented through text and music; it particularly explores the depiction of 'Oriental' women and ideas of sexuality. Through examination of this collection of libretti, the ways in which the writers of these texts filter and romanticise the changing intellectual ideas of this era is explored. Section II *Works of Fiction* is a close study of the works of H. Rider Haggard, using other examples of popular fiction by his contemporary writers as contextualising material; a primary concern of this section is to investigate how music is utilised in popular fiction to other non-Europeans and in the creation of orientalised gender constructions. Section III *Visual Culture* is an analysis of images of music and the 'Orient' in "high art", illustrations and photography, investigating how the musical Other was visualised. Through these analyses the author considers the means by which musical concepts were employed to create a wider 'Orient' on the pages, stages and walls of nineteenth-century Britain.

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## Preface.

When I embarked upon my doctoral research, my original area of interest was the representation of non-European musicians in a variety of written forms (including ethnomusicology/comparative musicology, travel writings, missionary works, song and opera texts, and novels), with an intention to consider case-studies from these diverse mediums through an orientalist-theoretical framework. The more primary research that I undertook, the more the representations in the popular arts appealed to me as study material; I found their greater basis on fantasy more interesting as a window into popularly held ideas about the ‘Orient’ and Other. Thus my original research-interest developed into this present study of representations of non-European musicians in the arts, namely the musical stage, fictional literature, and visual culture.

My primary source materials have been gathered in a number of ways. My original focus was on the materials available in the University of Durham libraries and special collections. From consulting references within both primary and secondary works, a web of primary materials was created that branched away from Durham and took me to the libraries at the Universities of Newcastle, Oxford and Cambridge and also, and most essentially, to the British Library. One example of this is Gerry Farrell’s references to Bishop’s opera *Englishmen in India* and Solomon’s *The Nautch Girl* in his book *Indian Music and the West*, which led to my further exploration of works by Bishop, Solomon and their contemporaries at the British Library. Despite attempting to structure my methodology, some of my primary literature examples were discovered by lucky chance, including G.F. Monkshood’s translation of Gautier’s *The Mummy’s Romance*, and more essentially E.M. Hull’s *The Sheik*, both of which I stumbled across and purchased in second-hand book shops. A number of online databases have been essential to my research methodology, including RIPM, RILM, Grove Music Online and Grove Art Online; alongside these well-known websites I have utilised the internet as a tool to learn about more obscure figures and works in the popular arts, and also geographically to locate source-materials.

In my search for visual materials I contacted a number of institutions including the Royal Geographical Society Picture Library, the Royal Academy of Music, The Bill Douglas Centre, the City of Westminster Archives Centre, the Templeman Library, Bethlem Royal Hospital, and The British Film Institute; I also visited The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, The Victoria and Albert Museum, The National Gallery, The Louvre and the Tate Britain. Although I corresponded with a variety of the curatorial staff of The National Trust, they held nothing in their collections that I could use for this study. Despite contact with so many institutions it was difficult to find many non-“factual” photographs of non-European musicians, hence the slightly shorter section on photography in the thesis. I had also originally wished to devote a chapter to the depiction of non-European musicians in silent film, however sources were scarce and difficult to view so I had to abandon this line of enquiry. Early on in my research some primary sources were suggested to me by other academics (whom I have thanked in my acknowledgements section), and I would like to extend my particular gratitude to Phyllis



Weliver for highlighting H. Rider Haggard's *She*, a work which I have found to be particularly rich in musicological examples, so leading to my own investigation of other Haggard works.

These numerous exploratory methods have led to a broad range of primary source materials with which I have been able to work. It is apparent that *The Musical Stage* covers larger numbers of artists (both composers and librettists) and works than the other sections, and this is because these works offer a different type of representation of the Other and 'Orient'; unlike the visual and fictional works which use music to describe Others, in opera libretti Others are described in text that is set to music. The *Works of Fiction* and *Visual Culture* sections utilise fewer primary examples because the frequent metaphorical nature of the musical references means that the sources are often richer and more complex in their presentations of the musical Other, whereas the opera libretti tend to offer more shallow and less nuanced stereotyping, thus profiting more from analysis in conjunction with many other contemporary works. Owing to the relative size of a novel or romance in relation to a visual artwork or opera text, it made sense to focus on a close study in the *Works of Fiction* section, and it was the particular richness and interesting applications of othered musical representation in the works of H. Rider Haggard that led to my focus on him in these chapters on fiction (and indeed also in the illustration chapter in *Visual Culture*), and also his own influence and success as a literary and colonial figure at the close of the long nineteenth century.

Each of the three sections of this thesis opens with a short introduction and overview with specific reference to the artistic mediums discussed in that section. In addition, *The Musical Stage* is also supplemented by a chapter giving an historical background to British orientalist operas in the long nineteenth century (Chapter 2), to aid the reader and prevent confusion in this section which covers so many operas, librettists and composers. Although this study is structured by artistic media it was not the intention to treat musical theatre, literature and the visual arts as discrete disciplines, but to draw links between trends and representations in these areas in an interdisciplinary manner. The discussions of the musical stage and 'high art' incorporate works ranging from the start of the 1810s through into the 1910s, whereas the literature and other visual sections focus more on the second half of the long nineteenth century. Although the primary focus has been on these latter decades when ideas about the Other and 'Orient' were increasingly stereotyped and negative, it was pertinent to retain investigations of the early nineteenth-century musical stage and 'high art' to illustrate the ways in which orientalist-musical representations of the late nineteenth century continued and changed earlier ideas and did not suddenly emerge fully fledged. The sections on earlier-nineteenth-century opera and art are therefore important to contextualise the later nineteenth-century thoughts and depictions discussed more widely in this thesis.

## Acknowledgements.

I am indebted to Dr. Phyllis Weliver who has not only been of particular influence throughout my research, but who has helped and supported me throughout the doctoral process. Alongside Phyllis, Dr. Simon James and Dr. Suzanne Fagence Cooper have been highly supportive and constructive in their comments on my early drafts. Thanks to my parents, Grandpa and husband for their support, both emotional and financial. Thanks to Emma Harmer and Patrick Zuk for their sharp eyes, constructive suggestions and proofreading aid. I would also like to extend particular thanks to Roger Allan (Secretary, The Rider Haggard Society, Great Britain) whose generosity with primary source material and general desire to aid in Haggard scholarship has been invaluable. I would like to thank Dr. Bennett Zon for supervising me through my doctoral study and I wish to acknowledge Prof. Julian Rushton and Dr. Rachel Cowgill for their support through my first publication.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Martin Clayton, Dr. Brian Singleton, Prof. Jonathan Bellman, Dr. Naomi André and Prof. Charles McGuire have all suggested reading material that has proved useful to this study. I wish particularly to express gratitude to Stephen Coan (editor of Haggard's African diaries) for his information as to the location of the manuscript of Asche's *Mameena*. A number of other people have also offered reading suggestions: Dr. George Biddlecombe, Dr. Jonathan Stock, Prof. Joep Bor, Dr. Emma Sutton, Prof. Carol M. Babiracki, Prof. Dennis Walder, Prof. William Everett, Prof. Olivia Bloechl, and Prof. Ruth Solie, and to them I extend my gratitude. I also wish to mention the following people to thank them for their correspondence at the commencement of this study: Prof. Derek B. Scott, Dr. Andrew Rudd, Dr. Paul Rodmell, Dr. Sophie Fuller, Dr. Laudan Nooshin, Dr. Tom Stolberg, Dr. Henry Stobart, Prof. Michael Pisani, Dr. Andrew Shail, and Philip Leibfried; also Dr. Sinan Akilli for the offer of future collaborative work on Haggard.

The staff members at many institutions have made my research much easier. I would like above all to thank the staff of the libraries, School of Music and Hatfield College at the University of Durham, and also the desk staff of the Rare Books and Music Reading Room at The British Library. Joy Wheeler at the Royal Geographical Society Picture Library has also been of particular help. In addition I wish to express thanks to the following: Jan Vaughan and Joanna Hopkins at The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, Bristol; John Lumsden at the University of Durham Library; Bridget Palmer and Janet Snowman at the Royal Academy of Music; Michelle Allen at The Bill Douglas Centre, University of Exeter; Hilary Davies at the City of Westminster Archives Centre; John Weedy (*Illustrated London News* Archivist,

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<sup>1</sup> Short parts of the Opera section of this thesis (regarding Bishop and Solomon) have been published in earlier versions as 'Empire and 'Orient': a reading of the non-European opera libretti set by Sir Henry Bishop and Edward Solomon'. In *Europe, Empire and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, ed. Julian Rushton and Rachel Cowgill. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006, and 'A Parallel Reading of the 'Oriental' and South American Opera Libretti set by Sir Henry Bishop'. In *Portrayal of the East: Music and the Oriental Imagination in the British Empire, 1780-1940*, ed. Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon. Aldershot: Ashgate, forthcoming.

[www.iln.org.uk](http://www.iln.org.uk)); Sue Crabtree at the Templeman Library, University of Kent; Lucinda Middleton at The Royal Cornwall Museum; J. Michael Phillips at Bethlem Royal Hospital; and more generally the staff of The Royal College of Music Library, The Bodleian, Collindale Newspaper Library, the University of Cambridge libraries, The Victoria and Albert Museum, The National Gallery, The British Film Institute, The Louvre, Tate Britain and the curatorial staff of The National Trust.

## Orientalism and its relation to music and musical representation.

This thesis explores issues of orientalism, otherness, gender and sexuality that arise in artistic British representations of non-European musicians during the long nineteenth century. This opening section discusses theoretical aspects of orientalism and their relationship to music; the establishment of a theoretical framework is essential to orientalist studies, as the theoretical considerations in this area are intricate, complicated, and (at times) even contradictory, thus it is important to establish which aspects of the theories of orientalism will be used to analyse primary materials. Depictions of the musical non-European appear within examples of many art-forms in this era, and this examination focuses on case studies of musical stage works, literature and visual culture as illustrating examples of this overarching trend. This thesis focuses on examples of arts that were popular, that is works that were not only commercially successful and widely disseminated, but which were 'intended for or suited to the taste or means of the general public'.<sup>1</sup> These mediums frequently (and often unconsciously) convey ideas that were influential to the mainstream at the time. Even the examples of 'high art' discussed in Chapter 11 were aimed at a wider public who attended the increasingly busy art galleries and subscribed to the many periodicals that reproduced 'high art' images for mass consumption. The seeming escapism of art-forms like the artworks, romances and operas here discussed<sup>2</sup> actually frequently expresses the underlying concerns and pressures (spiritual, sexual, and cultural) of Victorian life,<sup>3</sup> and it is such influences that this thesis explores in relation to the representation of the musical Other and 'Orient'. This study considers the long nineteenth century as roughly embracing the years from 1790 to 1914 and the start of World War I,<sup>4</sup> so cutting across the (frequently arbitrary) segmentation of this period into the Romantic, Victorian and Edwardian eras and instead creating an opportunity to discuss broader issues<sup>5</sup> of the Other and 'Orient' in relation to music in this period.

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<sup>1</sup> Anon. 'Popular'. *Compact Oxford English Dictionaries of Current English*. See the website [www.askoxford.com](http://www.askoxford.com) (Accessed 06 October 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Although opera is normally considered a 'high art' form, the case studies here considered were for popular, mass consumption – they were produced more for their commercial than artistic value.

<sup>3</sup> Nina Auerbach. *Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth*. London: Harvard University Press, 1982: 43.

<sup>4</sup> A few of the case studies date from a few years after this, however their spirit continues as that of the long nineteenth century, rather than connecting with more twentieth-century ideals.

<sup>5</sup> Anon. 'Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies'. *Birkbeck University of London, Centre for Nineteenth-Century Studies*. See the website [http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh/research/index\\_html/centreforc19thstudies/](http://www.bbk.ac.uk/eh/research/index_html/centreforc19thstudies/) (Accessed 30 June 2006).



## The Other

Due to the inextricable involvement of a person within culture, the apparent “norms” of their home society become naturalised<sup>6</sup> so giving opportunity ‘to other’ those who do not conform to these standards. The term ‘ideology’ is employed in this study to describe “norms” that are accepted or created by a cultural group, or a particular individual. As soon as a group of people are viewed as “different”, whether because of their sexuality, ‘race’, gender, religious beliefs or ‘class’, mistruths and fancies about them rapidly grow<sup>7</sup> and are expressed in images of otherness, which are culturally implicated and often signify misunderstanding leading to fear. The idea of the ‘Other’ is an important aspect of orientalist criticism;<sup>8</sup> in othering a group of people, a culture often projects things which they fear as well as characteristics that they dislike onto them. The ‘Orient’<sup>9</sup> is one of the most prevalent images of otherness in the European consciousness<sup>10</sup> and although othering occurs in all cultures, the power (im)balance between Europe and its Others in the long nineteenth century (and beyond) makes orientalism a distinct and dangerous form of this practice.<sup>11</sup> Even though the stereotypes and prejudices of ‘Orient’ change with time and place,<sup>12</sup> these processes of othering persist into the twenty-first century with the ongoing influences of the systems and beliefs associated with imperial and orientalist practices.<sup>13</sup> It is important to understand the ways that other cultures are ‘filtered’, as these can demonstrate much about (as well as influence) the relationship between Britain and its Others and act as an expression of associated prejudices and fantasies.<sup>14</sup> In ‘Enough Said’ (1990) Michael Richardson questions whether Edward Said really believes that anyone truly mistakes images of ‘Orient’ with what the different cultures designated as ‘Oriental’ are actually like, and he claims that ‘only academic literary critics’ ‘would mistake a representation for the thing that it represented.’<sup>15</sup> However, prejudices and the depictions of ‘Orient’ are often subtle and unconsciously influenced so that they could easily be (mis)taken for “factual” descriptions.

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<sup>6</sup> Reina Lewis. *Rethinking Orientalism: Women, Travel and the Ottoman Harem*. London: I.B. Tauris, 2004: 252.

<sup>7</sup> Benita Parry. *Delusions and Discoveries: India in the British Imagination, 1880-1930*. London: Verso, 1998: 31.

<sup>8</sup> Although the focus of this thesis is the presentation of the ‘Oriental’ Other, discussions of the male African Other in Chapters 8 and 13, and the South American Other in *Section I* have been included. This is because these different forms of othering occur alongside the more specifically ‘Oriental’ ones within the same works or in other works by the same artist. I therefore felt it was essential to include discussions of these representations, but have been careful not to employ the term ‘Oriental’ for these examples, but to discuss them in the context of ‘racial’ othering in a broader context.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Orient’ (and its derivatives) is now generally placed in parentheses within academic scholarship as it is a loaded term, as are ‘savage’, ‘primitive’ and ‘race’.

<sup>10</sup> Edward W. Said. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. London: Penguin Books, 1995 [1978]: 1.

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas Thomas. ‘Anthropology and ‘Orientalism’’. *Anthropology Today*, 7/2 (April 1991): 6-7.

<sup>12</sup> Edward Said has been accused of ignoring ‘regional variation’. [Peter H. Hansen. ‘Ornamentalism and Orientalism: Virtual Empires and the Politics of Knowledge’. *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 3.1, SPECIAL ISSUE - *From Orientalism to Ornamentalism: Empire and Difference in History*, Guest Editor Tony Ballantyne, (Spring 2002): 10.]

<sup>13</sup> Hansen, ‘Ornamentalism and Orientalism’: 12.

<sup>14</sup> Laura Nader. ‘Orientalism, Occidentalism and the Control of Women’. *Cultural Dynamics*, 2/3 (1989): 329.

<sup>15</sup> Michael Richardson. ‘Enough Said: Reflections on Orientalism’. *Anthropology Today*, 6/4 (August 1990): 18.

## Basic definitions of orientalism

Different individuals reacted to the 'Orient' (real or imagined) in differing ways, and the fact that the British Victorian 'Orient' was a fractured entity with many different 'Orient' conceived, believed and depicted, complicates any study of orientalism. To generalise, orientalism is a component of a mismatched power struggle between East and West: through orientalist beliefs and depictions, the East was weakened and more easily mastered. Edward Said's (1935-2004) book *Orientalism*<sup>16</sup> of 1978 is seminal to any discussion of definition in the field, however definitions within orientalism studies are diverse and sometimes contradictory. This section attempts to provide a brief overview of some of the central aspects that define orientalism.

The definitions of the practices of orientalism are diverse; in an area in which the 'Orient' itself is not a fixed geographical locale<sup>17</sup> the ideologies of its study inevitably vary. Said concentrates on the Middle East as the 'Orient', however Ziauddin Sardar, in his 1999 book called *Orientalism*, asserts that 'There simply has never been a definite object that is the Orient; the Orient is merely a pattern book from which strands can be taken to fashion whatever suits the temper of the times in the West.'<sup>18</sup> This wider definition of the 'Orient' is the one that shall be used in this study. For Sardar, the 'supposed knowledge' of the 'Orient' is utilised to enhance the sense of worth of the European, thus orientalism is 'a constructed ignorance, a deliberate self-deception, which is eventually projected on the Orient.'<sup>19</sup> In his work Said implies that orientalist sentiment is caused by imperialist greed and influence, however Richard King proposes a broader idea of orientalism by noting that orientalist thought is both influential on non-imperial European nations (King's example being Germany), and focused onto countries that were never part of a European empire (including Japan);<sup>20</sup> this broader interpretation has been subscribed to for this study. The assessment of individual works on the 'Orient' adds to broader discussions of and trends in orientalist thought,<sup>21</sup> and indeed the case studies here discussed depict many of the overarching themes and developments in British orientalist thought in the long nineteenth century.

Through Europeans creating fictionalised illustrations of the 'Oriental' Other, Meyda Yeğenoğlu believes that orientalism 'is about the cultural representation of the West to *itself* by way of a detour through the other.'<sup>22</sup> In *The Orient on the Victorian Stage* (2003), Edward Ziter likewise states that 'nineteenth-century orientalism was an elaborate project of displacement and self-invention.'<sup>23</sup> Thus, as Jayant Lele expounds, orientalism also protects the 'Occident' from the

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<sup>16</sup> Robert Young. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London: Routledge, 1995: 159.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 13.

<sup>18</sup> Ziauddin Sardar. *Orientalism*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999: 53.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*: 4.

<sup>20</sup> Richard King. *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East'*. London: Routledge, 1999: 85.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*: 89.

<sup>22</sup> Meyda Yeğenoğlu. *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 1.

<sup>23</sup> Edward Ziter. *The Orient on the Victorian Stage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003: 196.

analysis of self that is integral to a true engagement with other cultures.<sup>24</sup> Despite the avoidance of this self-consideration and their fictionalisation of the Other, Europeans actually reveal more about their own fears and desires than anything about the Other culture that they are attempting/claiming to portray. In line with Saidian thought, Sardar astutely observes that ‘The history of Orientalism is the history of the Western self, its ideas, doings, concerns and fashions, and it is present in all its forms whether overt or covert.’<sup>25</sup> For instance he cites the example of the Victorian explorer Richard Burton who attempted to confirm the fantasies of the *Arabian Nights* in his “reality” of the ‘Orient’.<sup>26</sup> For Burton, like for many Europeans, the ‘Orient’ proffered all the illicit pleasures of “deviant” sexuality (particularly sadomasochism); like many of his contemporary travellers Burton aimed to relieve his repressed sexuality in the ‘Orient’,<sup>27</sup> projecting ‘every imaginable kind of sexual perversion onto the Orient. Burton presented Eastern women as sexual objects who were capable of infinite varieties of copulation and deserved equally infinite contempt’.<sup>28</sup> These stereotypes represented all that was feared, and yet desired, by Westerners in the East.

According to Said, orientalism is ‘a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’,<sup>29</sup> and he asserts that the ‘The Orient was Orientalised not only because it was discovered to be “Oriental” [...], but also because it *could be* – that is, submitted to being – *made Oriental*.’<sup>30</sup> When discussing Western scholars Said contends that Orientalists considered peoples in ‘large collective terms’ or ‘abstract generalities’, and had no interest in discussing individual ‘Orientals’.<sup>31</sup> The Orientalist travelling outside of Europe usually held many preconceptions and prejudices,<sup>32</sup> but Said asserts that ‘In all cases the Orient is *for* the European observer [...] the Orientalist ego is very much in evidence, however much his style tries for impartial impersonality.’<sup>33</sup> Said’s statements are frequently this strong (in this case maintaining that *all* Orientalists believe something), leading many of his contemporaries to censure his own generalising tendencies. This study does not address the issue of whether or how much orientalism affected *all* Europeans and their views of the ‘Orient’, but presents a number of case studies in which it is an active element.

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<sup>24</sup> Jayant Lele. ‘Orientalism and the social sciences.’ In *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament*, ed. Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer, 45-75. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993: 59. Cited in King, *Orientalism and Religion*: 85-86.

<sup>25</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 16.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*: 43.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*: 16.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*: 43.

<sup>29</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 3.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: 5-6.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*: 154-55.

<sup>32</sup> Said asserts that when an Orientalist scholar travelled in the country about which he was a “specialist”, it was ‘always with unshakeable abstract maxims about the “civilisation” he had studied; rarely were Orientalists interested in anything except proving the validity of these musty “truths” by applying them, without great success, to uncomprehending, hence degenerate, natives.’ [*Ibid.*: 52.]

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*: 158.

In *Orientalism* Said asserts that ‘The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.’<sup>34</sup> This somewhat ambiguous statement has led to conflicting interpretations: that the ‘Orient’ did not exist outside of European discourse or that Europe misrepresented an ‘Orient’ that was truly there. Robert Young highlights this indistinctness in Said’s arguments, pointing out that if there is no actual ‘Orient’ how can any account of it be considered a misrepresentation, as it must be based purely on fantasy.<sup>35</sup> In contrast Brennan writes that ‘it seems equally clear’ that Said is not focusing on the fact that the ‘Orient’ was misrepresented, ‘but rather that their Orient took no account of the Orientals’ ordering of themselves. Said does not argue, for example, that there is no such thing as a “real” Orient or that it has only a discursive life.’<sup>36</sup> This confusion exacerbates the arguments surrounding orientalist theory. This study assumes that the ‘Orient’ as a geographical space is a fiction created by and for Europeans, and that there is no true single collective ‘Orient’, but instead an area that incorporates numerous distinct cultures. This investigation also presupposes that different individuals reacted to this imagined ‘Orient’ in differing ways,<sup>37</sup> and that the British Victorian ‘Orient’ was a multiple construction incorporating many different ‘Orientals’ conceived, believed and depicted.

Nineteenth-century orientalist studies tended to focus upon studying the past of ‘Oriental’ cultures; by asserting that the zenith of non-European cultures had already passed they made the “degeneration” of the ‘Orient’ seem to be unavoidable.<sup>38</sup> The ‘Orient’ was frequently studied through linguistic or religious historical inspection, ‘divorced from any social evolution’, meaning that Arabic, for example, was studied as if it were a dead language.<sup>39</sup> In this way scholars helped to perpetuate the image of the unchanging ‘Orient’, ‘absolutely different (the reasons change from epoch to epoch) from the West’,<sup>40</sup> and so historical orientalism became a central facet of orientalist thought. Although this is particularly true of the ‘high arts’, the popular arts more often focused on a contemporary ‘Other’ or expressed the middle-ground of a timeless ‘Orient’, as is demonstrated in the works looked at here. By rationalising the ‘Orient’ within a Western framework, orientalists attempted to de-mystify, and thus control, the East. Sardar avers that the orientalist vision is grounded in two ‘simultaneous desires: the personal quest of the Western male for Oriental mystery and sexuality and the collective goal to educate and control the Orient in political and economic terms.’<sup>41</sup> To assist this quest for control, the

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<sup>34</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 1.

<sup>35</sup> Robert J.C. Young. *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, Second Edition. London: Routledge, 2004 [1990]: 170.

<sup>36</sup> Timothy Brennan. ‘The Illusion of a Future: *Orientalism* as Traveling Theory’. *Critical Theory*, 26 (Spring 2000): 580.

<sup>37</sup> Mohammed Sharafuddin. *Islam and Romantic Orientalism: Literary Encounters with the Orient*. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1994: xvi-xvii.

<sup>38</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 60.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.: 96.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.: 1-2.



'natives' of Other places are represented as degenerate to validate conquest, but as redeemable enough to excuse Europe's continuing interference.<sup>42</sup>

According to Robert Young the history of European colonialism emphasises how apparently neutral academic disciplines have aided in the creation of frameworks for colonial subjugation and administration.<sup>43</sup> For Ashcroft and Ahluwalia the heart of Said's argument is that 'to know something is to have power over it, and conversely, to have power is to be able to know the world in your own terms',<sup>44</sup> and irrefutably power establishes the representations that come to be accepted as "real".<sup>45</sup> Thus many modern theorists of orientalism consider academia and indeed the arts to have enabled or at least aided political control in the European empires and the wider 'Orient'; to use Fred Halliday's metaphor, 'if you plan to rob a bank, you would be well advised to have a pretty accurate map of its layout, know what the routines and administrative practices of its employees are, and, preferably have some idea of who you can suborn from within the organization.'<sup>46</sup>

This brief overview makes it apparent that despite the volume of writing emerging on orientalist and post-colonial theory, as yet there is no single or all-encompassing definition of the term 'orientalism'. The field is still a comparatively new one, however critical awareness is constantly increasing, as is the variety and specificity of definitions. Said nevertheless remains a decisive influence, something of which he himself was proud: 'The invigorated study of Africanist and Indological discourses; the analyses of subaltern history; the reconfiguration of postcolonial anthropology, political science, art history, literary criticism, musicology, in addition to the vast new developments in feminist and minority discourses – to all these, I am pleased and flattered that *Orientalism* often made a difference.'<sup>47</sup>

## Orientalism and exoticism

In *The Orientalists: European Painters of Eastern Scenes* (1977), Philippe Jullian states that 'Orientalism is only a phase in the cult of the Exotic'.<sup>48</sup> Thus having established the definitions of orientalism that apply to this study it is relevant to briefly discuss exoticism and the critical difference between these two concepts. Exoticism is the evocation of 'a place, people or social milieu'<sup>49</sup> that is 'perceived as different from home by the people making and receiving the exotic

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<sup>42</sup> John M. MacKenzie. *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995: 12.

<sup>43</sup> Young, *Colonial Desire*: 159.

<sup>44</sup> Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia. *Edward Said*, Second Edition. London: Routledge, 2001 [1999]: 83.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*: 75.

<sup>46</sup> Fred Halliday. 'Orientalism' and its critics'. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 20/2 (1993): 160.

<sup>47</sup> Edward W. Said. 'Orientalism, an Afterword'. *Raritan: A Quarterly Review*, 14 (Winter 1995): 44.

<sup>48</sup> Philippe Jullian. *The Orientalists: European Painters of Eastern Scenes*. Oxford: Phaidon, 1977: 19.

<sup>49</sup> Ralph P. Locke. 'Exoticism'. *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 27 May 2006). [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com)

cultural product',<sup>50</sup> creating something that is 'interestingly different or strange, especially colourful and rich, and suggestive' of another culture.<sup>51</sup> Thus on a basic level, certain aspects of orientalism could be considered as exoticisms also, however the two concepts differ in their usage. Exoticism is an artistic tool, whereas orientalism is charged with cultural and/or political agendas. For example Claude Debussy (1862-1918) uses non-European musical elements in his works, particularly ideas inspired by the Indonesian *gamelan*, 'in such a way as to minimize their specific geographical and cultural associations';<sup>52</sup> Debussy adds unusual colour to his work with these influences, but he does not critique the culture from which the ideas were taken. This is the essential difference between exoticism and orientalism: whilst exoticism enables artists (in whatever art-form) to broaden their artistic palate and to explore new artistic mediums, images and styles, orientalism depicts another culture in such a way as to create comment, to critique or to highlight (often negative) difference. The former appreciates and embraces cultural diversity, whereas the latter (generally) disparages or criticises it. Even though orientalism may use elements of exoticism within its processes, these concepts remain extremely different in their aims.

## Orientalism, sexuality and gender studies

Central to this study are the ways in which constructions of gender and sexuality interplay with orientalism and how musical representation plays a part in the portrayal of these ideas. One aspect of the 'Orient' and sexuality that most fascinated the West in this era, and about which there were many stories and fantasies created, was the Eastern woman. According to Said 'the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe.'<sup>53</sup> Indeed sexuality is an important aspect of colonial discourse, as fantasy and desire are fundamental aspects in orientalist and colonial relationships with the Other.<sup>54</sup> The primary focus of Western views of feminine sexuality in the 'Orient' was the harem; the film academic Mary Hamer writes how 'Orientalism is seductive: it offers forms for European pleasure. Luxury is one of these, also cruelty; they meet in the fantasy of the harem, where absolute power can create a space for the play of sexualities – the eunuch, the lesbian, the slave – that are constrained elsewhere.'<sup>55</sup> Fantasies of the harem are played out across all of the British arts in the long nineteenth century, as is demonstrated in the examples used in this study.

Not only was female 'Oriental' sexuality a preoccupation, but in fact the 'Orient' as a geographical space was frequently viewed 'as the embodiment of sensuality' and was nearly

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<sup>50</sup> Ralph P. Locke. 'Exoticism and Orientalism in Music: Problems for the Worldly Critic'. In *Edward Said and the Work of the Critic: Speaking Truth to Power*, ed. P.A. Bové, 257-281. Durham: Duke University Press, 2000: 266.

<sup>51</sup> Anon. 'Exotic'. Chambers Reference Online. See the website [www.chambersharrap.co.uk](http://www.chambersharrap.co.uk) (Accessed 27 May 2006).

<sup>52</sup> Locke, 'Exoticism'. [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com)

<sup>53</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 190.

<sup>54</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 2

<sup>55</sup> Mary Hamer. 'Timeless Histories: A British Dream of Cleopatra'. In *Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film*, ed. Matthew Bernstein, 269-91. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997: 271.

always understood in feminine terms and consequently in Western imagery it has been conceptualised not only as racialised, but as feminised too.<sup>56</sup> Thus the East was often viewed through the fantasised metaphor of the Eastern woman. Meyda Yeğenoğlu believes that critically, it is imperative to subject the discourse of 'Orient' to a reading that explores this sexualisation, as she asserts that the European understandings of 'Orient' and the women therein are interrelating frameworks.<sup>57</sup> Even when a work does not directly represent a sexualised 'Oriental' woman, themes of Eastern sexuality can proliferate. The film theorist Ella Shohat considers one aspect of this idea – the veil – an idea also explored by Meyda Yeğenoğlu.<sup>58</sup> Shohat asserts that the 'Orient' is frequently presented metaphorically through the image of the veiled woman, and that '[t]he inaccessibility of the veiled woman, mirroring the mystery of the Orient itself, requires a process of Western unveiling for comprehension.' The process of unveiling the 'Oriental' woman came 'to allegorise the Western masculinist power of possession, that she, as a metaphor for her land, becomes available for Western penetration and knowledge.'<sup>59</sup> So alongside the feminisation and sexualisation of the 'Oriental' culture and geography, the 'Oriental' woman herself can be used in texts as a metaphor for the 'Orient', thus the intertwined issues of women and the sexualisation of the East are essential in understanding Western views of the 'Orient'.

In recent scholarship of orientalism there are also increasing calls for 'theoretical models of colonial discourse' to be restructured to consider the influence of gender upon European depictions of the Other.<sup>60</sup> Gender is no longer considered to be biological fact, but is now recognised as incorporating networks of culturally learnt and supported roles, thoughts and ideas, all of which affect artworks and cultural artefacts. Reina Lewis has been particularly influential in her analyses of works created by female orientalists, criticising Said for never questioning 'women's apparent absence as producers of Orientalist discourse or as agents within colonial power'<sup>61</sup> in *Orientalism*. She recognises that just as orientalist texts are influenced by the preceding bodies of work on 'Orient', they are also influenced by concepts of gender at the time of their creation,<sup>62</sup> and that women's texts are 'specifically gendered because of the social and psychological restraints on their experience and representation of the Orient.'<sup>63</sup> However Billie Melman warns against a misguided belief that orientalist women were not guilty of orientalist prejudice, as they frequently subscribed to Western "values" including a belief in "progress" and an assurance of cultural supremacy; thus women's presentations of 'Orient' and Empire were not

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<sup>56</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 73.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*: 26.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*: 44.

<sup>59</sup> Ella Shohat. 'Gender and Culture of Empire: Toward a Feminist Ethnography of the Cinema'. In *Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film*, ed. Matthew Bernstein, 19-66. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997: 32-33.

<sup>60</sup> Clare Midgley. 'Introduction: Gender and Imperialism: Mapping the Connections'. In *Gender and Imperialism*, ed. Clare Midgley, 1-20. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998: 10.

<sup>61</sup> Reina Lewis. *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation*. London: Routledge, 1996: 18.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*: 33.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*: 184.

a 'separate tradition', but gender-influenced depictions within the body of European works on 'Orient'.<sup>64</sup> In any historical moment or cultural community 'the terms within a system of gender are measured against one another in various, sometimes contradictory ways, allowing the analysis of both individual and larger cultural patterns of validation, marginalization and rejection.'<sup>65</sup> Gender roles in Other communities were often misunderstood as they were different from British normalised "standards". The 'Orient' and Empire could also be used to reaffirm British ideas of their own gendering, as is investigated by John Tosh in his work on masculinity and Empire.<sup>66</sup> Just as 'Oriental' women were repeatedly sexualised, 'Oriental' men were often portrayed as warmongering and violent, embodying everything that the British "gentleman" did not. The work of academics such as Lewis, Melman and Tosh on gender and orientalism has been of particular influence to this study.

## Interdisciplinarity and orientalism

Orientalist works incorporate belief systems that overarch myriad aspects of cultural production and hence benefit interdisciplinary study. Said viewed his analyses as interdisciplinary productions<sup>67</sup> claiming that what really compelled his 'attention' were 'interesting, daring, novel attempts to do something from an historical point of view, across discursive lines in often transgressive ways'.<sup>68</sup> In an interview with Jacqueline Rose (1998) Said specified that what he was 'trying to do is to put the work of art in a larger perspective and connect it to things that normally are not connected to it', to connect it to 'a cultural and political situation, but also to the privacy of the writer's life.'<sup>69</sup> He believed in a 'form of 'secularist analysis'' that disregarded 'discipline boundaries',<sup>70</sup> something that is beginning to filter into contemporary musicology. The ethnomusicologist Inge Boer considers interdisciplinarity an essential aspect of orientalist criticism in musicology:

Orientalism identified as discourse makes it possible, even imperative, to transcend the boundaries between disciplines. As a form of knowledge, Orientalism surpasses text-image divisions, for example, and hence distinctions between literature and art history as separate disciplines engaged in Orientalism. Multiple crossings and connections knit an intertextuality that calls forth more interdisciplinary work on Orientalism.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Billie Melman. *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918*. Hong Kong: The University of Michigan Press, 1992: 17.

<sup>65</sup> Jeffrey Kallberg. 'Gender'. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 9, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 645-47. London: Macmillan, 2001: 646.

<sup>66</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8*.

<sup>67</sup> Although to this author's knowledge he never specifically used that term about himself.

<sup>68</sup> Jennifer Wicke and Michael Sprinker. 'Interview with Edward Said'. In *Edward Said: A Critical Reader*, ed. Michael Sprinker, 221-64. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992: 248-49.

<sup>69</sup> Jacqueline Rose. 'Edward Said Talks to Jacqueline Rose'. *Critical Quarterly*, 40/1 (April 1998): 77.

<sup>70</sup> Ashcroft and Ahluwalia, *Edward Said*: 70.

<sup>71</sup> Inge E. Boer. 'Introduction: Imaginative Geographies and the Discourse of Orientalism'. In *After Orientalism: Critical Entanglements, Productive Looks*, ed. Inge E. Boer, 9-22. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003: 13.

Thus the interdisciplinary study of orientalist art productions is beginning to have a high profile in some musicological, academic spheres.

Despite this increasing popularity of interdisciplinary frameworks within many of the arts (including music), the critical consideration of interdisciplinarity remains a small body of writing (often highly contextually specific), building upon the ethnographical considerations of writers like James Clifford who deemed ethnography to be ‘hybrid textual activity’, ‘travers[ing] genres and disciplines’.<sup>72</sup> A distinction can be made between multidisciplinary approaches which ‘are assumed to evolve *new understanding* through *adapting and modifying* existing concepts, methods and theoretical frameworks within a discipline and occasionally borrowing ideas from others’ and interdisciplinarity which involves the ‘*melding* of concepts, methods and theoretical frameworks coming from different disciplines.’<sup>73</sup> Bill Readings in *The University in Ruins* (1996)<sup>74</sup> and Joe Moran in *Interdisciplinarity* (2002) both discuss how the criticism of academic disciplines as restrictive is as old as the separation into disciplines.<sup>75</sup> The term “interdisciplinary” emerged ‘within the context of these anxieties’ as early as the mid-1920s and became commonly used in academia in the humanities and social sciences directly following the Second World War,<sup>76</sup> yet three-quarters of a century later there is still little theoretical literature considering the concept. Moran cites many figures and schools as examples of working interdisciplinarity (even if they never utilised the term themselves), including Sigmund Freud (p.97), Charles Darwin (p.162), structuralists such as Roland Barthes (p.85), the new historicists (p.138), queer theorists (p.108), and post-colonialists including Said (p.168). As well as embracing a more ‘traditional search for a wide-ranging, total knowledge’, interdisciplinarity can include a fundamental questioning of knowledge and the ways in which we attempt to organise it.<sup>77</sup>

## Interdisciplinary influences

Derek B. Scott’s frequently interdisciplinary work has been influential on this study, primarily his several publications on orientalism but also his recurrent focus on popular music in nineteenth-century Britain.<sup>78</sup> This study likewise focuses on popular artworks intended for mass consumption by an urban general public, an area of exploration that has become acceptable to traditional academic musicology in the last few decades. Another area that has risen to prominence during this period is the consideration of women, gender and music, a number of publications of which have encouraged this study, including *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural*

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<sup>72</sup> James Clifford. ‘Introduction: Partial Truths’. In *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus, 1-26. London: University of California Press, 1984: 26.

<sup>73</sup> Yvonne Rogers, Mike Scaife and Antonio Rizzo. *Interdisciplinarity: An Emergent or Engineered Process?* Cognitive Science Research Paper 556. Brighton: University of Sussex, February 2003: 4-5.

<sup>74</sup> Bill Readings. *The University in Ruins*. London: Harvard University Press, 1996: 89.

<sup>75</sup> Joe Moran. *Interdisciplinarity*. London: Routledge, 2002: 14.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*: 15.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*: 14-15.

<sup>78</sup> Derek B. Scott. *The Singing Bourgeois: Songs of the Victorian Drawing Room and Parlour*. Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1989.

*Perspective* (1987),<sup>79</sup> *Embodied Voices: Representing Female Vocality in Western Culture* (1994)<sup>80</sup> and Derek Hyde's *New-Found Voices: Women in Nineteenth-Century English Music* (1998).<sup>81</sup> The connections between women, sexuality, gender and music are becoming more frequently explored, as has been done in this collection of case-study analyses.

Since the early 1990s interdisciplinary methodologies have increasingly influenced other areas of musicology. There has been a growing awareness that the traditional idea of the arts as "sisters" can be updated and utilised in explorations of, for example, the influence of art forms upon one another or the influence of cultural change and ideas upon those art forms. Richard Leppert has published widely on the intertextuality between 'fine art' and music<sup>82</sup> and more recently art critics like Suzanne Fagence Cooper are specialising in music and its visual representation.<sup>83</sup> Since the turn of the twenty-first century a number of interdisciplinary scholars, primarily women, have been considering depictions of music in literature, for example *The Idea of Music in Victorian Fiction* (2004) edited by Sophie Fuller and Nicky Losseff,<sup>84</sup> and the work of Phyllis Weliver<sup>85</sup> who has been particularly significant to this study.

## Orientalism and musicology

As can be demonstrated from the preceding catalogue of influential works above, it is becoming more generally acknowledged that cultural context is an important aspect of musicological interpretation,<sup>86</sup> thus in some ways musicology is integrating more ethnomusicological elements.<sup>87</sup> As David Gramit recognises, 'Among the areas of musicology that have been particularly vital in recent years is the exploration of European composers' representations of cultural "others"',<sup>88</sup> although much of this musicological research regards late-nineteenth-century European opera, there is little analysis of orientalism on the British stage, a situation that this study aims to redress.

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<sup>79</sup> Ellen Koskoff (ed.) *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. London: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1987.

<sup>80</sup> Leslie Dunn and Nancy A. Jones (ed.) *Embodied Voices: Representing Female Vocality in Western Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

<sup>81</sup> Derek Hyde. *New-Found Voices: Women in Nineteenth-Century English Music*, Third Edition. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998.

<sup>82</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 10*.

<sup>83</sup> Suzanne Fagence Cooper. 'Aspiring to the Condition of Music: Painting in Britain 1860-1900'. In *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies*, Volume 2, ed. Jeremy Dibble and Bennett Zon, 251-77. London: Ashgate, 2002.

<sup>84</sup> Sophie Fuller and Nicky Losseff (ed.) *The Idea of Music in Victorian Fiction*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

<sup>85</sup> Phyllis Weliver. *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction, 1860-1900: Representations of Music, Science and Gender in the Leisured Home*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000.

<sup>86</sup> Jeffrey Richards. *Imperialism and Music: Britain 1876-1953*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001: 8.

<sup>87</sup> The publication of volumes such as *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction* (2003) incorporating articles like Kofi Agawu. 'Contesting Difference: A Critique of Africanist Ethnomusicology' is creating a corpus of analysis and theory which is as relevant to academics who would consider themselves "musicologists" as to "ethnomusicologists".

<sup>88</sup> David Gramit. 'Orientalism and the Lied: Schubert's "Du liebst mich nicht"'. *19th-Century Music*, 27/2 (2003): 97.

Edward Said devoted a section of his 1993 book *Culture and Imperialism* to an exploration of Giuseppe Verdi's (1813-1901) *Aida* (1871) in its cultural/orientalist context;<sup>89</sup> this led to heightened discussions within musicology about imperialism and orientalism, and more directly to articles such as Paul Robinson's 'Is *Aida* an Orientalist Opera?' (1993).<sup>90</sup> In *Culture and Imperialism* Said discusses his interpretation of *Aida* as representing an 'Orientalized Egypt' with "Oriental" music created by Verdi;<sup>91</sup> for example the composer disregarded parts of a document on ancient Egypt sent to him by Ricordi in 1870 and exchanged some priests for priestesses, thus, according to Said followed 'the conventional European practice of making Oriental women central to any exotic practice: the functional equivalents of his priestesses are the dancing girls, slaves, concubines, and bathing harem beauties prevalent in mid-nineteenth-century European art and, by the 1870s, entertainment.'<sup>92</sup> Said concludes that 'As a highly specialized form of aesthetic memory, *Aida* embodies, as it was intended to do, the authority of Europe's version of Egypt at a moment in its nineteenth-century history'.<sup>93</sup> These operatic works represent Europeans' perceptions of the 'Orient', as opposed to any reality of those cultures. Said's writing here is certainly a large leap from his musings on Western art music that he had published only two years earlier under the title *Musical Elaborations*;<sup>94</sup> despite his assertion in that text that musical study 'can be more, and not less, interesting if we situate music as taking place, so to speak, in a social and cultural setting',<sup>95</sup> he seems to treat music in the abstract, almost de-contextualising it.

Said's specific references to music and the 'Orient' in *Culture and Imperialism* came at a time when musicologists were beginning to be more concerned with orientalism; indeed it was in the early 1990s that Ralph Locke, one of the most published musicologists on orientalism and music, began to focus on this area. Not only has Locke written about particular 'Oriental' works, including Camille Saint-Saëns's (1835-1921) *Samson et Dalila* (1877),<sup>96</sup> he addresses orientalism as a phenomenon within musicology and suggests theoretical frameworks through which it can be considered. In 1998 he sets out five 'interrelated issues' to contemplate when regarding orientalist musicology: how much works (claim to) reflect the "real" 'Orient'; how 'Oriental' fantasy interplays with this; how the 'Orient' is depicted musically and extra-musically; if 'Oriental' musical devices are there, how they relate to other musical exoticisms (for example Native American or "Gypsy" tropes); and do these musical devices actually relate to any lived, "real" 'Oriental' music?<sup>97</sup> In *The Musical Stage* I have utilised aspects of this framework,

<sup>89</sup> Edward Said. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1993: 134-57.

<sup>90</sup> Paul Robinson. 'Is *Aida* an Orientalist Opera?' *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 5/2 (July 1993): 133-40.

<sup>91</sup> Said, *Culture and Imperialism*: 145.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*: 146.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*: 151.

<sup>94</sup> Edward W. Said. *Musical Elaborations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*: xvi.

<sup>96</sup> Ralph P. Locke. 'Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers, Muezzins and Timeless Sands: Musical Images of the Middle East'. *19th-century music*, 22/1 (Summer 1998): 42.

<sup>97</sup> Ralph P. Locke. 'Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers, Muezzins and Timeless Sands: Musical Images of the Middle East'. In *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathon Bellman, 104-36. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998: 105.

however the majority of the case studies in this discussion are not overtly musically 'Oriental' influenced.

Alongside this framework Locke makes many other suggestions about orientalism and musicology that are of pertinence to this study. As much as musical works may claim to represent the 'Orient' they also 'present themselves as fictions, objects intended to provide entertainment or invite aesthetic contemplation', something particularly true of comic stage works.<sup>98</sup> Locke asserts that this 'very fictiveness of artworks serves to disguise or make palatable some demonstrably prejudicial portrayals of other peoples and places.'<sup>99</sup> Even positive portrayals of the Other 'can veil from sight the complexities of that other culture as fully as do frankly negative stereotypes',<sup>100</sup> something that is considered in Chapter 4: 'An angel/demon dualism'. Indeed Locke believes that the romance of 'Oriental' operatic works could serve to mask underlying political struggles,<sup>101</sup> and just like Said and Sardar, contends that there is more to learn about Europe than the 'Orient' in these works, particularly in patently allegorical works set in the 'Orient', but addressing European concerns.<sup>102</sup> However with all 'Oriental' works one must remember 'On the one hand is the work's essential Westernness – its irrelevance to the East, and the East's to it – and, on the other, is its power to reflect and even shape, perhaps damagingly, the attitude and behaviour of Westerners toward the non-Western world.'<sup>103</sup>

More recently Matthew Head has also addressed orientalism and musicology from a theoretical viewpoint in his article 'Musicology on Safari: Orientalism and the Spectre of Postcolonial Theory' (2003). He criticises the 'safari mentality' of many musicologists who name and classify the Other, merely observing orientalism instead of evaluating it.<sup>104</sup> He describes how musicologists 'almost always describe orientalist figures as clearly, even self-evidently, identifiable and recognisable. This is all the more remarkable because writers do not necessarily agree with each other on whether a work contains an orientalist figure'.<sup>105</sup> He wishes to dissuade academics from attempting to create a teleological, developmental view of orientalism, as for Head 'Orientalist representations do not so much 'develop' as go out of fashion [...] in part, because of changes in the political context that stimulated them.'<sup>106</sup> The orientalist romances of Rider Haggard could be a case in point: in the 1890s they were at the height of fashion and innovation in portrayals of the Other, however by the late 1910s Haggard's continuing creation of romances involving the same model of the Other had become outdated, and works like Hull's *The Sheik*, which inverts and manipulates many of Haggard's orientalist images, were instead the

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<sup>98</sup> Locke, 'Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers'. In *The Exotic in Western Music*: 105.

<sup>99</sup> Locke, 'Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers'. *19th-century music*: 22.

<sup>100</sup> Locke, 'Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers'. In *The Exotic in Western Music*: 108.

<sup>101</sup> Locke, 'Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers'. *19th-century music*: 37.

<sup>102</sup> Ralph P. Locke. 'Reflections on Orientalism in Opera and Musical Theater'. *Opera Quarterly*, 10/1 (1993-4): 61.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> M. Head. 'Critical Forum: Musicology on Safari: Orientalism and the Spectre of Postcolonial Theory'. *Music Analysis*, 22/1-2 (2003): 223.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*: 223-24.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*: 226.



mode. Head quotes Haggard's 'insight' about military might that 'the Other can "serve as a template for self-construction, being [presented as] a model of the martial power to which the colonist aspired"'.<sup>107</sup> This insight can be developed; not only can the Other be inspirational (and envy-inducing) in certain cultural aspects, so providing a 'template' for European observers, but the Other can also act as a *foil* for 'self-construction', a marker against which Europeans may consider what they are (supposedly) not.

Alongside these more theoretical reflections on orientalism and music, in the past few decades some musicologists have started to investigate specialised aspects of this area, for example Liao Ping-hui's exploration of issues of orientalism, opera and the repression of female sexuality in Giacomo Puccini's (1858-1924) *Madama Butterfly* (1904-07),<sup>108</sup> and Arthur Groos's musings on the same opera, considering it in terms of orientalism and home reception, with material relating to its performance in Japan.<sup>109</sup> Orientalism combined with sexuality is something that a number of critics have begun to consider more deeply in musicology, with examples including Philip Brett's divisive study of Benjamin Britten's (1913-1976) operas with a theoretical framework embracing orientalism and queer theory.<sup>110</sup>

This study is being undertaken at a time when orientalism is clearly grounded in musicological theory, and a juncture at which there is heightened awareness of orientalism owing to the recent death of Edward Said, who nonetheless remains a seminal influence. This study is adding to the corpus of interdisciplinary work that is being built around musicology, embracing orientalist theories, and specifically exploring ideas of the Other, gender and sexuality and their interplay in different popular art-forms.

## British orientalism and the long-nineteenth-century arts

### *The Musical Stage*

*The Musical Stage* addresses case studies of opera libretti spanning over one hundred years; the lengthier timeframe of this section creates the opportunity to illustrate how the musical representations of the late nineteenth century continued and changed from the earlier ideas. Libretto theory exploring the relationships between text and music in opera is a field that is beginning to gain more interest and is pertinent to this part of this study. In his 1977 book *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*, Peter Conrad makes the provocative statement that 'Words and music are enemies' and that 'Opera is the continuation of their warfare'.<sup>111</sup> When

<sup>107</sup> H. Rider Haggard quoted in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (eds.), *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: a Reader*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993: 17. Cited in *ibid.*: 214.

<sup>108</sup> Liao Ping-hui. "Of Writing Words for Music Which Is Already Made": *Madama Butterfly*, *Turandot*, and Orientalism'. *Cultural Critique*, 16 (Fall 1990): 31-60.

<sup>109</sup> Arthur Groos. 'Return of the Native: Japan in *Madama Butterfly*/*Madama Butterfly* in Japan'. *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 1/2 (July 1989): 167-94.

<sup>110</sup> Philip Brett. 'Eros and Orientalism in Britten's Operas'. In *Queering the Pitch: the New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, ed. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood and Gary C. Thomas, 235-56. New York: Routledge, 1994.

<sup>111</sup> Peter Conrad. *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*. London: University of California Press, 1977: 178.

interpreting opera it is delicate to reach a 'truce' in the 'warfare' between words and music; one cannot ignore either music or text completely, but an analysis almost inevitably places weightier focus on one of these areas. In attempting to perform this balancing act, many writers being *musicologists* will ultimately stress the precedence of music. Paul Robinson did so when he wrote that 'Words and stories, however, are *only* the beginning' and that the 'principal thing' distinguishing opera from drama is music.<sup>112</sup> Robinson believes that 'The master question for any interpreter of opera must not be What does the text say, but How is the text realised, or at least addressed, in the music?'<sup>113</sup> Indeed, when attempting to interpret an opera, it is the music that distinguishes it from 'straight' drama; however this section is not attempting to *interpret* opera as such, but to see if and how representations in opera express commonly held nineteenth-century ideas and opinions – what they can reveal 'about cultural history broadly conceived'.<sup>114</sup> Accordingly, this study is not attempting to read the "meaning" of the opera (whatever that may be) through the libretto, but attempts to utilise libretti as cultural documents and indicators of widely held acceptable thought.

In *Indian Music and the West* (1997) Gerry Farrell expresses his belief that a 'standardised musical orientalism' was created in the nineteenth century,<sup>115</sup> which the repertoire of stereotypical 'native' characterisations in the non-European operas of Sir Henry Bishop helped to create and uphold at the start of the century. It is true that some of the stereotypes at times are 'racially' interchangeable, supporting Edward Said's contention that Others are frequently considered in 'abstract generalities'.<sup>116</sup> The notion that the majority of 'natives' would be corrupt, violent and idolatrous is applicable whether in Africa, South America, India or the Middle East, but other ideas are more culturally and geographically specific – a fascination with mysticism and hidden sexuality is reserved for the 'Orient' and does not transfer elsewhere, and the stereotype of the 'noble savage' whether female or male (with its accompanying associations of 'quaintness') is not applied to Islamic cultures, but is employed to different degrees to representations of South Americans, black Africans and Indians. A violent South American idolatry acts as the antithesis of the 'noble savage' stereotype – incarnating the 'savage' proper – in the depictions of true 'savages' in Bishop's works there is no trace of the quaintness associated with pidgin-English comedy characters, or the guileless self-sacrificing women, but mere violent savagery. In Bishop's South American operas there is a clear line drawn between those characters considered 'noble' and 'quaint' and those merely seen as savage, and that line is the 'native' attitude to the Europeans. Those who help the Europeans are viewed as quaintly noble, yet 'racially' inferior, however those who do not align themselves with the white characters are depicted as 'racially' degenerate and dangerous. This binarism between dangerous and 'noble' 'savages' aligns with John MacKenzie's belief that Others were depicted as degenerate to

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<sup>112</sup> Paul Robinson. *Opera and Ideas: From Mozart to Strauss*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1985: 2.

<sup>113</sup> Paul Robinson. 'A Deconstructive Postscript: Reading Libretti and Misreading Opera'. In *Reading Opera*, ed. Arthur Groos and Roger Parker: 328-46. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988: 341-42

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Gerry Farrell. *Indian Music and the West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997: 78-79.

<sup>116</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

validate conquest and interference, but redeemable enough to excuse Europe's continuing interference.<sup>117</sup> By the early nineteenth century however, non-Europeans began to be portrayed in a downward spiral of negativity – as foolish (a darker aspect of quaintness) and degenerate, with the 'noble savage' myth dying out by the mid-century. The opera libretti set by Bishop serve as examples of these greater trends in European thought, on the cusp of the quaint 'noble savage's' demise.

By the mid-nineteenth century and the composition of the musical dramatic works used here as case studies, representations had altered markedly from those of Bishop's day. The tone of these works is overall much more comical, and complex subjects are treated with less gravity. The representations of 'Oriental' women have diversified, but also strengthened in negativity in some aspects; dichotomies are established with the 'Oriental' female as proud predatory, sexual being or conversely as duty-bound, languishing, object of voyeuristic sexual fantasy. There is furthermore a more overt focus on the harem as a concept and physical space; as Mary Hamer states, the place where unqualified power creates an arena for male sexual fantasy.<sup>118</sup> Miscegenation continues to be practised, and now with Islamic women, but still not with Africans who are now generally represented in a much more derogatory manner. Violence has diminished, but duplicity and corruption are becoming central aspects of the 'Oriental' character, and the representations of religion have become more comical and derogatory and are no longer mystical (in alignment with the death of the 'noble savage' ideal). One explanation for the transformation of representations from Bishop's day may be that as Britain increased its imperial power into the middle decades of the nineteenth century (pre-1857) 'natives' seemed to pose less of a threat to British stability, so comical representations of non-Europeans became more suitable than before. This is the case with *Lord Bateman* and *The Cadi* which were both first performed before the upheaval caused by the Indian Mutiny (1857-58), rocking the security of Empire. On the other hand Arbuthnot's work was composed in 1860 after the rebellion, so perhaps his highly negativised black characters and the resurgence of the idea of (Hindus in particular) practising human sacrifice can be attributed to the fear and instability caused by the Mutiny.

The representations of slavery are understandably fewer in these mid-century dramas than in Bishop's day, with the abolition of slaving in Britain having occurred nearly half a century earlier, but the depictions of slavery and black peoples are far more racist and negative than those of thirty years earlier. Birotteau describes the Cadi's slaves as 'These black animals of yours',<sup>119</sup> and Arbuthnot's Nelusko sings that 'They call me a darned nigger, 'cos my skin it is not

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<sup>117</sup> John M. MacKenzie. *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995: 12.

<sup>118</sup> Hamer, 'Timeless Histories': 271.

<sup>119</sup> [Thomas Marie François Sauvage]. *The Cadi: or, Amours among Moors. A Comic Opera, in Two Acts. The Music by Ambroise Thomas. As Presented, for the First Time, at The Theatre Royal Haymarket, On Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1851, Under the Management of Benjamin Webster, Esq. Copyright Edition.* [Libretto] [Anonymous translation]. London: S. G. Fairbrother, 1851: 31.

white.’<sup>120</sup> Use of the term ‘nigger’ does not occur in any of Bishop’s works and here illustrates the newer fear, dislike and contempt for black peoples that were arising in Britain by the mid-nineteenth century. Selika, herself African, jibes ‘Nelusko, dear, you’re just like a gorilla: / I mean as active’;<sup>121</sup> highlighting the animalistic nature of the African male and then retracting the line to make it seem that the simile was intended to be one of action and not appearance or disposition would have been inconceivable in the worlds of Bishop’s operas. Indeed, to reveal the difference in tone, one merely has to view the stage directions for the opening scenes of Arbutnot’s comedy: Vasco enters ‘*carrying with difficulty a large bottle labelled “Cape Sherry” in one hand, and dragging NELUSKO and SELIKA by a rope round their necks with the other.*’<sup>122</sup> This imagery of human degradation coupled with a comically large bottle of ‘Cape’ Sherry (to highlight where Vasco has been travelling) is intended to amuse; clearly gone are the days of Bishop’s ‘noble savages.’

By the close of the century Britain had on the surface appeared to have convinced itself of the stability of Empire, but the exploration of operatic representations here undertaken digs into the cracks in this veneer of safety, and explores underlying fears and questions of ‘Orient’ and Empire. Despite the apparent confidence in Empire and Britain at the close of the nineteenth century the image was brittle, hence the increased mockery and negative stereotyping of non-Europeans and the amplified ‘horror’ at miscegenation. Moving into the twentieth century the earlier depictions continue to solidify, sometimes to the point of caricature, as the stability of Empire wavered and began to fail. As musical drama moved into the twentieth century representations of ‘Orientals’ and other non-Europeans diversified. The old Victorian dichotomy of the ‘angel in the home’ versus the ‘worldly whore’ can be seen to be influencing the representations of non-European women in these works; a dichotomy is established between the pliable, willing, simple and honourable maid (a “poor relative” of the earlier ‘noble savage’ figure) and the manipulative, mercurial, sexually-aware temptress. Relating to this, the contradictory ideas concerning miscegenation depend upon which ‘category’ the ‘native’ fits into – *with* honour or *without*. There is a new focus on the physicality of the women, and the idea of undressing replaces that of unveiling – indeed there is generally a move away from ideas of the veil and harem. Dance has become a more central indicator of lax sexuality, again presenting a more physical focus. The non-European male is similarly polarised, but between the noble warrior of places like Japan and Zululand and the caricatures of the imbecilic Chinese or violent Arab, thus the images of the men have become much more culturally specific, in a way not dissimilar to those of a century earlier in Bishop’s works. These contradictions in representations seem to have arisen from greater knowledge of other cultures through increased ease of travel and

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<sup>120</sup> Captain Arbutnot. *Lacy's Acting Edition. L'Africaine, or, The Belle of Madagascar. A Burlesque, in One Act. (Being the first Extravaganza on the subject printed.)* [Libretto]. London: Thomas Hails Lacy, n.d. [1860]: 8.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*: 24.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*: 5.

wider publication, so depictions of 'natives' now tend to be geographically specific interpretations of older themes, such as female sexuality, male violence and honour.

Sexuality is a major component of the changing portrayals of non-Europeans in these works, as are other themes such as 'nobility', violence, religious practice and indolence – all of which characteristics were attributed to 'racial' difference. It was possible for *some* 'natives' to share *some* British characteristics, such as 'honour' or 'duty', but 'natives' could not be ascribed a large number of these, as this would make them socially equal.<sup>123</sup> As Kenan Malik highlights, 'In the end it mattered little that the scientific basis of racial divisions was tenuous at best. Race was a social category, not a scientific one. What was important [...] was not that races existed, but that society should be organized as if they did'.<sup>124</sup> Representations of non-Europeans like these musical works are one such organisational device, often with 'constructed ignorance' influencing the 'representation of races on stage', thus 'compound[ing] the stereotyping.'<sup>125</sup> In view of this, it is pertinent to return to Peter Kivy's statement that 'what is represented' in musical drama 'is not music but the world as the librettist, the composer and (at least some of) their contemporaries construe it';<sup>126</sup> an assertion supported by the analyses of these libretti case studies. Prejudices and stereotypes changed throughout the long nineteenth century, and these alterations are mirrored in the works catering to the demands of the day, such as the 'Oriental' operas of Bishop, Solomon, Talbot and others. Although these stereotypes were also influenced by historical events, as in most popular art-forms facts were transformed by the popular imagination. The orientalisation of the non-European countries in these works was largely based upon a lack of understanding of foreign cultures, and the song-writers' romanticisation of the changing intellectual ideas of the long nineteenth century.

### *Works of Fiction*

The focus on H. Rider Haggard's works in this section allows an opportunity for an in-depth analysis of this one writer on 'Orient' and Other at the end of the long nineteenth century. Haggard (and his contemporaries) utilised music to other women and men in very different ways, hence the section's separation into gendered chapters. When Haggard's Other women display qualities most feared (yet sometimes desired) by British society they are at their most musical; an essential component of Haggard's characterisation for his dangerous, sexual women is musicality, and perhaps Haggard aligns these two concepts because it is hard to rationalise either clearly. He associates their musicality with allure, sensuality, danger, power-lust and finally violence. Although his *femmes fatales* are visually appealing and welcome British men's 'gaze',

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<sup>123</sup> Laurence Kitzan. *Victorian Writers and the Image of Empire: The Rose-Colored Vision*. London: Greenwood Press, 2001: 8.

<sup>124</sup> Kenan Malik. *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western Society*. London: Macmillan Press, 1996: 121.

<sup>125</sup> Brian Singleton. *Oscar Asche, Orientalism, and British Musical Comedy*. Contributions in Drama and Theatre Studies, Number 106, Lives of the Theatre. London: Praeger, 2004: 67.

<sup>126</sup> Peter Kivy. *Osmín's Rage: Philosophical Reflections on Opera, Drama, and Text*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988: 184.

with their music they subvert power relations and gain control. Conversely Haggard's musical images concerning Other men avoid sexualisation, instead his music highlights their Other qualities, whether good (including nobility and loyalty) or bad (for example violence, or 'primitive' worship). Again in contrast to Haggard's musical individualisation of Other women, he primarily uses masculine music to reinforce the idea of a faceless male Other, as part of a group – seeing the Other in Said's 'large collective terms'.<sup>127</sup> The preceding contextualising material places Haggard's works within contemporary fiction and indicates that for these British fiction-writers music is often closely related to the representation of the 'Other', as it is frequently used metaphorically to represent innate Other characteristics or as behaviour displaying people's otherness. The final chapter in this section acts as a coda, and explores issues of gender and music in E.M. Hull's *The Sheik* (1919). Haggard and many of his contemporaries use musicality to sexualise their 'Oriental' women, however Hull (the *nom de plume* of Edith Maude Winstanley) utilises similar musical ideas to sensualise her male Sheik. This chapter explores the ways in which Hull subverts the (by then) established markers of 'Oriental' musical sensuality

For Rider Haggard and his contemporary British fiction writers music is closely related to the representation of the 'Other', as the case studies in this section indicate. Non-European women are othered and sexualised by these writers and music is a frequent tool in this process; likewise the otherness of "foreign" male characters is emphasised by their non-European musicality. However music is often not only an indication of the Other, but can be an active force in these works where it is frequently integral to the othered physicality of non-European characters. Music has the ability to express and (as these analyses of Hull and Wilde's works indicate) to transgress ideas of gender and sexuality, making it a valuable device for the nineteenth-century writers here studied. Music, like elements of sexuality and otherness, is difficult to capture satisfactorily through language, which is perhaps one reason why Haggard and his contemporaries so frequently link these concepts.

### *Visual Culture*

This final section examines case studies of non-European music as represented in different visual forms, namely fine art, photography, and illustration, and highlights the ways in which these disciplines frequently overlap in ideology and representation of the musical 'Orient' and Other. Indeed, one of the most prominent aspects of these case-study explorations of visual culture in long-nineteenth-century Britain is the inter-relatedness of the different visual disciplines. The imagery established as acceptable in the 'high arts', most particularly painting, was highly influential on the work of photographers and also on the illustrators of popular fiction (both popular in its mass distribution and acceptance, and in being intended for a wide general public). None of these disciplines is independent, but they all take elements from and are influenced by

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<sup>127</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55

the representations established in one another, and indeed those prevalent in contemporary literary and musical works.

The images considered here seem to fall into four broad groupings (although, as with any taxonomy there is always some overlapping). Some of these artists depicted an 'Orient' that was entirely of their own imagining, having never visited the societies that they are representing; it is important to distinguish between artists who had visited the 'Orient' and those who 'simply exploited a fashionable style.'<sup>128</sup> The 'Oriental' paintings of artists like Bonington and photographs by Fenton are pure fantasy, as the artists had never been to the 'Orient', thus these works are based purely on the absorption of other people's descriptions and the prevailing stereotypes and prejudices of the day. These works are the vaguest in their designation of subject, with non-specific titles designating Others as 'abstract generalities',<sup>129</sup> like Fenton's *The Pasha and Bayadère* and Bonington's *Odalisque in Yellow*. They appear highly staged with only 'Oriental' props to designate place, as opposed to any real detail or knowledge. Continuing the theme of imagination, the second category of works represents a past 'Orient', normally one that is more glorious than the present, an idea that Ziauddin Sardar considers in *Orientalism*.<sup>130</sup> Many of the illustrations for Haggard's works (themselves set in "history") can be considered in this way, as can "high" artworks like Alma-Tadema's *Antony and Cleopatra*. Owing to the combination of removed place and time these works can be as fantastical as the artist desires, although all of the works here studied that fall into this category are bounded by external narrative – either Haggard's texts, Biblical story, or "historical" myth. The third group contains artists who visited the 'Orient', but who chose to focus on the places and peoples prohibited to them, instead of what they had actually seen. The many harem scenes explored in Chapter 11 fall into this category, as indeed do Beato's *geisha* photographs; they emphasise the British desire to 'penetrate' the veil, as discussed by Meyda Yeğenoğlu.<sup>131</sup> Finally there are those who tried to portray the "real" 'Orient' as they saw it, including the photographer Frith and the artists Dillon and Lavery.

Each of these artworks is an individual response to the Other, but although the 'Orient' inspired artists in different ways and in varied mediums, many of the British Victorian stereotypes of 'Orient', including a 'noble' historical past, present-day negative religious ritual, and particularly heightened female sexuality, are evident in these visual representations. These interpretations of a sample of images heighten the viewer's awareness of the cultural-orientalist context in which they were created, revealing not only how music was often considered a valuable tool in the depiction of the Other, but also the various ways in which the 'Orient' entered the artistic imagination during the long nineteenth century in Britain.

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<sup>128</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 30.

<sup>129</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>130</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 60.

<sup>131</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 44.

### *Concluding remarks*

In any study of this nature the author must decide upon the depth of analysis; it was not my desire to attempt to cover large amounts of material in only shallow detail, so whilst endeavouring to retain a broad spectrum of examples, the focus is more particularly on certain artists and artworks.<sup>132</sup> In a realm as subjective as the portrayal of Others and 'Orient' there will inevitably be (often much) difference between individual artists' ideas, thus in focusing on specific people, and being able to contextualise them biographically and historically, the author feels that the resultant detailed and historically-grounded analyses have justified this decision. This thesis's interdisciplinary framework allows the consideration of a broad cross-section of examples from the popular arts and thus an insight into some of the ways in which widespread prejudices of the Other and 'Orient' were played out in different art-forms. Although interdisciplinary, this thesis attempts to be balanced in its theoretical understanding of the different arts, thus a large body of theoretical writings has been consulted and engaged with, primarily from orientalist and imperialist studies, musicology, gender studies, literary theory, and art and photographic theories, but also aspects of film and cultural studies, anthropology, ethnomusicology, history of science, aesthetics and 'racial' theory. Through these means, and despite the focus on representations of music, it attempts to avoid biasing this study too much towards the single discipline of music. The choice of primary material to analyse and for contextualisation in this exploration has been as broad-ranging as was practical, and includes opera libretti, play texts, songs, travel writings, romances, novellas, short stories, poems, children's fiction, diaries, fine art, photographs, films, book illustrations, periodical illustrations, newspapers, magazines and journals. Through the analyses of this set of case studies taken from the long-nineteenth-century British popular arts, this thesis explores issues of the Other, orientalism, gender and sexuality with regards to representations of non-European music and musicians.

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<sup>132</sup> Throughout this study, by "artists" the author means composers and writers as well as visual artists.



## SECTION I

# The Musical Stage

## Chapter 1: An introduction to British opera in the long nineteenth century.

In *The Orient on the Victorian Stage* (2003), Edward Ziter posits that popular entertainments are ‘possibly the most important area in which to examine transformations within orientalism’,<sup>1</sup> as the industry was influenced by much of the contemporary orientalist scholarship. He asserts that ‘In the process, the entertainment industry became – and remains – a primary site for the formulation of modern conceptions of race, gender and nation.’<sup>2</sup> Indeed, presentations of the Other on the British stage remained commercially successful and well attended throughout the long nineteenth century. This section explores features of orientalism and their transference to and influence on British perceptions of Other areas of the world through the medium of opera libretti. As Derek Scott states, ‘representations rely upon culturally learned recognition’;<sup>3</sup> for example both the quaint ‘noble savage’ and the ‘Oriental’ were ascribed particular characteristics that became recognisable to British audiences. However, depictions and representations are not static pictures, and this section investigates the ways in which stereotypes of otherness changed, overlapped and diverged.

### An overview of central developments

#### *The early nineteenth century*

During the first decades of the nineteenth century Sir Henry Bishop was considered the foremost British composer for the stage. He was composing operas at a time when ideas of ‘race’ were just beginning to be consolidated in Britain, and in many of the non-European opera libretti set by Bishop ideas of quaintness and ‘noble savagery’ are integral to the narrative. As far as can be ascertained neither Bishop nor any of the dramatists for his ‘Oriental’ and South American works travelled outside of Europe, therefore their representations are not based upon any primary observation of the cultures depicted, however these operas reflect many of the elements that the British perceived to be essential aspects of the ‘Orient’ and the ‘noble savage’. As a nation with a powerful dramatic tradition, music was considered to be subservient to the drama on the British stage<sup>4</sup> and in this early part of the century it was seldom considered integral to the dramatic structuring or characterisations of a stage work;<sup>5</sup> although the music was often considered incidental to the drama, Temperley asserts that it was still important to the overall theatre experience.<sup>6</sup> Particularly well-liked songs often appeared in multiple operas, as was the case with a number of Bishop’s songs, particularly ‘Home, Sweet Home’ (1829). Such songs were even

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<sup>1</sup> Ziter, *The Orient on the Victorian Stage*: 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*: 21.

<sup>3</sup> Derek B. Scott. ‘Orientalism and Musical Style’. *Musical Quarterly*, 82 (1998): 326.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Karen Ahlquist. ‘Masculinity and Legitimacy on the English Musical Stage: The Mature Male, 1800-1845’. *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, 8/1 (2004): 2.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Temperley. ‘Great Britain: Opera’. *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 22 February 2006) <http://www.grovemusic.com>

inserted into the many Continental works that were adapted and translated for this middle-class audience by Bishop and others, where tricky arias were removed, ensembles reduced and recitative translated into spoken dialogue,<sup>7</sup> for audiences that were used to following drama in speech and not song.<sup>8</sup>

### *Moving into the mid-century*

The aristocracy of the earlier nineteenth century considered British opera to be negligible, preferring Italian works,<sup>9</sup> however the British tradition was supported by the upper-middle classes, particularly women, many of whom purchased the fashionable songs as sheet music in piano reduction for home performance. Ronald Pearsall believes that in these early decades it 'became natural' to consider British opera (like Bishop's works) as 'a string of adorable airs linked in a way that was arbitrary or incomprehensible.'<sup>10</sup> In the opening decades of the century, plots and music were frequently borrowed from or influenced by productions from the Continent, particularly France and Germany; the exoticism of portraying the Other became fashionable, alongside the more traditional "British"-themed productions.<sup>11</sup> It was not until John Barnett's (1802-1890) composition of the first significant British Romantic opera *The Mountain Sylph* (1834) that spoken dialogue was abandoned,<sup>12</sup> but the spoken word has remained an important component of British operetta and musical stage drama to the present day. In the same decade Michael William Balfe (1808-1870) rose to prominence,<sup>13</sup> becoming the most successful British opera composer of the mid-nineteenth century, with his fame spreading internationally because of his success with *The Bohemian Girl* (1840-43). The Romantic school of British opera composers, like Balfe and Edward Loder (1813-1865), was partly a continuation of what Temperley calls 'the Bishop era', because song forms and spoken dialogue were retained, as was the adaptation of Continental plots. However the stylistic influences of composers such as Weber, Verdi, Meyerbeer and Gounod brought a new style with increased dramatic intensity and passion to works like Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl*, which often gained musical success despite the frequent banality of the libretti.<sup>14</sup> Romantic nationalism made it to the British musical stage with Sir George Alexander Macfarren (1813-1887), whose operas, for example *King Charles II* (1849), involved strictly British subjects and incorporated folk song motifs. Nationalistic sentiment probably influenced Balfe, who attempted to create a national English Opera in 1841 with the backing of Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort; when this failed, seemingly owing to the fickleness of the artists, Balfe left for Paris.<sup>15</sup> Royal support for British stage works encouraged the rising middle-classes to be less suspicious of opera ('the Georgian theatre had

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<sup>7</sup> Ahlquist, 'Masculinity and Legitimacy on the English Musical Stage': 2.

<sup>8</sup> Christina Fuhrman. *Adapted and Arranged for the English Stage': Continental Operas Transformed for the London Theater, 1814-33*. PhD diss., Washington University, 2001: 252. Cited in *ibid.*: 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ronald Pearsall. *Victorian Popular Music*. Newton Abbot, Devon: David & Charles, 1973: 149-50.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*: 160.

<sup>11</sup> Temperley, 'Great Britain: Opera'. <http://www.grovemusic.com>

<sup>12</sup> Eric Walter White. *The Rise of English Opera*. London: John Lehmann, 1951: 99.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*: 92.

<sup>14</sup> Temperley, 'Great Britain: Opera'. <http://www.grovemusic.com>

<sup>15</sup> White, *The Rise of English Opera*: 100.

long been a byword for immorality'),<sup>16</sup> increasing its acceptability. As did the work of Thomas and Priscilla German Reed who from the 1850s presented musical stage works aimed at the sectors of the public who still considered theatres to be rife with sin and immoral behaviour, both on stage and off.<sup>17</sup>

By the mid-century representations of non-Europeans on the stage began to lose the freshness<sup>18</sup> and novelty of difference, and started to spiral into negativity; when the musical plays that are used here as case studies were written the potential nobility of savagery had been replaced by more comical depictions of corrupt or licentious dramatic figures, undeserving of 'civilising' change.<sup>19</sup> The tone of these mid-century works differs greatly from that of Bishop's early nineteenth-century works; even when Bishop's operas included comical figures they retained a general mood of seriousness, whereas the tone of the mid-century works here discussed is humorous, reflecting changes in popular stage taste more generally. The 'noble savage' of the early nineteenth century has all but disappeared, the only vestige being Sophia's freeing of Bateman in Charles Selby's *Lord Bateman* (1850), however that moment is still presented as one of particular comedy in the work. The list of *dramatis personae* in *Lord Bateman* may act as an example of the general tone indicated in these works.

*Mulegpuleyfooleybeg (a Turkish Pacha, an ugly old man with a handsome daughter, and a wooden leg*

*Uzozizezaz, a Janissary, (a very stout young officer, with a rather irritable temper*

*Sophia Zulimazedemuleypuleybeg, a Turkish Heiress – the Pacha's handsome daughter – a very charming young lady, with an elegant turban, and very noble sentiments.*<sup>20</sup>

The use of ridiculous names that sound "foreign" but are nonsensical specifies the way in which Selby wishes us to view these characters – as figures of fun, rather than serious depictions – there is no 'noble savage' here. Despite the fact that these depictions are not serious, they are no less indicative of trends in popular thought in mid-nineteenth-century Britain.

### *The close of the long nineteenth century*

By the late nineteenth century operetta ruled the British musical stage. The state of Richard D'Oyly Carte's (1844-1901) two theatres symbolised the situation of British opera at this time – The Savoy Theatre prospered with comic operas or operettas (descendants of the light operas that

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Hurd. 'Opera 1834-1865'. In *The Romantic Age, 1800-1914: Music in Britain*, ed. Nicholas Temperley: 307-29. London: Athlone Press, 1981: 308.

<sup>17</sup> Temperley, 'Great Britain: Opera'. <http://www.grovemusic.com>

<sup>18</sup> 'Harems appeared as early as 1758 in Arne's *Sultan*, a negro in Dibdin's *The Padlock* (1768), West Indians in Arnold's *Inkle and Yarico* (1787) and American Indians in Storace's *The Cherokee* (1794).' [Temperley, 'Great Britain: Opera'. <http://www.grovemusic.com>]

<sup>19</sup> C.C. Eldridge. *The Imperial Experience: From Carlyle to Forster*. London: Macmillan Press, 1996: 142.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Selby. *Duncombe's Edition. The Loves of Lord Bateman and the Fair Sophia. An Historical, Pantomimical, Melo-Dramatical, Balletical, Burlesque Burletta, in One Act. (Adapted from the Old Ballad, Illustrated by George Cruikshank)* [Libretto]. London: J. Duncombe & Co., n.d. [1850]: 3.

had been composed since the early eighteenth century), but his Royal English Opera House collapsed, leaving few outlets for the production of serious British operas except through the Carl Rosa Opera Company.<sup>21</sup> At The Savoy, Sir Arthur Sullivan (1842-1900) followed the operetta style of his predecessors, but the talent of his librettist William Schwenck Gilbert (1826-1911), and their exploitation of parody (an idea 'deeply rooted' in the Victorian theatre),<sup>22</sup> granted the partnership massive success; indeed the importance of the librettist to this collaboration is recognised by the collaboration's universal recognition as '*Gilbert and Sullivan*',<sup>23</sup> a new development in the consideration of British opera. They were granted the first international British opera success since Balfe, with *The Mikado* (1884) (the collaborators' longest-running work, with 672 performances), which on its revival in 1896 received over one thousand performances, becoming the first work at The Strand to do so.<sup>24</sup> Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas greatly influenced the British musical stage into the early decades of the twentieth century and had many imitators, none of whom 'possessed a sufficiently strong musical personality to effect any lasting or cogent development of [their] work',<sup>25</sup> however Edward Solomon's efforts were well-liked by his contemporaries.

The tone of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century British operettas was primarily humorous, often satirical and sometimes nonsensical, a trend which includes those works on 'Oriental' subjects. However in these lighter forms, observes Gerry Farrell, the portrayal of 'Orientals' 'became increasingly racist and stereotyped', as in Dance and Desprez's libretto for Edward Solomon's *The Nautch Girl* (1891). Nevertheless, the women still remain 'alluring and desirable', even if the male characters descend into 'evil, duplicity, or buffoonery'.<sup>26</sup> This tone, a development of that arising in the mid-century, is reflected in the character names of Solomon's 'Indian Comic Opera', including Pyjama, Cheetah, Baboo Currie and Tiffin, reminiscent of the comical names employed by Gilbert in *The Mikado* and indeed in Selby's *Lord Bateman* forty years earlier. Although these names are intended as a joke they are nonetheless derogatory and another illustration of the Victorian imperialist belief in British superiority and 'native' lowliness. The men in particular are objects of jest in these operas, incarnating the buffoons cited by Farrell.

At the close of the nineteenth century the apparent confidence in Empire was not as solid as it appeared to be; fears continued to rise that the Empire would collapse, and were heightened by events like the Boer War (1899-1902) and Queen Victoria's death (1901). Doubts also began to form at the nature of British superiority – both 'racial' and national. Insecurities like these were often reacted to in conflicting ways – some sought to strengthen Empire (hence the 'Scramble for Africa' in the 1870s-90s) and continued to codify and build-upon 'racial' stereotypes and

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<sup>21</sup> White, *The Rise of English Opera*: 117.

<sup>22</sup> Nigel Burton. 'Opera 1865-1914'. In *The Romantic Age, 1800-1914: Music in Britain*, ed. Nicholas Temperley: 330-57. London: Athlone Press, 1981: 330.

<sup>23</sup> White, *The Rise of English Opera*: 112.

<sup>24</sup> Jon Alan Conrad. 'Arthur Sullivan'. In *The Viking Opera Guide*, ed. Amanda Holden, with Nicholas Kenyon and Stephen Walsh, 1055-74. London: Viking, 1993: 1063.

<sup>25</sup> Burton, 'Opera 1865-1914': 339.

<sup>26</sup> Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*: 96.

prejudices – others fought against these attitudes in an attempt to understand foreign cultures. This often caused ambivalence in both the attitude of an individual to Empire and ‘Orient’, and in the attitudes of British society as a whole. Although by the early decades of the twentieth century ideas about other ‘races’ had solidified, these new fears and ambivalences continued to mount as the Empire, and hence the stability of the concept of ‘Britishness’, began to crumble (this was particularly affected by The Great War of 1914 to 1918). Japan’s ascendancy in the international arena as a “world power” accentuated the difference between Europe and its Others, as the issue of the “Yellow Peril” was central to much of the debate on British foreign policy.<sup>27</sup> During these decades at the start of the twentieth century, the focus of the orientalist gaze seems to move from the ‘Near’ and ‘Middle East’ to the ‘Far East’, perhaps because an increase in travel accounts of these further places were beginning to be more readily available in Britain, replacing the interest in the now seemingly ‘well-known’ Islamic ‘Near East’. This raised awareness (and the continuing success of Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado*) is probably what caused a stream of ‘Japanese’ musical dramas in these decades, as creating caricatures of those that threaten (primarily the men) distracts people from their underlying fears. Despite the rise in tensions many representations occur in the same areas on which the earlier stage works focus – visions of ‘Oriental’ sexuality, polygamy, the veil and harems; religion and belief; duplicity and corruption – however new focuses have also arisen: the buffoonery of the ‘Oriental’ male and ‘native’ indolence, as are discussed in these case studies. This section will explore some of the ways in which these contradictions and ambivalences in late nineteenth-century thought were played out on the operatic stage.

### *The application of libretto studies to the operatic ‘Orient’ and Other*

European orientalist operas and theatrical works of the second half (and particularly the final quarter) of the nineteenth century have begun to be well documented and explored by critics such as Edward Said, Ralph Locke and Derek Scott (as discussed in the introductory section ‘Orientalism and musicology’), however those of the early century such as Henry Bishop’s works are infrequently considered. This is partly owing to less readily available information, but also to the fact that by the later nineteenth century the representations of ‘Orient’ and ‘Empire’ had become more sexualised, more strongly codified and less sympathetic. However, as Matthew Head notes, orientalism does not decrease in a representation when there is an increase in sympathy for the Other,<sup>28</sup> thus the quaint ‘noble savage’ idea in Bishop’s works is still ‘racial’ othering in practice. When analysing these case studies it must be remembered that musical works depicting Others ‘do not claim (or do not *only* claim) to represent objectively [...] Rather (or also), they present themselves as fictions, objects intended to provide entertainment or invite aesthetic contemplation. This is particularly true of comic operas’.<sup>29</sup> Whilst being aware of this, critics can still glean much about normalised thought from artistic representations, so in exploring

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<sup>27</sup> Malik, *The Meaning of Race*: 118-19.

<sup>28</sup> Head, ‘Musicology on Safari’: 215.

<sup>29</sup> Locke, ‘Cutthroats and Casbah Dancers’. In *The Exotic in Western Music*: 105.

texts such as these we can attempt to understand popular British viewpoints of other places and peoples.

In 1985 in *Opera and Ideas* Paul Robinson writes that ‘By showing how these works engage the intellectual concerns of their day, I hope to draw attention to a neglected conceptual dimension in their makeup and thereby to enrich our sense of their artistic logic.’<sup>30</sup> Robinson here expounds how libretti can be used to explore cultural ideas at the time of writing, and how these are integral to the interpretation of an opera. Although traditionally the libretto has been viewed as ‘something sub-literary and intrinsically uninteresting’,<sup>31</sup> with the strengthening of disciplines like ethnomusicology and cultural studies in recent years, literary scholarship has broadened its definitions to include less “artistic” texts, including the opera libretto.<sup>32</sup> Arthur Groos believes that this means that libretti are no longer considered “beneath contempt as literature,” but very much within the purview of contemporary humanist scholarship.<sup>33</sup> Despite an awareness that ‘Music articulates the drama’,<sup>34</sup> the works here studied are popular musical stage works, and not ‘high art’ operas, and as Robinson writes, many popular composers apply similar music to all their characters ‘a condition which will satisfy us only in certain contexts, such as operetta or musical comedy. We really do not need to have Mabel and Yum-Yum impress us as individually as Verdi heroines.’<sup>35</sup> In reality, in many of the works here used as case studies there is little musical differentiation between non-European and European characters, just as there is little expression in the music of weighty “emotion” or strong individual characterisation. Hence, whilst occasionally commenting on interesting musical settings or usage, this section has a focus on the texts of these musical dramatic works, considering them to be “artefacts” for discussion in a broader cultural context. As Peter Kivy declares in *Osmin’s Rage: Philosophical Reflections on Opera, Drama, and Text* (1988) ‘what is represented (except in unusual cases) is not music but the world as the librettist, the composer and (at least some of) their contemporaries construe it’,<sup>36</sup> the imagined worlds of the ‘Orient’ and Other are what these analyses explore.

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<sup>30</sup> Robinson, *Opera and Ideas*: 3.

<sup>31</sup> Arthur Groos. ‘Introduction’. In *Reading Opera*, ed. Arthur Groos and Roger Parker: 1-11. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988: 1.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*: 10.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Joseph Kerman. *Opera as Drama: New and Revised Edition*. London: Faber & Faber, 1988: 17.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*: 218.

<sup>36</sup> Kivy, *Osmin’s Rage*: 184.

## Chapter 2: An historical background to British orientalist operas in the long nineteenth century.

### Sir Henry Bishop

Sir Henry Bishop (1786-1855) was at the forefront of music theatre composition in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century,<sup>1</sup> composing nine operettas, thirteen complete “operas”, contributing to another twenty-three<sup>2</sup> and writing incidental music for sixty-five dramas.<sup>3</sup> At the start of the 1810-11 season Bishop was appointed music director and composer at Covent Garden where he stayed for fourteen years. His theatrical music, especially his ballads and glees, was highly popular with the public and its sale in sheet music format made Bishop famous and prosperous. Bruce Carr deems Bishop to be the most successful composer of English dramatic music at this time, and asserts that Bishop’s reputation in the nineteenth century was outshone by only Balfe’s and Sullivan’s.<sup>4</sup> Carr considers Bishop’s *oeuvre* to be ‘An excellent pool of examples to illustrate practises characteristic of English musical theatre (as it was experienced at the two ‘major’ establishments)’.<sup>5</sup> Not only was he a highly popular and successful composer, Bishop was also involved with and influential in musical institutions; he was one of the original harmony professors at the Royal Academy of Music and was appointed to the chair of music at Oxford University in 1848 from where he was awarded a DMus in 1853. He was also involved with important musical societies; in 1813 he was one of the founding members of the Philharmonic Society and from 1840-48 was the chief conductor of the Ancient Concerts. Bishop was knighted on 1 June 1842 by Prince Albert, making him the first British musician to be given a knighthood by royalty.<sup>6</sup>

Bishop’s modern reputation is not superlative; in the view of critics such as Nicholas Temperley, this is primarily owing to the musical “hackwork” and arrangements that his positions as musical directors required of him.<sup>7</sup> In his day however, Bishop was extremely highly regarded, with contemporary music journal critics describing him as ‘a man of great talent’, if hampered by difficult working conditions<sup>8</sup> and poor libretti.<sup>9</sup> Although many of Bishop’s theatre works were light and comical he is often credited with serious compositional skill, described as ‘in every part the scientific composer’, with a ‘thorough acquaintance with the greatest works of the best

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce Carr. ‘Theatre Music: 1800-1834’. In *The Romantic Age, 1800-1914: Music in Britain*, ed. Nicholas Temperley, 288-306. London: Athlone Press, 1981: 290.

<sup>2</sup> For convenience I have referred to all of Bishop’s works here cited as ‘operas’, because that is the way in which they were designated by Bishop and his contemporaries.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Northcott. *The Life of Sir Henry R. Bishop*. London: The Press Printers, 1920: ii.

<sup>4</sup> Carr, ‘Theatre Music: 1800-1834’: 291.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*: 290.

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas Temperley. ‘Bishop, Sir Henry R(owley)’. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 3, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 630-34. London: Macmillan, 2001: 630-31.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Anon. ‘Review of Music: Native Land, or Return from Slavery’. *The Harmonicon*, 2/18 (June 1824): 112.

<sup>9</sup> Anon. ‘Review of Music: The overture and music in the comic opera called Englishmen in India’. *The Harmonicon*, 5/7 (July 1827): 134.



schools',<sup>10</sup> and such 'versatility' that 'he can make those characteristics which distinguish other eminent men, his own.'<sup>11</sup> So Bishop was not only appreciated by the public, but esteemed by the musical community. On the announcement of Bishop's knighthood a critic in *The Musical World* considered it 'a graceful tribute to the most popular, fertile, and gifted musician that England has produced in the present age'.<sup>12</sup> Even in 1886, *The Musical Times* printed a homage to him celebrating 'the hundredth occurrence of a day that gave to English music one of its brightest ornaments'.<sup>13</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century Bishop was praised for the skill with which he could personify types of person on the stage,<sup>14</sup> indeed George Macfarren (1813-1887) wrote that Bishop's talent was 'of a theatrical, not a dramatic nature, enabling him to represent groups but not persons, dispositions but not feelings, customs but not passions'.<sup>15</sup> Thus this section suggests that Bishop's representations of non-European characters may be trusted as being inline with popular ideas, as not only were his works well-received and extremely popular, but he is particularly credited with this skill in creating distinctive and believable characterisations on stage.

## Bishop's 'Oriental' Operas

Three works out of Bishop's large operatic corpus are set in the 'Orient'. Bishop composed for Charles Walker's dramatic work *The Fall of Algiers* (19 January 1825, Drury Lane Theatre, London)<sup>16</sup> which depicts England's 1816 battle with the pirates known as the Barbary Corsairs, who operated out of Algiers and preyed on shipping in the West Mediterranean Sea.<sup>17</sup> The city was bombarded by an English squadron under Lord Exmouth, assisted by Dutch men-of-war, and the corsair fleet was burned. As far as can be ascertained, the dramatist Charles Walker was active in London between 1818 and 1829; evidence is scanty, however alongside *The Fall of Algiers* there are four existing non-musical melodramatic or tragic works all of which are set in Europe, thus *The Fall of Algiers*, an 'Oriental' operatic work, seems to be an exception in his dramatic output. An anonymous contemporary critic wrote that from Bishop, 'we can remember nothing, lately, better than his "*Fall of Algiers*,"' although he found the drama 'intrinsically absurd and uninteresting', making it 'doubly hard upon a man of such talent as Mr. Bishop to be set to labour upon such impracticable materials'.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Anon. 'Covent-Garden Theatre'. *The Harmonicon*, 1/12 (December 1823): 202.

<sup>11</sup> Anon. 'The Fall of Algiers, a grand Opera in three Acts, (the Poetry by C. E. Walker, Esq.) as performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane; composed by Henry R. Bishop, Composer to the Theatre Royal, Drury-lane. London. Goulding, D'Almaine and Co.' *The Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, 7/25 (1825): 85.

<sup>12</sup> Anon. [Untitled – Bishop's Knighthood]. *The Musical World: A Weekly Record of Science, Criticism, Literature, and Intelligence, Connected with the Arts*, 17/23 (June 1842): 177.

<sup>13</sup> Anon. 'Sir Henry Rowley Bishop'. *The Musical Times*, 27/526 (Dec. 1886): 708-09.

<sup>14</sup> Carr, 'Theatre Music: 1800-1834': 297-300.

<sup>15</sup> George A. Macfarren. 'Bishop's Glees'. *The Musical Times*, 11 (1864): 409. Cited in *ibid*.

<sup>16</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Fall of Algiers; a Grand Opera, the Poetry by C.E. Walker* [Vocal Score]. London: Goulding & D'Almaine, n.d. [1825].

<sup>17</sup> Charles Walker. *The Fall of Algiers: a new opera in three acts: the whole of the music composed by Mr. H.R. Bishop* [Libretto]. London: Dolby, n.d. [1825].

<sup>18</sup> Anon., 'The Fall of Algiers': 89-90.

The Persian 'fairy opera' *Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp* (29 April 1826, Drury Lane Theatre, London)<sup>19</sup> is written by the prolific playwright George Soane (1790-1860). Contemporaries wrote that it 'was dramatized for this occasion with less skill than Mr. Soane has exhibited in most of his other melodramas',<sup>20</sup> believing that 'the literary part was certainly deficient.'<sup>21</sup> Soane not only wrote libretti for Bishop, but also for other distinguished opera composers, including Michael William Balfe. Soane's *Aladdin* has a lengthy and convoluted plot: the Genie of the Flame, Unda, is summoned by a golden ring held by Aladdin's uncle, Mourad, who epitomises the stereotypical 'Oriental' evils – trickery, greed and dishonesty and is described by Aladdin as 'a cheat! / A rogue! a knave!' and 'a sorcerer!'<sup>22</sup> Mourad sends Aladdin to gain the lamp for him in a magical desert cave where Aladdin nearly dies, but he attains the lamp and its genii, Astra, Mellora and Corella. Using the genii to meet the Schah's courtship demands, 'Prince' Aladdin wins the object of his desire and Persia's 'fairest' maid,<sup>23</sup> the Schah's sister, the princess Nourmahal, creating a splendid, magical palace for her. Discovering Aladdin's success Mourad poses as a tradesman offering new lamps for old, and so tricks Nourmahal into giving him Aladdin's lamp. Mourad makes the genii move the lovers' palace to Africa with Nourmahal inside, and the Schah sentences Aladdin to death, believing him guilty of her disappearance; he is however given seven days in which to find Nourmahal, with his mother imprisoned as security. Aladdin wins the little golden ring and its genie, and he rescues Nourmahal, who poisons Mourad. Aladdin frees the genii of the lamp at the opera's finale. Critics described the story as 'threadbare'; so overused that 'the pristine brilliancy it derived from Eastern magnificence and the machinery of genius and fairy, is almost worn off.'<sup>24</sup> The production was over-hyped,<sup>25</sup> badly managed, and marketed as a rival to Carl Maria von Weber's *Oberon*, so that 'the towering height of its neighbouring rival blighted and withered it'.<sup>26</sup>

In 1824 Bishop set Dimond's *Native Land or Return from Slavery*, and then in 1827 they collaborated on *Englishmen in India*, so Dimond was a stranger to neither Bishop's operas nor 'Oriental' themes as drama. The dramatist William Dimond worked in London between 1800 and 1830, not only with Bishop, but also his box-office rival Weber, with whom he produced *Abu Hassan* in 1825, an operatic drama derived from a tale from *The Arabian Nights*. Dimond also wrote straight drama, including historical works and melodramas, and was a published poet. However, the reviews of their opera were not favourable, considering it merely 'an imitation of

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<sup>19</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Overture and the whole of the Music in Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp: A Fairy Opera, in Three Acts* [Vocal Score]. London: Goulding & D'Almaine, 1826.

<sup>20</sup> Anon. 'Bishop's Aladdin'. *The Harmonicon*, 4/47 (Nov. 1826): 222.

<sup>21</sup> Anon. 'The Overture and the whole of the Music in Aladdin, or the wonderful Lamp, a fairy Opera, in three acts, composed by Henry R. Bishop. Composer to the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and Professor of Harmony and Composition at the Royal Academy of Music. London. Goulding, D'Almaine and Co.' *The Quarterly Musical Magazine and Review*, 8/30 (1826): 244.

<sup>22</sup> George Soane. *Aladdin: A Fairy Opera in Three Acts, As Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden*. [Libretto] New York: E.M. Murden, 1826: 21.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*: 26.

<sup>24</sup> Anon., 'The Overture and the whole of the Music in Aladdin': 243-44

<sup>25</sup> Anon., 'Bishop's Aladdin': 222.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*: 224

the recently-imported Italian operas now in vogue', but putting 'no blame' on Bishop.<sup>27</sup> Three years later when Bishop set Dimond's comedy *Englishmen in India* (27 January 1827, Drury Lane Theatre, London)<sup>28</sup> critics again disparaged the text, considering it light material and pitied Bishop's 'genius' in having to work with matter which could not be expected to bring forth even a few 'brilliant sparks by collision with what did not possess the smallest quantity of even latent heat.'<sup>29</sup> Despite the orientalist plot of Dimond's libretto for Bishop's *Englishmen in India* there is little allusion to India within the music, which remains clearly within the light English operatic style of the period.<sup>30</sup> According to Farrell two 'Indian songs' ('Sakia, fusal beharust' and 'Rewannah kisty') appeared in the play, but there seem to be no versions extant.<sup>31</sup> The only other reference to 'Oriental' music occurs in the Overture, which Bishop notes is 'from a Hindostanee Melody'. Although critics considered his overture somewhat old-fashioned,<sup>32</sup> the supposed use of a 'Hindostanee' Air was fashionable and contemporary, as they were a popular form of piano music and song at this time. It was a 'fashionable pursuit' in India, especially for women, to "collect" 'Hindostannie' Airs,<sup>33</sup> which were transcribed directly from Indian performances into European notation by Anglo-Indians, however, by the time that Bishop was writing they had become highly westernised.<sup>34</sup> Bishop's 'Hindostanee Melody' is most probably taken from one of the contemporaneously published collections; it is not, therefore, a particularly authentic representation of Indian music.

Bishop equally makes little effort to create believable Indian characters whom one can suppose to be native Indians, rather than westernised representations for popular consumption. The opera follows Gulnare, an Indian girl who was given into the guardianship of an Englishman, Colonel Oswald, during an episode of social instability and insurgence. She has grown up to be beautiful, and falls in love with her English guardian.<sup>35</sup> Gulnare's other suitor, Tancred (who is, according to Farrell, 'like a truly noble savage'), releases her, recognising that her love for Oswald is greater.<sup>36</sup> When Tancred and Gulnare sing their duet 'Say, What is Love?',<sup>37</sup> they talk of April hours and 'that winged child' Cupid, allusions to Western time-divisions and European mythology; Gulnare is perhaps westernised through such means in order that her union with Oswald at the finale to the opera is acceptable to the audience. Thus, although the opera depicts Indian characters, they have a British background superimposed upon them within the lyrics of their songs.

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<sup>27</sup> Anon., 'Review of Music: Native Land': 111.

<sup>28</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Overture and Music in the Comic Opera called Englishmen in India as Performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane* [Vocal Score]. London: Goulding & D'Almaine, n.d. [1827].

<sup>29</sup> Anon., 'Review of Music: The overture and music': 134.

<sup>30</sup> Bishop, *Englishmen in India*: 3-4.

<sup>31</sup> Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*: 101.

<sup>32</sup> Anon., 'Review of Music: The overture and music': 134.

<sup>33</sup> Ian Woodfield. *Music of the Raj: A Social and Economic History of Music in Late Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Indian Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000: 13.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*: 175.

<sup>35</sup> William Dimond. *Englishmen in India; A Comic Opera, in Three Acts* [Libretto]. London: J. Duncombe & Co, n.d. [c.1840].

<sup>36</sup> Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*: 94-95.

<sup>37</sup> Bishop, *Englishmen in India*: 55-61.

## The Other as represented in Bishop's South American Operas

Frederick Reynolds' *The Virgin of the Sun!* (31 January 1812, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London)<sup>38</sup> is set in Peru where the Incan warrior chief, Rolla, is in love with Cora, a Virgin of the Sun. Rolla's love is unrequited and instead she reciprocates the Spaniard Don Alonzo's affection, however if she breaks her religious vows of chastity to the Sun God, she, her lover and her father would be executed. Alonzo saves Cora when she is caught in a storm in the temple grounds but Rolla is misinformed that Cora has been abducted by him. Alonzo and Cora secretly marry and when Rolla finds them Cora tells him, and Rolla, in his love, offers to hide them. Cora returns for the day to the temple and the High Priestess, discovering her betrayal, imprisons her and instigates Alonzo's capture. Alonzo, Cora and her father Telasko are taken to be tried by King Ataliba, but Rolla summons his troops and storms the temple against the King to save the captives, until he is seized. The opera resolves with all of the captives pardoned.<sup>39</sup> As a dramatist, Reynolds (1764-1841) concentrated on European subjects, specialising in comedy, particularly farce.

Like Reynolds, the prolific playwright Thomas Morton (1764-1838) who penned *The Slave* (12 November 1816, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London)<sup>40</sup> concentrated on comedy, as well as working on a number of musical plays. *The Slave* is set in Suriname, a British slaving colony between 1799 and 1816. The plot follows Gambia (the slave of the title and indeed his name that of an African country), who is in love with the 'quadroon' Zelinda; however she is attached to the Englishman Captain Clifton, with whom she has a child. Gambia saves Clifton from rebellious slaves, and returns Zelinda to him. Following Clifton's quelling of the slave rebellion, Zelinda repays Gambia's magnanimity by agreeing to free Gambia rather than herself. She is ultimately abandoned by them both and left in slavery.<sup>41</sup>

*Zuma or the Tree of Health* (21 February 1818, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London),<sup>42</sup> like Reynolds's *The Virgin of the Sun!*, is set in Spanish colonial Peru. The Peruvians know of two trees – one poisonous, the other its antidote. The Peruvian Zuma works for the Countess or Vice-Queen, the Spanish Viceroy's wife, who is being secretly poisoned by the Peruvians. Caesar, 'once a prince, now a slave', is a black slave in the palace household who is set to watch Zuma, as she is suspected of the poisoning. Zuma is also suspected of wanting to cure the Vice-Queen by her own community, so her husband, Mirvan, has sworn on their child Zamorin's life that she

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<sup>38</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Overture, Chorusses, and Whole of the Music as Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, to the Grand Melo Dramatic Opera Called The Virgin of the Sun!* [Vocal Score]. London: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter and Co., n.d. [1817].

<sup>39</sup> Frederick Reynolds. *The Virgin of the Sun; An Operatic Drama, As Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden* [Libretto]. London: C. Chapple, 1812.

<sup>40</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Overture, Chorusses, and Whole of the Music as Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden to The Slave, An Opera in Three Acts by Permission, most respectfully Dedicated to His Grace The Duke of Devonshire* [Vocal Score]. London: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co., n.d. [1816].

<sup>41</sup> Thomas Morton. *The Slave; A Musical Drama, In Three Acts* [Libretto]. London: John Miller, 1816.

<sup>42</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Overture and Songs, in the Comic Opera of Zuma, or The Tree of Health* [Vocal Score, Book 1]. London: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co., n.d. [1818].

will not cure her. Chinchilla and the young Spaniard Picquillo are in love: he locates Zuma's son Zamorin and is then trapped in a cave with him where they are left to die by Azan (Chinchilla's brother and Mirvan's old rival for Zuma). Two days later Caesar rescues the child but Picquillo is taken by the Peruvians to be sacrificed to the gods, until Chinchilla saves him then joins him at the Spanish Palace. Zuma is caught with 'poison' and put on Spanish trial, however Picquillo has brought the cure to the palace and saves the Vice-Queen; and Zuma, who had really been trying to apply the antidote, is discharged.<sup>43</sup> The play's librettist, the poet and playwright Thomas John Dibdin (1771-1841) ran away to be a player in 1789 and by the close of the eighteenth century he was an immensely popular dramatist; his dramatic output runs to about two hundred and fifty pieces (excluding his prologues, epilogues and songs).<sup>44</sup>

James Robinson Planché (1796-1880), the librettist for *Cortez or the Conquest of Mexico* (5 November 1823, Theatre Royal, Covent Garden, London)<sup>45</sup> was likewise immensely popular. *Cortez* has a graphically violent libretto representing the Spanish forces' invasion of Mexico. The Spaniards fight against the native Tlascalcan 'Indians', an independent state who themselves are at war with the native Mexicans, and nearly lose one of their allies, Marina, whom the Mexicans attempt to sacrifice to their gods. However, the Spaniards rescue her and claim victory over the Tlascalans.<sup>46</sup> The work was well received as 'a most imposing spectacle' with music of 'a superior kind'.<sup>47</sup> Planché collaborated with Bishop on at least four works at this early point in his career as a playwright and poet, including the highly popular *Clari, or the Maid of Milan* (1823). The contemporary composer, Edward Fitzball (1792-1873), describes Planché in glowing terms in his memoirs of 1859: 'Planché had brilliant thoughts at his disposal, and knew how to use them, throwing them about like a shower of radiant [sic] stars. Elegance, taste, all that was refined was his; and what was better than all, *refined* feeling.'<sup>48</sup> Thus, like Bishop, Planché was a well-respected and successful artist, writing over one hundred and forty stage works.

## The mid-nineteenth-century librettists, composers and their dramas

The comedian Charles Selby (1802?-1863) spent his early years as a vagabond, travelling to Barbados, so seeing non-Europeans at first hand, and gaining experience at sea. Selby had success in the theatre for nearly thirty years both as an actor and as a prolific original playwright and adaptor of French plays.<sup>49</sup> His libretto for *The Loves of Lord Bateman and the Fair Sophia*

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<sup>43</sup> Thomas John Dibdin. *Zuma; or, The Tree of Health* [Libretto]. London: John Miller, 1818.

<sup>44</sup> John Russell Stephens. 'Dibdin, Thomas John'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7589?docPos=2> (Accessed 14 November 2005).

<sup>45</sup> Sir Henry Rowley Bishop. *The Music in Cortez, or The Conquest of Mexico, Historical Drama In Three Acts* [Vocal Score]. London: Goulding & D'Almaine, n.d. [1823].

<sup>46</sup> James Robinson Planché. *Cortez; or the Conquest of Mexico. An Historical Drama. In Three Acts* [Libretto]. London: John Lowndes, n.d. [1823].

<sup>47</sup> Anon., 'Covent-Garden Theatre': 202.

<sup>48</sup> Edward Fitzball. *Thirty-Five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life*. London: T. C Newby, 1859: Vol. II, 28.

<sup>49</sup> Anon. 'Selby, Charles 1802?-1863'. From *Literature Online*. See the website <http://lion.chadwyck.co.uk/searchFullrec.do?id=1896&area=authors&forward=author&trailId=1092619F44E&activeMultiResults=authors> (Accessed 22 October 2005).

(1850) is based upon the traditional *Ballad of Lord Bateman*.<sup>50</sup> There is no evidence of the composer who set the songs for this work. Selby modifies this semi-tragic tale by adding his comical touch to this ‘*Historical, Pantomimical, Melo-Dramatical, Balletical, Burlesque Burletta*’. The Turkish ‘Pacha’ Mulegpuleyfooleybeg has imprisoned Bateman, however his daughter Sophia Zulimazobedemuleypuleybeg likes him, so frees Bateman on the night on which he was to have been murdered by her father’s orders. She declares her passion for him and he agrees to marry her to save her from the evil Janissary to whom she is betrothed. She promises to join him in England after seven years and fourteen days, they swear faith and he escapes. Sophia arrives on the promised day only to find Bateman about to marry Miminipimini, a beautiful British lady. After much discussion Miminipimini is dismissed with one thousand a year, leaving her happy, and the play closes with Bateman and Sophia heading to church to marry.

*The Cadi: or, Amours among Moors* (18 June 1851, Theatre Royal Haymarket, London) is an anonymous translation of Thomas Marie François Sauvage’s (1794-?) *opera-bouffon, Le caïd* (1849). Biographical evidence about Sauvage is scanty; but he is credited with the poetry for a large number of operatic works. The music for this 1851 edition is by the French composer Ambroise Thomas (1811-1896), an extremely able composer who wrote successfully in almost any style. It was with *Le caïd* (1849) that Thomas first displayed ‘true originality in his music’, despite the fact that Rossini is still a considerable influence in the work. Elizabeth Forbes believes that the music’s charm ‘transcends the conventionality of the text.’<sup>51</sup> The play is set in French controlled Algeria – the French drum-major Michel desires the Cadi’s daughter Fatima, who herself is actually half-French as her mother was captured by the Cadi (or Pasha) Aboul-y-far during the Napoleonic battles in Egypt. Birotteau, a Parisian *coiffeur*, is in love with and betrothed to Virginia, a Parisian milliner and dress-maker. The Cadi is being beaten nightly by his subjects because of his unfair taxes and the bad advice that he is being given by his corrupt attendant Ali Bajou, ‘an old eunuch’.<sup>52</sup> Ali tells Michel that the Cadi has decided to give him Fatima as a wife in return for his protection, because he is so afraid of being beaten. Birotteau forms a plan to make himself rich by protecting the Cadi: he suggests that the Cadi gives him 20,000 sequins in front of all of his subjects as a reward for showing the ruler how to find out who his enemies are – that will stop people attacking him, as they will believe that Birotteau can protect the Cadi. However the ruler decides to pay Birotteau with his daughter instead and make him heir. Michel visits Fatima in her harem and she, believing him to be the husband to whom she has been promised, professes her love. When Birotteau arrives and Michel discovers his plan he threatens him with death; Virginia then gives Birotteau an ultimatum – death or renouncement of Fatima. That night Birotteau accidentally beats the Cadi believing him to be Michel, he then

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<sup>50</sup> An example of which was published as a text song-sheet by J. Catnach (London, 1835?) and can be seen at the British Library, C.116.h.2.(22.)

<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth Forbes. ‘Thomas, (Charles Louis) Ambroise’. In *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy (Accessed 10 December 2005). [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com)

<sup>52</sup> [Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 3.

pretends to enter the dark room and 'rescues' the Cadi. The Cadi believes himself saved, pays Birotteau his money, Virginia and Birotteau are reunited, and Fatima and Michel are betrothed.

Captain Arbuthnot's *L'Africaine, or, The Belle of Madagascar* (1860) is also based on a French source. It is a burlesque of the opera libretto *L'Africaine*<sup>53</sup> by Augustin Eugène Scribe (1791-1861), who was incidentally in correspondence with *Le caïd*'s author Sauvage.<sup>54</sup> Scribe, a French playwright and librettist, was founder of the Society of Authors and is recognised with refining and popularising the 'well-made play', in his lifetime manufacturing around 440 to 500 plays.<sup>55</sup> It is unsurprising that a writer of such fame in France was adapted into English, however there appears to be no biographical information available about the adaptor, Captain Arbuthnot. His text was published by Thomas Hails Lacy at his Covent Garden printing house; Lacy published sets of *Acting Editions* from 1848 until 1874 which were 'intended for provincial minor theatre companies and private theatricals' and focused on the publication of contemporary plays shortly after their debuts on the London stage.<sup>56</sup> As with *Lord Bateman*, there is no evidence of the composer who set the songs for this work. The text follows the imprisonment and escape of Selika 'an Oriental Princess',<sup>57</sup> who is captured as a slave (alongside her unrequited lover Nelusko) by Vasco di Gama. The Portuguese noblewoman Inez is in love with Vasco, but she is told by her father that she must marry Don Pedro, as they believe Vasco drowned. Vasco returns from his voyage with his slaves to find Inez married and to be accused of falsifying his travel tales, causing him and his slaves to be imprisoned by the Inquisition. Selika falls in love with Vasco, so prevents Nelusko from murdering him. Inez frees them, but after they all leave Portugal they are shipwrecked in Madagascar, where Selika is Queen. Her people wish to sacrifice Vasco to the gods, so she pretends marriage to him to save him, and then (literally) mesmerises him into loving her. Inez hears that Don Pedro is dead, and Vasco still wishes to marry her, so they flee to take a ship. Following Vasco's elopement Selika is preparing to kill herself (by sniffing a poisonous flower), and Nelusko wishes to die with her. Vasco and Inez arrive, followed by Don Pedro who is not actually dead. When the latter releases Inez to Vasco, Selika decides to marry Nelusko.

## Edward Solomon, his librettists, and their works

Born in the year of Bishop's death, Edward Solomon (1855-1895) was less famous than his predecessor despite success as a composer, conductor and pianist. Emerging from a family of theatre musicians, he began his career as a pianist, concluding it with appointments as musical director at theatres in London and New York. He was best known as a composer of comic songs

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<sup>53</sup> First performed 1865, set by Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864).

<sup>54</sup> See entry at Oxford University, Taylor Institution Library's Catalogue of the Letters and Papers of Modern European Writers and Others, website [www.taylib.ox.ac.uk/msfre4.htm](http://www.taylib.ox.ac.uk/msfre4.htm).

<sup>55</sup> Wayne Turney. "Eugene Scribe (1791-1861) and the "Well-made Play"". See the website [www.wayneturney.20m.com/scribe.htm](http://www.wayneturney.20m.com/scribe.htm) (Accessed 19 October 2005).

<sup>56</sup> Richard Pearson. 'Lacy's Acting Edition of Victorian Plays (1848-1878)'. *The Victorian Plays Project, University of Worcester*. See the website [www.worc.ac.uk/victorian/victorianplays/lacys.htm](http://www.worc.ac.uk/victorian/victorianplays/lacys.htm) (Accessed 22 October 2006).

<sup>57</sup> Arbuthnot, *L'Africaine*: 2.

and is 'one of the most accomplished contemporaries of Sullivan. Solomon's melodies are usually in an English ballad or a march style with repeated melodic phrases and simple rhythms'.<sup>58</sup>

Henry Pottinger Stephens (Henry Beauchamp) (1851-1903) specialised in stage burlesque and comic opera libretti alongside his career in journalism.<sup>59</sup> *Billee Taylor*, by Stephens and Solomon, premiered in 1880, the same year as *The Pirates of Penzance*; it was a 'major success' and was favourably compared with Gilbert and Sullivan's work, causing 'its authors to be hailed briefly as the equals of Carte's prized writers'.<sup>60</sup> They subsequently worked together on a number of occasions including the comic opera *Lord Bateman; Or, Picotee's Pledge* (29 April 1882, Gaiety, London). *Lord Bateman* is another reworking of the traditional *Ballad of Lord Bateman*, an example of which, adapted by Charles Selby is here discussed in the context of mid-nineteenth-century works. The story remains basically the same: Bateman is captured by the Turkish Soldan and rescued by his daughter, (renamed) Picotee. She promises to join Bateman in England, eventually doing so, winning him and being Christened Matilda Jane.<sup>61</sup>

Solomon's *The Nautch Girl or The Rajah of Chutneypore* (30 June 1891, The Savoy, London)<sup>62</sup> was given an unfavourable review by *The Times* for being a work too much "Gilbert and Sullivan" and not enough Solomon and Dance, with many of the characters being "types".<sup>63</sup> The story follows the love of Indru, the Rajah's son, and Hollee Beebee, the principle dancer of a *nautch* troupe. Indru deliberately loses his Brahmin rank, and he and Hollee marry (she has lost her caste through an accident of her father). Indru's father, Punka, is troubled by this and furthermore by his corrupt Vizier, Pyjama, who has secretly stolen the diamond eye of Bumbo, the National Idol. Pyjama announces that Hollee's court case has been won and she is a Brahmin again, so he condemns her and her [now] lower-caste lover to traitors' deaths. The *nautch* troop's leader, Baboo Curry, rescues Hollee and takes her on tour to Europe. The father of a condemned man may not be Raja, so Pyjama is awaiting his moment. However, Chinna Loofah, Indru's unrequited lover, rescues Indru – they find the people celebrating a miracle – Bumbo the two-thousand-year-old idol has moved, searching for his eye. He falls in mutual love with Chinna and condemns Punka and all his family to death by crocodile. Pyjama excuses himself from execution by revealing that he's not a relation of Punka's, and merely claimed to be to gain promotion. At the execution, Punka announces that Pyjama is the thief, he is taken to execution,

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<sup>58</sup> Andrew Lamb. 'Solomon, Edward'. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 23, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 654-55. London: Macmillan, 2001: 654-55.

<sup>59</sup> David Stone. 'Edward Solomon'. *Who Was Who in the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company (1875-1982)*. See the website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/whowaswho/S/SolomonEdward.htm> (Accessed 05 December 2005).

<sup>60</sup> Kurt Gänzl. 'Henry Pottinger Stephens'. *British Musical Theatre*. See the website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/authors/stephens.html> (Accessed 09 November 2005).

<sup>61</sup> Edward Solomon. *Lord Bateman; Or, Picotee's Pledge. Comic Opera in two acts, libretto by H.P. Stephens* [Vocal Score]. London: Joseph Williams, n.d. [1882].

<sup>62</sup> Edward Solomon. *The Nautch Girl, Comic Opera, in two acts. Words by G. Dance, Lyrics by G. Dance and F. Desprez* [Vocal Score]. London: Chappel & Co., 1891.

<sup>63</sup> Anon. 'Savoy Theatre'. *The Times* (01 July 1891): 10.



the eye is restored, as is Punka, and the lovers reunited.<sup>64</sup> Sir George Dance (1858?-1932) who wrote the text and some of the songs for Solomon's *The Nautch Girl*, focused on comic opera libretti, working with a number of composers including Howard Talbot (1865-1928), with whom he produced the 'Oriental' musical comedy *A Chinese Honeymoon* (1899). Biographical information is scarce about Frank Desprez (1852?-1916) who also penned song texts for *The Nautch Girl*. Dance and Desprez's libretto is unusual in the libretti here studied as it contains no European characters.

## Late-nineteenth-century contextualising works

Any study of late-nineteenth-century British operetta will invariably refer to William Schwenck Gilbert (1826-1911) and Sir Arthur Sullivan's (1842-1900) influential and incredibly popular works. Gilbert and Sullivan's collaboration was 'so successful' that their 'often tumultuous working relationship' lasted for twenty years and thirteen operettas.<sup>65</sup> One must note that Solomon's *The Nautch Girl* premiered at The Savoy only six years after Gilbert and Sullivan's influential, orientalist opera *The Mikado or the Town of Titipu* (1884, The Savoy, London), had done so. *The Mikado* would seem an obvious choice when contextualising Solomon's work, however despite its Japanese setting, about which the creators took great pains,<sup>66</sup> the work acts primarily as a critique of contemporary British culture.<sup>67</sup> Gilbert himself acknowledged this when the opera was later temporarily prohibited from performance in case it affronted a visiting Japanese prince and he declared of his Mikado, 'He has no more actuality than a pantomime king'.<sup>68</sup> The essential Britishness of *The Mikado* has been noted by many scholars, but Derek Scott makes a more detailed analysis of the connection, writing that Gilbert uses irony to 'make play with stereotypical ideas about foreigners to satirise English racial prejudice'.<sup>69</sup> Thus Gilbert does not criticise the Japanese, but instead British racism.<sup>70</sup> Solomon was certainly influenced musically by Sullivan's style, and one can imagine that the selection of 'Oriental' operas following *The Mikado* was perhaps trying to emulate its great popularity and financial success. Basil Hood (1864-1917) was hailed as the 'new Gilbert' when he started to work with Sullivan in 1899, creating *The Rose of Persia, or, The Story-Teller and the Slave* (29 November 1899, The

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<sup>64</sup> Anon. 'The Nautch Girl or the Rajah of Chutneypore'. *The Guide to the World of Light Opera and Operetta*. See the website <http://www.musicaltheatreguide.com/composers/solomon/nautchgirl.htm> (Accessed 13 November 2005).

<sup>65</sup> Arthur Jacobs. 'Sullivan, Sir Arthur Seymour'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/26772> (Accessed 25 October 2005).

<sup>66</sup> Henry A. Lytton. *The Secrets of a Savoyard*. London: Jarrolds Publishers Limited, n.d. [1927]: 61.

<sup>67</sup> Despite the pentatonic 'Oriental' musical touch of using an 'authentic' Japanese verse, "Miya sama" to which the Imperial Army of Japan marched to battle in 1868, [Audrey Williamson. *Gilbert and Sullivan Opera: A New Assessment*. London: Rockliff, 1953: 156.] Williamson believes that 'In *The Mikado* the English character of Sullivan's music (if we except the few oriental overtones already mentioned) reached its zenith.' [Ibid.: 169.]

<sup>68</sup> Cited but unreferenced in *ibid.*: 143.

<sup>69</sup> Derek B. Scott. 'English National Identity and the Comic Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan'. In *Nineteenth-Century British Music Studies*, Volume 3, ed. Bennett Zon and Peter Horton: 137-52. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003: 142.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

Savoy Theatre, London).<sup>71</sup> The production was incredibly successful<sup>72</sup> and follows Hassan, a 'rich philanthropist who entertains beggar-men at his house, much to the dismay of his twenty-five wives.' The Sultana, escaping her harem, enters Hassan's house with three of her slaves disguised as dancing girls. The bored Sultan and his officials go to Hassan's also, however Hassan, whilst on the drug 'bhang', admits that the Sultana is in his house. As punishment the Sultan takes Hassan to the palace and orders his court to 'treat Hassan as if he were Sultan.'<sup>73</sup>

Alfred Cellier's comic opera (librettists Albert Jarret<sup>74</sup> and William Lestocq (also known as Charles Frohman) (d. 1920)) follows another Sultan, Shallah, *The Sultan of Mocha* (8 March 1874, Prince's Theatre, Manchester).<sup>75</sup> Shallah loves Dolly, but she loves an Englishman, Peter, and when Dolly's uncle sells her to the Sultan, Peter rescues her. However, they are all captured and she has to wed the Sultan to buy the others' freedom. Eureka and Isadora are vying for the Sultan's hand, so Isadora 'veiled' appears as Dolly and marries the Sultan, who releases the Englishmen. *The Times*' reviewer considered Cellier to write 'well for voices', praising how he 'thoroughly understands the orchestra'. The critic felt that 'Though occasionally dull, it is by no means wanting in the "fun" thought indispensable to such concoctions'.<sup>76</sup>

## The early-twentieth-century stage

This section focuses on two sets of 'Oriental' works – the musicals of Howard Talbot (1865-1928) and the stage works presented by (Thomas Stange Heiss) Oscar Asche (1871-1936). Talbot studied at the Royal College of Music and achieved fame with the musical comedy *A Chinese Honeymoon* (1899) (in collaboration with George Dance). Talbot subsequently composed music to a number of other libretti set in the 'Far East', including *The White Chrysanthemum*<sup>77</sup> (31 August 1905, Criterion Theatre, London). He also frequently collaborated with other composers, including Lionel Monckton (1861-1924) on *The Mousmé*<sup>78</sup> (9 September 1911, Shaftesbury Theatre, London), and Paul Rubens (1875-1917) on *The Blue Moon*<sup>79</sup> (28 August 1905, The Lyric Theatre, London), where the former's 'greater technical expertise set off

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<sup>71</sup> Arthur Sullivan. *The Rose of Persia, or, The Story-Teller and the Slave* [Vocal Score]. London: Chappell and Co., 1899.

<sup>72</sup> Kurt Gänzl. 'Basil Hood'. *British Musical Theatre*. See the website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/authors/hood.html> (Accessed 09 November 2005).

<sup>73</sup> Paul Howarth. 'The Rose of Persia, or the Story-Teller and the Slave'. *The Gilbert and Sullivan Archive*. See the website [http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/rose/html/persia\\_home.html](http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/rose/html/persia_home.html) (Accessed 27 October 2005).

<sup>74</sup> Dates unknown.

<sup>75</sup> Alfred Cellier. *The Sultan of Mocha, Comic Opera in Three Acts dedicated to Sir Arthur Sullivan* [Vocal Score]. London: Enoch and Sons, n.d. [1875?].

<sup>76</sup> Anon. 'St. James's Theatre'. *The Times* (24 April 1876): 7.

<sup>77</sup> Howard Talbot. *The White Chrysanthemum, A New Lyrical Comedy in Three Acts, Book by Leedham Bantock and Arthur Anderson. Lyrics by Arthur Anderson* [Vocal Score]. London: Chappell & Co., 1905.

<sup>78</sup> Lionel Monckton and Howard Talbot. *The Mousmé (The Maids of Japan), New Musical Play in Three Acts, Book by Alex M. Thompson and Robert Courtneidge, Lyrics by Arthur Wimperis and Percy Greenbank* [Vocal Score]. London: Chappell & Co., 1919.

<sup>79</sup> Howard Talbot and Paul A. Rubens. *The Blue Moon, A Musical play in Two Acts. Book by Harold Ellis, revised by A.M. Thompson, Lyrics by Percy Greenbank and Paul A. Rubens* [Vocal Score]. London: Chappell & Co., 1905.

to good effect the songwriting abilities of his collaborators'.<sup>80</sup> Monckton studied at Charterhouse and then Oxford, and in maturity produced what could be considered a string of "hit singles" in scores by some of the most important stage composers of the time.<sup>81</sup> Rubens too studied at Oxford, originally submitting songs for insertion in musical operas, and later creating his own scores. He wrote 'broad, striking melodies, rivalling Monckton as the most talented of Edwardian musical comedy composers.'<sup>82</sup> Thus Talbot's words were set by some of the most prominent musical stage composers of the day.

Arthur Anderson<sup>83</sup> and (Ernest) Leedham Bantock (1870-1928) wrote *The White Chrysanthemum*. Bantock was a character stage actor, librettist and director who collaborated with Talbot on a number of occasions;<sup>84</sup> little is known of Anderson. *The White Chrysanthemum* follows the story of Sybil Cunningham (known as O San, 'The White Chrysanthemum') who lives in Japan with her husband. Despite the play's setting in Japan, nearly all of the characters are British or American – there are however a few interesting songs by the Japanese characters.

The writer Percy Greenbank (1878-1968) worked with Monckton on most of his musicals including *The Blue Moon* and *The Mousmé*; he also supplied song-lyrics to many other composers.<sup>85</sup> The cast of *The Blue Moon*, like *The White Chrysanthemum*, is primarily made up of European characters. It is set in Naga in Burmah [sic] where a singing girl, Chandra Nil ('The Blue Moon' – on account of her eyes), has been chosen as princess, but she is in love with the British Captain Jack Ormsby, who loves her too. All resolves happily, as befits a comic musical. Greenbank also co-wrote *The Mousmé* with Arthur Wimperis (1874-1953). Wimperis commenced his working life as an artist, and after the Boer War (where he served with Paget's Horse and experienced Empire and its Others at firsthand) began to write professionally.<sup>86</sup> *The Mousmé*, is set in Japan during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), and all of the characters are Japanese: the temple singer O Hana San is famed for the beauty of her voice; she loves Fujiwara and to save him from disgrace and death from an unpaid gambling debt she pays it by selling herself to becoming a *geisha*, as the men go off to war. Once they return, Hana is released from the tea-house and chooses love and Fujiwara over her previous life of religious solitude.

Oscar Asche was a major force on the British musical stage in the early twentieth century (despite his Australian origin), 'By far the greatest and most prolific producer of the Orient on the

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<sup>80</sup> Andrew Lamb. 'Talbot [Munkittrick], Howard'. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 25, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 28-29. London: Macmillan, 2001: 28.

<sup>81</sup> Kurt Gänzl. 'Lionel Monckton'. *British Musical Theatre*. See the website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/composers/monckton.html> (Accessed 11 November 2005).

<sup>82</sup> Andrew Lamb. 'Rubens, Paul A (Ifred)'. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 21, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 83-9. London: Macmillan, 2001: 839.

<sup>83</sup> Dates unknown.

<sup>84</sup> Kurt Gänzl. 'Leedham Bantock'. *British Musical Theatre*. See the website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/authors/bantock.html> (Accessed 12 November 2005).

<sup>85</sup> Kurt Gänzl. 'Percy Greenbank'. *British Musical Theatre*. See the website [http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/authors/greenbank\\_p.html](http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/authors/greenbank_p.html) (Accessed 08 November 2005).

<sup>86</sup> Kurt Gänzl. 'Arthur Wimperis'. *British Musical Theatre*. See the website <http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/british/authors/wimperis.html> (Accessed 10 November 2005).

London stage',<sup>87</sup> creating 'the most talked about productions of his generation'.<sup>88</sup> In 1907 Asche and his wife, Lily Brayton, went into management of His Majesty's Theatre. In 1911 he appeared as Hajj in a 'musical scena' *Kismet* (April 1911, Garrick Theatre, London)<sup>89</sup> written for him by Edward Knoblauch.<sup>90</sup> The reviewer in *The Times* wrote that 'It is a good story, and a still better vehicle for Oriental splendour';<sup>91</sup> the popularity of 'Oriental' themes is highlighted in *The Playgoer and Society Illustrated*: 'The "Star of the East" is riding high in the skies of Theatreland, and I would not be at all surprised if the striking success of "Kismet" – Mr. Edward Knoblauch's realistic drama of Oriental love, passion and cruelty – makes it the forerunner of a regular boom in Eastern productions';<sup>92</sup> indicating that critics considered the plot to be "authentic". *Kismet*, set in the Baghdad of *The Arabian Nights*, follows the enemies Hajj and the Sheikh Jawan who has stolen Hajj's wife and fathered a son (now missing) upon her. Hajj gains gold from Jawan, is no longer a beggar, but still steals rich raiment from the bazaar merchants for himself and his daughter, Marsinah. He is arrested and taken before the fraudulent and tyrannical Wazir Mansur, chief of police, who persuades him to kill the Caliph<sup>93</sup> in exchange for his hand and freedom, and promises to marry Marsinah (who is in love with 'a gardener's son'). When she tells her father of her love, he angrily has her carried off to Mansur's harem. Hajj fails at killing the Caliph, and is imprisoned in the same dungeon as Jawan, whom he strangles and then trades places with to escape. Hajj rescues his daughter from Mansur and murders him when he realises he is Jawan's son. The 'gardener's son', really the Caliph, comes to rescue his love from the harem, he takes her as his bride and banishes Hajj.<sup>94</sup>

The success of *Kismet* later influenced Asche to write his celebrated *Chu Chin Chow* (31 August 1916, His Majesty's Theatre, London).<sup>95</sup> Asche created the book and lyrics to *Chu Chin Chow*<sup>96</sup> in just two weeks for a score by (George) Frederic Norton (1869-1946). Norton, originally a stage singer, published many songs, and from 1901 supplied music for London stage shows, with this work considered the peak of his compositional career.<sup>97</sup> It broke theatre records by running in London for five years (1916-1921) being seen by almost three million people.<sup>98</sup> Derek Scott comments that through stereotypes of greed, decadence, violence, treachery, sexual women and effeminate men 'the whole of the [perceived] East is distilled into one plot.'<sup>99</sup> The work is based

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<sup>87</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 1.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*: 2.

<sup>89</sup> Composer unknown.

<sup>90</sup> Dates unknown.

<sup>91</sup> Anon. 'Garrick Theatre. "Kismet."' *The Times* (20 April 1911): 8.

<sup>92</sup> H.V.M. 'The Story of "Kismet."' *The Playgoer and Society Illustrated*, 4/20 (1911): 58.

<sup>93</sup> Islamic leader believed to be descended from Muhammad.

<sup>94</sup> H.V.M., 'The Story of "Kismet."' : 34.

<sup>95</sup> Anon. 'National Library of Australia – Australian Performing Arts (PROMPT) Collection: Oscar Asche (1871-1936)'. *National Library of Australia*. See the website [www.nla.gov.au/collect/prompt/asche.html](http://www.nla.gov.au/collect/prompt/asche.html) (Accessed 17 November 2005).

<sup>96</sup> Frederick Norton. *Chu Chin Chow, A Musical Tale of the East, Told by Oscar Asche* [Vocal Score]. London: Keith Prowse & Co., 1916.

<sup>97</sup> Philip L. Scowcroft. 'A Fifth Garland of English Light Music Composers'. *Classical Music Web*. See the website [www.musicweb-international.com/garlands/5th.htm](http://www.musicweb-international.com/garlands/5th.htm) (Accessed 27 October 2005).

<sup>98</sup> Scott, 'Orientalism and Musical Style': 326.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*: 324-25.

upon the tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves: Abu Hasan, a thief in disguise as the Chinaman Chu Chin Chow, goes to the palace of Kasim Baba, to spy on his riches. Hasan's slave, Zahrat, is already spying in the palace, and has befriended Baba's chief wife, Alcolom, who loves her husband's poor brother, Ali Baba. Hasan is recognised and recruited to murder Kasim Baba in return for safety and riches. Hasan does the deed and is then stabbed to death; Zahrat escapes from Hasan, the thieves are killed with boiling oil, and the lovers are all united.<sup>100</sup>

In 1913 Asche and Brayton met H. Rider Haggard in Australia and the author persuaded Asche to dramatise *A Child of the Storm* (1913).<sup>101</sup> So on their return from their Australian tour the company stopped in South Africa to research Asche's dramatisation of the romance as *Mameena* (7 October 1914, The Globe Theatre, London),<sup>102</sup> the music for which was composed by Christopher Wilson.<sup>103</sup> *Mameena* is the *Child of Storm* (both literally and metaphorically) and she marries the chief Masapo. He dies and she marries the chief Saduko, but later elopes with Prince Umbelazi, causing a civil war between him and his brother Cetewayo. The play ends with Cetewayo's victory, Umbelazi's death and *Mameena's* suicide after condemnation as a witch. Asche and his production team were keen to create an 'authentic' Zulu community on stage and elaborate and lengthy preparations took place in Zulu communities in South Africa to create the *mise-en-scene*.<sup>104</sup> Asche wrote that 'this production was the most life-like one ever seen on the London stage' as 'London had never before seen what appeared to be real Zulus in all their war rig-out'. Despite the 'tremendous success' of the premiere, the show started to lose money because of war lighting-restrictions which affected all of the theatres<sup>105</sup> and also because a play on a war theme is unlikely to stay popular in a country at war.<sup>106</sup>

Following *Mameena*, Asche's love of spectacle reached new heights with *Cairo*, which according to Asche was 'the heaviest and most elaborate production ever put upon the English stage'.<sup>107</sup> It was completely written by Asche and modelled on the 'Oriental' themes of *Chu Chin Chow*. It opened in London in 1921 where, Asche asserts, it was 'received with even more enthusiasm than *Chu*. And we played to capacity-houses month after month.'<sup>108</sup> Egypt held a particular attraction for British spectacle at the start of the twentieth-century, perhaps because the country combined elements of two fascinations, it was 'both Arabic and ancient'.<sup>109</sup> *Cairo* follows Prince Nur-al-

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<sup>100</sup> Anon. 'Chu Chin Chow'. *The Guide to Musical Theatre*. See the website [http://www.nodanw.com/shows\\_c/chuchinchow.htm](http://www.nodanw.com/shows_c/chuchinchow.htm) (Accessed 23 October 2005).

<sup>101</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Child of Storm*. London: Cassell & Company, 1925 [1913].

<sup>102</sup> Oscar Asche. [manuscript of] *Mameena: A Play in Four Acts. Dramatised by Oscar Asche From the Novel "Child of Storm" by H. Rider Haggard*. [No. 2950, received Lord Chamberlain's Office, 16 Sept. 1914, licensed Globe Theatre, 22 Sept. 1914] BRITISH LIBRARY LCP 1914/29 [final unbound manuscript].

<sup>103</sup> Dates unknown.

<sup>104</sup> Oscar Asche. *Oscar Asche: His Life by Himself*. St. Albans: Hurst & Blackett, n.d. [1929]: 157.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*: 158-59.

<sup>106</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 100.

<sup>107</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 172.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*: 173.

<sup>109</sup> Antonia Lant. 'The Curse of the Pharaoh, or How Cinema Contracted Egyptomania'. In *Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film*, Matthew Bernstein and Gaylyn Studlar, 69-98. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997: 78-79.

Din who persuades Ali Shar to conspire with him to depose the Sultan, claiming that the Sultan has cast 'wanton eyes' over Shar's daughter Zummurud. Shar admits the conspiracy to the Sultan who forces Zummurud to choose between himself and her father (she chooses the Sultan) and sends Shar on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Prince Ali seizes Zummurud with the help of a Chinese couple to hold her to ransom; Shar attempts to rescue her, but is taken to be sold at the slave market. Ali is finally killed by Shar, Zummurud is restored to the Sultan and Shar is forgiven.<sup>110</sup> The music for *Cairo* was composed by Percy E. Fletcher (1879-1932) who was also the conductor and orchestrator for Norton's *Chu Chin Chow*. Fletcher's musical output is very large, including partsongs, tone poems, instrumental suites, and waltzes.<sup>111</sup> Asche wrote his autobiography in 1929 – an account of the changes from the days of high Victorian theatre to the early twentieth-century cinema – and from 1932-36 he moved to the 'silver screen', appearing in six films.

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<sup>110</sup> B.W. Findon. 'Cairo: A Mosaic in Music and Mime. In Three Acts and Eleven Scenes. Mime by Oscar Asche. Music by Percy Fletcher.' *The Play Pictorial*, 39/237 (1917): 116-17.

<sup>111</sup> Geoffrey Self. 'Fletcher, Percy (Eastman)'. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 8, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 941. London: Macmillan, 2001: 941.

## Chapter 3: Sexualising the Other.

This chapter focuses on ideas of othered sexuality (primarily female) as they were presented on the British operatic stage in the long nineteenth century. For the British, the 'Orient' was an arena of sexual possibilities,<sup>1</sup> thus 'Oriental' women were often stereotypically othered by being considered sensuous, alluring and sexually available, in opposition to the ideal of the vulnerable, spiritual and pure Englishwoman. These prevailing images of 'Oriental' women may have influenced the contradictory behaviour of nineteenth-century colonial officials; for example in India the military establishment supplied facilities for sexual relations between non-commissioned British soldiers and native women, but the authorities attempted to prevent sexual interaction between British officials and officers and Indian women.<sup>2</sup> Although this may highlight ideas associated with the British class system as much as opinions of Indian women (it was the lesser-ranking army who were provided with Indian prostitutes, whereas higher-class officials were discouraged from fraternising with the 'immoral' native women), this suggests that even if the establishment felt that the Indian women were suitable for prostitution, they were not fitting matches for those in power, as a wife, mother or even courtesan.

### The Sensual 'Oriental'

Gerry Farrell observes that nineteenth-century popular song 'falsified the relationship between the 'Orient' and the West on a multitude of levels', including 'the romanticisation of colonialist ills'.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, one of the enduring ideologies of popular culture expressed in music is to romanticise actions and emotions, particularly love,<sup>4</sup> as is for instance reflected in Dimond's text for Bishop's *Englishmen in India* (1827) where the representations of the Indian characters are not overtly negative, but are sensualised in comparison with the demure British personalities. When describing love, the British utter such non-impassioned phrases as Sally's 'let me look killingly, In white Satin as the Bride', and 'Tho' wedded still wooing and billing and cooing, / Like Turtles that frolic from morning till night'.<sup>5</sup> However the Indian girl, Gulnare, sings 'The lip quivers wildly, the bosom will swell', and when Gulnare and Tancred sing of love they compare it to 'The fairy dance / On moist sands trac'd', and comment 'so wild, so wild'.<sup>6</sup> There is a patent disparity between these characterisations, upholding the popular illusion of a sensual 'Orient'.<sup>7</sup> The female Other was almost always sensualised on the nineteenth-century British stage; in these case studies a dichotomy between the Other woman as submissive, pliable object of male sexual fantasy, or as assertive sexual being arises, highlighting Bram Dijkstra's assertion that 'The

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<sup>1</sup> Rana Kabbani. *Europe's Myths of Orient*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986: 67.

<sup>2</sup> Kenneth Ballhatchet. *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj: Imperial Attitudes and Policies and their Critics, 1793-1905*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1980: 9.

<sup>3</sup> Farrell, *Indian Music and the West*: 84.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*: 82.

<sup>5</sup> Bishop, *Englishmen in India*: 62-67.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 55-67.

<sup>7</sup> Despite such clear differentiation in Dimond's text Bishop does not seem to reflect this is his musical choices

search for woman as the lily, the paragon of virtue, had carried within itself the discovery of Lilith<sup>8</sup> of woman as snake, the inevitable dualistic opposite of the image of virginal purity'.<sup>9</sup> This is a polarisation which strengthened as the century progressed.

## Pliable Sensuality

Fatima, the embodiment of 'Oriental' womanhood in *The Cadi* (1851), conforms to the former category; she is the voyeuristic object, languorously awaiting her husband (whoever he may be). She remains sensual, but in a mild, docile way; she is the object of sexuality rather than its subject. When told she is to marry, Fatima's slaves gather around 'Her exquisite form arraying'.<sup>10</sup> The idea of a group of beautiful slaves bedecking their mistress is a recurrent one, for instance Emma Reeve's description (1845?) of 'The beautiful servitors' in Turkey who 'pass their lives in indolent seclusion, one monotonous day succeeds another, and the bath and the toilet form the only occupations to beguile its tedious hours.'<sup>11</sup> Even Fatima's slaves are depicted as languorously waiting, their only activities being the arraying and bathing of themselves or their mistress. Fatima dutifully follows her father's wishes; as she follows all of her father's dictates, when she first meets Michel, believing him to be the Frenchman that her father has chosen, Fatima declares 'Thou'rt lord of this poor heart, love, / My father's choice, thou art, love.'<sup>12</sup> Fatima even depicts *herself* as an *object* of sexual pleasure: 'And fain I'd please him; / Let perfumes rare, / My dark hair / Now embalm, / On my brow / Place that gauze, / I'd give worlds his heart to charm.'<sup>13</sup> The recurring idea of the veil arises in Fatima's adoption of a 'gauze' on her 'brow' to 'charm' her prospective husband – she knows that the veil hiding her beauty can only enhance it (an idea similar to that discussed by the modern theorist Meyda Yeğenoğlu).<sup>14</sup>

Moving to the case-study operas from the close of the century, some of the representations of Japanese and Burmese women take on this stereotype of the duty-bound object of sexual fantasy and develop it into the 'Oriental' woman willing to do anything to please her man, this being her apparent 'duty'. This is demonstrated to an extent in the *geishas*' willingness to metamorphose to suit their men,<sup>15</sup> and clarified by direct phrases like 'Gay little, glad little girls are we, Eager to please and fair to see'<sup>16</sup> and 'Down before you Low we bend, We implore you, Condescend / On your most exalted persons To permit us to attend.'<sup>17</sup> This deference to men and admission of

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<sup>8</sup> 'Lilith is a female Mesopotamian night demon with a penchant for killing male children.' 'The idea of Lilith as the first wife of Adam arose in the Middle Ages.' Lilith can also be a kind of 'lamia' or witch. [Anon. 'Lilith'. *Wikipedi, the Free Encyclopedia*. See the website <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilith> (Accessed 12 November 2005).]

<sup>9</sup> Bram Dijkstra. *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986: 216.

<sup>10</sup> [Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 25.

<sup>11</sup> Emma Reeve. *Character and Costume in Turkey and Italy, Designed and Drawn from Nature, by Thomas Allom, Esq., with Descriptive Letter-Press, by Emma Reeve*. London: Fisher, Son, & Co., n.d [1845?]: 13.

<sup>12</sup> [Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 26.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*: 25.

<sup>14</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 39-44.

<sup>15</sup> See footnotes 39-45.

<sup>16</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 16.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 64.



their own lowly position in comparison finds approval with the European men, who sing 'Methods seemly, Manners bland, Are extremely in demand: / Yours are more than merely polish'd, One might say they were japanned!'<sup>18</sup> The behaviour of the 'JAP GIRLS' in *The White Chrysanthemum* (1905) as they light the European men's cigarettes indirectly echoes such words – 'Takee piecee matchee Makee scratchee scratchee Strikee little light; / Puff! Puff!'<sup>19</sup> (note the use of pidgin-English to represent intellectual inferiority). These fantasies of female obsequiousness could now more commonly be found outside of a Britain inhabited by the 'New Woman', who by 1919 was likely to be wishing for more independence.<sup>20</sup> This approving depiction of the pliable 'Eastern' woman acts in comparison to her European counterpart, and also occurs in Rubens' song 'Burmah Girl', where the Major<sup>21</sup> sings 'You do not ask for rows of pearls To trim your frenzied frocks, / You only need a simple bead, You've got no op'ra box'.<sup>22</sup> Ideas of simplicity are supported by contemporary travel writings on the 'Far East' where it was believed that 'The whole conception of life among these people seems to me to be a healthy and a simple one. It is not in any way, or at any rate to any great extent, a material conception.'<sup>23</sup> Thus a new representation of the simple, pliant 'Oriental' woman arises, in response to the strengthening of women's positions in Europe.

Greenbank's text for Talbot's song 'Honourable Jappy Bride' hearkens back to the imagery of the dutiful wife in *The Cadi* (1851) with the presentation of Islamic marriage as a contrast to French unions.<sup>24</sup> Miyo Ka San (the daughter of General Okubo and his English wife) sings 'Honourable Jappy bride When she's tied Up in marriage, / Must not be heard To say one word Her husband to disparage. / Honourable English dame Not the same, She's far bolder'. The phrase 'tied Up in marriage' creates connotations of the wife's unwilling domination by men, a theme that has occurred in 'Oriental' works for the previous seventy years. Miyo continues, 'Honourable Jappy wife Leads a life; Rather lonely; / No fun she has, She's treated as A pet or plaything only'.<sup>25</sup> This has echoes of the seclusion of the earlier harem images, as do the sexualised terms 'pet' and 'plaything'. Yet the title 'Honourable Jappy Bride' denotes a desire to retain honour, despite oppression and isolation. In this drama, in contrast to her sexualised *geisha* counterpart, a shadow of the image of the 'noble savage'<sup>26</sup> recurs alongside newer ideas of feminine honour – Hana and Fujiwara fall in love and she, a temple priestess, secretly sells herself as a *geisha* to clear his gambling debts and save his honour and life: 'To bondage I have sold myself, The debt of love to pay',<sup>27</sup> so rescuing then winning her love.

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<sup>18</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 66.

<sup>19</sup> Talbot, *The White Chrysanthemum*: 72-76.

<sup>20</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 1-4*.

<sup>21</sup> He decides that 'If a wife I find I shall bring her to live in Burmah!', but does not wish to take a Burmese bride.

<sup>22</sup> Talbot and Rubens, *The Blue Moon*: 95-98.

<sup>23</sup> H.B. Montgomery, *The Empire of the East*. London: Methuen & Co., 1908: 74.

<sup>24</sup> See footnote 102.

<sup>25</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 9-15.

<sup>26</sup> For ideas of the 'noble savage' see *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4, and Works of Fiction: Chapter 8*.

<sup>27</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 55-56.

## Assertive sexual women

The pliant self-sacrifice of these objects of male fantasy acts as a contrast to the more common stereotype of the sexually assertive 'Oriental' Other. Opinions on 'Oriental' female sexuality that are only hinted at in the sensuousness of the women in Bishop's works are more obviously depicted in the mid-century works – this is partly owing to the operas' comical stance, allowing the librettists to say more daring things 'in jest' than would be acceptable in serious drama. In *Lord Bateman* (1850) Selby's Sophia is almost brazen in her open sexuality; she propositions Bateman and states 'And I'm tired of living all alone, / In a state of ce-li-ba-cy.' The melismatic setting of the word 'celibacy' in what is primarily a syllabic libretto highlights it within the text so that the audience would be aware that this is an influential idea in the work (despite her claim of celibacy she still entertains flattering 'sweethearts').<sup>28</sup> She is very forceful in her declamations to Bateman: 'I know that many men / My artless frankness might as wantonness condemn, / But thou art much too noble', to which he replies 'Oh! / You make me blush by saying so.'<sup>29</sup> Sophia is claiming 'artless frankness' over mere shamelessness, but in mid-Victorian eyes her behaviour could be considered nothing but wanton. Her exclamations making Bateman blush could be interpreted in conflicting ways – as embarrassment at her compliment, or as discomfiture at her forwardness. Sophia concludes her exclamations with the words 'Though I have dared to breathe the passion that doth thrill / With ecstasy my maiden heart, do not judge me ill; / Respect the love that will not be controul'd, [sic] / And do not think me light and bold'.<sup>30</sup> Selby here presents something of a dichotomy – Sophia presents herself as maidenly (that is to say virginal), loving and daring, more like the pliable women of the previously section, but conversely she depicts herself as experiencing frenzies of passion, and boldly declaring them. It is unlikely that such bold language could be used by any Victorian British 'Miss' in contemporary drama if she still wished to appear respectable. Sophia's 'Oriental' othered sexuality is portrayed through her presumptuous and passionate declamations. Ideas like these concerning 'Oriental' women were not uncommon at this time: 'Born in a warm and voluptuous climate, her mental powers uncultivated, left without active employment to pass her days in voluptuous indolence, occupied in listening to tales of intrigue and fancy, and with no restraint put upon her passions by the faith she believes, what else can be expected?'<sup>31</sup> Thus the negative characteristics in characters such as Sophia were ascribed by some to a poor education, a lack of industry, an inclination towards fantasy and intrigue, and a religion demanding no self-control.

Arbuthnot represents Selika in *L'Africaine* (1860) as even more predatory; when studying Vasco asleep she muses (in song) 'I'd like to kiss him; no, 'twould not be right, / And yet just one, I

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<sup>28</sup> Selby, *Lord Bateman*: 12.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*: 14.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: 15.

<sup>31</sup> Rev. Edward Storrow. *The Eastern Lily Gathered: A Memoir of Bala Shoondore Tagore, with Observations on the Position and Prospects of Hindu Female Society*. London: John Snow, 1852: 10.

almost think I might. (*she leans over VASCO, and is about to kiss him [sic]*),<sup>32</sup> then she is interrupted by Nelusko. Her choice to kiss a sleeping (and thus defenceless) European is rapacious, although also the stuff of the fantasies highlighted by modern scholars like Said<sup>33</sup> and Yeğenoğlu.<sup>34</sup> Later in the play Selika places an ‘*absurdly large*’ disc ‘*such as those used by electro-biologists*’ in Vasco’s hand and says ‘Mark well this *disc*. You shortly will *discover* / That you perforce must be Selika’s lover.’ She then ‘*makes mesmeric passes in front*’ of his eyes and instead of declaring ‘Impossible! I won’t!’, Vasco now says ‘Oh, yes, I do! / (*affectionately*) Selika dear, I love, I love but you!’<sup>35</sup> This representation, despite its nature as a caricature of mesmerism, still places Selika in a position of power deemed unwomanly at best and dangerous at worst. As Alison Winter discusses in *Mesmerized* (1998), ‘The few women mesmerists did not give public demonstrations, perhaps because the role of mesmerist (as opposed to that of subject) was too overt a display of power.’<sup>36</sup> Thus in publicly mesmerising Vasco into desiring her, Selika is openly abusing a power that (in Victorian eyes) should not rightly be hers.<sup>37</sup>

Many of the women of Burmah, Japan, Egypt and Zululand are depicted as devious and sexually manipulative in the case-studies at the close of the long nineteenth century. In *The Blue Moon* (1905) Rubens creates the music and words for the Major’s song ‘Burmah Girl’; ‘Burmah girl, You stand alone of all I have known, / With your smiles and roguish wiles, How can a man be firm, ah!’<sup>38</sup> Thus she cunningly entraps men sexually with her ‘smiles’ and sly behaviour. Wimperis grants the *geishas* of *The Mousmé* (1919) similar techniques: ‘Coy little smile and roguish glance, / Plainly say, “Step this way!” Who could refuse such a splendid chance!’ They exploit the fact that they are ‘Full of feminine fascination, Graceful gesture, roguish glance’, and they play with the stereotyped virgin/whore dichotomy: ‘We’re alternately shy and shameless, Fondly free or cooly cold, / Archly innocent, Blandly blameless, Bold as brass or good as gold. [...] With all deference, Name your preference – Bold as brass or good as gold?’<sup>39</sup> This direct questioning of men’s sexual preferences by women is something new to these early twentieth-century dramas and reflects the freer use of sexuality in these works. Just eleven years earlier H.B. Montgomery had written, in his *The Empire of the East* (1908), that ‘It is a long cry from the graceful *geisha* to the inanities and banalities which appear to be the stock-in-trade of music-hall performances in this country.’<sup>40</sup> Despite the social standing of the *geisha*, she was usually a glorified courtesan, yet for Montgomery her performances are superior to that of British Music Hall women. Regardless of such elevated views by a minority, the *geisha* becomes the Music Hall female in *The Mousmé* and is caricatured as sexually knowing, manipulative and ‘gold-

<sup>32</sup> Arbuthnot, *L’Africaine*: 10.

<sup>33</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 190.

<sup>34</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 2.

<sup>35</sup> Arbuthnot, *L’Africaine*: 21.

<sup>36</sup> Alison Winter. *Mesmerized: Powers of Mind in Victorian Britain*. London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998: 138.

<sup>37</sup> Serious mesmerism occurs in Haggard’s romances: see *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 31-34*.

<sup>38</sup> Talbot and Rubens, *The Blue Moon*: 95-98.

<sup>39</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 69-72.

<sup>40</sup> Montgomery, *The Empire of the East*: 69.

digging' ('We like men With lots of yen, The door of our hearts has a golden key!')<sup>41</sup> Indeed by the *fin de siècle* European men often envisioned Japan as 'an erotic haven', with 'pleasure quarters' established by the Japanese government for foreigners, in 'treaty' ports like Yokohama.<sup>42</sup> Richard Burton states that 'Japanese women have probably carried the mechanical arts of auto-eroticism to the highest degree of perfection,'<sup>43</sup> with devices such as balls 'called *rino-tama*, [which] are held in the vagina by a paper tampon,' which were not only used by 'the more fashionable *geishas*' as well as prostitutes, but were 'well known by name to ordinary girls'.<sup>44</sup> Thus Japanese women were attributed advanced knowledge of sexual pleasure, which is hinted at by the *geishas*' mutability in this drama.<sup>45</sup> Moving from Asia to Africa the image darkens with G.S. Street of the Lord Chamberlain's Office describing Asche's Mameena as 'a beautiful Zulu woman, devoured by ambition and "fatal" to the men who love her.'<sup>46</sup> Likewise, in Asche's *Chu Chin Chow* (1916) Marjanah sings 'Cleopatra's Nile'<sup>47</sup> listing the ghosts of the queen's conquered lovers who haunt the Nile<sup>48</sup> and again her 'guile' is highlighted along with her ability to 'pleasure' men before leading them to their doom – no genuine love is discussed. So the image of an othered, manipulating, sexually predatory woman who uses men for her own gain continues and is magnified in Africa.

## Licentiousness and dance

The assertive sexuality of 'Oriental' women was frequently considered as given, and one way in which their othered licentiousness was presented on the later nineteenth-century stage was through sensual dance. This is a theme taken up in Stephen's text for Cellier's *The Sultan of Mocha* (1875?), where a Chorus of Odalisques<sup>49</sup> sings of the danger to any man venturing 'too near' to their *seraglio*, and of their Sultan – 'A Sultan most magnificent / We dance before / We love his smile beneficent / We fear his frown much more / A beauty were she flighty / Alas alack / Or any ways "hity-tity" / That beauty gets "the sack"'.<sup>50</sup> One presumes that the sack is a means of murder, as one cannot be 'fired' from slavery. They present dancing seductively before the Sultan as their primary occupation in the *seraglio*, but they dance more out of fear than enjoyment. The matter of dance and seduction is resumed in Dance, Desprez and Solomon's *The Nautch Girl* (1891); the fact that the principal women are a *nautch* troupe would have immediate connotations for many Western audience-members, just as Cellier's Chorus of Odalisques would. Throughout the nineteenth century the *nautch* – a performance of traditional Indian dancing –

<sup>41</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 69-72.

<sup>42</sup> Eleanor M. Hight. 'The Many Lives of Beato's "Beauties"'. In *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, ed. Eleanor M., Hight and Gary D. Sampson: 126-58. London: Routledge, 2002: 126.

<sup>43</sup> Havelock Ellis. *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. New York: Random House, 1936 [1906]: Vol. I, Part One, 167.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: 168.

<sup>45</sup> Beato created many "geisha" photographs, see *Visual Culture: Chapter 12*, at footnotes 63-82.

<sup>46</sup> G.S. Street. Cover-page of *Mameena: A Play in Four Acts. Dramatised by Oscar Asche From the Novel "Child of Storm" by H. Rider Haggard*. [No. 2950, received Lord Chamberlain's Office, 16 Sept. 1914, licensed Globe Theatre, 22 Sept. 1914] BRITISH LIBRARY LCP 1914/29 [final unbound manuscript]: [2].

<sup>47</sup> Norton, *Chu Chin Chow*: 14-16.

<sup>48</sup> See Appendix I.

<sup>49</sup> Concubines or female slaves in a harem.

<sup>50</sup> Cellier, *The Sultan of Mocha*: 107-09.

was a prominent mode of entertainment, mainly for British men in India. *Nautches* were provided in honour of the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1875 and of his son Prince Albert Victor in 1890, although on the latter occasion there were protests from the Bishop of Calcutta among others.<sup>51</sup> Ian Woodfield notes that the discussion of the morality of *nautch* dancing intensified in the nineteenth century, with some British considering it a cultural activity<sup>52</sup> and others campaigning against it ‘with all formality and importance’, for example by forming ‘a “Society for the Suppression of Nautch parties,” from whose propaganda it is urged that it is a short step from the nautch-party to the nautch-girl’s home.’<sup>53</sup> One anonymous contemporary source in the *Sentinel* comments: ‘A Nautch dance is performed by Hindu prostitutes, who usually sing songs of the most lascivious character, accompanied by gestures and movements of the body having an obscene meaning.’<sup>54</sup>

‘Nautch girl’ was a term popularly used in British imperial India to denote secular courtesans who were attached to the Muslim courts,<sup>55</sup> and like other professional women of this sort, they ‘often had sexual relationships with men, although in their lifetime their associations were generally limited to one or two men’.<sup>56</sup> British interpretations of the *nautch* were diverse – as ‘languishing’, ‘ardent and impassioned’;<sup>57</sup> ‘woefully disappointing’, ‘mere wriggings and contortions, supposed, I believe, to be voluptuously suggestive to the Oriental male mind, but rather resulting in monotonous muscular spasms’;<sup>58</sup> ‘Voluptuous’, ‘with a graceful dexterity not to be surpassed’;<sup>59</sup> or ‘a miracle of art, and all the more fascinating because of the rare beauty of the performers’ with each wearing a ‘bewitching veil’.<sup>60</sup> The performers, who usually remained unmarried, ‘were trained to present music and dance forms in a manner that was both intellectually stimulating and emotionally seductive’ for men;<sup>61</sup> as Charles Salaman writes in 1878, the ‘professional dancing and singing girls of India, like most of the inhabitants of tropical climates, excel in what has aptly been termed “the eloquence of the body.”’<sup>62</sup> It was these aspects which led to the formation of official British committees in the 1890s in an endeavour to prohibit *nautch* dancing.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*: 157.

<sup>52</sup> Woodfield, *Music of the Raj*: 158.

<sup>53</sup> Mary Frances Billington. *Woman in India*. London: Chapman & Hall, 1895: 224.

<sup>54</sup> Anon. *Sentinel*, (February 1893). Cited in Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*: 157.

<sup>55</sup> Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*: 157.

<sup>56</sup> Jennifer Post. ‘Professional Women in Indian Music: The Death of the Courtesan Tradition’. In *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Ellen Koskoff, 97-110. London: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1987: 98.

<sup>57</sup> Anon. Cited in Charles K. Salaman. ‘Music in connection with dancing’. *The Musical Times*, 19/423 (01 May 1878): 266.

<sup>58</sup> Billington, *Woman in India*: 68.

<sup>59</sup> See Appendix II for full descriptions.

<sup>60</sup> Mrs. Anna H. Leonowens. *Life and Travel in India: Being Recollections of a Journey Before the Days of Railroads*. Philadelphia: Porter & Coates, 1884: 189-93. Cited in *Memsahibs Abroad: Writings by Women Travellers in Nineteenth Century India*, ed. Indira Ghose, 71-76. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998: 72.

<sup>61</sup> Anon. *Sentinel*, (February 1893). Cited in Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*: 157.

<sup>62</sup> Salaman, ‘Music in connection with dancing’: 265.

<sup>63</sup> Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class*: 158.

The opening chorus of the *nautch* girls in Dance and Desprez's libretto for Solomon's opera reflects these popular opinions: 'We never woo / As others do / With passion ardent, firm and true; / For we would stay / Unwed for aye, / To love, and love, and run away'.<sup>64</sup> In this *allegro* aria the girls sing a quite plain, joyful melody, with most movement falling in the rising, step-wise, semi-quaver pattern to which the words 'and run away!' are set.<sup>65</sup> Solomon thus highlights their flippant lack of concern about the immoral statements that they are singing. Preceding the girls' aria, Baboo Currie warns Indru, the Rajah's son, 'Of feminine beauty beware, sir!' with regards to the lead dancer, Hollee Beebee, thus again imparting prejudice to an audience which has yet to see the *nautch* girls themselves. A significant song exchange then occurs between the two men: Indru: 'Lilies are pure, but not purer than she;' Currie: 'She's more wide-a-wake than you think, sir', Indru: 'Comrades are true, but not truer to me;' Currie: 'At strangers I've known her to wink, sir'.<sup>66</sup> Solomon highlights Currie's exclamations by marking them *accelerando*, whereas, in contrast, Indru's more naïve phrases are marked *dolce*.<sup>67</sup> Thus through his musical choices Solomon portrays Currie's concern at what the dance master believes to be Indru's misplaced (and dreamy) affection and belief in feminine purity. These textual statements and Solomon's setting of them depict the *nautch* girls as untrustworthy, promiscuous and fickle.

## The Other body

Dance focuses the eye on the body of the performer, and the focus on the bodies of Other women is a common one<sup>68</sup> – as William Knighton wrote in 1856 'perfection of physical form is more frequently observed in India [or indeed the 'Orient' in general] than elsewhere, on account of the dress. English women buy their shapes ready made for them in cloth and whalebone; Indian women exhibit those forms which the Almighty bestowed upon them.'<sup>69</sup> In *L'Africaine* Vasco is attracted to Selika noting 'that lack of crinoline',<sup>70</sup> so contemplating her body's true shape, a body (like Fatima's) not deformed by Western fashions such as crinoline or corsetry. Indeed, by the close of the century the idea of *unveiling* the 'Oriental' woman has now developed into that of actually *undressing* her – in *Chu Chin Chow* Nur-al-Huda (Ali-Baba's son) declares to Marjanah 'If I liken thy shape to the bough when green, / My likeness errs, I must confess: / For the branch is fairest when clad the most, / And thou art fairest when clad with less.' Not only does this display a desire to undress the 'Oriental' woman, it insinuates a knowledge that 'thou art fairest', not 'thou *would be* fairest', suggesting that perhaps Nur-al-Huda is not just having to imagine Marjanah's body. Marjanah answers that she is fairest when in 'Cashmere silk', 'Perfumed [...] musk', made-up 'Powdered and khold with cheeks be-rosed, / Bosom in sapphire clasps

<sup>64</sup> George Dance. *A New Indian Comic Opera in two acts. Entitled the Nautch Girl: or, the Rajah of Chutneypore, words by George Dance, music by Edward Solomon, and lyrics by George Dance and Frank Desprez* [Libretto]. London: Chappell & Co., n.d. [1891]: 4.

<sup>65</sup> Solomon, *The Nautch Girl* [Vocal Score]: Song No. 4.

<sup>66</sup> Dance, *The Nautch Girl* [Libretto]: 4.

<sup>67</sup> Solomon, *The Nautch Girl* [Vocal Score]: Song No. 3.

<sup>68</sup> See footnotes 10-11 for a discussion of Fatima's 'exquisite form' in *The Cadi*.

<sup>69</sup> William Knighton. *The Private Life of an Eastern King: Compiled from a member of the household of his late Majesty, Nussir-u-Deen, King of Oude*. London: G. Routledge & Co., 1856: 91.

<sup>70</sup> Arbuthnot, *L'Africaine*: 9.

enclosed', insisting 'Thou could'st not love me more in less'.<sup>71</sup> In drawing attention to the modest covering on her 'bosom' she in fact moves his consideration to the breasts beneath the sapphire clasps, connoting that her modesty is feigned. Indeed the word 'clasps' has implications of embracing, provoking images of grasping her 'Bosom'. In this song Marjanah suggests that in enhancing her beauty she can entice Nur-al-Huda (in a similar way to Wimperis's *geishas*).

Moving further into the twentieth century, Asche's stage spectacles progressively reveal more 'Oriental' flesh, as is apparent in their promotional photographs in publications like *The Playgoer and Society Illustrated*. Their spread on *Kismet* (1911) includes a number of images of veiled 'Oriental' female musicians<sup>72</sup> reflecting the seated or recumbent poses so popular in late-nineteenth century "fine art" paintings of 'Oriental' women.<sup>73</sup> There are photographs of the Caliph receiving 'gifts of fair women from Egypt', one of whom is the scantily clad Miss Nancy Denvers as *The Almah* who dances for the king,<sup>74</sup> again a fantasy of 'Oriental' female flesh played out on stage. Not only did this 'Oriental' staging give women (and men) the chance to play at "going native", it gave (women and) men the opportunity of seeing semi-clad British women on the stage, made acceptable through their guise as the Other.



*The Almah* (a dancer) (Miss Nancy Denvers) dances before the Caliph.

This desire to depict the naked 'Oriental' caused Asche to be called before the Lord Chamberlain in 1912 after two hundred and fifty performances of *Kismet* had run. Asche recounts the confrontation in his memoirs:

I explained to him that in the harem scene a slip of a girl about sixteen walked to the edge of the bath in a blue cloak. This she threw off, and for a fleeting second one saw a glimpse of a graceful, boyish figure in a shaft of moonlight diving into the water. The girl, of course, was clothed from neck to heel in silk fleshings. That was all that was seen of her.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Norton, *Chu Chin Chow*: 61-63.

<sup>72</sup> H.V.M., 'The Story of "Kismet."': 35.

<sup>73</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11*.

<sup>74</sup> H.V.M., 'The Story of "Kismet."': 47.

<sup>75</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 139.

This moment of “nakedness” is depicted photographically in *The Playgoer and Society Illustrated*<sup>76</sup> which shows the tableau of a group of musicians with lyres placed at the foot of the stage as musical servants playing to the recumbent harem inhabitants opposite them on the stage. However the focus of the stage harem is not the foreground action, but the bath that is centrally placed beneath the painted arches, domes and latticed windows (signifiers of the space as ‘harem’).

#### The Wazir Mansur’s Harem



Photo

Kut-al-Kulub, the Wife of Wives, with Mansur's other Wives, before the arrival of Marsinah

(Illustration by Anwar)

Asche's assertion that the apparently naked woman is a 'boyish' 'slip of a girl' is not consistent with the rounded body of the woman photographed on stage for this publication. Attention is deliberately drawn to her almost nakedness by the focus of the actresses around her and their eyes concentrated upon her white body, and the way in which she is only wearing gold cuffs on her arms and ankles, resonates of decadence and captivity. The almost completely veiled servant at her side who holds her discarded cloak heightens the contrast between the veil and the promise that lies beneath its folds. 'Oriental' female physical display accompanied by the performance of female musicians is a theme commonly found in late Victorian art,<sup>77</sup> so Asche seems to have been influenced by existing patterns of representation in the visual arts, although full nakedness in 'Oriental' images is unusual in Britain. As Edward Ziter comments, these spectacles of female flesh were 'consumed' by both women and men, and as much as the genders may experience them differently, such scenes 'articulated power relations between East and West and between women and men, helping to define these terms.'<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup> H.V.M., 'The Story of "Kismet."': 50.

<sup>77</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11*.

<sup>78</sup> Ziter, *The Orient on the Victorian Stage*: 6.



In contrast to Asche's languid 'Orientals', the physicality of Asche's othered African women in *Mameena* (1914) is highlighted by their 'wild' performance of a 'war dance' with dancing shields and little spears.<sup>79</sup> This was a 'scene of spectacle' that 'stood out' as a highlight<sup>80</sup> in this work where 'The love story, together with the intrigue amongst the Zulus themselves, were overshadowed by dance and music'.<sup>81</sup> The corporeality of dance and its scantily-clad African performers is a furthered enactment of the kind of female physicality sung about in Asche's 'Oriental' work. The 'Oriental' women are just sung of and passively displayed, whereas the Other 'African' women exhibit their physicality in aggressive dance performance. However the height of Asche's presentation of the physical sexuality of the Other was reached in The Finale to Act II of *Cairo*, a work that Brian Singleton considers in its entirety as 'the culmination of a sexualisation of the musical comedy stage, begun in music hall as sexual knowingness.'<sup>82</sup> The Bacchanal Scene, the photograph of which is labelled with Nur-al-Din's words "'Dance till ye drop and swoon. Feast full and drink ye deep of wine.'" in *The Play Pictorial*<sup>83</sup> is described by Asche in his autobiography as the 'Egyptian orgy'.



In this scene the cast of nearly one hundred raise their naked arms in positions of submission and offering to their Prince as the 'orgy' commences and progresses into wild dance. Following this the curtain rises on what Singleton describes as 'a scene of postcoital exhaustion' indicating that 'a hint of that "sub-rosa world of pornography"<sup>[84]</sup> had not only transgressed the stage door but

<sup>79</sup> Asche, *Mameena*: [67].

<sup>80</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 97.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*: 98-99.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*: 156.

<sup>83</sup> Stage Photo Company. *The Bacchanal Scene*. In B.W. Findon. 'Cairo: A Mosaic in Music and Mime. In Three Acts and Eleven Scenes. Mime by Oscar Asche. Music by Percy Fletcher.' *The Play Pictorial*, 39/237 (1917): 126.

<sup>84</sup> Peter Bailey. *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 186. Cited in Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 156.

had marched brazenly onto the stage itself.<sup>85</sup> The editors of *The Play Pictorial* felt that their photograph of this notorious and incredible scene warranted a double page spread<sup>86</sup> to do the after-orgy<sup>87</sup> slumber of the ‘Orientals’ justice.



This image is a detail from the image in *The Play Pictorial*, and pictures about one third of the players and stage.<sup>88</sup> The intertwining bodies of the scantily-clad actors and actresses spread over the entirety of the steps covering the stage, placed in such a way as to display all of the bodies rising towards the theatre’s ceiling. The producer seems surprised when he notes in his memoirs that ‘The Egyptian orgy aroused a considerable amount of controversy. It was daring, but not more so than the Russian Ballet – but that of course, being foreign, is forgiven anything.’<sup>89</sup> In this scene Asche reaches the zenith of visualising ‘Oriental’ licentiousness and sexuality on the long-nineteenth-century musical stage.

<sup>85</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 156.

<sup>86</sup> Findon, ‘Cairo’: 122-23.

<sup>87</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 174.

<sup>88</sup> Stage Photo Company. (detail from) *The Finale, Act II*. In B.W. Findon. ‘Cairo: A Mosaic in Music and Mime. In Three Acts and Eleven Scenes. Mime by Oscar Asche. Music by Percy Fletcher.’ *The Play Pictorial*, 39/237 (1917): 122.

<sup>89</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 173.

## Veils, Polygamy and harems

This focus on the Other body is inevitably linked with the 'Oriental' structures that hid it from European male gaze: the veil and the harem. The chorus of Nourmahal's slaves and attendants ('one of the most striking things') in Bishop's *Aladdin*<sup>90</sup> (1826) sings of her, 'Glancing by stealth or flinging a shade o'er the veil'd march of Persia's maid'<sup>91</sup> highlighting the recurring idea of the veil in orientalist discourse. The word 'veil'd' is picked out by Bishop's setting of a top G and then an F sharp in the soprano voices<sup>92</sup> – the highest point in this verse and of equal pitch to the highest point in the piece – suggesting that Bishop recognises the veil as the important idea in this stanza. In her fascinating discussion of veils in *Colonial Fantasies* (1998), Meyda Yeğenoğlu writes that in creating an obstruction between the 'Oriental' woman's body and the Western (male) eyes, the veil seems to remove her body from male subjugation.<sup>93</sup> The chorus phrase 'Glancing by stealth' hints at imagined pleasure and also Aladdin's thrilling danger in actually catching sight of the princess unveiled, and thus illustrates the desire to surreptitiously remove and penetrate the veil to reveal the woman beneath – a major British preoccupation, as the veiled woman may be perceived as an unconquered (and perhaps unconquerable) aspect of the 'Orient', thus the quintessential 'forbidden fruit'. Indeed, Yeğenoğlu asserts that through the veil as mask, the 'Oriental' woman is enigmatical, with a presumption that the true person is obscured and concealed, so 'They are therefore other than what they appear to be.'<sup>94</sup> Hence whilst the 'Oriental' male is *openly* corrupt and false, the woman's deception is figured by her veiled body, reflecting a perceived hidden Other (and negative) inner nature. In the nineteenth-century, the veil itself and the unveiling of the 'Oriental' woman become a metaphor for the mysterious nature of the 'Orient' and its discovery by the British male.

Throughout the century veils and unveiling remain a fascination in these stage works and in depictions of the 'East' more generally. A few years before this operetta Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Haggard focuses on the veil in his travel writings, declaring, 'The times when beautiful dark eyes flash on the passing cavalier day by day from behind a veil or a window lattice, until love or fancy hath entered into the fair one's heart, are not even yet gone by.'<sup>95</sup> So the veil is still an integral part of the fantasy of the 'Oriental' woman at the *fin de siècle*. Haggard also comments that 'It must, nevertheless, be owned that the fellah girl as often as not puts her veil to one side to show her pretty face to a stranger when no men of her immediate male relations are by; and as for their modesty, with them appearance is everything'.<sup>96</sup> Thus not all 'Oriental' women behave in such a "maidenly" way. Indeed, the portrayal of Rose-in-Bloom in *The Rose of Persia* (1899) is ambiguous when Hood gives her and her three favourite ladies-in-waiting the

<sup>90</sup> Anon. 'The Overture and the whole of the Music in Aladdin': 247.

<sup>91</sup> Bishop, *Aladdin*: 75-82.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*: 79.

<sup>93</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 39.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*: 44.

<sup>95</sup> Lieut.-Col. Andrew Haggard. *Under Crescent and Star*. Second Edition. London: William Blackwood & Sons, n.d. [1896]: 75.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*: 102.

words, 'Tho' damsels of lowly degree, (As you see,) We'll provide you with innocent pleasure'.<sup>97</sup> The tone of this sung phrase is ambivalent – it could be played straight and with genuine innocence, or overplayed to imply that the pleasure will not be 'innocent' at all. Likewise their situation is dubious, as she is Sultana, but dancing before a non-royal man who is not her husband; regardless of whether she is veiled this is neither 'maidenly' nor queenly behaviour. Their conduct here supports Haggard's charge that 'appearance is everything',<sup>98</sup> although some (usually female) travel-writers disagree, with, for example, Mrs. Harvey observing that 'Nothing could be more decorous than the appearance and manners of every woman in the royal harem'.<sup>99</sup>

Unlike Mrs. Harvey and other female visitors (non-family) men had no access to the harem; consequently voyeuristic imaginings of Other women became a component of the fantasy of the 'Orient'. Mirroring the idea of 'glancing by stealth' at Nourmahal, there is a scene in Bishop's *Aladdin* when 'Music is heard from the baths' and he exclaims 'What sweet notes are those? / Allah! the Princess, singing as she bathes! / A cygnet, floating on the crystal waters / To her own music, while the amorous tide / Clings to the breast that scarcely moves its surface.'<sup>100</sup> Imagining her breasts lightly skimming the surface of the water as she sings, whilst barely disguised in a swan metaphor, is a highly sensuous and voyeuristic image of female nakedness – an imagining inconceivable regarding white women in opera. Alongside the harem, 'Turkish' baths, where the 'Oriental' woman unveils *herself*, are almost as great a preoccupation for the British as the veil, and a focus which becomes more overt in later dramas.

Interestingly, depictions of the harem are not objects of jest in the otherwise comical mid-century operatic works, but act more as serious cultural comment. In *The Cadi* Fatima tells Virginia that 'while we are unmarried in this country, we are comparatively free, and have our time to ourselves, but the moment we take a husband, we are confined to the harem, and become little better than slaves. Is it so in France?' Virginia is shocked and sings a comical song about how marriage in France causes the 'contrary' as 'The late imprison'd bird thro' the whole town takes wing, / At balls and routs all day and night you her will see, / For she is married – she's a wife – she's free!' She declares that husbands are 'always our slaves'; 'We as sovereigns rule them, / We as children school them'.<sup>101</sup> The image of the controlling European wife is a popular one in comical opera, so is in no way incongruous here, however the depiction of 'Oriental' women as slaves is not intended to be an amusing one. Islamic women in a harem were frequently represented in this helpless way (regardless of literary or artistic medium): 'Mahomedan females are in a much more degraded humiliating position, than even Hindus are. The gross sensualism which is ever allied with their creed, polygamy, and the indifference with which the marriage tie is regarded, are the cause of this.'<sup>102</sup> The *seraglio* or harem is again referred to by Selby in *Lord*

<sup>97</sup> Sullivan, *The Rose of Persia*: 54.

<sup>98</sup> Haggard, *Under Crescent and Star*: 102.

<sup>99</sup> Mrs. Harvey, *Turkish Harems and Circassian Homes*. London: Hurst & Blackett, 1871: 79-80.

<sup>100</sup> Soane, *Aladdin*: 29.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*: 28-29.

<sup>102</sup> Storrow, *The Eastern Lily Gathered*: 2.

*Bateman* (1850), when Sophia is told by his prospective mother-in-law, 'You miss minx had better go / Back to Turkey, / And be a *Seragligaglio!*'<sup>103</sup> Referring to Sophia (a princess) as 'miss minx' [sic] again reinforces the idea of overt 'Oriental' sexuality and the term '*seraglio*', (here deliberately deformed for comic effect)<sup>104</sup> places her as belonging in that space, both conceptually and physically, rather than in Victorian Britain. Sophia refers to her time in the harem as unhappy and idle: 'Immured within the Harem's lonely tower, / I passed full many a weary hour'.<sup>105</sup> The boredom and lack of industry of the harem inhabitants are highlighted.

Harems, and indeed sizeable harems, are suggested in Walker's text when Laurette sings 'Where ev'ry man has wives a score'<sup>106</sup> in Bishop's *The Fall of Algiers* (1825). In its first statement, Bishop highlights this phrase not only by a pause on the first note of 'man', but also by setting it *a capella*; it is the only sung phrase in this finale that has no instrumental accompaniment, thus the words can be clearly heard and are then repeated twice more to reinstate the meaning,<sup>107</sup> so in his setting Bishop picks out this text as central. Reina Lewis asserts in *Gendering Orientalism* (1996) that by the early nineteenth century any reference to the harem or to polygamous practice (a founding-stone of the harem) operates within an existing web of orientalised precepts and representations of these ideas.<sup>108</sup> Thus, Laurette's highlighted and thrice-sung phrase about polygamy would activate a range of connotations and prejudices in audience-members' minds. Nevertheless there would be ambivalence in these reactions as the ideas of polygamy and the harem were not simply perceived as immoral and violent towards women, but they were also fascinating and appealing to British men as the substance of fantasy.

By the close of the long nineteenth century polygamy has become a major component of British perceptions of 'Oriental' sexual identity; Sullivan and Hood's *The Rose of Persia* (1899) opens with Hassan's wives singing in chorus, thus immediately focusing on polygamy and the harem. Hassan sits 'Surrounded by my wives Who number only five-and-twenty!' He acknowledges that twenty-five is 'singularly few', but he believes that if he added the other twenty-five that he could afford 'The trouble I've With twenty-five Twice twenty-five would double!'<sup>109</sup> This highly comical depiction of polygamy is not a particularly negative representation, but a humorous comment on the difficulty of wives, be they single ones in Europe or multiple in Persia. In this representation Hassan is almost the "victim" of polygamy, (a reversal of normal portrayals), thus perhaps the idea of polygamy has become almost so accepted as a different cultural choice that Hood does not criticise it.

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<sup>103</sup> Selby, *Lord Bateman*: 28.

<sup>104</sup> The term is misused, as a *seraglio* is the harem itself and not its inhabitants.

<sup>105</sup> Selby, *Lord Bateman*: 14.

<sup>106</sup> Bishop, *The Fall of Algiers*: 121-30.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*: 122.

<sup>108</sup> Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*: 164.

<sup>109</sup> Sullivan, *The Rose of Persia*: 7-9.

## Male sexual violence

The sexuality of the 'Oriental' men is only infrequently highlighted in these works and when it is so it is only to portray them as sexually forceful or even violent. The imbalance in gender representation is perhaps owing to the fact that the libretti are all written by men who probably considered heightened portrayals of female sexuality in the Other more entertaining than potentially disturbing representations of overt male virility. Stephens creates a dark portrait of forced polygamy for Cellier's *The Sultan of Mocha* (1875?); in the Duo 'Sweet Hannah or Alice' the Sultan sings 'Refuse me fair beauty [...] Reluctant or willing / I bet you a shilling / You'll find my love killing / Unless you relent'.<sup>110</sup> He threatens Dolly with death or his harem and later in the work demands, 'So you'd better stay with me at Mocha / And be number 5, 0, 3.'<sup>111</sup> A harem of hundreds, and a harem taken by force with disregard for even the woman's name, is a highly negative picture of the fate of women in the 'Orient', and also upholds the theorist Ziauddin Sardar's theme of representations depicting the corrupt and violent nature of 'Oriental' despots.<sup>112</sup> Fictional descriptions were upheld by popular 'factual' writings of the Other, for example Mrs. Leonowens' description of the cruel harem schooling of Choy in *Siamese Harem Life* (1873): 'we were subjected to the most rigorous training, mentally and physically [...] if we ever forgot a single word [of poetry and song], or did not put it in its right place, we were severely beaten. What with recitations, singing, dancing, playing, and beating time with your feet, we had a hard life of it'.<sup>113</sup>

Violence is further presented in Stephens's libretto for *Lord Bateman* (1882) where the fact that Muslim men may take multiple wives is again underlined; Macdallah brags 'Having thrash'd the Christian host, / Then he [the Muslim] knows no prouder boast / Than his right to kiss his wives and whip his boys'.<sup>114</sup> Here male sexuality is directly linked with cruelty, violence and female submission, but also carries homoerotic and sadistic undertones. In *Empire and Sexuality* (1990) Ronald Hyam defines perversion as an act the 'primary aim' of which 'is domination rather than mutual enjoyment: if it becomes an expression of power rather than sensuality, and is thus so to speak plundering rather than worshipping',<sup>115</sup> and sadistic sexual behaviour as paraded in Stephen's libretto would be a perversion in the eyes of the Victorian Christian audience. Likewise the homoerotic undertones of an 'Oriental' man 'whipping' his 'boys' would not be lost on many audience members, as the 'Orient' was often considered a site of the "vice" of pederasty<sup>116</sup> which the British public generally believed common in many 'Oriental' places.<sup>117</sup> Richard Burton, in the now infamous 'Terminal Essay' to his translation of *The Book of the*

<sup>110</sup> Cellier, *The Sultan of Mocha*: 88.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*: 90.

<sup>112</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 2.

<sup>113</sup> Mrs. Anna H. Leonowens. *Siamese Harem Life*. London: Morrison and Gibb Limited, 1952 [1873]: 104.

<sup>114</sup> Solomon, *Lord Bateman*: 30.

<sup>115</sup> Ronald Hyam. *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990: 9.

<sup>116</sup> The practice of men having sexual relations (especially anal intercourse) with boys.

<sup>117</sup> Lewis D. Wurgaft. *The Imperial Imagination: Magic and Myth in Kipling's India*. Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983: 50.

*Thousand Nights and a Night* (1886), describes what he terms the ‘Sotadic Zone’ – he believes that this region covers the Mediterranean ‘romance’ countries, North Africa, Asia, the South Sea Islands and the Americas, suggesting that the climate and geography of these areas effeminises the men, causing pederasty to be common.<sup>118</sup> Indeed he writes that ‘Moslems, even of saintly houses, are permitted openly to keep catamites,<sup>[119]</sup> nor do their disciples think worse of their sanctity for such license / Yet pederasty is forbidden<sup>[120]</sup> by the Koran.’<sup>121</sup> Thus for many watching *Lord Bateman*, the expression ‘whip his boys’ would raise images and associations from “factual” literature like Burton’s.

The premise of men coercing women is continued in *The Rose of Persia* (1899) as Hassan attempts to unveil Rose-in-Bloom and she begs ‘Hassan! Thy pity I entreat / And at thy feet / A suppliant, lo! I kneel / Respect my maiden modesty / I beg of thee! / Turn not from my appeal! / Thine Oriental etiquette / D’ost thou forget? / To force a maid to raise her veil / Before a male?’<sup>122</sup> She actually decides to die instead of remove her veil, and when she is forced, the Vizier does not forget his (and her) honour and declares ‘The Royal Rose-in-Bloom unveil’d approaches! / Let all men turn respectful backs upon her!’<sup>123</sup> Hassan goes against religious practice to discover Rose-in-Bloom’s identity (she is the Sultana Zubeydeh posing as a slave), forcing her to dishonour herself by showing her face to a man other than her husband. Even in this comedy it would be understood by the audience, both from their general knowledge and also from her impassioned words, that this is one of the greatest degradations possible to a virtuous ‘Oriental’ woman, yet it is forced here upon her by an ‘Oriental’ man.

The ‘Oriental’ female in Selby’s *Lord Bateman* (1850) also has much to fear from unwanted male attention and the corruption of male rulers. Sophia tells Bateman that she was ‘Bred mid the savages which thronged my father’s hall, / No kindred spirit could I find – they all / Were sordid, base, and cold, / And lived only for drink and gold.’<sup>124</sup> Not only has she had to endure living amongst squalid, greedy and dissolute ‘savages’, her father was trying to force upon her an unwanted marriage to one such man: ‘My pa he wants to make me wed, / A great rough bear of a *Ja-nis-sary*– / But rather than have him, I’ll go to bed, / And die’.<sup>125</sup> Sophia’s pride here surfaces in choosing death over marriage to a bestial Turkish warrior, and Bateman is attracted to marry her instead because of his pride and her danger. Bateman too experiences the danger of her father’s despotism when the Pacha is planning to have him secretly murdered, moving Bateman to declare ‘Oh cruel, cruel, cruel, cruel, cruel, cruel Turks! / Is this the way your justice

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<sup>118</sup> Sir Richard F. Burton. ‘Terminal Essay’. In *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*. Volume X, 63-302. Benares: Kamashastra Society (for Private Subscribers Only), 1886: X, 206.

<sup>119</sup> Boys who have sexual relations with men.

<sup>120</sup> Incidentally, this is part of a theme that ‘Orientals’ are unable to fulfil the dictates of their own religions.

<sup>121</sup> Burton, ‘Terminal Essay’: 223.

<sup>122</sup> Sullivan, *The Rose of Persia*: 119-20.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*: 226.

<sup>124</sup> Selby, *Lord Bateman*: 14.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*: 12.

works?’<sup>126</sup> This merely highlights the commonly-held British notion that there can be no justice in a tyrannically run state. Selika prevents a similar secret and cowardly murder in *L’Africaine* when the African Nelusko ‘advances stealthily, with large carving knife, much jagged, in his hand’<sup>127</sup> to stab the sleeping Vasco in the back. Sophia and Selika prevent the murders of their European loves, but cannot be described as ‘noble savages’<sup>128</sup> as they do so for their own gain (a desired lover) and not for self-less motivations, neither are they truly risking their own safety – if Sophia’s security was menaced by freeing Bateman she would not have stayed in Turkey for a further seven years.

## Miscegenation

Self-sacrificing ‘native’ love often operates in the instances of miscegenation or inter-‘racial’ union which actually occur in each of Bishop’s South American operas: with Chinchilla and Picquillo in *Zuma*, Zelinda and Clifton in *The Slave* (1816), Marina and Cortez in *Cortez* (1823), and Cora and Alonzo in *The Virgin of the Sun!* (1812). From this list it is apparent that in all of these cases the male is European and the female a ‘native’ as was customary in inter-‘racial’ relationships at the time, primarily because Western men were more likely to travel outside of Europe and had far greater input into their choice of partner than did their female European counterparts. However, in neither of Bishop’s Islamic ‘Oriental’ operas is there ‘intermarriage’; this is an interesting difference, and may result from the lack of factual precedence. As women were more protected and (by devices like the veil and harem) separated from Western male contact, marriages between Muslim women and European men would have been highly unusual, and this translates into the operatic action. It may also be because as desirable as the enigmatic and sensual ‘Oriental’ woman may be as a conquest, the mild, malleable and quaint ‘noble savage’ is more suited to the British idea of nineteenth-century wifedom.

In contrast to Bishop’s earlier works, miscegenation between an ‘Oriental’ woman and a European man occurs in each of the mid-century dramas. In *Lord Bateman* (1850) Sophia marries Bateman, wresting him from his British bride, and forming a break with the ideas in Bishop’s operas; this may reflect the opening up of Islamic countries to foreign influence, and so to previously non-viable inter-‘racial’ marriages. It is Sophia’s forwardness in coming over the sea to claim Bateman that creates the union, however she comes to England and goes to wed in a Christian church, so this assimilation and renouncement of her Islamic roots make the marriage acceptable to the audience. In *The Cadi* (1851), despite the fact that Michel must ‘go native’ and become the next Cadi, the union of Michel and Fatima (again a Muslim) is an acceptable one as her mother was French, and because it brings Michel great position and wealth – one of the major

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<sup>126</sup> Selby, *Lord Bateman*: 13.

<sup>127</sup> Arbuthnot, *L’Africaine*: 10.

<sup>128</sup> For ideas of the ‘noble savage’ See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4 and Works of Fiction: Chapter 8*.



fantasies of empire.<sup>129</sup> Selika's situation is somewhat different: she loves her slave-master Vasco – 'I love him! yes, I love him / Most unmistakably!'<sup>130</sup> – even though he has enslaved her, the Queen of Madagascar. Vasco is attracted to Selika too: [not sung] 'Observe that skin. / Mark *you* that *hue*, that lack of crinoline, / Those optics green.'<sup>131</sup> He admires her skin colour – marking its difference to the audience, and focusing on this difference as augmenting her sexual appeal. After Selika's mesmerism of Vasco, he sings to her 'At one time I was foolish, love, / And did not know your worth, / All through some stupid prejudice / 'Gainst Oriental birth. [...] I richly prize, [...] above all, your coal black hair.'<sup>132</sup> It must be remembered that this seemingly modern renouncement of prejudice against miscegenation with 'Oriental' women is sung when Vasco is mesmerised. With that in mind, and the fact that he later abandons Selika and elopes with Inez, the audience is meant to believe the opposite of his words to be true and correct. Selika is an African (as the title of the work states) although Vasco refers to her as 'Oriental', and like in the Bishop works, it is still unacceptable for miscegenation between Europeans and 'black blood'. She eventually settles for marriage with the African Nelusko and Vasco is forgiven by Inez, as he was (literally) under Selika's mesmeric spell.

Later in the century representations of miscegenation between 'Oriental' women and European men seem to decline; indeed, the Soldan has to take Dolly by force in *The Soldan of Mocha* (1875) (the idea of men using force against women has arisen and is quite prevalent). The only case of miscegenation is Picotee and Bateman in *Lord Bateman* (1882), however this is a reworking of a tale at least a century old from days when miscegenation would be less controversial. With the rise of Social Darwinism in the later nineteenth century, perceptions of non-white peoples as evolutionarily primitive were solidified, with little attempt to distinguish between biological and cultural differences.<sup>133</sup> Anne Maxwell writes that Social Darwinism almost employed concepts of evolution 'backwards' as rather than using Darwin's notion that all 'races' began at the same point and evolved differently owing to circumstance and genetics, 'they began with the present, seeing existing inequalities as proof that colonised races constituted a lower stage of human evolutionary development.'<sup>134</sup> "Non-Aryans" came to be viewed as incapable of responding to "civilising" influences, and miscegenation became unacceptable. Much of this change of feeling was exacerbated by the Indian Mutiny; Victor Kiernan believes that 'India was never forgiven for what it did in 1857, still less perhaps for what it exasperated the English into doing, or allowing to be done'.<sup>135</sup> So by the close of the century, miscegenation

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<sup>129</sup> When Birotteau mistakenly thinks this his fate he envisages that he 'shall pass my life in luxurious repose and voluptuous enjoyment. I shall live like a turk – have a seraglio – smoke opium – drink sherbet – roll all day long upon the soft cushions of a divan – [rolling himself on the divan] – dressed in cashmeres – in fact, be a regular pasha – oh it will be delicious!' [[Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 32.]

<sup>130</sup> Arbuthnot, *L'Africaine*: 9.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*: 22.

<sup>133</sup> Eldridge, *The Imperial Experience*: 40.

<sup>134</sup> Anne Maxwell. *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions: Representations of the 'Native' and the Making of European Identities*. London: Leicester University Press, 2000: 15.

<sup>135</sup> Victor Kiernan. *The Lords of Human Kind: European Attitudes toward the Outside World in the Imperial Age*. London: Serif, 1995: 49.

was a 'horror' involving a 'fear of regression' and also 'the desire to maintain economic and political control'<sup>136</sup> by separating 'whites'. Picotee herself realises that 'It is wrong, so wrong, I know it, / But I love this stranger knight; / And my love I may not show it, / To him my heart's delight, / For I am a Moslem maiden, / And he is an infidel'.<sup>137</sup> To correct this wrong (as after all Stephens could hardly change the opera's ending), just as Selby's Sophia of thirty years earlier is Christianised, her counterpart Picotee is Anglicised in the finale of the work. The Englishmen decide to give her a new name, in effect (in audience-members' minds) to 'Christen' her, with 'something patriotic, / And not at all exotic', something with 'a British ring' and 'a British swing' – Matilda Jane. Thus the Other is made acceptable by her Anglicisation and Christianisation. However, Picotee's last words to Bateman are, 'But always to thee I'll be Picotee, / And to others Matilda Jane!',<sup>138</sup> perhaps reminding him that even if she appears the Englishwoman, he will always know that it is merely a veneer on her 'Oriental' identity.

By the early twentieth century views on miscegenation were again beginning to diversify and it began to be more frequently represented in musical theatre once more. For some it was still a 'racial' abomination, as is represented by the reaction that Greenbank gives to Major Vivian Callabone (the Head of the Garrison at Naga, Burmah) in *The Blue Moon*, when he hears of Captain Jack Ormsby's love for Chandra Nil: 'How shocking, how disgraceful, I can't believe my ears, / Observe your aunt reduced to Salvolatile and tears! / Of gossip and of scandal we shall quickly have the place full, / How thoughtless, how ridiculous! how shocking! how disgraceful!' The chorus echoes 'How awkward, how unpleasant! The truth we cannot hide, / He's rather shocked his family by choosing such a bride, / The situation seems a little difficult at present, / How awkward, how undignified! how foolish, how unpleasant!'<sup>139</sup> Yet these protestations are caricatured here by Greenbank, intimating their extremeness and perhaps their outdated nature. Chandra and Jack are given the duet 'O Mystic Love!' which sets a seal of approval on their love; 'Out of the radiant East, Fresh as the dawn and fair, / Love, for a while released, Rose in a beauty rare. / Fanning the sacred flame, Fortune, with fancy blest, / Smiled upon him who came Out of the golden West'.<sup>140</sup> This establishes a direct challenge to the opening lines of Kipling's poem 'The Ballad of East and West' which claims 'Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet'.<sup>141</sup> Thus ideas on miscegenation seem to be reaching full circle, with acceptance like that that occurred in the early and mid-nineteenth-century works starting to reappear after nearly half a century of proscription.

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<sup>136</sup> Kiernan, *The Lords of Human Kind*: 34.

<sup>137</sup> Solomon, *Lord Bateman*: 22.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*: 129-34.

<sup>139</sup> Talbot and Rubens, *The Blue Moon*: 67-68.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*: 139-45.

<sup>141</sup> Rudyard Kipling. 'The Ballad of East and West'. In *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses*. Fifth Edition, 75-83. London: Methuen & Co., 1893 [1892]: 75, line 1.

## Concluding remarks

These case-study analyses support Meyda Yeğenoğlu's assertion that fantasy and desire are deep-seated aspects in orientalist representations of the Other.<sup>142</sup> Relating to theories discussed in the opening section of this thesis, the othered sexualised nature of the 'Orient' as perceived by the British helped to define their ideas (and also aspirations) regarding their own sexuality. In these stage works Other women are most frequently considered as either sensual, sexually aware, or in more extreme cases provocative and even predatory, namely everything that a British woman was not, or *should* not be. In contrast to these portrayals, 'Oriental' women are occasionally represented as submissive, obedient and pliable; a fantasy for British men to experience, and something becoming less of a reality in Victorian Britain. Othered men are depicted as sexually aggressive, even sadistic and violent, embodying everything that the British "gentleman" did not wish to. Thus these analyses sustain Meyda Yeğenoğlu's contention<sup>143</sup> that much of the material representing Britain's Others in fact tells the reader/viewer more about Britain's own fears and aspirations (in this instance regarding sexuality and the body) than about foreign cultures.

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<sup>142</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 2

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*: 1.

## Chapter 4: An angel/demon dualism.

Much as a polarisation of othered female sexuality, between malleable sensual being and aggressive sexual predator, is established in these long-nineteenth-century stage works, likewise an angel/demon dualism is set up in more general depictions of the Other. In some instances in these case-study musical-dramatic works the Other is portrayed as the 'noble savage' who aids the (usually occupying) European characters. More typically, many perceived aspects of Other (and usually male) behaviour are accentuated and stereotyped in a representation process leading to the demonisation of the Other. In *Woman Musicians in Victorian Fiction*, Phyllis Weliver frequently highlights a specific use of the angel/demon polarisation as it was applied to depictions of female musicians, yet the concept was more widely used in depicting women, and indeed in the cases of these operas, to depict people from other cultures more generally. Consequently this chapter examines some of the methods by which the Other was both idealised and demonised on the British nineteenth-century stage.

### Idealising the Other: the quaint 'noble savage'

'Native people were quaint. They were not just different; their difference took on the qualities of daftness, of not being quite natural, of being an illustration that natives were not wholly governed by reason.'<sup>1</sup> In his 2001 study concerning *The Rose-Colored Vision* of nineteenth-century imperial writers and Empire, Laurence Kitzan explores the idea of 'quaintness': he believes that quaintness swiftly became associated with retardation, lax morality, and the lack of the drive for progress and improvement that the British considered to be imperative in the modern world.<sup>2</sup> This section discusses quaintness as an aspect of the broader 'noble savage' idea that solidified in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The 'noble savage' was a mythologised foil to the highly negative depictions of 'savage' 'natives',<sup>3</sup> but although the 'noble savage' is more complex it remains a 'stereotypical' form of othering.<sup>4</sup> The 'noble savage' usually has a more European physiognomy than other 'natives' and in playing a self-sacrificial role strives for the good of their community and frequently aids its 'civilisation', usually as an ally of the white Europeans in the story;<sup>5</sup> they are often seen as childlike and thus quaint. This 'child' imagery is rarely encountered before the turn of the nineteenth century and dies out after the mid-century with the ascendancy of high imperialism. Laurence Kitzan asserts that 'The White Man's Burden', namely high imperialism, was a reaction to quaintness and to the image of the childlike

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<sup>1</sup> Kitzan, *Victorian Writers and the Image of Empire*: 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid..

<sup>3</sup> The idea of the 'noble savage' is frequently linked to the French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). He discussed the idea in his 1775 *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité* (*Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality*), in which he expressed the notion that humans are naturally good when free of the vices that plague civilised society. [James J. Delaney. 'Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778).' *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. See the website <http://www.iep.utm.edu/r/rousseau.htm> (Accessed 06 October 2006).]

<sup>4</sup> M. Daphne Kutzer. *Empire's Children: Empire and Imperialism in Classic British Children's Books*. London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000: 7.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

'savage',<sup>6</sup> but as Gustav Jahoda points out, although 'the images of animality and cannibalism date back to antiquity and still survive [...] that of child-likeness appeared late and proved transitory.'<sup>7</sup> During the early decades of the nineteenth century degeneration theories also abounded, involving ideas that following the creation of a perfect human being in God's image, the 'races' of man fell into differing levels of barbarism and savagery,<sup>8</sup> with only the white man retaining near-perfection; the "childlikeness" of "lower" 'races' was one form of 'racial' degeneration and was part of the quaint, 'noble savage' stereotype. Subsequently, it was such ideas regarding 'native' quaintness, childlikeness and lower intellectual capacity, making up the 'noble savage' stereotype of the Other, which hardened into negative and racist depictions in the mid- to late-nineteenth century.

### The 'noble savage' of Bishop's operas

Ideas of quaintness and noble savagery run parallel to other early nineteenth-century 'racial' stereotypes; as a stereotype the 'noble savage' differs from those of the sexualised 'Oriental' woman and the corrupt 'Oriental' man, and even though they sometimes share some of the same images of idolatry, violence and corruption, these are embodied in different ways. In Dibdin's *Zuma* (1818) Caesar, who is born an African prince and is now a slave in the household of the Vice-Queen, is a 'noble savage' figure as depicted by his loyalty in his position as slave to his mistress the Vice-Queen and also by his rescue of Zuma's son Zamorin. Caesar sings of his parents' general corruption and deviancy – the difference between Caesar's depiction of his parents, a free African king and queen, and the way in which he, an enslaved prince, is represented in the text, may embody the idea that the black man could begin to be "civilised" by Western control and intervention.<sup>9</sup> However in Dibdin's employment of a quaint, almost pidgin-English mode of speech for Caesar, (which according to Nussbaum indicates a black-face character),<sup>10</sup> he clearly others Caesar's character, defining him as inferior (despite his nobility), as would perhaps be reinforced by the actor blacking-up. The language is an illustration of the 'daftness' and lack of reason that are ascribed to the quaint, 'noble savage'.<sup>11</sup>

Caesar is the only character in *Zuma* who speaks in dialect and also the only black character, and through these means he is clearly positioned as lowlier than even the native Peruvians; in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century Europe much attention was given to forming racial hierarchies. In doing so white Europe was strengthening its political world-position and creating a 'scientific' explanation of existing power relations. Robert Young, in *Colonial Desire* (1995), notes how a 'racial' hierarchy was established with the most "civilised" at the pinnacle, and the

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<sup>6</sup> Kitzan, *Victorian Writers and the Image of Empire*: 8-9.

<sup>7</sup> Gustav Jahoda. *Images of Savages: Ancient Roots of Modern Prejudice in Western Culture*. London: Routledge, 1999: 214.

<sup>8</sup> Felicity A. Nussbaum. *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003: 12.

<sup>9</sup> As discussed by MacKenzie in *Orientalism and Religion*: 12.

<sup>10</sup> Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*: 223.

<sup>11</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8* also.

most “primitive” at the base.<sup>12</sup> This hierarchy became the European at the top, the Asian in the middle, and the black ‘native’ at the bottom.<sup>13</sup> Despite their lowliness, in Bishop’s works the African is not only invariably depicted as a slave, but also as a ‘noble savage’.

The ‘native’ women in *Zuma* also fall into the ‘noble savage’ mould of self-sacrifice to protect either a European lover or a beloved European employer. These characters conform to Daphne Kutzer’s assertion in *Empire’s Children* (2000) that ‘noble savages’ are ‘willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good’,<sup>14</sup> that good (usually) being for the European. *Zuma* herself is a ‘noble savage’, as indeed is her husband Mirvan, as they defy their Peruvian community to save the Europeans. As previously stated, *Zuma* is (rightfully) suspected by her peers of attempting to cure the Vice-Queen. In disobeying their community in order to save *Zuma*’s mistress, the couple is willing to sacrifice not only their own lives, but also that of their son Zamorin, who is being held captive by Azan, Mirvan’s old rival for *Zuma*. Thus their loyalty to their European protectors supersedes all other concerns in truly ‘noble savagery’. An illustration of the ‘noble savage’ is clearly exemplified in another Peruvian, Chinchilla’s, song ‘Poor Zimra was a Simple Maid!’ in the same opera. She sings a graceful love song to her Spanish lover, Picquillo, of Zimra who loved Don Mostachio. In her narrative the Don is taken hostage by Peruvian Chiefs ‘But Love, they say, of oft awake, / When other people are asleep! / At night this Maiden op’d the door, / And met her love, to part no more!’<sup>15</sup> And so Zimra defies her community to rescue her lover and be with him forever, as indeed Chinchilla does herself later in the plot. Dibdin’s repetition of the word ‘Love’ is a particular pointer to the ‘noble savage’ ideal, as for this stereotype to function correctly, pure, self-sacrificing love is a prerequisite. The title of this song, describing Zimra as ‘Poor’ and ‘Simple’ aligns her with simplicity and foolishness, reasserting the idea of quaintness as an aspect of the ‘noble savage’ character.

There are no Islamic female ‘noble savage’ figures in these works; this is partly because such a figure invariably has contact with European characters, which is denied to the Muslim women in Bishop’s works (and most probably in reality also), but also because Islamic women are not perceived as quaint, so cannot fit into the ‘noble savage’ mythology. Islamic women are considered to be the opposite of quaint and childlike – knowing, sexually provocative, mysterious and sophisticated – it is this conception of femininity which is lacking in the seemingly more innocent and quaint women of South America, hence the absence of an equivalent to the sensual, ‘Oriental’ woman in these operas and the lack of ‘noble savages’ in the Islamic works.

The female ‘noble savage’ figure is also found in the (non-Islamic) African character of Zelinda in Bishop’s setting of Thomas Morton’s play *The Slave*. Zelinda (as a ‘quadroon’) holds a

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<sup>12</sup> Young, *Colonial Desire*: 94.

<sup>13</sup> Syed Hussein Alatas. *The Myth of the Lazy Native: A study of the image of the Malays, Filipinos and Javanese from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and its function in the ideology of colonial capitalism*. London: Frank Cass, 1977: 19.

<sup>14</sup> Kutzer, *Empire’s Children*: 7.

<sup>15</sup> Bishop, *Zuma*: 25-27.

'racially' ambiguous position; as Felicity Nussbaum emphasises in *The Limits of the Human* (2003) '*The Slave* seems to question where a hybrid woman's loyalty should lie, with England or with Africa, and racial romance turns out to be a means of refining national loyalties.'<sup>16</sup> Gambia, the slave of the title (who was sometimes played by a black actor, including Ira Aldridge (1807-67), the first black stage actor in Britain) is in love with Zelinda; however she is attached to the Englishman Captain Clifton, with whom she has a child. Interestingly, Zelinda is carried upon the shoulders of the darker slaves in "An Indian Procession"<sup>17</sup> when she marries the Captain. In the vocal score Bishop footnotes 'For the Melody of this DANCE, which is truly Indian, I am indebted to the kindness of a Musical Friend!'<sup>18</sup> however this is hard to reconcile with the fact that the ballet remains clearly within the key of E flat major with no modal colouration, has no atypical rhythmic features, and in no way seems to depart from the sound-world of early-nineteenth-century European dances. The inclusion of the *Indian* procession is an illustration of the mixed 'racial' make-up of Surinam, with white Europeans, native 'Indians' and black slaves, alongside other immigrant communities. Zelinda, who unlike Gambia is given no direction to black up, is clearly treated as the other slaves' superior,<sup>19</sup> yet she is obviously *not* white; she is essentially Other to all groups. Zelinda's 'in-between' 'racial' status thus gives her superiority over the black slaves, but despite her marriage to Clifton, she herself is a slave nonetheless. Gambia is cast into the traditional 'noble savage' mould when he selflessly saves Captain Clifton from rebellious slaves, and returns Zelinda to her husband. This situation also arises in the plot of *The Virgin of the Sun!* in which the Incan warrior chief Rolla loves Cora; when she secretly marries the Spaniard Don Alonzo, Rolla in his love (and 'noble savagery') offers to hide them. In each of the cases, African and Peruvian, the 'native' relinquishes his claim on his love and becomes the 'noble savage' in bequeathing her to a European lover. These instances in fiction must surely have acted as reassurance to the European male's sense of supremacy and domination.

In *The Slave*, following Clifton's quelling of the slave rebellion with kindness, it is Zelinda who repays Gambia's magnanimity by taking on the 'noble savage' role and readily agreeing to free Gambia rather than herself. Nussbaum observes that 'In a series of reversals, Clifton and Gambia, white man and black, become brothers whose bonds exceed Clifton's love (and indeed Gambia's love) for Zelinda'.<sup>20</sup> The now free Gambia accompanies Clifton, with both leaving Zelinda and presumably her child as slaves in Suriname. One must note that *The Slave* was riding the wave of abolitionist sentiment in Britain; indeed, in this play the white and free black join in brotherhood, however they ultimately spurn the sexually-implicated, and 'racially' 'degenerate' Other 'quadroon' woman, and her child – the material result of the white man's guilty sexual desire. For Nussbaum, *The Slave* justifies freeing the black man 'because even

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<sup>16</sup> Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*: 233.

<sup>17</sup> Bishop, *The Slave*: 29.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*: 39.

<sup>19</sup> Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*: 233.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*: 234.

without his fetters he will continue to serve the white man – all the more crucial when an actual black man is playing the well-liked Gambia the Slave. In addition the play offers reassurance that the hybrid woman and her offspring will be appropriately abandoned and forgotten like Africa, slavery, and the miscegenation which she represents.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly here, when the inter-‘racial’ union involves a woman with ‘black blood’, she is ultimately abandoned, yet in the cases of Bishop’s Indian and other South American operas, where a ‘native’ woman is perhaps more passable as white, miscegenation is acceptable. This may again be owing to the perceived ‘racial’ hierarchy of the time, creating distaste for mixing ‘superior’ white blood with that of black Africans who were believed to be dwelling on the lowest hierarchical rung of civilisation and most likely to ‘degenerate’ British blood.

### The ‘noble savage’: a reprise

It is not until nearly a century later that the idea of the ‘noble savage’ re-emerges in the case studies of opera libretti here studied, and when it does so, it is transformed and somewhat diluted. Imagery of honour, with weak echoes of the older ‘noble savage’ idea, occurs in Wimperis and Talbot’s presentation of the Japanese men in *The Mousmé* (1911): the male chorus of warriors sings ‘Hail, hail, Sakura [cherry blossom]! We give thee pride of place, / As emblem of the fighting man, / The dauntless heart of great Japan / And her heroic race!’<sup>22</sup> Here the Japanese army (the ‘Yellow Peril’) are presented quite sensitively and with some cultural insight, as the *sakura* still remains important in Japanese culture, with a fortnight of the year being celebrated nationally as the *sakura* season when the blossoms are at their most perfect. However, they are presented as ‘racially’ proud, maybe subconsciously echoing the threat of their empire’s growing strength. Despite the association of warriors with flowers there is none of the feminisation that occurred in earlier operatic depictions of ‘Eastern’ men: ‘Hail, hair, Sakura Who diest in thy pride! / May we upon the hard-fought field, / Our lives, like thee, in glory yield, / And death be beautified!’<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the Samurai retained a mythology of nobility and strong masculinity in Europe, and their honour was very rarely questioned; as Montgomery wrote, ‘There is nothing in their ethical code to which I the most censorious person can raise the slightest objection.’<sup>24</sup> The idea of warrior ‘natives’ had been inactive in these opera libretti for nearly one hundred years, however events like the Anglo-Zulu War (1879), Boer War (1899-1902) and Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) brought inter-‘racial’ combat back into focus.

In Asche’s *Mameena* (1914), one of the primary functions of music is to accompany dance, notably the war dance with the company ‘roaring’ ‘Bayete!’ (‘Hail!’ – the royal salute) and ‘War! War!’<sup>25</sup> and the wedding dance, the ‘spectacle’ of which ‘was astounding and deafening’<sup>26</sup> as

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<sup>21</sup> Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human*: 234-35.

<sup>22</sup> Monckton and Talbot, *The Mousmé*: 129-30.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Montgomery, *The Empire of the East*: 77.

<sup>25</sup> Asche, *Mameena*: [67].

<sup>26</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 97.



over eighty, blacked-up cast members ‘sang and danced till the curtain fell – and then was raised time after time – even the jaded first-nighters got up in their feet and sang the time and stamped with their feet in rhythm.’<sup>27</sup> The photographs of this latter dance highlight the striking nature of the swathes of blacked-up skin on the stage and extravagant costumes and props.<sup>28</sup>



Brian Singleton highlights these dances, commenting that ‘The [two] real Zulu chiefs, who had been imported but not permitted to perform, also taught the all-white company traditional dances and song, which Asche inserted into the show, but became bastardized as pseudo-slave-hymns.’<sup>29</sup> Asche explains that the Zulu chiefs were not allowed to perform because of ‘the behaviour of some white women at the South African Exhibition at Earl’s Court’,<sup>30</sup> it was acceptable for white men to play mock Zulus blacked-up on stage and declaring war, but not for actual Zulus to do so.

Asche reminisces that all eighty cast members (excepting the white Allan Quatermain) were made ‘black or brown. It used to take me two hours to be made up, coloured from head to foot, and it took the other members of the company a like time’.<sup>31</sup> One can well believe that when viewing the publicity images of the cast in costume in *The Daily Mirror* where Asche is described as ‘a Zulu to his finger-tips [sic.]’ (see image below).<sup>32</sup> Yet as much as a blacked-up white actor *represented* a black-man on stage, the knowledge remained that underneath the paint he was *white*, as is evident in this passage regarding W.P. Collins from Reverend Hugh Reginald Haweis’s *Music and Morals* (1871): ‘underneath, the same face, only washed, looks appealingly at us, and seems to say, “You see the black all comes off. I am not so bad-looking either. You can hardly see me at night. But remember *P. Collins* is white, and although his initial is *P.*, he

<sup>27</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 159.

<sup>28</sup> Anon. ‘Zulu-Land on the London Stage: Remarkable Pictures from “Mameena,” at the Globe Theatre’. *The Sketch* (21 October 1914): 44-45. Illustration featured: Foulsham and Banfield. ‘The Scene in the Royal Kraal: The Wedding Dance’: 45.

<sup>29</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 100.

<sup>30</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 158-59.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*: 159.

<sup>32</sup> Anon. (Daily Mirror Photograph) *Oscar Asche as Saduka is a Zulu to his finger-tips*. In ‘Oscar Asche as a Zulu: Wonderful New Play at the Globe’. *The Daily Mirror* (05 October 1914): 6.

was not christened Pompey.”<sup>33</sup> This passage depicts the ambivalence inherent in the process of ‘blacking-up’, but also the clear knowledge that as “real” as it seems, the audience is secure in the knowledge that it is but illusion. The film critic Tania Modleski asserts that blacking-up is ‘a method by which the white man may disavow – acknowledge and at the same time deny – difference at the level of the body’,<sup>34</sup> and is thus a form of mimicry, of creating ‘a difference that is almost nothing but not quite’,<sup>35</sup> as discussed in recent work by the post-colonial scholar Homi Bhabha.



Well before blacking-up on the stage Asche and Chris Wilson had spent time near Johannesburg researching the music and performance details for *Mameena*. Captain James Stuart (Assistant Secretary of Native Affairs) took the players to visit a choice of kraals with pre-arranged ‘demonstrations of Zulu culture’. Stuart was later to supervise the costumes, scenery and other mise-en-scene for the production ‘as well as teaching the company Zulu manners’.<sup>36</sup> Asche’s description of their experiences at one of the Zulu kraals that Stuart showed them highlights his enthusiasm at these displays:

I heard the most wonderful and thrilling band in the world. There were about one hundred and fifty natives, all playing on the Kaffir piano after the style of the xylophone. [...] The rhythm was perfect. It throbbed through the air and through your body. It gripped you by the throat. It was as God speaking. The earth trembled with the very soul of it. And then a rush of

<sup>33</sup> Rev. H.R. Haweis, *Music and Morals*. London: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1912 [1871]: 473.

<sup>34</sup> Tania Modleski, ‘Cinema and the Dark Continent: Race and Gender in Popular Film’. In *Feminist Film Theory: A Reader*, ed. Sue Thornham, 321-35. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999: 322-23.

<sup>35</sup> Homi K. Bhabha, ‘Of Mimicry and Man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse’. In *The Location of Culture*, 85-92. London: Routledge, 1994: 91.

<sup>36</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 90.

painted warriors, with their assegais and knobkerries, leaping, springing into the air to the beat of it. And then at the very height of it – do you call it the crescendo? – when you could not imagine how it could be topped, a mighty and sudden and complete crash – of silence. But only a musician who has heard it could attempt to describe it. I looked at Chris Wilson, a great musician [...] and he was trembling from head to foot, the tears rolling down his cheeks. He could not speak of it for long after, and then only in exclamations of wonder.<sup>37</sup>

Asche not only hears the music, but moreover seems to experience it physically, something that he attempts to demonstrate in the physicality of his performers. As Singleton remarks, Asche and Wilson did not question the Zulu performers whom they saw and they returned to England with 'surface aesthetics to copy or misremember in their composition and staging with which to accompany a parade of Captain Stuart's costumes and props.'<sup>38</sup> However their appreciation of the Zulu music and their *attempts* to emulate it faithfully on stage show a new development in these works, with composers and writers wishing to create reliable interpretations of "genuine" 'native' music – something that occurs only very minimally in any of the pre-twentieth-century works.

## Demonising the Other

Despite periods of interest in the 'noble savage', many aspects of Other behaviours were represented and interpreted on the British stage as negative and even evil. The strength of demonisation seems to increase as the century progresses, thus in the works of Bishop, for example, the Other is more negativised than demonised.

### Other beliefs: *Magic and mysticism*

In *Europe's Myths of Orient* (1996) Rana Kabbani notes that magic and sorcery were habitually associated with one another in European representations of the 'Orient',<sup>39</sup> which is well illustrated in Bishop's *Aladdin* (1826). Magic is an integral part of the plot as the libretto revolves around a magic golden ring, a magic lamp and a collection of sometimes invisible genii, all of whom are slaves to these objects.<sup>40</sup> The power of magic is highlighted in the genie Unda's words, 'Mightier than Sage or King / Is he who wears the Ring!';<sup>41</sup> thus magic can emulate and create knowledge, status and power, and lead to worship as befits royalty. In ways such as this 'Oriental' life is made Other and distanced with increasingly conventionalising stereotypes of magic, mysticism and idolatry. The beliefs and religious practises in Bishop's early-nineteenth-century operas very much revolve around images of mysticism and violent idolatry, however the

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<sup>37</sup> Asche, *Oscar Asche*: 144.

<sup>38</sup> Singleton, *Oscar Asche*: 92.

<sup>39</sup> Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient*: 40.

<sup>40</sup> Bishop, *Aladdin*: 42-48.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

mystic elements in mid-century works are limited, with one of the infrequent examples being Selika's mesmeric powers in *L'Africaine* (1860).<sup>42</sup> This is more a comment on the contemporary European craze for mesmerism than on 'Oriental' mysticism, thus the supernatural side of religion loses its importance later in the century.

### *Violence, human sacrifice and cannibalism*

Kabbani feels that 'Among the many themes that emerge from the European narration of the Other, two appear most strikingly. The first is the insistent claim that the East was a place of lascivious sensuality (as discussed in the previous chapter), and the second that it was a 'realm characterised by inherent violence.'<sup>43</sup> In *The Fall of Algiers* (1825) the Muslim character Orasmin sings 'let Alla nerve my hand, and be my battle word / Destruction to the Christian band', 'The Koran, or the Sword!'<sup>44</sup> Bishop sets this section *Allegro Spiritoso* and marks Orasmin's line *Animato* in stark contrast to the preceding *Largo Sostenuto* and subsequent *dolce* markings, thus highlighting Orasmin's agitation and zeal. In linking the words 'Koran' and 'Sword' in his libretto, Walker associates Islam with violence; he also indicates that the Muslim characters are wishing to kill non-Muslims. Bishop illustrates this violent 'Oriental' temperament through his sudden tempo and style changes. So 'Oriental' religion is given a negative slant with Islam seen as a violent and brutal religion. In *Orientalism* (1999) Sardar remarks that 'Symbolically, the violent and barbaric Muslim male and the sensual, passive female, come together to represent the perfect Orient of Western perception: they fuse together to produce a concrete image of sexuality and despotism and thus inferiority';<sup>45</sup> the Islamic operas set by Bishop illustrate this with their mysterious women and barbaric men.

One feature of 'native' conduct that could be (and often was) perceived as uncivilised and degenerate was religious practice. In Bishop's South American operas the representations are more overtly violent and images of idolatry prevail. A savage South America is created in *Cortez* (1823) with Mexico depicted as a land of human sacrifice with the threat of cannibalism.<sup>46</sup> In *Cortez* the chorus prays to the God of Air singing, 'Round thy shrine for aid we throng! / Warm blood we'll pour o'er it'.<sup>47</sup> This image is made explicitly violent rather than mystical, and is also sensualised with the idea of 'warm blood' flowing; through this image the situation is further augmented by the European fear of human sacrifice and cannibalism – the Indian men sing 'Our altar's [sic] with blood of the stranger shall reek' and in the vocal score Bishop footnotes 'All the nations of New Spain devour the flesh of their captives after having sacrificed them to the Gods'.<sup>48</sup> In footnoting this Bishop is merely aligned to accepted thought, for instance W. Cooke

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<sup>42</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, at footnotes 35-37.*

<sup>43</sup> Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient*: 5-6.

<sup>44</sup> Bishop, *The Fall of Algiers*: 112-20.

<sup>45</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 48.

<sup>46</sup> For fictional representations See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8, 'Human Sacrifice and Cannibalism'*.

<sup>47</sup> Bishop, *Cortez*: 65-67.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*: 44-45.

Taylor writes in 1840 that cannibalism 'is found in most barbarous tribes'.<sup>49</sup> By the early-nineteenth century cannibalism was a standard European image of the 'savage' Other, and the 'Orient' itself appears to be the only non-European locale to which cannibalism is not ascribed. This may be because aspects of the 'Orient' had long been experienced by Europeans with it being geographically relatively close to Europe, and even in the often creative European imagination, cannibalism could not be allied with what was "known" or believed about the 'Orient'.

The fear of human sacrifice also arises in *L'Africaine* a third of a century later, when Selika has to rescue Vasco from this fate. Unlike in the Bishop works, here there is no intimation of cannibalism and the overall representation of religion is much less violent. A new angle on faith has also developed – a mockery of Other (that is non-Christian) religions. Vasco quips, '*Vishnu!* who's he? *I vish I knew; do you? (to audience) / It's a rum lingo!*'<sup>50</sup> This punning is a stylistic device that Arbuthnot employs for comedy through the entire work, however this joke is emphasised as this is one of the few points where the audience is addressed directly, and at a juncture where Vasco is openly derisive of the Hindu religion through a mockery of the name of one of its gods. It seems somewhat bizarre that the Queen of Madagascar is Hindu as the primary religion in that country is Islam – this is perhaps a confusing of geography and cultures, or a blatant disregard for their importance, something reflected at other junctures in the drama as Selika also describes her time in Bengal (in modern Pakistan) and Bombay (in modern India),<sup>51</sup> yet she is an African from Madagascar. This relates to Edward Said's assertion that orientalists considered 'Orientals' in 'abstract generalities'.<sup>52</sup>

### *Disregard of religious edicts*

Just as Arbuthnot derides Hinduism, in *The Cadi* (1851) Sauvage gently mocks Islam when Ali declares 'Now with pure hearts in solemn seeming, / Prostrate yourselves, believers all',<sup>53</sup> intimating that the importance is to *seem* untainted and grave. This is reflected by Ali's behaviour and his taste for spirits, which he dishonestly justifies by stating 'of course I would not drink wine for the world, you know, for Mahomet forbids it; but rum, and brandy and kirchwasser [sic] and arrack, he says nothing about, so I'm all right there, and I love 'em dearly, I can tell you.'<sup>54</sup> Sauvage even gives Ali a drinking song in which he sings 'Our prophet's paradise, believe me, / To wait for patiently now won't grieve me.'<sup>55</sup> Ali is thus presented as dishonest and negligent towards his religious convictions. Through the character in his poem

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<sup>49</sup> W. Cooke Taylor. *The Natural History of Society in the Barbarous and Civilized State: An Essay Towards Discovering the Origin and Course of Human Improvement*. New York, 1840: 124-25. Cited in H.L. Malchow. *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996: 41.

<sup>50</sup> Arbuthnot, *L'Africaine*: 19.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*: 10.

<sup>52</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>53</sup> [Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 7.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*: 14.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*: 16.

'Mandalay' (1892) Rudyard Kipling also depicts the 'Oriental's' lack of ability to maintain religious practice in the 'East' (alongside the fickleness of 'Oriental' women): 'An' I seed her [...] a-wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot: / Bloomin' idol made o' mud- / Wot they called the Great Gawd Budd- / Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed' er where she stud!'<sup>56</sup> The narrator shows how religion is forgotten in passion. The inability to keep to religious practice occurs in some of these stage works also, but about Islam, instead of Hinduism.<sup>57</sup> Much like Sauvage's Ali, the stereotype of the dissolute, drunken ruler persists later into the century in *Lord Bateman* (1882) when at the close of Act I Stephens has the Soldan falling into unconsciousness through an excess of alcohol, so either the librettist was unaware that practising Muslims do not drink alcohol, or he was utilizing it in order to highlight the concept that the 'Orientals' are so corrupt that they do not even observe their own religious edicts.

## Duplicity and Corruption

In Bishop's *Aladdin* (1826) magic (like power in general) corrupts: in this particular instance it corrupts Aladdin's uncle Mourad. In 'Tremble, ye Genii in your Caves!' Mourad sings, before his final disappearance, 'I shall live as none before', 'I will ever youthful be, / Sickness shall not come near me, / Night and day the wine shall flow, / And the fairest round me glow'.<sup>58</sup> In these statements Mourad embodies a number of characteristics, namely greed and covetousness, and a weakness for alcohol and women, that to early-nineteenth-century British morality would be failings and indicators of corruption. It is not however just the individual who is perceived to be unreliable in the 'Orient', but also 'Oriental' institutions and leaderships; as Heidi Holder states in her article on British drama in *Acts of Supremacy* (1991) the edicts of 'natives' are portrayed as 'essentially corrupt' in nineteenth-century drama.<sup>59</sup> Again in *Aladdin*, the powerful male characters are further painted negatively; the Schah's aria 'Sister! I have loved thee well!' warns her 'Yet, though dear to me as sight, / Though I prize thee as the light; / Check me not, or find too late / Warmest love can keenest hate'.<sup>60</sup> The Schah cautions Nourmahal not to cross him when he has chosen a husband for her ('Prince' Aladdin) – in his despotism he alone will make decisions and will punish *anyone* who attempts to obstruct him, regardless of personal ties. In both Mourad and the Schah, male 'Orientals' are presented as so corrupt and despotic that familial relations are superseded by personal greeds and desires.

Moving to South America, the Peruvian character Azan in *Zuma* (1818) acts in a comparable fashion – despite his professed love for Zuma he chooses to imprison her child, Zamorin, in order to prevent Zuma from helping her mistress. Through his corrupt actions Azan's 'love' proves

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<sup>56</sup> Rudyard Kipling. 'Mandalay'. In *Barrack-Room Ballads and Other Verses*. Fifth Edition, 50-53. London: Methuen & Co., 1893 [1892]: 51, lines 13-17.

<sup>57</sup> Hassan's unveiling of Rose-in-Bloom in Sullivan's *The Rose of Persia* has already been discussed. See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3*, at footnote 122-23.

<sup>58</sup> Bishop, *Aladdin*: 110-19.

<sup>59</sup> Heidi J. Holder. 'Melodrama, Realism and Empire on the British stage'. In *Acts of Supremacy: The British Empire and the Stage, 1790-1930*, ed. J.S. Bratton, Richard Allen Cave, Breandan Gregory, Heidi J. Holder and Michael Pickering, 129-49. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991: 130.

<sup>60</sup> Bishop, *Aladdin*: 100-03.

rather to be merely lust and desire, as he chooses to laud what power he has over those whom he professes to care for, in a similar way to the Schah in *Aladdin*. Thus ideas of 'native' corruption are applied to South Americans as well as to 'Orientals'. In fact, the stereotypes of despotism, mysticism and corruption that are normally viewed as orientalist are all intertwined in Dibdin's plot for *Zuma*. As previously discussed, through a magical poison from a tree (to which the only cure is an antidote from its partnering tree) the Peruvians are secretly poisoning the Vice-Queen, thus 'natives' are slowly murdering a European female – an inexcusable deed in British eyes, and an illustration of the perceived danger to Western women who leave the safety of Europe. Indeed, the Vice-Queen is the only European woman outside of Europe who is depicted in these examples of Bishop's operas, and she is directly threatened throughout the action, perhaps acting as a warning to any European woman who may wish to venture away from home.

Dishonestly and duplicity take a more central role in the musical dramas of the mid-nineteenth century; by this time there was a common belief that the 'Oriental' normally wore an 'expression of cruelty, duplicity, or discontent.'<sup>61</sup> It was particularly those in power who were considered most corrupt, as indeed is depicted through these libretti. In *The Cadi* (1851) the ruler is described as thieving by his own people: 'On some pretext ev'ry day of our lives sirs, / This old Cadi to rob us contrives sirs!'<sup>62</sup> and even his advisor says that the Cadi would 'promise all, but never pay a jot.'<sup>63</sup> The word 'contrives' indicates that the Cadi expends much thought and perhaps enjoyment on his corrupt dictatorship. The representation of the Cadi is in line with popular writing, for example George Trevelyan's comment that 'Our very honesty seems ostentatious and contemptible to the wily and tortuous Hindoo [or 'Oriental'] mind.'<sup>64</sup> The irony is that the Cadi's advisor, the eunuch Ali, is duping him in turn – 'A stupid old fool! he fancies that I'm his most obedient humble slave, while I'm all the time leading him by the nose, just when and where and how I please.'<sup>65</sup> Indeed Ali seems to embody many of the aspects that were to become caricatured as aspects of the "sly" 'Oriental'. The very fact that Ali is an eunuch would create distrust in an audience which may have read some of the many and commercially successful travel writings describing the duplicity of such "unnatural" beings, for example Emmeline Lott writes in *The English Governess in Egypt* (1867): 'having myself witnessed several of these spectres of mankind [eunuchs] "toying and wooing" with the black female slaves, I doubted their infirmity of body, and kept a watchful eye over them.'<sup>66</sup> Thus the 'Orient' is so sexually dangerous that women are not even safe with eunuchs.

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<sup>61</sup> Emmeline Lott. *Nights in the Harem; or, The Mohaddety in the Palace of Ghezire*. London: Chapman & Hall, 1867: Vol. I, 6.

<sup>62</sup> [Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 5.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*: 7.

<sup>64</sup> George Otto Trevelyan. 'The Gulf Between Us', from *The Competition Wallah*. London: [Macmillan], 1864: original page not specified. Cited in *Empire Writing: An Anthology of Colonial Literature 1870-1918*, ed. Elleke Boehmer, 8-15. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998: 9.

<sup>65</sup> [Sauvage], *The Cadi*: 13.

<sup>66</sup> Emmeline Lott. *The English Governess in Egypt: Harem Life in Egypt and Constantinople*. London: Richard Bentley, 1866: 175.

Later in the century, and again with echoes of *The Cadi's Ali*, the 'cruel, scheming Oriental'<sup>67</sup> is incarnated in the character of Macdallah in *Lord Bateman* (1882), the Soldan's principal advisor. He describes himself in the following terms: 'I felt that for crime I was rife, / As well as for sly dissipation';<sup>68</sup> consequently he felt that he would be the ideal royal counsellor at the Soldan's court. In line with this, Cellier's Sultan describes himself as 'not a bit shy; / Look at my eye, wary and sly';<sup>69</sup> so slyness is something that Stephens ascribes to 'Oriental' rulers in both of his works here studied. Back to Solomon, Macdallah's general dissoluteness is presented in the ironic 'Quartette', 'Family Virtues', with the text: 'To have a strong sense of not meaning to pay / Is the way our family's got; / When a creditor calls to be out, gone away, / To be up all the night and in bed all the day, / To delight in strong drink and excel in high play, / Are ways that our family's got!';<sup>70</sup> representing a hardening of the mid-nineteenth-century image of Eastern duplicity and dissolution which has developed into extremely negative, and now almost stereotypical images of the 'Oriental' ruler. In the same work the Soldan himself is presented in an equally negative light: in his solo song 'The Great Eastern', again a satirical title, the Soldan states: 'Oh, an eastern monarch is a jovial wight, / He rules all his subjects with a father's care; / Whate'er he undertakes is certain to be right, / For to contradict him nobody would dare!' Despite his 'jovial' and fatherly nature, he acknowledges that none would contradict him, stressing his status as an absolute monarch or dictator. For the Soldan 'instant execution Is the noble institution / By which he always carries out his laws' and he states 'Gainst this splendid constitution / Who could raise a revolution? / If he does, he's sewn up neatly in a sack'.<sup>71</sup> Thus even in his fatherly role he torturously murders those who dare to disagree with him. Furthermore, Stephens directly links violence and Islam when Macdallah declares, 'praises be to Allah For this good heathen slaughter!'<sup>72</sup> Imagery of violence is also utilised by Hood in *The Rose of Persia*, when Hassan threatens Rose-in-Bloom with death or unveiling, 'Then, Executioner, / With scimitar await! / Perhaps you'll kindly her / At once decapitate!'<sup>73</sup> Descriptions of dictatorial violence like this stretch back nearly a century to the representation of the Schah in Bishop's *Aladdin* (1827).

The Soldan's mockery of democracy is the refrain of 'The Great Eastern': 'Let them chatter as they please of their civilisation, / Their parliament, and liberties, and representation, / But the only perfect nostrum for a downtrodden nation / Is an autocratic specimen just like me!'<sup>74</sup> This cultural comment by the writer on the faults of absolute monarchs, most particularly those employing torture, displays the Victorian belief that such behaviour could only lead to a "downtrodden nation", in contrast to the perceived splendours of Britain's own, more democratic system. The representation of the Soldan echoes Gilbert's characterisation of The Lord High

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<sup>67</sup> Christine Bolt. *Victorian Attitudes to Race*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971: 178.

<sup>68</sup> Solomon, *Lord Bateman*: 15-17.

<sup>69</sup> Cellier, *The Sultan of Mocha*: 75.

<sup>70</sup> Solomon, *Lord Bateman*: 43-44.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*: 37-39.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*: 7-14.

<sup>73</sup> Sullivan, *The Rose of Persia*: 121-22.

<sup>74</sup> Solomon, *Lord Bateman*: 37-39.



Executioner, Ko-Ko, in *The Mikado*; most particularly when Ko-Ko sings of his 'little list', he is portrayed (although satirically) as indiscriminate, petty and cruel in his decisions regarding what is 'criminal'.<sup>75</sup>

Like Ko-Ko, the stereotype of the buffoon is also compounded onto the Soldan's incarnation as the cruel, scheming 'Oriental'; in his song 'The Marvellous Magician', the Soldan boasts of his magical skills, does a number of card tricks and states 'I am known as Twinkum Twanky, / Of the sport of Hanky Panky / I'm allow'd to be / The very best professor!'<sup>76</sup> The use of the term 'hanky panky' not only indicates the Soldan's use of artful trickery to swindle money, but also dishonest behaviour involving sexual activity. This song is perhaps also a comment on the older ideas of the mysticism of the 'East' as found in Bishop's day, and a mockery of these myths which are now dispelled. Stephens makes the Soldan look ridiculous, but also as wasting his time – hardly a fit ruler of a kingdom. Indeed, images of time-wasting and indolence like those depicted through Stephens' Soldan are essential to the 'Oriental' stereotype by the late nineteenth century. In *The Rose of Persia* (1899), Hassan describes how 'The laziest of lives I live in peace and plenty' smoking a 'hubble-bubble',<sup>77</sup> and even his women sing that they 'lie in languor lazy, Lounging on a low divan, / Flood of interesting chatter Flows behind each dainty fan'.<sup>78</sup> This description of indolent women in the 'Orient' is not exceptional, for instance Mrs. Holman Hunt in her description of Syrian harems in 1881 refers to the 'monotonous idleness'<sup>79</sup> of the women. Andrew Haggard believes this 'empty existence' of the women to be the cause of 'Oriental' 'women smiling all around them at every man who came near'.<sup>80</sup> Indolence is ascribed to other Asians as well as Muslims, with Dance's libretto to *The Nautch Girl* (1891) opening with the words, 'Beneath the sky of blue / The indolent Hindu / Reclines the whole day long', and comments such as 'the idle throng',<sup>81</sup> reinforcing the stereotyped view of the 'lazy native', an idea that gained force towards the end of the century.

## Male caricaturing

By the early twentieth century, publicly approved displays of cruelty and violence by 'Oriental' figures of power are so far-fetched that they enter the realms of caricature.<sup>82</sup> For example, in *Chu Chin Chow* (1916) Norton continues the late-nineteenth-century theme of Muslim violence with Abu Hasan's song 'The Scimitar', where he sings 'Carve thee up, carve thee down, / Slice thee

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<sup>75</sup> William Schwenck Gilbert. 'The Mikado'. In *The Annotated Gilbert and Sullivan [Libretto]*, ed. Ian Bradley, 255-354. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982: 275. Interestingly Ko-Ko has 'the nigger serenader, and the others of his race' on his list, who amongst many others, 'they'll none of 'em be missed.'

<sup>76</sup> Solomon, *Lord Bateman*, 115.

<sup>77</sup> Sullivan, *The Rose of Persia*: 7-9.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*: 5-6.

<sup>79</sup> Mrs. Holman Hunt. *Children at Jerusalem: A Sketch of Modern Life in Syria*. London: Ward, Lock, & Co., n.d. [1881]: 68.

<sup>80</sup> Haggard, *Under Crescent and Star*: 404.

<sup>81</sup> Solomon, *The Nautch Girl [Libretto]*: 3, 6.

<sup>82</sup> Anon. 'Caricature'. *Compact Oxford English Dictionary*. See the website <http://www.askoxford.com/results/?view=dict&freeseach=caricature&branch=13842570&textsearchtype=eexact> (Accessed 19 November 2005).

through from heel to crown; / Carve thee in, carve thee out, / Whilst with pride my robbers shout'.<sup>83</sup> The utilisation of pidgin-English by Anderson in *The White Chrysanthemum* (1905) for the 'Jap Girls' is another caricaturing and othering device, a contrivance that is exploited to a much greater extent in his representation of Sin Chong, Lieutenant Armitage's Chinese servant on H.M.S. Powerful, stationed in Japan. All of the songs that the Japanese or Chinese sing in this work are in 'pigeon-English', but particularly Sin Chong's: 'Just whenee day is dawning, Sin Chong wake from slumberee long; / In very early morning, Hear small bell go dingy, dingy dong. / Please getee up, Take piecee cup, Make welly nice warm tea. / Chinaman yawn, Feel welly worn, Use welly, big, big D [...] When piecee blekfast over'.<sup>84</sup> The mockery of a Chinese-produced 'r' sounding like an 'l' is made use of to such an extent that at times the text is very difficult to understand, but this incoherence would merely add to the caricaturing effect, and continues the 'buffoonery' established in the late-nineteenth-century works by composers like Solomon.

The Chinese man's inferiority and apparent lack of intellect are not only represented in his dialect, but also in his repetition of words like 'ding, ding dong' and his generally subservient position. His situation is made clear in the concerted number 'Six Jolly Sailors and a Slim Chinee' when all of the ship's crew sing the chorus 'Two, four, six piece Jack Tar briny-man, Insignificant pigtail Chineeman. / Little Japanese on bended knee, Six jolly sailors And a slim Chinee'.<sup>85</sup> Again Chong is caricatured with a mockery of the Chinese style of wearing hair long, and his slight figure. The description of the Japanese 'on bended knee' puts them literally lower in stature than the Englishmen, clearly illustrating on stage for the audience their inferiority to the British, as they kneel to their "superiors". The Chinese man is described as 'Insignificant', placing him below notice – even 'lower' than the Japanese. John Thomson's publication of 1873-74, *Illustrations of China and its People* includes photographs of Chinese 'types' or 'typical scenes' which 'reflected established Western images of China, propagated by other travellers, writers, artists and photographers. Thomson's photographs of, for example, a Chinese woman's fashionably deformed foot or people smoking opium confirmed China's low place on the scale of civilization and provided additional evidence to support a dominant Western image of the Chinese as hopelessly addicted to a range of vices'.<sup>86</sup> By the early twentieth century images of the 'Oriental' had become so unquestionably established that in works like *The White Chrysanthemum* and *Chu Chin Chow* some of the representations of the 'Oriental' Other have reached the point of caricature.

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<sup>83</sup> Norton, *Chu Chin Chow*: 64-65.

<sup>84</sup> Talbot, *The White Chrysanthemum*: 34-39.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*: 72-76.

<sup>86</sup> James R. Ryan. *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire*. London: Reaktion Books, 1997: 165.

## Concluding remarks

In contrast to the nobility of the Other as perceived by some British artists, as these case-studies indicate that the majority of representations of Others are demonised, particularly when considering men. The paired, polarised stereotypes of the 'noble savage' and 'cruel, scheming Oriental',<sup>87</sup> could be seen as support for John MacKenzie's assertion (discussed in the opening section of this thesis) that in long nineteenth century Britain, Others are frequently portrayed as degenerate in order to validate conquest, but redeemable enough to defend Europe's continuing intervention;<sup>88</sup> as these case-study operas have suggested, in their childlike 'noble' simplicity or their indolent, violent and corrupt perversion, Britain's Others in general (and 'Orientals' in particular) are depicted as unfit to govern themselves. The 'noble savage' ideal hints that some degree of "redemption" is a possibility, even if 'real' "civilisation" may not be. This is however a somewhat too rigid simplification, as these case studies rather highlight the nuanced and frequently ambivalent attitudes to the Other on the British musical stage. Angelic and demonic representations are played out beside one another onstage, yet as the long nineteenth century progresses, those actors (and actresses) cast into demonic, highly stereotyped and negative roles outnumber those who play 'noble savages' for the British audiences.

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<sup>87</sup> Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*: 178.

<sup>88</sup> John M. MacKenzie. *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995: 12.

## SECTION II

# Works of Fiction

Haggard and his Milieu

## Chapter 5: Literature and orientalism: an introduction.

Contemporary theories about orientalism are often linked to literature, and Edward Said uses a number of examples in the primary case-study material for his seminal *Orientalism* (1978). Since this groundbreaking publication, other scholars (and indeed Said himself) have utilised these theories in relation to other forms of cultural production, however orientalist theory still retains an important and relatively long-established role in academic discussions of British literature about Other cultures. The 'Orient' has been represented in British literature for centuries, taking its precedent from the works of Ancient Rome and Greece, however in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries aspects of orientalism (the theories of which are discussed in the opening section of this work) became established in these portrayals. In *Orientalism*, Said mentions fictional works from canonical British long-nineteenth-century authors as diverse as Lord George Gordon Byron (1788-1824), George Eliot (1819-1880), Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), and E.M. Forster (1879-1970), indicating how orientalism frequently overrides gender, class and literary-stylistic boundaries.

This thesis study has overviewed the orientalist works of many fictional writers, yet only those who incorporated examples of the employment of music to create images of otherness have been analysed in the body of this work: the authors studied include James Morier (1780-1849), Ella Haggard (1819-1889), Andrew Haggard (1854-1934), Arthur Haggard (1826-1925), George Meredith (1828-1909), G.A. Henty (1832-1902), Algernon Swinburne (1837-1909), Bram Stoker (1847-1912), Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), Kipling, Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), John Buchan (1875-1940), and Conrad. Owing to the particular breadth, diversity and richness of nineteenth-century British orientalist fiction, it seemed wise to choose a close study for this section: Sir Henry Rider Haggard (1856-1925) was one of the most successful and prolific writers of 'Orient' and Other in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and unlike many of his contemporaries he frequently alludes to music in his romances, thus making him particularly suitable as a close study for this thesis.

Haggard wrote his romances within a climate where artistic works regarding the Other were extremely fashionable, accordingly Chapter 6 is a contextualising chapter, considering varied case-studies of fiction from the second half of the long nineteenth century and exploring the diverse ways in which music is used either as a metaphor representing innate characteristics attributed to the Other or as behaviour displaying people's otherness. The following two chapters focus on the popular romances of Rider Haggard which were aimed at mass dissemination to the general public, and the ways in which he concentrates on and develops the musical ideas touched upon by his contemporaries. The final chapter in this section acts as a coda to the analysis of Haggard's works by discussing E.M. Hull's *The Sheik* (1919). It provides an example of the ways in which Haggard's orientalist gender constructions began to be subverted as the long nineteenth century drew to a close, and how music is used in this process.

## H. Rider Haggard and his literary style

'[F]lashes of a fine, weird imagination and a fine poetic use and command of the savage way of talking';<sup>1</sup> it was with this compliment that Robert Louis Stephenson made contact with Henry Haggard following publication of the latter's first romance, *King Solomon's Mines*, in 1885. Haggard was a prolific and successful writer of fiction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He first experienced Empire when his father sent him to South Africa in his late teens where he learned Zulu and helped to investigate a spate of witch persecutions. He took part in an expedition to annexe the Boer Transvaal (1877), helping (literally) to hoist the Union Jack in Pretoria,<sup>2</sup> and was appointed Master and Registrar of the High Court of Justice for the Transvaal. After brief service in the Pretoria Cavalry in the wars against Cetywayo and the Zulus in 1879,<sup>3</sup> he returned to England to take the bar and he began to write.

Haggard's early imperial experience greatly marks his writings, as do his various travels in Egypt, South Africa, the Middle East, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Fiji, Hawaii and the United States. He was also influenced by his friendships with writers such as Rudyard Kipling and Andrew Lang (to whom *She* is dedicated and whose poem backs the title page of *Allan Quatermain*).<sup>4</sup> Haggard's early works were not only disseminated to a large readership, but were also critically acclaimed; reviewers were overwhelming in their admiration for *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*, indeed those who disliked this work were in a minority.<sup>5</sup> Despite the fact that Haggard's writings were criticised for their sexual outspokenness<sup>6</sup> they were not banned – in a climate that objected to the sexualised works of writers such as Oscar Wilde and Thomas Hardy there must be a reason for this acceptance; it is possible that Haggard's works were not seen as excessively threatening to morality because their overt sexuality is placed in an orientalist context and often depicted through metaphors, particularly musical ones.

Haggard's view of southern Africa influenced the Victorian public's imagination in a similar way to Kipling's India,<sup>7</sup> so his writings not only reflected popular ideas, but aided in their creation. Haggard divided his works into 'novels' (generally 'domestic pieces', set in England), and 'romances', located in Africa or an alternative uncharted territory.<sup>8</sup> Although Robert Fraser asserts that romances contrast with novels, stating that the latter are often vehicles for social

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Berresford Ellis. *H. Rider Haggard: A Voice From the Infinite*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978: 101.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew Smith. 'Beyond Colonialism: Death and the Body in H. Rider Haggard'. In *Empire and the Gothic: the Politics of Genre*, ed. Andrew Smith and William Hughes, 103-17. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003: 103.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Fraser. *Victorian Quest Romance: Stevenson, Haggard, Kipling and Conan Doyle*. Plymouth: Northcote House, 1998: 28-29.

<sup>4</sup> Norman Etherington. *Rider Haggard*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984: 108.

<sup>5</sup> Ellis, *H. Rider Haggard*: 113.

<sup>6</sup> Hugh Ridley. *Images of Imperial Rule*. London: Croom Helm, 1983: 94. For example Anon. 'The Culture of the Horrible: Mr. Haggard's Stories'. *The Church Quarterly Review*, XXV (January 1888): 402.

<sup>7</sup> Paula M. Krebs. *Gender, Race, and the Writing of Empire: Public Discourse and the Boer War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999: 149.

<sup>8</sup> Rebecca Stott. 'The Dark Continent: Africa as Female Body in Haggard's Adventure Fiction'. *Feminist Review*, 32 (1989): 71.

criticism, whereas the former ‘frequently convey and consolidate the common values of a culture’,<sup>9</sup> this is a great simplification. Questions regarding the literary significance of romance and his own written style were ongoing preoccupations for Haggard, as is indicated by his diary entry of 4 April 1918, concerning a review of his romance *Love Eternal* in *The Times*, which ‘As usual [...] falls foul of my writing and tells me that I am not a “literary artist”, though it is good enough to add that I make what I want to say very clearly understood. This, to my view, doubtless a quite inartistic one, is the real point of all writing!’<sup>10</sup> The qualities of the romance were also discussed by other nineteenth-century writers: in his preface to *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) Nigel Hawthorne considers his book as romance ‘woven of’ a ‘humble’ ‘texture’, much like Haggard’s ‘inartistic’ romance style. Like Haggard, Hawthorne refuses ‘relentlessly to impale the story with its moral [...] as by sticking a pin through a butterfly – thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude.’<sup>11</sup> Haggard also wrote about the romance in his autobiography: for him the love-story ‘at least among English-speaking peoples, must be limited and restrained in tone, must follow the accepted lines of thought and what is defined as morality’<sup>12</sup> – interestingly he specifically separates the love-affairs of the ‘English-speaking peoples’, suggesting that Other peoples in his romances need not conform to ‘what is defined as morality’ (a phrase that indicates that Haggard holds little genuine respect for contemporary sexual moralistic thought). There are few literary niceties to Haggard’s written technique, which is why his metaphorical references to music are conspicuous in what is essentially a simple style.

In *Victorian Quest Romance* (1998) Robert Fraser writes that although it seemed to be an act of escape, quest romance was actually a search for truth and the real aspects of human nature.<sup>13</sup> Haggard’s own views and beliefs overtly influence his plots and content – whilst creating fictional (and often fantastical) works he used his romances to explore ‘truths’ and meanings – as Richard Patteson writes, Haggard’s fictions correspond to his version of “history”.<sup>14</sup> For Wendy Katz, romance is literary form where ‘characters can be set free from place, time, or history [...] In Haggard’s writings the restraints of time are subverted by any number of rebirths, doubles, reincarnations, or returns to former lives’.<sup>15</sup> Again this is a reflection of Haggard’s personal

<sup>9</sup> Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance*: 8.

<sup>10</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *The Private Diaries of Sir Henry Rider Haggard: 1914-1925*, ed. D.S. Higgins. London: Cassell, 1980: 132.

<sup>11</sup> Nathaniel Hawthorne. ‘Preface’. In *The House of the Seven Gables*, ed. Michael Davitt Bell, 1-3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1851]: 2.

<sup>12</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Days of My Life: An Autobiography, in Two Volumes*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1926: Vol. II, 92.

<sup>13</sup> Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance*: 77.

<sup>14</sup> For example Haggard believed that the ruins discovered in Zimbabwe in 1868 were evidence that ‘whites were in Africa in ancient times; whites ruled over native blacks’. [Richard F. Patteson. ‘King Solomon’s Mines: Imperialism and Narrative Structure’. *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, 8/2 (Spring 1978): 114.]

<sup>15</sup> Wendy R. Katz. *Rider Haggard and the Fiction of Empire: A Critical Study of British Imperial Fiction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987: 44.

beliefs,<sup>16</sup> as his faith incorporated the God and Devil of the Christian faith, elements of Egyptian reincarnation,<sup>17</sup> 'a concept of love reminiscent of Socrates's definition in the *Symposium*',<sup>18</sup> and an interest in spiritualism.<sup>19</sup> Owing to the influence of these beliefs in his work Haggard's writings helped to resurrect the 'gothic novel' in a new guise as the 'imperial gothic' romance.<sup>20</sup>

Although Haggard's literature might not describe the actual political situations between Britain and its Others, it indicates one man's interpretation of imperial spirit, otherness, 'racial' values and gender issues at the close of the long nineteenth century. This was a literature beloved by many adults and given to children to read in the hope that it would instil the values which it carries, indicating that Haggard was inline with popular thought.<sup>21</sup> Haggard also influenced later writers, particularly C.S. Lewis, who like Haggard explored his (very different) spiritual beliefs through writing fantasy. Shortly before his death Lewis declared his desire to find a new trilogy of Haggard romances in heaven.<sup>22</sup> In his review of Morton Cohen's *Rider Haggard: His Life and Work*, Lewis writes that 'Haggard's best work will survive' as 'A great myth is relevant as long as the predicament of humanity lasts.'<sup>23</sup> Haggard saw himself in a similar light, writing 'Indeed, I have come to hope that in dim, unborn ages, when much better work, both of my own and other people's, is clean forgotten, I shall still be remembered as a man who in the Victorian era wrote the well-known romance called *King Solomon's Mines*, and some other equally popular tales.'<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> All beings may be 'different manifestations of some central, informing life, though inhabiting the universe in such various shapes.' [H. Rider Haggard. 'Case L.1139 Dream'. *Journal of the Society for Psychological Research*, 11/212 (October 1904): 281.]

<sup>17</sup> Haggard wrote: 'it seems to me not only possible, but perhaps probable, both that we have lived before and shall so live again.' [H. Rider Haggard. 'Have we lived on earth before?' *The London: A Magazine of Human Interest* (November 1904): 406.]

<sup>18</sup> Morton Cohen. *Rider Haggard: His Life and Work*. London: Macmillan, 1968 [1960]: 224.

<sup>19</sup> Adam Lively. *Masks: Blackness, Race and the Imagination*. London: Vintage, 1999: 151.

<sup>20</sup> A style that flourished 'at least to John Buchan's *Greenmantle* in 1916.' [Patrick Brantlinger. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914*. London: Cornell University Press, 1988: 227.] See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 9*, at footnote 36 and Appendix XXIX.

<sup>21</sup> Kitzan, *Victorian Writers and the Image of Empire*: 174.

<sup>22</sup> Kathryn Lindskoog. 'Reactions from Other Women'. In *In Search of C. S. Lewis*, ed. S. Schofield, 77-88. South Plainfield NJ: Bridge, 1983: 88. Cited in Mervyn Nicholson. 'C.S. Lewis and the Scholarship of Imagination in E. Nesbit and Rider Haggard'. *Renascence: essays on values in literature*, 51/1 (Fall 1998): 57.

<sup>23</sup> C.S. Lewis. [recently reprinted as] 'The Mythopoeic Gift of Rider Haggard'. In *Of This and Other Worlds*, ed. Walter Hooper, 128-32. London, Collins, 1982. Cited in Nicholson, 'C.S. Lewis': 57.

<sup>24</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'The Real King Solomon's Mines'. In *The Best Short Stories of Rider Haggard*, ed. Peter Haining, 18-25. London: Michael Joseph, 1981: 19. From *Cassell's Magazine*, July 1907.



## Chapter 6: Contextualising Rider Haggard.

This chapter seeks to contextualise the works of H. Rider Haggard by establishing the environment within which he was working, and hence situating his works within the popular orientalist literature of his contemporaries. All of the works discussed in the first section of this chapter incorporate images of music and female otherness, and many of them relate to the tropes used by Haggard, as discussed in the next chapter. Music is used to other 'Oriental' women, most particularly with intimations of heightened sensuality and sexuality, but it is also used to associate them with violence, murder and bestial brutality. This chapter focuses on a poem by Ella Haggard (Rider's mother); a romance by one of Rider Haggard's brothers, Captain [Edward] Arthur Haggard's 'The Kiss of Isis' (1900); Oscar Wilde's poem 'The Sphinx' (1894); and *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful* (1900) by George Meredith.

The obvious choices of Rider Haggard's literary contemporaries who focused on masculinity, Others and exploration are Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, George Alfred Henty and Joseph Conrad; however such comparison is less fruitful than might be expected. It became apparent that many authors writing in romance or adventure genres did not make use of music in a similar fashion to Haggard in connection to maleness, or indeed often at all. Although the Anglo-Indian Kipling focuses on his country of birth, he actually almost seems to never mention 'native' music, and even though (like Haggard) Henty and Conrad both centre on Africa, Henty's characters are British soldiers who seem to ignore any 'native' arts and Conrad only infrequently discusses any form of African musicality in his adventure stories, so there is likewise little non-European musicality to explore in these works. Despite the romance-writer Stevenson's concentration on the 'South Sea Islands' (Polynesia: he made his home in Samoa), his association of music and 'native' masculinity occasionally closely parallels that of Haggard. Stevenson's stepson wrote that 'Looking back, I can recall how constantly he spoke of music', 'persistently' played the flageolet, studied 'counterpoint and attempted composition',<sup>1</sup> so for Stevenson, like Haggard, music is often expressed in his writings. Despite differences, these writers touch upon Other musics and occasionally utilise music to other male non-European characters, which is the focus on the second section of this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Lloyd Osbourne. 'Introduction'. In *New Arabian Nights, by Robert Louis Stevenson*. London: William Heinemann, 1927: xxii-xxiii.

## Women, sexuality and music

### Desiring Isis: the Haggard family's 'Oriental' fascination

H. Rider Haggard, his six brothers and three sisters reached adulthood as the Empire reached its pinnacle; Rider was not the only sibling professionally involved in Empire, as together the siblings covered the Army, the Royal Navy, the Diplomatic Corps, the Indian Civil Service and the Colonial Service.<sup>2</sup> Half of them were published writers often focusing on imperial or 'Oriental' themes, so was their mother Ella. Her works include the lengthy poem *Myra: or the Rose of the East, A Tale of the Afghan War* (1857), which follows Walter, an Englishman who is fighting with the British against the Afghans, and attempting to win wealth to enable him to ask for the Afghani Myra's hand. Myra is ill from grief and fear at the other marriage that her father is attempting to press upon her. When Walter sends Myra a rose and she discovers he is injured, she believes him dead, but although he returns having inherited his uncle's estate, Myra dies following his homecoming and he returns to England to bury her there. Thus, as in many mid-nineteenth-century works, Ella chooses to thwart the inter-'racial' union of her lovers – unsurprising at this time of political unrest in the Empire.<sup>3</sup> One can imagine that their mother's writings were influential on the Haggard children, including Rider, and a few elements occur in her work which Rider and his other siblings later develop.

As with all of her son Rider Haggard's later non-European women, Ella's Myra is sensualised by her music; when alone in her chamber she sings to herself: 'Fair Myra breathed sweet music too; / Light o'er her harp her fingers strayed, / And, soft as siren, sang the maid'.<sup>4</sup> Myra does not *create* music, she 'breathes' it as if it were an integral part of her 'Oriental' being. The image of her fingers lightly brushing the harp strings is a sensual one, especially when coupled with her 'soft' siren-song, as if calling to Walter, although she is alone; Phyllis Weliver examines the frequent Victorian trope of the siren, a woman who is both 'musical and seductive', describing how 'Part of the Victorian fascination with singing women was the inherent difficulty of distinguishing whether she was angel or siren.'<sup>5</sup> Indeed Myra contains elements of both stereotypes, which is perhaps why she cannot be allowed to marry her Englishman, nor to marry an Other, hence her inescapable death.

Myra's first song is an imagining of freedom<sup>6</sup> and accentuates the siren imagery with its focus on the sea. Myra asks Walter to come with her to 'the waves' wild bed!' where she will 'waft' him 'away' in 'dreams' and show him 'magical coral caves'. This imagery could be taken as literal descriptions of a seascape but also has inferences of sexual intercourse, with the 'billows in

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<sup>2</sup> Victoria Manthorpe. *Children of the Empire: The Victorian Haggards*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1996: 19.

<sup>3</sup> Ella's poem was published during the Indian Mutiny (1857-58) and she added a particularly fervent demand for retribution and stronger control in the Empire: See Appendix III.

<sup>4</sup> Ella Haggard. *Myra: or the Rose of the East, A Tale of the Afghan War*. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1857: 27, Canto III, lines 138-39.

<sup>5</sup> Weliver, *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction*: 7.

<sup>6</sup> See Appendix IV.

golden showers' breaking representing the point of orgasm, accompanied by 'the lightnings [sic] flash' and the singing gale. This is heightened by descriptions of mounting and plunging and a 'death-shriek' after which they will 'float to some Isle of the Blest'.<sup>7</sup> So the first song given to Myra by Ella could be interpreted as an innocent desire to escape to the sea with her lover, but the siren simile directly preceding it points to this deeper sexual metaphor. In her final song Myra metaphorically compares herself to a 'fragile desert flower' awaiting a passing 'pilgrim' to 'pluck thy tender blade';<sup>8</sup> the word 'pluck' continues the metaphor as it has a possible interpretation of loss of virginity, so together with her first song the suggestion is that Myra is waiting with desire for Walter. Myra is 'fragile' and passive and only expresses her latent desire through song. She conforms to the stereotype of the 'Oriental' woman passively awaiting her lover, much like Fatima in the anonymous translation of Sauvage's opera *The Cadi: or, Amours among Moors*<sup>9</sup> produced only six years before this poem was published.

Ella's son Arthur Haggard experienced cultural Others as he entered active military service in Egypt in 1884, then fought in South Africa at the turn of the twentieth century. Arthur's work 'The Kiss of Isis', published almost fifty years after Ella's poem, depicts a very different 'Oriental' woman – Isis embodies more elements of the *femme fatale* of the *fin de siècle*. In *The Romantic Agony* (1933) Mario Praz describes the *fin-de-siècle* fascination with a 'conception' of the 'Fatal Woman' who obscures her usually youthful and often inferior lover and acts like a 'praying mantis', with 'sexual cannibalism' as her 'monopoly'.<sup>10</sup> In a world where the male enjoys this masochistic relation,<sup>11</sup> Praz describes the 'fascination of beautiful women already dead, especially if they had been great courtesans, wanton queens, or famous sinners' who become 'the Fatal Woman who was successively incarnate in all ages and all lands, an archetype which united in itself all forms of seduction, all vices, and all delights'.<sup>12</sup> This description could be of Rider Haggard's Ayesha who embodies all of these fatal characteristics,<sup>13</sup> however like Myra, Arthur Haggard's Isis embodies only some *femme-fatale* elements – she is sensual but remains uncorrupted by evil. Despite the majority of the family's published works being of an imperial or 'Oriental' flavour, this romance by Arthur is remarkable in their output for the obvious influence of their famous brother Rider. The story follows Geoffrey Owen who is in Cairo when he is captured and infected by 'Evil'; he must win the Kiss of Isis to free himself so that he is safe to declare his love to the English Ena without tainting her. Isis appears to him and takes him back to ancient Memphis and her temple where he wins her kiss. The romance closes with Geoffrey realising that he is kissing Ena in the ruins of Memphis – so despite his passion with Isis and her allure, following their kiss he returns to his safe Englishwoman.

<sup>7</sup> Haggard, *Myra*: 28, Canto III, lines 140-65.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*: 29, Canto III, lines 166-87.

<sup>9</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, footnotes 10-14*.

<sup>10</sup> Mario Praz. *The Romantic Agony*. Trans. by Angus Davidson. London: Collins, The Fontana Library, 1966 [1933 English version]: 231.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*: 232.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*: 236.

<sup>13</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7*.

Geoffrey's encounter with Isis in ancient Memphis is filled with 'the most entrancing music'<sup>14</sup> and mysticism (much like Rider's Englishmen's assignations with Ayesha and Sorais):<sup>15</sup> 'The door opened, and Geoffrey felt himself seized and carried upwards, as it were on the wings of a rushing wind. He could see nothing; but, as he sped on, he heard sweet singing, and the blending of harmonies in a heavenly chant, while the sounds of music were everywhere around him. . [sic] He seemed to be borne through space by a choir of holy, yet invisible, beings.'<sup>16</sup> Although this occurrence is 'holy', at the same time it is an experience of the bodily senses. He finally approaches the curtain:

he was alone – the choir of heavenly voices swelled and swelled, breaking into a grand triumphant pæan, which found its echo in Geoffrey's own soul. Over his head it rolled, and round him, filling him with ecstasy. Then as he drew the curtain aside, it ceased – all became strangely still – and he knew that he stood in the precincts of the Holy Shrine.<sup>17</sup>

Much like (Rider's) Ayesha's penetration of Holly,<sup>18</sup> Isis here actually uses her music to enter Geoffrey, but in contrast to Ayesha, Isis grants her man 'ecstasy', fulfilling her promise of giving sexual pleasure. Arthur writes that 'suddenly he heard a Voice, so pure and silvery-toned that it thrilled through his whole being, and took from him all consciousness, save that Isis, the Divine, the Holy, was addressing him.'<sup>19</sup> The use of a capital letter for 'Voice' seeming to make it a proper noun insinuates that it is almost an entity in its own right and certainly a thing of importance. Isis's music is so overwhelming that it affects Geoffrey bodily and he is so overcome that he swoons. Like the non-European women created by many contemporary writers (including Rider), Isis and Myra's voices are musical, but the characters do not create the same ambivalence as Rider's creations – they are 'Oriental' in their overt sensuality and their assertive sexuality, but have none of the darkness, guile or violence of Rider's stronger *femme-fatale* figures.

The musical female 'Oriental' voice seems to be a common device at the time, with many contemporary authors attributing musical voices to such figures. Rider Haggard's friend Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) rarely uses music in his literature, but one exception is when describing a sensual 'Oriental' woman's voice. In *The Naulahka* (1892) the American Nick Tarvin secretly meets Sitabhai (the Maharajah of Rhatore's favourite wife) who is poisoning the heir and she gives him the necklace he desires in return for his silence. Tarvin notes 'the music of the voice. He wondered what the face behind the veil might look like.'<sup>20</sup> Kipling deliberately depersonalises Sitabhai's voice by saying *the* voice instead of *her* voice, hence further accentuating the mystery

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<sup>14</sup> Captain Arthur Haggard. 'The Kiss of Isis'. In *The Kiss of Isis and the Mystery of Castlebourne, in One Volume*, 1-156. London: Hurst and Blackett, Limited, 1900: 139.

<sup>15</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 26-34*.

<sup>16</sup> Haggard, 'The Kiss of Isis': 139.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 150.

<sup>18</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, after footnotes 58*.

<sup>19</sup> Haggard, 'The Kiss of Isis': 151.

<sup>20</sup> Rudyard Kipling and Wolcott Balestier. *The Naulahka: A Story of West and East*. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1928 [1892]: 235-36.

and detachment created by her veiled face (an exploitation of another 'Oriental' stereotype, as expounded theoretically by Meyda Yeğenoğlu<sup>21</sup> and Ella Shohat<sup>22</sup> amongst others). The trope is asserted in G.F. Monkshood's<sup>23</sup> 1908 translation of Théophile Gautier's (1811-1872)<sup>24</sup> 'The Princess Hermonthis' ('Le pied de momie' from *Le Roman de la Momie*, 1858), as she cries 'in a voice sweet and vibrant as the tones of a crystal bell –'<sup>25</sup> (in Coptic), much like Haggard's Ayesha with her associated bell imagery.<sup>26</sup> In another contemporary mummy romance, Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903), Lady Margaret Trelawny (who is possessed by the Queen and also her reincarnation) states the 'fact' that Queen Tera wishes bodily resurrection to experience love: 'Her noble words, flowing in musical cadence and vibrant with internal force, seemed to issue from some great instrument of elemental power. Even her tone was new to us all; so that we listened as to some new and strange being from a new and strange world.'<sup>27</sup> The change in the timbre of Margaret's voice indicates Tera's possession of her; her voice is transformed to one with such musicality and force that it depicts her very otherness. Stoker only infrequently mentions music in his work, but does so here in this device commonly used with 'Oriental' women.<sup>28</sup>

## Wilde and his 'fantastic Sphinx'

*Femme-fatale* darkness and violence are explored in a musical 'Oriental' context by Oscar Wilde. Wilde was a central figure in aesthetic and decadent artistic circles at the *fin de siècle*, and in spite of the gulf between Rider Haggard and Wilde in literary approach, the fatal 'Oriental' woman is a fascination that crosses literary borders, as is the association of her sexuality with music. Much of 'The Sphinx' involves the fear that she (with her plethora of Egyptian deity lovers) is tempting the student narrator away from Christianity and a god who now 'weeps for every soul in vain',<sup>29</sup> a 'pallid' god who seems to be failing.<sup>30</sup> Wilde's poem contains many musical references, particularly the narrator's request for the Sphinx to sing the song of her history – like Rider Haggard's Ayesha, she seems to live eternally ('A thousand weary centuries are thine').<sup>31</sup> He asks her to 'Fawn at my feet, fantastic Sphinx! and sing me all your

<sup>21</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 39-44.

<sup>22</sup> Shohat, 'Gender and Culture of Empire': 32-33.

<sup>23</sup> William James Clarke.

<sup>24</sup> Gautier visited the 'Orient' (Turkey and Egypt) and was 'tireless in praising the Orientalist painters and encouraging the public to buy their works'. [Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 38.]

<sup>25</sup> Théophile Gautier. 'The Princess Hermonthis'. In *The Mummy's Romance*. Trans. by G.F. Monkshood, 221-54. London: Greening & Co., 1908 [1858]: 242.

<sup>26</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 61-71*.

<sup>27</sup> Bram Stoker. *The Jewel of Seven Stars*. Ed. Clive Leatherdale. Westcliff-on-Sea: Desert Island Books, 1996 [1903]: 185.

<sup>28</sup> Stoker also uses this in *Dracula* to other the three vampiric women in Dracula's castle: 'they all three laughed, such a silvery, musical laugh, but as hard as though the sound never could have come through the softness of human lips. It was like the intolerable, tingling sweetness of waterglasses when played on by a cunning hand.' This is reminiscent of Haggard's Ayesha and her dangerous musical laughter. [Bram Stoker. *Dracula*. *Online Literature*. See the website <http://www.online-literature.com/stoker/dracula/3/> (Accessed 24 March 2006) [1897]: Chapter 3.]

<sup>29</sup> Oscar Wilde. 'The Sphinx'. In *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, 738-46. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1997 [1894]: 746, line 174.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: line 173.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*: 738, line 17.

memories!<sup>32</sup> however the Sphinx never gains her voice; Wilde's narrator imposes upon her a colourful and highly sexualised history, but she never sings or speaks, remaining 'Inviolable and immobile'<sup>33</sup> in the corner of his 'student's cell.'<sup>34</sup> The narrator asks her, 'Who were your lovers? who were they who wrestled for you in the dust? / Which was the vessel of your Lust? What Lemman had you, every day?'<sup>35</sup> highlighting her supposed aggression and profligate sexuality. The list that he speculates for her is long and varied, containing primarily Middle Eastern and Egyptian deities, but also beasts, fantastical as well as real. The narrator focuses on the Egyptian oracle god<sup>36</sup> Ammon, whose temples are now 'ruined'<sup>37</sup> and whose statues are only 'scattered'<sup>38</sup> 'fragments'.<sup>39</sup> The narrator proposes that she remake her 'bruised bedfellow' (as Isis did Osiris) and 'wake mad passions in the senseless stone'<sup>40</sup> by 'Charm[ing] his dull ear with Syrian hymns! he loved your body! oh, be kind'<sup>41</sup> – the narrator gives the Sphinx's song magical properties as well as sensual ones.

The narrator's presentation of the Sphinx focuses on her bestial nature as an 'exquisite grotesque! half woman and half animal!'<sup>42</sup> – a more literal and stronger focused form of the bestial imagery found in Rider Haggard's work. Like in Haggard, the idea of the snake arises:<sup>43</sup> the narrator wishes to 'grasp / The tail that like a monstrous asp coils round your heavy velvet paws!'<sup>44</sup> In contrast to Haggard's presentations of a snake-like woman, the Sphinx is already half-cat and her tail almost becomes a literal representation of the snake so often associated with dangerous female sexuality, one that the narrator can 'grasp' and so perhaps control. He sees that 'Your tongue is like a scarlet snake that dances to fantastic tunes, / Your pulse makes poisonous melodies.'<sup>45</sup> The simile of the Sphinx's tongue being like a snake betokens the falseness and danger of anything that she may say, which is supported by the imaginary red snake dancing to 'fantastic' (that is false) tunes, namely lies, but although these tunes imply the Sphinx's melodious speech or even song, the reader is never actually permitted to hear either. The blood moving through her body seems to create music for the narrator, yet he projects upon her a dangerous and destructive music in line with the violent sexuality. He reprimands her that she 'wake[s] foul dreams of sensual life'<sup>46</sup> as 'You wake in me each bestial sense, you make me what I would not be.'<sup>47</sup> As previously stated, this poem could be interpreted as a fear of losing one's

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<sup>32</sup> Wilde, 'The Sphinx': 739, line 30.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.: 738, line 3.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.: 745, line 162.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.: 740, lines 45-46.

<sup>36</sup> John Lendering, 'Ammon'. *Livius: Articles of Ancient History*. See the website <http://www.livius.org/am-ao/ammon/ammon.htm> (Accessed 15 December 2005).

<sup>37</sup> Wilde, 'The Sphinx': 743, line 110.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.: line 115.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.: line 121.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.: line 124.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.: 744, line 125.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.: 738, line 12.

<sup>43</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 53-60*.

<sup>44</sup> Wilde, 'The Sphinx': 738, lines 15-16.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.: 745, lines 154-55.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.: 746, line 169.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.: 745, line 168.

faith in Christianity, but another level of interpretation relies upon Wilde's personal struggle with his sexuality; indeed almost a quarter of the poem focuses on Ammon and his body. Regardless of one's overall understanding of the poem's "meaning", Wilde irrefutably employs images of 'Oriental' women, sexuality and music similar to those used by Rider Haggard, in spite of their disparate literary styles.

### She 'sang to the Serpents': Meredith's Bhanavar.

According to Bram Dijkstra, in the nineteenth century women were not only considered to be tempted by the snake, but to be like, or embody, the serpent; 'Among the terms to describe a woman's appearance none were more overused during the late nineteenth century than "serpentine," "sinuous," and "snake-like."' <sup>48</sup> Indeed as early as the 1860s the poet Algernon Charles Swinburne was employing serpent imagery with the ideas of the Fatal Woman and the 'Orient', not only in his poetry, such as 'Cleopatra' (1866), but also in his descriptions of Michelangelo's (1475-1564) art in *Notes on Designs of the Old Masters in Florence* (1864). In these musings he employs recurrent *femme-fatale* imagery, for instance describing female statues as 'beautiful always beyond desire and cruel beyond words; fairer than heaven and more terrible than hell', with a 'mouth crueller than a tiger's, colder than a snake's, and beautiful beyond a woman's'. <sup>49</sup> This representation of the serpent, grouped with *femme fatale* and 'Oriental' female sexuality reaches its zenith in George Meredith's *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful* at the turn of the twentieth century where these aspects are accompanied by musicality. This fascinating tale follows Bhanavar, an Arabian beauty, who wins eternal loveliness through her lover Zurvan's sacrifice: Zurvan wins the Jewel from the Serpent of the Lake's brow for her, is bitten and poisoned and dies. She wears the jewel and is cursed to have men desire her beauty and die because of her – truly the *femme fatale*. <sup>50</sup> Bhanavar's character develops throughout the work – she starts as an innocent village beauty and evolves into a vengeful embittered sorceress queen, desperately attempting to maintain her beauty and her hold upon the king (although she regains some integrity when she loves and saves Ruark at the close of the tale, sacrificing her beauty).

Even in her opening days of blushing 'sweetness' <sup>51</sup> Bhanavar is presented as a highly sensualised figure and music is an important component of this characterisation; once Zurvan has won the Jewel for her 'So she said again, in the low melody of deep love-tones, "Kiss me, O my lover! For I desire thy kiss"', <sup>52</sup> stressing the familiar device of the musical melody of an 'Oriental' woman's sensual voice coupled with sexual forwardness. However Zurvan is 'as a pillar of stone' from the poison, thus Meredith associates Bhanavar's musicality with danger from the outset. She begs Zurvan, "'so speak to me, my lover! For there is no music like the music of thy

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<sup>48</sup> Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*: 305.

<sup>49</sup> Algernon Charles Swinburne. *Notes on Designs of the Old Masters in Florence*. 1864: pages not specified. Cited in Praz, *The Romantic Agony*: 266-68.

<sup>50</sup> For synopsis see Appendix V.

<sup>51</sup> George Meredith. *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*. Westminster: Archibald Constable and Company, 1900: 3.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*: 13.

voice, and the absence of it is the absence of all sweetness, and there is no pleasure in life without it.”<sup>53</sup> Meredith attributes to the youth Zurvan almost a similar sensuous musicality to that of Bhanavar – perhaps suggesting her overpowering influence upon him – an influence that leads to his death. Likewise the sway of Bhanavar’s beauty inspires Ruark to sing to her of it;<sup>54</sup> in the song he acknowledges her as ‘deathly’, yet admits that this does not lessen his desire for her. Bhanavar herself makes the same association in her sung reply to Ruark, questioning Destiny as to why she is desired and ‘like a poisonous fruit, deadly sweet’;<sup>55</sup> again through music Meredith associates Bhanavar’s beauty with fatality.

Bhanavar and her true love Almeryl exchange lengthy sung expressions of love. Although his songs fall into conventional male love-song stereotypes like flowers of the morning and the skies,<sup>56</sup> hers are filled with sensual illustrations and sexual demands,<sup>57</sup> for instance ‘O my beloved, kiss, kiss me! waste thy kisses / like a rain.’<sup>58</sup> Like Myra’s breaths of music, Bhanavar’s ‘sighs’ are ‘the measure of [the] music she sang’,<sup>59</sup> stressing her physicality as part of her musicality. Meredith describes how ‘these two lovers lute and sing in the stillness of the night, pouring into each other’s ears melodies from the new sea of fancy and feeling that flowed through them. Ere they ceased their sweet interchange of tenderness, which was but one speech from one soul, a glow of light ran up the sky’.<sup>60</sup> This tender ‘interchange’ of music leading to the lovers becoming ‘one soul’ could be interpreted as a metaphorical description of sex, so heightening Meredith’s association of Bhanavar’s music with her strong sexuality.

After Almeryl’s murder Bhanavar’s musicality mutates, becoming allied not only with her fervent sexuality, but more completely with her power, danger and violence. To force Aswarak to tell her where her husband is buried Bhanavar calls up the serpents for the first time:<sup>61</sup> she does so by ‘rubbing the Jewel’ ‘on her bosom’ and singing to them to come to their ‘Queen’.<sup>62</sup> In the middle of her song ‘Bhanavar was circled by rings and rings of serpent-folds that glowed round her, twisted each in each, with the fierceness of fire, she like a flame rising up white in the midst of them.’<sup>63</sup> The image of Bhanavar singing to her snakes and rubbing a gem on her breast is highly sexualised, and calling up snakes, often recognised as phallic symbols, reinforces this sexualisation. Bhanavar becomes almost elemental (like fire) through her power and to highlight her danger and power she sacrifices the two (innocent) black harem slaves (a frequent icon of the ‘East’) to her snakes. Bhanavar’s control of her phallicly-symbolic serpents with *song* parallels her control of men with her *beauty* and her *voice* – a talent that all of these *femmes fatales* have in

<sup>53</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 13.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*: 35.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*: 36.

<sup>56</sup> For an example see Appendix VI.

<sup>57</sup> See Appendix VII.

<sup>58</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 54.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*: 56-57.

<sup>61</sup> See Appendix VIII.

<sup>62</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 82.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*: 83.



common – an alluring musicality. Later in the tale Bhanavar tricks Aswarak into following her to her husband's tomb<sup>64</sup> to avenge him; there she unleashes her serpents upon him.<sup>65</sup> In song Aswarak begs her to unveil but she refuses and allures him in a 'girlish guise, sighing behind the veil'<sup>66</sup> and singing, until he declares 'Thine am I, thine! And what a music is thy voice, O my mistress'.<sup>67</sup> Her musical voice and song win her (an almost sadistic) control over him – like Rider Haggard's Ayesha, Bhanavar knows how to manipulate and 'enrapture'<sup>68</sup> a man and uses her veil and song as tools to do so. In return for this man's blood and death Bhanavar gains a 'new loveliness of her face'<sup>69</sup> whilst standing in a 'fountain of fire', much as Ayesha gains eternal youth from a pillar of fire<sup>70</sup> – yet Meredith's Fatal Woman must now sacrifice men to gain the fire and her beauty.

Meredith further animalises Bhanavar when her voice becomes almost disembodied like a 'creature' struggling to survive during a vigil at Almeryl's tomb – her 'voice in her throat was like a drowning creature and she rose up, and chanted wildly'.<sup>71</sup> In her grief, even her compelling voice becomes threatened. Her song's focus on the blood that she will weep and that that she will cause others to weep has echoes of the themes of Sorais' song in Rider Haggard's *Allan Quatermain*:<sup>72</sup> blood, death, violence and power. Once more Bhanavar rubs the Jewel and calls the serpents to her, but

to delight her soul with the sight of her power, and rolled and sported madly among them, clutching them by the necks till their thin little red tongues hung out, and their eyes were as discoloured blisters of venom. Then she arose, and her arms and neck and lips were glazed with the slime of the serpents, and she flung off her robes to the close-fitting silken inner vest looped across her bosom with pearls, and whirled in a mazy dance-measure among them, and sang melancholy melodies, making them delirious, fascinating them; and they followed her round and round, in twines and twists and curves, with arched heads and stiffened tails; and the chamber swam like an undulating sea of shifting sapphire lit by the moon of midnight. Not before the moon of midnight was in the sky ceased Bhanavar sporting with the serpents, and she sank to sleep exhausted in their midst.<sup>73</sup>

This extraordinary scene<sup>74</sup> is a turning point in Bhanavar's characterisation; she has not called up the serpents for any reason other than to delight in her power and to 'sport' with them. The description of a fluid-covered, half-dressed 'Oriental' woman 'rolling' and 'sporting' with, and

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<sup>64</sup> See Appendix IX.

<sup>65</sup> See Appendix X.

<sup>66</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 99.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*: 99-100.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*: 100.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*: 99-100.

<sup>70</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 8-9*.

<sup>71</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 87.

<sup>72</sup> See Appendix XV. See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, from footnote 120-21*.

<sup>73</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 87-88.

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix XI.

‘clutching’ the ‘arched’ and ‘stiffened’ serpents until they are ‘delirious’ and ‘fascinated’ by her, resonates with metaphors of sexual intercourse, bestiality and orgies, and as before her ‘melancholy melodies’<sup>75</sup> are central to the event.

Meredith’s portrait of Bhanavar the Beautiful assembles and magnifies many of the elements that Rider Haggard and his contemporaries explore in orientalised fiction, but here the fear (and titillation) of the ‘Oriental’ woman with her alluring sensuality, guile and forward (almost aggressive) sexual nature is tainted with overtones of perversion and bestiality. These women are Other – powerful, mystical, violent, sexual (and sometimes even perverted) – the antithesis of everything expected in British women; embodying Yeğenoğlu’s theories of fantasy and desire.<sup>76</sup> These characters are so fascinating that they, with their music, appear in writings as diverse as those of Rider Haggard, Meredith and Wilde, however they are nearly always punished with death or disempowerment for stepping out of the “proper” role of womanhood. Underlying fears and desires regarding women’s position, alongside changing gender roles in British society, and images and prejudices about ‘Oriental’ ‘races’, intermingle to create these *femmes fatales* who so fascinated readers and writers of popular fiction at the end of the long nineteenth century.

## Masculinity and music

Unlike the contextualisation of Haggard’s female ‘Oriental’ musicality, there is less of a consensus in contemporary writings that include masculine othered musicality. In writings on Empire, colonialism and masculinity there seem to be few masculine musical depictions, and when they occur they may or may not be in line with Haggard’s musical characterisations of otherness. Despite the fact that Haggard and the children’s author Edith Nesbit (1858-1924) were very different in personal outlook (‘Nesbit was a feminist and socialist; Haggard has a reputation for being an imperialist and a misogynist’),<sup>77</sup> their representations of musical masculinity occasionally converge. The literary scholar Ashton Nicholas has highlighted how the British frequently projected polarised representations on to their Others: the coarse and dangerous savage, or the nostalgic ‘noble savage’<sup>78</sup> (something similar to the angel/demon binarism discussed in relation to musical stage works in Chapter 4). Haggard uses music to represent both sets of these traits in African men, whereas his contemporaries are often less willing to consider the Others’ nobility, and less concerned with music as an expression of othered masculinity.

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<sup>75</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 87-88.

<sup>76</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 2

<sup>77</sup> Nicholson, ‘C.S. Lewis’: 48.

<sup>78</sup> Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow. *The Africa That Never Was: Four Centuries of British Writing About Africa*. Illinois: Waveland, 1992: 11. Cited in Ashton Nichols. ‘Mumbo Jumbo: Mungo Park and the Rhetoric of Romantic Africa’. In *Romanticism, Race, and Imperial Culture, 1780-1834*, ed. Alan Richardson and Sonia Hofkosh, 93-113. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996: 97.

## Othering

As with Haggard's writings (but to a lesser extent), music is used by some writers to portray 'otherness'. Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness* (1902) takes its title from the following passage: 'We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness [...] At night sometimes the roll of drums behind the curtain of trees would run up the river [...] Whether it meant war, peace, or prayer we could not tell.'<sup>79</sup> Africa's 'heart of darkness' includes a disembodied music representing a culture that is so alien to the narrator that he is unable to fathom this music and codify it as threat, reassurance or worship. Thus music becomes a part of Africa's very core and of its potential danger. It was commonly believed that 'Music is still in a state of barbarism in the interior of Africa', and in contrast to Haggard, writers such as Conrad seem to support this view, producing imagery where the music of 'SAVAGES' is not 'true music' as 'they use hardly any other instruments than those from which the sound is produced by striking.'<sup>80</sup> In *Heart of Darkness* Conrad makes frequent references to drumming, when 'The monotonous beating of a big drum filled the air with muffled shocks and a lingering vibration.'<sup>81</sup> This is an aural description frequently utilised in contemporary writings; another example occurs in Wilde's fairytale 'The Young King' (1892) when there is a dream-sequence of a 'Negro' ship going to Arabia and 'At the prow of the galley sat a shark-charmer, beating monotonously upon a drum.'<sup>82</sup> Wilde's African men are given the mysticism (and presumed false trickery) of the 'Oriental' snake-charmer (here a more exotic 'shark-charmer') and the 'savage' musicality of the dull drums of Africa.

Conrad's Africans rarely sing (again in contradistinction to Haggard's), going against the widespread conviction that 'Dance and song are the genuine inspiration of the Africans; their feet never tire, their voice never droops.'<sup>83</sup> In one of the rare musical instances, the narrator of *Heart of Darkness* describes a boat 'paddled by black fellows': 'You could see from afar the white of their eyeballs glistening. They shouted, sang; their bodies streamed with perspiration; they had faces like grotesque masks – these chaps; but they had bone, muscle, a wild vitality, an intense energy of movement, that was as natural and true as the surf along the coast.'<sup>84</sup> Conrad aligns male African music with a vivid physicality and naturalness; their music become almost part of their body and so displays its innateness (as in many Haggard works). In Conrad's 'Tales of Unrest' (1898) an unknown servant of the king, Karain, is also given voice: 'near him a youth improvised in a high tone a song that celebrated his [Karain's] valour and wisdom. The singer rocked himself to and fro, rolling frenzied eyes [...] The song of triumph vibrated in the night,

<sup>79</sup> Joseph Conrad. *Heart of Darkness*. London: Penguin Books, 1994 [1902]: 50.

<sup>80</sup> M.M. Escudier. 'Nationalities of Music'. *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, 5/118 (15 February 1854): 356.

<sup>81</sup> Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*: 91.

<sup>82</sup> Oscar Wilde. 'The Young King' from *A House of Pomegranates*. In *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, 245-56. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1997 [1892]: 251.

<sup>83</sup> F. Harrison Rankin. *The White Man's Grave: A Visit to Sierra Leone, in 1834*. London: Richard Bentley, 1836: Vol. II, 282-83.

<sup>84</sup> Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*: 19-20.

and the stanzas roll out mournful and fiery like the thoughts of a hermit.<sup>85</sup> This music is not like the noble extempore songs of Haggard's Zulus,<sup>86</sup> but contains an undertone of madness and effeminacy (with the male singer's high voice). For Conrad innate musicality is not an admirable characteristic.

In Wilde's writings, male 'natives' (and particularly their voices) are often described in effeminised musical terms. In *Salomé* (1894) (in which the incantatory and repetitive structuring was interpreted as an 'inherent musicality' by the composer Richard Strauss)<sup>87</sup> the Page of Herodias speaks of The Young Syrian who has just killed himself out of unrequited love for Salomé, and he declares that 'The sound of his voice was like the sound of the flute, of a flute player.'<sup>88</sup> The flute was at this time an instrument proscribed to women owing to its phallic connotations and unladylike physicality.<sup>89</sup> As the Page imagines the Syrian as both the flute and its player there is a homosexual undertone of the Syrian (as flute) possessing the instrument as well as enjoying to play upon it; as Joseph Bristow writes 'homosexuality was not an open secret. [...] Since it contravened the guiding principles of Judaeo-Christian religious law, homosexuality could only be mentioned obliquely in fiction',<sup>90</sup> as male desire is here. Later in the play *Salomé* says to Jokanaan's head that 'Thy voice was a censer that scattered strange perfumes, and when I looked on thee I heard a strange music.'<sup>91</sup> She describes his voice in a way that is often used to portray female vocality – in terms of 'otherness', music and sensuality. Amy Koritz explores how the balance of masculine speech and female silence is overturned by Salomé's possession of Jokanaan's head and in consequence his speech,<sup>92</sup> however this can be augmented by arguing that as Salomé has now claimed the right to speak and has silenced Jokanaan's voice, she further *disempowers* him and *empowers* herself by metaphorically feminising his voice and so asserting her control – a masculine characteristic. The subversion of musical metaphor in Wilde's play perhaps reflects his personal position as a homosexual, decadent and aesthete.

## '[M]any voices chanting a slow, strange hymn'

Writers contemporary to Haggard frequently focus on masculine musicality as expressed in religious rituals of the Other, as does Haggard himself.<sup>93</sup> In E. Nesbit's tale *The Story of the*

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<sup>85</sup> Joseph Conrad. 'Tales of Unrest': 'Karain: A Memory'. In *Almayer's Folly and Tales of Unrest*, 3-55. London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1923 [1898]: 15.

<sup>86</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8, 'A Zulu War-Dance'*.

<sup>87</sup> Judith R. Walkowitz. 'The "Vision of Salome": Cosmopolitanism and Erotic Dancing in Central London, 1908-1918'. *American Historical Review*, 108/2 (April 2003): 341.

<sup>88</sup> Oscar Wilde. 'Salomé, A Tragedy in One Act Translated from the French of Oscar Wilde by Lord Alfred Douglas'. In *Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, 597-624. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited, 1997 [1894]: 607.

<sup>89</sup> Julianna Moore. 'Women and the flute in the nineteenth century'. In *Fluting and Dancing: Articles and Reminiscences for Betty Bang Mather on her 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, ed. David Lasocki, 51-60. New York: McGinnis & Marx, 1992: 51.

<sup>90</sup> Joseph Bristow. *Empire Boys: Adventures in a Man's World*. Reading Popular Fiction. London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991: 82.

<sup>91</sup> Wilde, 'Salomé': 621.

<sup>92</sup> Amy Koritz. *Gendering Bodies/Performing Art: Dance and Literature in Early Twentieth-century British Culture*. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1995: 81.

<sup>93</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8, 'Mystical Musicality'*.

*Amulet* (1906) the children magically visit a 'shrine near the beginnings of belief'<sup>94</sup> where they hear 'the sound of many voices chanting a slow, strange hymn.[...] the chant quickened and the light grew brighter, as though fuel had been thrown on a fire.'<sup>95</sup> Hence mystical, musical, othered African imagery arises even in fiction for British children. Correspondingly in *Heart of Darkness* Conrad associates the 'native' 'throb of drums' and 'drone of weird incantations'<sup>96</sup> with religious ritual. The narrator muses on 'the tremor of far-off drums, sinking, swelling, a tremor vast, faint; a sound weird, appealing, suggestive, and wild – and perhaps with as profound a meaning as the sound of bells in a Christian country',<sup>97</sup> so even when he is unable to interpret the evocative 'native' music Conrad has the narrator impose his own interpretation of religious practice onto it. In one revealing passage he ponders that their music 'was unearthly' and the men *almost* 'inhuman'. However it is their distant kinship to himself that he finds most 'thrill[ing]' as 'They howled and leaped, and spun, and made horrid faces'; the 'dim suspicion of there being a meaning in it [the music] which you – you so remote from the night of first ages – could comprehend.'<sup>98</sup> For Conrad, as for Haggard, 'primitive' music resonates among his white characters, however in Conrad's books it inspires fear of kinship rather than Haggard's admiration of the 'natives'' nobility.

Musical 'native' ritual in Haggard's works occasionally develops into human sacrifice or cannibalism,<sup>99</sup> a theme also taken up by Stevenson. His poem on the starving Marquesans who turn to cannibalism of their own people is entitled 'The Feast of Famine: Marquesan Manners' (1890) and is set in the 'South Sea Islands'. In Section II: 'The Lovers', Rua and the princess Taleia are secret lovers, but he is doomed to die and be eaten. They speak to one another of how 'the drum of death shall beat'<sup>100</sup> and indeed on the morrow 'arose the voice of the feast, / The frenzied roll of the drum, and a swift, monotonous song.'<sup>101</sup> A thousand voices accompany the forty drummers and 'Frenzy hurried the chaunt, frenzy rattled the drums' as 'old men leered at the ovens and licked their lips for the food' and 'The naked spirit of evil kneaded the hearts of the clan', as 'out of a thousand singers nine were numbered to die.'<sup>102</sup> Stevenson's imagery, like Haggard's, revolves around bloodlust, agitated drumming, and an almost orgiastic scene of singing and atrocity. 'Woe in the song! for the grave breathes in the singers' breath, / And I hear in the tramp of the drums the beat of the heart of death'<sup>103</sup> – so the music in particular metaphorically represents this evil for Stevenson.

<sup>94</sup> E. Nesbit. *The Story of the Amulet, with illustrations by H. R. Millar*. London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1969 [1906]: 248.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*: 247.

<sup>96</sup> Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*: 95.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*: 28-29.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*: 51.

<sup>99</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8, 'Human sacrifice and cannibalism'*.

<sup>100</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson. 'The Feast of Famine: Marquesan Manners'. In *The Works of Robert Louis Stevenson, Tusitala Edition*, Vol. XXIII: Poems, Volume Two: Ballads; New Poems, 40-45. London: William Heinemann, 1923 [1890]: 40, section II, line 98.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*: section III, line 14-15.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*: 41, section III, line 32.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*: 43, section III, lines 87-88.

After visiting the Marquesas Stevenson wrote an imaginative account regarding the, by then defunct, sacrificial space that he saw there: the drums ‘continuously throbbed in time. In time the singers kept up their long-drawn, lugubrious, ululating song; in time, too, the dancers [...] unanimously must have grown the agitation of the feasters [...] It is told that the feasts were long kept up; the people came from them brutishly exhausted with debauchery, and the chiefs heavy with their beastly food.’ Thus for Stevenson the cannibals may almost be considered as beasts and certainly lack humanity;<sup>104</sup> he wrote that ‘Nothing more strongly arouses our disgust than cannibalism, nothing so surely unmortars a society’,<sup>105</sup> an idea that is echoed in Haggard’s portrayals. Again these preoccupations are propagated even in children’s fiction: in E. Nesbit’s *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904) the ‘copper-coloured natives’<sup>106</sup> are presumed to be cannibals<sup>107</sup> by the magic-carpet-travelling children and they are once again highly musical, but are attributed a ‘savage’ and Other musicality – ‘Small, strange-shaped drums were beaten, odd-sounding songs were sung, and the dance got faster and faster and odder and odder, till at last all the dancers fell on the sand tired out.’<sup>108</sup> Despite the seas between these geographical spaces Stevenson portrays Polynesian cannibalism and music much as Haggard and Nesbit depict African practice.

The other ritual touched upon by Haggard’s contemporary writers (both travel and fictional) is African warfare, and the attendant music of the ‘War drums’ resounding ‘on both sides of the river’ in the darkness.<sup>109</sup> Even Henty mentions this African musicality when ‘All night the enemy kept on beating tom-toms and occasionally yelling’.<sup>110</sup> However none of Haggard’s contemporaries seem to revere African war-song as he does,<sup>111</sup> as nowhere was this literature survey able to unearth descriptions (whether ethnomusicological, anthropological or fictional) of a similar nature to Haggard’s extensive writings regarding African war-songs.

### ‘The English are not a musical people’

The representations of ‘white’ masculine musicality are even sparser in these works than in Haggard’s writings and are similar in tone.<sup>112</sup> In *Heart of Darkness* Conrad mentions a grand piano when the narrator is in England: this acts as a sign of civilisation in marked contrast to the drums of Africa. Yet it stands ‘massively in a corner; with dark gleams on the flat surfaces like a sombre and polished sarcophagus.’<sup>113</sup> So it is not active music and is metaphorically as quiet as

<sup>104</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson. *In the South Seas; Being an account of experiences and observations in the Marquesas, Paumotus, and Gilbert Islands in the course of two cruises, on the yacht “Casco” (1888) and the schooner “Equator” (1889)*. London: William Heinemann, 1924 [1900]: 86-87.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*: 79.

<sup>106</sup> E. Nesbit. *The Phoenix and the Carpet*. Harmondsworth: Puffin Books, 1984 [1904]: 76.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*: 69-70.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*: 75.

<sup>109</sup> Herbert Ward. *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1890: 233.

<sup>110</sup> G.A. Henty. *The Dash for Khartoum: A Tale of the Nile Expedition*. London: Blackie & Son Limited, n.d. [1891]: 193.

<sup>111</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8, ‘A Zulu War-Dance’*.

<sup>112</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 8, ‘White men’s music’*.

<sup>113</sup> Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*: 106.

the grave – this is music negated rather than active ‘white’ music-making. The only mention of direct European musicality in the novel is when ‘the common crowd of sea-going adventurers’ ‘drank champagne, gambled, sang noisy songs, and made love to half-caste girls.’<sup>114</sup> These travellers singing bawdy songs are completely disparate with Haggard’s noble (and often titled) travellers, and their musicality reflects their “low” social standing, rather than their ‘whiteness’. As in Haggard’s *Allan and the Holy Flower* an African is given a music-box as a gift by a white man in Conrad’s *Almayer’s Folly* (1895)<sup>115</sup> and the Polynesian Keawe displays his new-found wealth with ‘chiming clocks and musical boxes’<sup>116</sup> in Stevenson’s short story ‘The Bottle Imp’ (1891) – so the music box (a European, ‘civilised’, mechanised music) becomes a symbol of ‘native’ wealth. This sparseness in references to English music-making perhaps reflects the common contemporary belief that ‘The English are not a musical people’.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Joseph Conrad. *Almayer’s Folly*. Suffolk: R. Clay & Sons, 1930 [1895]: 11.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*: 78.

<sup>116</sup> Robert Louis Stevenson. ‘The Bottle Imp’. In *The Complete Short Stories*, ed. Charles Neider, 539-74. New York: Da Capo Press, 1998 [1891]: 548.

<sup>117</sup> Haweis, *Music and Morals*: 409.

## Chapter 7. ‘The “Lady of the Night” hath a sweet voice, and she will not sing in vain’:

### Haggard's women – sexuality, music and the Other.

Music is an essential component of Haggard's presentation of Other women. These strong, orientalisised women whom he invariably associates with musicality often display characteristics attributed to the 'New Woman' at the close of the nineteenth century, as well as to the interrelated concept of the *femme fatale*.<sup>1</sup> The New Woman was feared by British men because she was not only a threat in the then male-dominated realms of higher education and employment, but was also perceived to embody a freer sexuality endangering contemporary ideas of female morality.<sup>2</sup> The 'New Woman' theme is taken up by Elaine Showalter who believes that it is no coincidence that the quest to find Ayesha begins in 1881 in Haggard's *She*, the year in which women were first admitted to the Cambridge examinations 'and when, symbolically, the strongholds of male knowledge begin to fall.'<sup>3</sup> Even though the phrase 'New Woman' was not coined until the mid-1890s, as Patricia Murphy writes, it is an appropriate term when discussing Haggard's *She* of the 1880s (as well as his later works), as his writings incorporate the growing worries about gender roles and the "Woman Question" that were important to these decades.<sup>4</sup> Part of this debate involved concern over women's sexuality, something that Haggard often explores through music, specifically in the case of Ayesha but also in the many other sexualised, non-European women in his romances. As well as embodying aspects of the New Woman, Haggard's Other women's open sexuality and their dominant social positions also establish them as *femme-fatale* figures, an idea that is rooted in myth and unlike the New Woman centres on the female's effect on the male, and upon her frequently fatal desires.<sup>5</sup> The *fin de siècle* preoccupation with the *femme fatale* can be viewed as a reaction to the "problem" of the New Woman. Whether you view Ayesha as 'sodomasochistic male fantasy',<sup>6</sup> as many (primarily feminist) critics have done, or as a fascinating receptacle of collective culture like Robert Fraser,<sup>7</sup> there is no question that She is a highly sexualised and sensualised character, and this chapter proposes that music is an important aspect of Haggard's vision of She and, more generally, the sexuality of the female Other.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 6*, at footnote 10-13 for a discussion of the attributes of the *femme fatale*.

<sup>2</sup> Rebecca Stott. *The Fabrication of the Late-Victorian Femme Fatale: The Kiss of Death*. London: Macmillan Press, 1992: viii.

<sup>3</sup> Elaine Showalter. *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture at the Fin de Siècle*. London: Virago, 1990: 85.

<sup>4</sup> Patricia Murphy. *Time is of the Essence: Temporality, Gender, and the New Woman*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2001: 31-32.

<sup>5</sup> Stott, *The Fabrication of the Late-Victorian Femme Fatale*: viii.

<sup>6</sup> Attributed to Elaine Showalter. Cited in Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance*: 45.

<sup>7</sup> Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance*, 45.



## *She and Allan Quatermain*

This chapter focuses on two of Haggard's fifty-five romances: *She: A History of Adventure* (1886) and *Allan Quatermain* (1887), but makes reference to other Haggard works. *She* follows the story of the handsome Leo Vincey who on his twenty-fifth birthday opens the casket left to him by his father; it contains documents telling of a white queen who rules an African tribe and of his father's failed quest to find her. So Leo, his guardian Horace Holly, and Holly's servant, Job, set sail for Zanzibar. After shipwreck and an encounter with the matrilineal Amahagger society they reach Kôr where the two-thousand-year-old Ayesha rules.<sup>8</sup> She is waiting for her lost love Kallikrates and believes that Leo is he reincarnated. She takes Leo as her affianced, murders her Amahagger rival Ustane, and takes the Englishmen to bathe in the Flame of Life to gain (apparent) life immortal. Leo is fearful, so Ayesha steps into the pillar of fire to reassure him, but astonishingly she ages her two thousand years and appears to die. Job is killed by shock, and Leo and Holly only just escape to return to England broken men. One occurrence indicating how influential the ideas and representations in Haggard's work were is Sigmund Freud's note that between July 1897 and September 1899 he dreamed about Haggard's writings, particularly *She*.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly the thoughts that Haggard was developing in his romances relate to many contemporary cultural and intellectual currents; indeed Edward Said sees Sandra Gilbert's 'recent and extraordinarily brilliant study' of *She* as demonstrating 'the narrow correspondence between suppressed Victorian sexuality at home, its fantasies abroad, and the tightening hold on the male late nineteenth century imagination of imperialist ideology.'<sup>10</sup> Thus *She* incorporates many late-nineteenth-century preoccupations.

In *Allan Quatermain*, the sequel to Haggard's first romance *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), the musical sexualisation of foreign women again occurs. In this, the second in a large group of books about Quatermain, a hunter who spends much time in Africa, he returns there in the company of Sir Henry Curtis and Captain John Good to search for a white society which (myth says) lives north of Mount Kenia. After many trials they find Zu-Vendis, ruled by twin queens, the dark Sorais and the fair Nyleptha,<sup>11</sup> both of whom fall in love with Curtis. Sorais is associated with music throughout the romance, with her 'soft and musical voice'<sup>12</sup> and her dark, wailing songs of love, blood and death;<sup>13</sup> her foil, Nyleptha is not connected to music. In all of

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<sup>8</sup> Vogelsberger writes that 'the Lovedu tribe at the time when Haggard was in the Transvaal had a fair-skinned female queen, who was said to be immortal and all-powerful. Interestingly enough there were quite a number of white women rumoured to rule an African tribe in the nineteenth century.' So Haggard was building upon contemporary 'urban legend'. [Hartwig A. Vogelsberger. "King Romance": *Rider Haggard's Achievement*. Salzburg: Institut Für Anglistik und Amerikanistik Universität Salzburg, 1984: 89.]

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: 27.

<sup>10</sup> Edward W. Said. 'Orientalism Reconsidered'. In *Europe and Its Others*. Volume One, Proceedings of the Essex Conference on the Sociology of Literature July 1984, ed. Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, Margaret Iversen and Diana Loxley, 14-27. Colchester: University of Essex, 1984: 23-24.

<sup>11</sup> In many nineteenth-century novels the 'fair woman' is the heroine and the 'dark' woman her opposite as the 'fallen woman'. [Inderpal Grewal. *Home and Harem: Nation, Gender, Empire, and the Cultures of Travel*. London: Leicester University Press, 1996: 37-38.]

<sup>12</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Allan Quatermain*, ed. Dennis Butts. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995 [1887]: 149.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*: 189.

Haggard's romances it is only the dark, dangerous, sexual women who are ever given this kind of musicality, as he believes that 'Only the dark races with their age-long record of bloodshed, slavery and sorrow can conceive and utter'<sup>14</sup> such music. Sorais is depicted as an evil, murdering temptress who causes the deaths of thousands when she declares a bloody civil war sparked by the rejection of her love for Curtis. The Englishmen fight for the army of Nyleptha whom Curtis loves; they defeat Sorais, and Curtis marries Nyleptha. After writing his narrative of their adventures Quatermain dies and is cremated in Zu-Vendis (although he features in later Haggard romances) and Curtis becomes Nyleptha's King-Consort, redressing the 'anomaly' of female power.<sup>15</sup> Good also remains in Zu-Vendis and begins to recover from his unrequited love for Sorais. Published in the same year as Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee, this romance expresses concerns and conflicted thoughts about masculine identity, conquest, and men's place in a female-ruled society.

*Allan Quatermain* ends with Curtis's postscript in which he sets out his wish to exclude all foreigners from the country, and his hope to convert the Zu-Vendis people to Christianity (an activity usually associated with British colonisation), but he has 'no fancy for handing over this beautiful country to be torn and fought for by speculators, tourists, politicians and teachers, whose voice is as the voice of Babel'.<sup>16</sup> Haggard was a member of the first generation of Englishmen to read Darwin as 'adolescents uncontaminated by deep-seated prejudices', and he used his youthful experiences in Africa combined with this Darwinian influence in his writings.<sup>17</sup> With these attitudes in mind one can note with interest that once Haggard's adventurers reach their remote destinations they choose not to unlock them to the wider world and certainly not to British colonial expansion.<sup>18</sup> This assertion conflicts with Deirdre David's contention that 'there is no textual evidence to support a reading of *She* as either glorifying or lamenting the British presence in Africa',<sup>19</sup> because Haggard's other works often lament white interference. This highlights Haggard's often ambivalent attitude to Empire – an idea he found pure and great in principle, but petty and often destructive in practice,<sup>20</sup> leading to an ultimately unresolved tension in many of his works between the belief in white superiority and his respect for (some) Africans (particularly Zulus).<sup>21</sup> Daniel Bivona in *Desire and Contradiction* (1990) suggests that the commercial success of Haggard's works is partly owing to his comparatively sympathetic treatment of 'native' African cultures. British Victorian readers were accustomed to presentations of 'natives' that allowed them to remain religiously, sexually, politically and morally superior, but Bivona views Haggard as having developed a more 'relativistic' attitude by ascribing value to

<sup>14</sup> [Wednesday 11 March 1914]. H. Rider Haggard. *Diary of an African Journey (1914)*, ed. Stephen Coan. London: Hurst & Company, 2000: 77.

<sup>15</sup> Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance*: 38-39.

<sup>16</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 282.

<sup>17</sup> Etherington, *Rider Haggard*: 107.

<sup>18</sup> Kitzan, *Victorian Writers and the Image of Empire*: 159.

<sup>19</sup> Deirdre David. *Rule Britain: Women, Empire, and Victorian Writing*. London: Cornell University Press, 1995: 198.

<sup>20</sup> For Haggard's contradictory thoughts on Empire see Appendix XII.

<sup>21</sup> Daniel Bivona. *Desire and Contradiction: Imperial Visions and Domestic Debates in Victorian Literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990: 37.

these 'native' cultures.<sup>22</sup> Haggard's personal views of non-European cultures and his particular respect for the Zulu people create a 'noble savage' aspect in some of his 'native' characters.<sup>23</sup> Haggard's imaginary Africa, influenced by his perception of the Zulu, is a world of honourable warfare and strong masculinity in which the white man can rediscover the chivalric golden days lost in Europe and 'experience undomesticated masculinity in its most agreeable fantasy form'<sup>24</sup> away from "white society" which Haggard felt was now marred by industry, effeminacy and decadence.<sup>25</sup>

### 'Very sweet music it was': allure and sexuality

Manipulation of men by Haggard's women is often linked to music in his works. Although there are many scenes of obvious female display, such as the 'band of beautiful girls somewhat lightly clothed, some of whom played on lutes and other instruments of music'<sup>26</sup> in *Montezuma's Daughter* (1893), Haggard's application of music in conjunction with allure and sexuality runs at a deeper level in much of his writing. In *Quatermain*, Curtis says to Quatermain:

"I was shown straight into Sorais' private chamber, and a wonderful place it is; and there she sat, quite alone, upon a silken couch at the end of the room, playing gently upon that zither of hers. I stood before her, and for a while she took no notice of me, but kept on playing and singing a little, and very sweet music it was. At last she looked up and smiled."<sup>27</sup>

The luxurious setting, the 'gaze' of 'those dark eyes of hers', the 'perfume on her hair' and the music create 'an incarnate spirit of beauty',<sup>28</sup> and so Sorais assails all of Curtis's senses with her seductive splendour – a deliberate display, as she knows that he is there, but takes no notice.

Likewise when Ayesha is attempting to ensnare Holly she utilises her musical qualities: 'She laughed – ah, how musically! and nodded her little head at me with an air of sublimated coquetry that would have done credit to a Venus Victrix',<sup>29</sup> the victorious Roman goddess of love, beauty and courtesans. At this juncture Holly describes how he is 'Drawn by some magnetic force which I could not resist'<sup>30</sup> to look at Ayesha, just as Curtis 'almost felt as though [he] was being mesmerised'<sup>31</sup> when Sorais sings before him. Etherington writes that 'Genius in action for Haggard's women means immoral methods employed to achieve amoral ends';<sup>32</sup> Sorais and Ayesha use such methods as they utilise their intelligence and musicality to display themselves in

<sup>22</sup> Bivona, *Desire and Contradiction*: 37.

<sup>23</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4*.

<sup>24</sup> John Tosh. 'Imperial Masculinity and the Flight from Domesticity in Britain 1880-1914'. In *Gender and Colonialism*, ed. Timothy P. Foley, Lionel Pilkington, Sean Ryder and Elizabeth Tilley, 72-85. Galway: Galway University Press, 1995: 81.

<sup>25</sup> Gail Ching-Liang Low. *White Skins/Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism*. London: Routledge, 1996: 35.

<sup>26</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Montezuma's Daughter*. London: Longman's, Green, & Co., 1896 [1893]: 117.

<sup>27</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 203.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*: 204.

<sup>29</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *She: A History of Adventure*. London: Penguin Books, 2001 [1886]: 159.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 204.

<sup>32</sup> Etherington, *Rider Haggard*: 80.

their full alluring magnetism. Ayesha is called She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed by her subjects, perhaps from pure fear, or possibly owing to this magnetism which makes her literally irresistible. Throughout the nineteenth century music was considered a central component of mesmerism and the two were associated in theories of the unconscious, something in which Haggard was interested in his quest to decide upon his own spirituality. In *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction* (2000), Phyllis Weliver writes that 'The relationship between mesmerist and subject was feared because of the complete control that the operator had, with the implication that he could use this control to seduce his female patients. Music became associated with the mesmerist, becoming part of his stereotypical character and a metaphor for the mastery he exerted over Victorian heroines.'<sup>33</sup> Here however, it is the women who are empowered with the musical ability to mesmerise,<sup>34</sup> and this is another aspect of the othering of these women who are here taking on powers usually attributed to sexually predatory men – continuing the thread of the fear of the New Woman and the 'Oriental' female as Other.

### 'White-veiled women'

For Ayesha, one of her principle weapons of allure against the Englishmen is the veil that she uses to cover her 'half-divine'<sup>35</sup> loveliness. The idea of veils and specifically *unveiling* is frequently linked to her and through Holly's words it is insinuated that unveiling Ayesha metaphorically destroys men – 'No man who once had seen She unveiled, and heard the music of her voice, and drunk in the bitter wisdom of her words, would willingly give up the sight for a whole sea of placid joys.'<sup>36</sup> Here Haggard highlights Ayesha's beauty, intelligence and musicality – a heady combination destroying peace of mind forever, but which no man would choose to relinquish. The (fictional) editor of Holly's later manuscript on *Ayesha* (1905) writes that 'like Mr. Holly, I incline to the theory that *She*' 'put forward' stories like 'the vague Isis-myth' 'as mere veils to hide the truth which it was her purpose to reveal at last in that song she never sang.'<sup>37</sup> Despite never *hiding* behind her literal veil, we are led to believe that Ayesha again utilises veils, but this time metaphorically, and to hide her true story. Haggard believed in such metaphorical female veils: 'what man is there that a veiled woman does not interest? Indeed, does not half the interest of woman lie in the fact that her nature is veiled from man, in short a mystery which he is always seeking to solve at his peril, and I might add, never succeeds in solving?'<sup>38</sup> These views must have influenced his frequent portrayal of perilous veiled women. Ayesha is only able to emerge from these metaphorical veils in song, yet her confession is prevented by Leo's death in *Ayesha* (1905), a demise caused by her kisses; thus her sexual desire ultimately reaches a point where it supplants her sensual musicality, and silences it.

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<sup>33</sup> Weliver, *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction*: 15.

<sup>34</sup> For a more humorous version of mesmerism, see *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, footnotes 35-37*.

<sup>35</sup> Haggard, *She*: 192.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*: 241.

<sup>37</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Ayesha, The Return of She*. London: Ward, Lock & Co., Limited, 1905: 20. See page 370 for 'the song she never sang.'

<sup>38</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Finished*. London: MacDonald, 1962 [1917]: 216.

Meyda Yeğenoğlu asserts that as the veil formed an impediment between the Western (male) eyes and the female 'Oriental' body it seemed to prevent her conquest by the European male,<sup>39</sup> so he desired to penetrate the veil to reveal the woman beneath, and the presumed delights that must be hidden.<sup>40</sup> For the European men described by Yeğenoğlu the veil acts as a mask, making the 'Oriental' woman into a mystery. This mask hides the true person<sup>41</sup> so that the veil becomes a metaphorical representation of 'Oriental' women's deception and secrecy. Ayesha chooses to unveil at significant moments – to Holly when she is trying to manipulate him; to Leo and Holly when she sings her love-song to the former; and to bathe in the flames of eternal life. As Homi Bhabha has written, 'In the objectification of the scopic drive there is always the threatened return of the look'<sup>42</sup> and part of Ayesha's attraction (and danger) is her negation of her objectified status by removing her veil to display herself, and so returning the scopic look of the Englishmen, a look which she focuses on Leo. In *willingly* unveiling, Ayesha not only seems to offer herself sexually to the Englishmen, but also displays power<sup>43</sup> over them and shows her pleasure at the "deviant" 'vice' of pleasure at personal display.<sup>44</sup>

It is not only She whom Haggard presents veiled, this is a theme that he often touches upon and explores. The facelessness of veiled women is depicted in 'Elissa; or, the Doom of Zimbabwe'.<sup>45</sup> The priestesses of Baaltis are singing whilst they process to the temple to take part in the sacrifice of a baby in an attempt to save the life of the incarnation of the goddess (their chief priestess).<sup>46</sup>

These women, who numbered at least a hundred, were clad in white, and wore upon their heads a gauze-like veil that fell to the knees, and was held in place by a golden fillet surmounted with the symbol of a crescent moon. [...] On her right wrist, moreover, a milk-white dove was fastened by a wire, both corn and dove being tokens of that fertility which, under various guises, was the real object of the worship of these people. The sight of these white-veiled women about whose crescent-decked brows the doves fluttered, wildly striving to be free, was very strange and beautiful as they advanced also singing a low and melancholy chant.<sup>47</sup>

The 'symbol' of the crescent moon securing their veils gives rise to images of Islam and otherness, however here these images are paganised with the associated infant sacrifice and 'savage' worship of fertility. The doves (themselves to be slaughtered) 'striving' for freedom from the priestesses perhaps reflect the imprisonment of the women in their veils – the doves may

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<sup>39</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 39.

<sup>40</sup> Neil MacMaster and Toni Lewis. 'Orientalism: from unveiling to hyperveiling'. *Journal of European Studies: Literature and Ideas from the Renaissance to the Present*, 28 (1998): 123.

<sup>41</sup> Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*: 44.

<sup>42</sup> Homi K. Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994: 81.

<sup>43</sup> Showalter, *Sexual Anarchy*: 156.

<sup>44</sup> Lynda Nead. *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988: 180.

<sup>45</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Elissa; or, the Doom of Zimbabwe'. In *Black Heart and White Heart and Other Stories*, 69-232. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1900.

<sup>46</sup> For an analysis of the corresponding illustration See *Visual Culture: Chapter 13*, at footnotes 32-37.

<sup>47</sup> Haggard, 'Elissa': 104.

be held by a wire, but the golden fillet securing their veils likewise traps the women in the captivity (to European eyes) of the veil, and to further the metaphor, also of their 'barbaric' religion and society. Unlike She who is empowered by her utilisation of the veil, these priestesses seem to be ensnared and depersonalised by it, as is reflected in their unexceptional melancholy chant, a marked contrast to Ayesha's individualising musicality.

Ayesha is not the only one of Haggard's dangerous women who uses the veil for her own means, another is the Asika (the mystical priestess ruler of the African Bonsa Town) in *The Yellow God: An Idol of Africa* (1909). The Asika herself is 'wonderfully clad in gold-spangled, veil-like garments, with round bosses shaped to the breast, covered with thin plates of gold fashioned like the scales of a fish, which showed off the extraordinary elegance of her lithe form',<sup>48</sup> echoing Haggard's descriptions of Ayesha. However the Asika's demand that the object of her desire, the English Major Alan Vernon, covers *his* face is extraordinary:

"Understand me," she said, fixing her great languid eyes upon him in a fashion that made him exceedingly uncomfortable, "understand, Vernoon, that if you go out anywhere, you must be in your mask, which you can only put off when you are alone with *me*."

"Why?" he asked.

"Because, Vernoon, I do not choose that any other woman should see your face. If a woman looks upon your uncovered face, remember that she dies – not nicely."<sup>49</sup>

The fact that the Asika has the power to 'choose' whether others see the face of her preferred man would be unsettling for Haggard's British readership, it is therefore unsurprising that unlike Leo with Ayesha, Alan is appalled by the Asika and 'all his soul revolted, yet the fearful strength that was in her seemed to draw him inward whither she would go. Then a light shone, and that light was the face of Barbara [his English love]'.<sup>50</sup> Despite moments of attraction, Alan remains true in spirit to Barbara and is chiefly afraid of and disgusted by the Asika's 'evil loveliness'.<sup>51</sup> Later in the romance the Asika 'loosed a scarf that she wore across her breast-plate of gold fish-scales, and threw the star-spangled thing over Alan's head, that even these priests should not see his face'.<sup>52</sup> Not only does the Asika emasculate Alan by choosing to cover his face and actively forcing him to do so by her own hand, she feminises him by dressing him in her own beautiful veil so subverting the very notion of the veil as a device for controlling and hiding women. The assertive, domineering and masculinised behaviour of the Asika again illustrates Victorian fears of the New Woman, but here (and most frighteningly) it is a New Woman with the power as well as the desire to entirely subjugate men, conforming to contemporary fears that women were usurping male roles and sexual freedoms. The Asika's aggressive New Woman behaviour leaves

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<sup>48</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *The Yellow God: An Idol of Africa*. London: Cassell & Company, 1926 [1909]: 159.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*: 168.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*: 239.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*: 159.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*: 172-73.

her abandoned by Alan who returns to Barbara's more docile charms, proving a stark warning to Haggard's female readership.

The Asika is often animalised by Haggard's descriptions; through the combination of imagery like her gold fish-scale breastplate and the 'snake-like poise of the head, the long, bending neck and the feline smile'<sup>53</sup> Haggard attributes to the Asika a slipperiness, liteness and cunning – physical animal traits and their more abstract associated characteristics. In *She*, Haggard grafts the symbolic idea of the snake onto the metaphor of the veil:

And without more ado she stood up and shook the white wrappings from her, and came forth shining and splendid like some glittering snake when she has cast her slough; ay, and fixed her wonderful eyes upon me – more deadly than any Basilisk's – and pierced me through and through with their beauty, and sent her light laugh ringing through the air like chimes of silver bells.<sup>54</sup>

The snake is 'a long-standing trope of demonized female sexuality'<sup>55</sup> and when Ayesha is linked with the Basilisk – a fatally dangerous serpent, with echoes of Satan's temptation of Eve and Eve's of Adam – she is again musically laughing.<sup>56</sup> Ayesha's frequent laughter associated with music conforms to Haggard's presentation of her as sorceress; according to Catherine Clément 'Women-witches often laugh'<sup>57</sup> and 'All laughter is allied with the monstrous.'<sup>58</sup> Holly's description of Ayesha's eyes piercing him completely with their beauty whilst musically laughing produces images of penetration. In metaphorically penetrating Holly Ayesha is usurping a male prerogative, however in doing so with *beautiful* eyes she places a feminine gloss over a masculine activity. This highlights fears of the New Woman taking away sexual control and supremacy from men, something that Ayesha also achieves in general power and position as well as in her sexual role, continuing to other her, in a chapter that Haggard titles 'The Balance Turns'. In *She and Allan* (1921) Haggard makes the serpent allusion even more explicit with a scene where Ayesha is sending Quatermain to speak with the dead – Allan describes how he

appeared to see Ayesha seated in a temple, for there were columns about her, and behind her was an altar on which a fire burned. All round her, too, were hooded snakes like to that she wore about her middle, fashioned in

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<sup>53</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 159.

<sup>54</sup> Haggard, *She*: 192.

<sup>55</sup> Murphy, *Time is of the Essence*: 50.

<sup>56</sup> Haggard also associates his Cleopatra with snakes in a similar way in our first glimpse of her: 'Her breast was bare, but under it was a garment that glistened like the scaly covering of a snake, everywhere sewn with gems.' [H. Rider Haggard. *Cleopatra: Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian, as Set Forth by his Own Hand*. London: The Readers Library Publishing Company, n.d. [1889]: 77.]. Her naked breasts sexualise this sumptuous and animalistic imagery. In the same romance Haggard describes the disappearance of the goddess Isis thusly: 'As the last note of the sweet voice died away, the fiery snake climbed into the heart of the cloud.' [Ibid.: 200.] So with serpent imagery Haggard links Cleopatra (who historically considered herself to be descended from Isis) with Ayesha (originally a priestess of Isis) and the goddess herself.

<sup>57</sup> Catherine Clément. 'Part 1. The Guilty One'. In *The Newly Born Woman*. Theory and History of Literature, Volume 24, ed. Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, trans. Betsy Wing, 1-62. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975 [translated 1986]: 32.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.: 33.

gold. To these snakes she sang and they danced to her singing; yes, with flickering tongues they danced upon their tails! What the scene signified I cannot conceive, unless it meant that this mistress of magic was consulting her familiars.<sup>59</sup>

Thirty-five years after his original allusions to Ayesha as serpent-like, Haggard has her singing to, and dancing with, her snake 'familiars' in an obscene magical ritual, much like Meredith's Bhanavar of twenty years earlier.<sup>60</sup>

### 'Her bell-like notes': feminine manipulation

In *Quatermain* Haggard's descriptions of Sorais frequently allude to music, but primarily regarding her speech, for example 'the Queen Sorais addressed him in a soft and musical voice.'<sup>61</sup> Interestingly Haggard writes 'a' voice and not 'her' voice; this implies Sorais' decision to use this voice and thus manipulate. With Ayesha, music is chiefly utilised in the expression of her emotions: for instance joy – 'She laughed out in her bell-like notes',<sup>62</sup> or anger – 'she spoke, or rather hissed, in Arabic, in a note that curdled my blood, and for a second stopped my heart.'<sup>63</sup> Haggard associates music with these women particularly when they are at their most dangerous. The motif of Ayesha penetrating Holly continues with his development of fear at her knowledge and intelligence: "'Why art thou so frightened, stranger?'" asked the sweet voice again – a voice which seemed to draw the heart out of me, like the strains of softest music. "Is there that about me that should affright a man?", "Ah, stranger," she answered, with a laugh that sounded like distant silver bells, "thou wast afraid because mine eyes were searching out thine heart, therefore wast thou afraid."<sup>64</sup> When Ayesha attempts to manipulate and gain knowledge and power over Holly she is at her most perilous and most musical; this danger is subtle and on a surface level beautiful, like 'the strains of softest music' and indeed Ayesha herself. Ayesha's melodious laughter also accompanies her most evil moments – laughing at those she is having executed and accompanying her lies to Leo about her murder of Ustane – thus her laughter's musical beauty acts as a 'veil' over her bloodiest deeds. Haggard often describes his non-European women's voices and laughter in musical terms: for example in *When the World Shook* (1919) 'The Lady Yva actually did laugh, and very musical was that laugh'<sup>65</sup> and *Nada the Lily* (1892) whose 'hair curled and hung upon her shoulders, her eyes were large and brown, and soft as a buck's, her colour was the colour of rich cream, her smile was like a ripple on the waters, and when she spoke her voice was low and sweeter than the sound of an instrument of music.'<sup>66</sup> However these women's musicality stretches no further. They are alluring, but ultimately act as 'noble

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<sup>59</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *She and Allan*. London: Hutchinson & Co., n.d. [1921]: 252.

<sup>60</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 6, 'She 'sang to the Serpents''*.

<sup>61</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 148.

<sup>62</sup> Haggard, *She*: 157.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*: 167.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*: 146.

<sup>65</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *When the World Shook, Being an Account of the Great Adventure of Bastin, Bickley and Arbuthnot*. London: Cassell & Company, 1921 [1919]: 102.

<sup>66</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Nada the Lily*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, n.d. [1892]: 201.



savage' figures; they do not display the fuller musicality of Haggard's Ayesha and Sorais and their associated darkness and sexuality.

Ayesha is frequently associated with bells. According to Haggard's contemporary Carl Engel, 'The notion that the tinkling and clanging of bells is a safeguard against the influence of evil spirits, so common among Christian nations, evidently prevailed also with the ancient Egyptians',<sup>67</sup> Haggard as a keen and well respected amateur Egyptologist may have been aware of this association.<sup>68</sup> In repeatedly likening Ayesha's bewitching musicality to bells Haggard appears to give her a musicality that is pure and safe, however the way in which Ayesha uses her musicality shows it to be entirely false as She usurps something holy for amoral ends. In *Ayesha* (the sequel to *She*) this is taken a step further as She carries a crystal, gold and precious-stone sistrum as the symbol of her power. The sistrum was used in ancient Egyptian culture in the religious ceremonies of Hathor and Isis to ward off evil spirits,<sup>69</sup> and indeed by Ayesha herself as she began life as the Prophetess of Isis,<sup>70</sup> representing Isis on earth.<sup>71</sup> Her undoing is her desire for Kallikrates causing her to flee her role as a priestess. As Ayesha herself can be (and has been) interpreted as evil, she again shows her falsehood, as following her 'fall' she chooses to keep a symbol of religious purity as her sceptre. With the 'tinkling bells' and her sistrum Ayesha gives herself the appearance of safety and purity, but through her behaviour proves herself to be their opposite. It is also interesting to note that the sistrum 'produced a sound like the hiss of a snake',<sup>72</sup> one of the favoured animals of Isis, so the instrument continues the connection between Ayesha, Isis and serpents.

### 'A paean of triumph': female power

The sexualisation and musicality of Ayesha is anticipated in her unlucky rival Ustane's characterisation. Ustane, a member of the matrilineal Amahagger tribe, chooses Leo as partner. Ustane and Ayesha are the only characters in the romance who are given songs and Ustane's 'musical gibberish'<sup>73</sup> involves a premonition and vision of Ayesha, so this song and its underlying sexuality are still linked to her.<sup>74</sup> The lines '*Ay, when mine eyes fell on thee I did*

<sup>67</sup> Carl Engel. *Musical Myths and Facts in Two Volumes*. London: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1876: Vol. I, 130.

<sup>68</sup> He was a friend of Howard Carter, who invited him to visit Tutankhamen's tomb. [Shirley M. Addy. *Rider Haggard and Egypt*. Suffolk: AL Publications, 1998: 2.]

<sup>69</sup> James W. McKinnon and Robert Anderson. 'Sistrum'. In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 23, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 450-51. London: Macmillan, 2001: 450.

<sup>70</sup> A 'well-documented group of musicians' in ancient Egypt is 'the chantresses, or temple musicians' who 'included a great number of women of privileged backgrounds at Thebes and elsewhere, including queens, princesses, and other members of the royal family.' [Emily Teeter. 'Female Musicians in Pharaonic Egypt'. In *Rediscovering the Muses: Women's Musical Traditions*, ed. Kimberly Marshall, 68-91. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993: 85.] Haggard, in his guise as amateur Egyptologist, may have been aware of this when creating Ayesha's background.

<sup>71</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'The Kiss of Fate'. In *The Best Short Stories of Rider Haggard*, ed. Peter Haining, 120-29. London: Michael Joseph, 1981 [1922].

<sup>72</sup> Gaetano Capasso. *Journey to Pompeii: Virtual Tours Around the Lost Cities*. Napoli: Capware Culture Technologies, 2002: 32.

<sup>73</sup> Haggard, *She*: 97-99.

<sup>74</sup> See Appendix XIII.

*desire thee, – / Then did I take thee to me*',<sup>75</sup> illustrate the open sexual choice of Ustane's society – the thought that a woman can 'desire' and 'take' a man reverses British Victorian gender roles – in matrilineal societies women are theoretically liberated in sexual terms, allowing them to choose (and discard) multiple partners, which would be exciting in a Victorian context, but also threatening. Perhaps to quash this fear Haggard has the male Amahaggers rise up to kill the women every second generation, when 'at last they get unbearable', to 'show them' that the men are 'strongest'.<sup>76</sup>

Ustane's choice foreshadows Ayesha's desiring of Leo and the elimination of her rival (Ustane) in order to attain him. Ayesha's song incorporates her future plans, dreams and desires and occurs after 'she again threw off her veil'.<sup>77</sup> Although it begins with images of love that '*is born of the flesh*', a sensual illustration, the final section of her song grows out of this sensuality into images of lust of a different kind – for power. She sings to Leo in a 'triumphant tone' of the couple's '*beauty*', '*might*', thundering '*greatness*', '*victory and pomp*', '*splendour*' and a '*power*' previously '*unattained*', evoking Holly's earlier image of her as Venus Victrix – sensual, yet warmongering. As Gail Ching-Liang Low emphasises, Ayesha can be viewed as the 'negative image' of Queen Victoria; she is the savage ruler whose arrival in England and usurpation of power would be at great cost to life, liberty and morality.<sup>78</sup> In choosing Leo and taking the sexual lead she is, in Victorian eyes, unmanning him. She even lays 'her hand upon his shoulder' in a physical act of selection and possession;<sup>79</sup> this is ironic as Leo's masculinity does not fall clearly into the acceptable Victorian mould and the homoerotic innuendos of his beauty and his homosocial friendship with Holly have been explored by modern critics.<sup>80</sup>

Haggard writes that Ayesha 'broke out, after the ancient and poetic fashion of the dwellers of Arabia, into a paean of triumph and epithalamium, which, wild and beautiful as it was, is exceedingly difficult to render into English, and ought by rights to be sung to the music of a cantata, rather than written and read'.<sup>81</sup> Despite a few exceptions,<sup>82</sup> until the twentieth-century declamation was thought to be a male style,<sup>83</sup> likewise both serious composition (cantata)<sup>84</sup> and improvisation were the realms of men. Carolyn Korsmeyer writes that

<sup>75</sup> Haggard, *She*: 97-99.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*: 118.

<sup>77</sup> See Appendix XIV.

<sup>78</sup> Low, *White Skins/Black Masks*: 65.

<sup>79</sup> Haggard, *She*: 232-33.

<sup>80</sup> For example in Bristow, *Empire Boys*: 141.

<sup>81</sup> Haggard, *She*: 231.

<sup>82</sup> One example being the 'Italian' poet Corinne, whose improvisatory orations which she accompanies with her lyre are described in Madame de Staël's *Corinne, ou l'Italie* (1807). However when she orates (28-33) her "foreignness" is accentuated and supported by her claims that Italian is a 'melodious, highly coloured language [which] was formed with the fine arts around it' making oration more natural, and she is othered by the turban that she is wearing (33). [Madame de Staël. *Corinne, or Italy*. Oxford World's Classics. Trans. by Sylvia Raphael. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1807].]

<sup>83</sup> Private Communication, 5 August 2005, from Charles MacDougall to Claire Mabilat (then Walsh).

<sup>84</sup> As Ethel Boyce wrote in 1893, 'very few [women] have attempted [to compose] serious musical works'. [Ethel M. Boyce. 'Music'. In *Ladies at Work*, ed. Lady Jeune, 40-43. London: Innes & Co., 1893: 43.]

Among the terms of criticism that were commonly used in assessing works of art, one of the most opprobrious was “effeminate.” Male artists were the ones to whom this negative term would be applied, for a work of similar quality by a woman would simply be feminine and thereby charming and minor. There is no equivalent negative variation on “masculine” to serve as the counterpart of “effeminate,” which is a derogatory term employed with sufficient onus that one realizes just how unlike women male creators apparently were supposed to be.<sup>85</sup>

In creating grand music Ayesha is commandeering a strictly male role, thus challenging ‘woman’s role in evolution’ to become more feminine, and so creating implications of reversion and degeneration.<sup>86</sup> Haggard calls Ayesha’s song an epithalamium (a lyric ode in honour of a bride and bridegroom) so it is a form of declamation and oration, however in *singing* this ode she overlays this with the feminine area of song, so she usurps this masculine style, but imposes femininity in the form of song upon it. This aligns with Haggard’s use of Ayesha’s *beautiful* eyes penetrating Holly – a feminine interpretation of a masculine activity – the Other as New Woman.

In *Ayesha* Haggard again gives She her voice following her betrothal to Leo, when Ayesha ‘kisses him and the light from her brow moves to his also’ and She then demands,

“Listen now while I sing to thee and hear that song aright, for in its melody at length though shalt learn the truth, which unwed I might not tell to thee. Thou shalt learn who and what *I* am, and who and what *thou* art, and of the high purposes of our love, and this dead woman’s hate, and of all that I have hid from thee in veiled, bewildering words and visions.”

“Listen then, my love and lord, to the burden of the Song of Fate.”<sup>87</sup>

It seems that only in song can Ayesha reveal the mysteries of her ‘veiled’ life – a fitting feminine form for her woman’s revelations of love. Holly continues his description:

Hark! she began to sing in a voice so rich and perfect that its honeyed notes seemed to cloy my blood and stop my breath.

The world was not, was not, and in the womb of

Silence

Slept the souls of men.

Yet I was and thou –

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<sup>85</sup> Carolyn Korsmeyer. *Gender and Aesthetics: An Introduction*. London: Routledge, 2004: 47.

<sup>86</sup> Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*: 212-13.

<sup>87</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 369.

Suddenly Ayesha stopped, and I felt rather than saw the horror on her face' [... as] 'withered in Ayesha's kiss, slain by the fire of love, Leo lay dead.'<sup>88</sup>

In accordance with previous descriptions, Ayesha's musical voice seems to stop the blood of Holly, and finally her kiss literally kills Leo (whose soul she later joins). Hearing the temptress's song at the moment of death is a theme that Haggard had used a few years earlier in *Cleopatra* (1889)<sup>89</sup> as Harmachis's final words illustrate: 'Oh, Cleopatra! Cleopatra, thou Destroyer! if I might but tear thy vision from my heart! Of all my griefs, this is the heaviest grief – still must I love thee! Still must I hug this serpent to my heart! Still in my ears must ring that low laugh of triumph – the murmur of the falling fountain – the song of the nightingale.'<sup>90</sup> Again associated with a dangerous snake, Cleopatra (who is herself *literally* poisoned by Harmachis) still poisons his thoughts with her musical laughter as he dies.<sup>91</sup>

### 'Beauty made sublime'

Initially Haggard calls Ayesha's song 'beautiful' – in opposition to the depths and grandeur of the sublime, the beautiful is traditionally associated with artifice and the feminine.<sup>92</sup> However Haggard then modifies this description, likening her declamatory style to a cantata. In *The Pleasures of Imagination* (1744, revised 1772) Mark Akenside describes the sublime as 'awe-inspiring in its magnitude, its energy, its terror. While beauty is related to virtue and use, the sublime is related to infinity, to immortality'.<sup>93</sup> This Romantic concept persisted into Haggard's era, somewhat moving away from its conception in aesthetic theory and landscapes and becoming more concerned with the psychology and the effects of the sublime.<sup>94</sup> The concepts of 'infinity', 'immortality' and 'divinity' are applied to Ayesha by Haggard, as is the actual term 'sublime': 'Never before had I guessed what beauty made sublime could be – and yet, the sublimity was a dark one – the glory was not all of heaven – though none the less was it glorious.'<sup>95</sup> In the same passage Haggard describes Ayesha as having 'the beauty of celestial beings', 'this beauty, with all its awful loveliness and purity, was *evil*',<sup>96</sup> 'visible majesty', 'imperial grace', being 'godlike', and having a 'shadow of sin and sorrow'.<sup>97</sup> All of these terms are linked to the idea of the sublime, and at the close of *this* description when Ayesha unveils for

<sup>88</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 370.

<sup>89</sup> Although Haggard acknowledges that Cleopatra is Greek, she is highly orientalist in this work as is unsurprising in her context as Queen of Egypt.

<sup>90</sup> Haggard, *Cleopatra*, n.d.: 253.

<sup>91</sup> Haggard often uses music at moments of non-European female power: one example being Sihamba's scene as a seer [H. Rider Haggard, *Swallow: A Tale of the Great Trek*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1919 [1898]: 84-85.] and another the Asika's control of her people [Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 195.].

<sup>92</sup> Clayton Crockett, *A Theology of the Sublime*. London: Routledge, 2001: 77.

<sup>93</sup> Samuel H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England*. Michigan: Ann Arbor, 1960 [1935]: 72.

<sup>94</sup> Vijay Mishra, *The Gothic Sublime*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1994: 19.

<sup>95</sup> Haggard, *She*: 159.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*: 158.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*: 159.

Holly for the first time, Ayesha laughs 'ah, how musically!'<sup>98</sup> Haggard directly aligns Ayesha's sublimity, danger, beauty, and musicality.

In *The Feminine Sublime* (1995) Barbara Claire Freeman suggests that the reason that woman is 'always associated with the beautiful, and never with the sublime, is that her subjugation is its very precondition.'<sup>99</sup> Haggard questions this concept in *She*, as Ayesha has power and thus sublimity, and all of the men cannot avoid subjugation to her. Derek Scott asserts that the nineteenth-century ideology of the sublime and the beautiful 'worked to exclude women from particular compositional choices (unless they were to be untrue to their "nature") and also effectively fenced off the category of "greatness" in music as a male domain';<sup>100</sup> Ayesha is in reality unwomanly in her sublimity and in her compositional style. Indeed, as Jacqueline M. Labbe writes, the sublime as expounded by Edmund Burke (1729-1797),<sup>101</sup> can entail a 'loss of masculine power. The exciting prostration the viewer feels at the precise moment of the sublime acts as a kind of feminizing agent, briefly destabilizing the subject's sense of independent selfhood'.<sup>102</sup> In giving up his position of power the (male) viewer experiences 'the delight of momentarily assuming the feminine position of objectification, along with the terror of submitting to the Other's control'.<sup>103</sup> The choice to submit to this lack of control in fact displays one's power in having that *choice* to make in the first place,<sup>104</sup> thus the male experience of being with Ayesha is a sublime one. For Labbe,

The Burkean pain of this sublime consists of the feminization process; [...] that one can only experience the disabling power of the sublime because one successfully occupies the masculine subject position. And yet the impulse to abandon this position, even briefly, testifies to a certain growing unease with its ramifications, the result of newly complicated ideas of gender roles and perceptual privilege.<sup>105</sup>

These ideas are particularly pertinent in *She*, where the men experience Ayesha's sublimity by submitting to her power and desires even against their better judgement, and where Leo's beautiful masculinity does not tally with the ideal man in the Victorian mindset. In the sublime, Edmund Burke emphasises pain over pleasure, which 'imports a masochistic sexuality heightened by his insistence on the passivity of the viewer',<sup>106</sup> as is experienced by Leo and Holly in this romance. The nature of the sublime is its ability 'to blur distinctions between

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<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Barbara Claire Freeman. *The Feminine Sublime: Gender and Excess in Women's Fiction*. London: University of California Press, 1995: 72-73.

<sup>100</sup> Derek B. Scott. *From the Erotic to the Demonic: On Critical Musicology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003: 43.

<sup>101</sup> Burke was central to the British Romantic construction of the sublime in the eighteenth century, with his essay *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757).

<sup>102</sup> Jacqueline M. Labbe. *Romantic Visualities: Landscape, Gender and Romanticism*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998: 41.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.: 47.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.: 48.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.: 41.

observer and observed, reader and text, or spectator and event',<sup>107</sup> an aspect highlighted by Haggard with the climax of his description of the unveiled She: 'Drawn by some magnetic force which I could not resist, I let my eyes rest upon her shining orbs, and felt a current pass from them to me that bewildered and half-blinded me.'<sup>108</sup> This is again imagery of penetration repeating that of Ayesha's penetrating eyes exploring Holly's heart and causing him fear, and echoing the Basilisk similes. However here their eyes connect and Ayesha's transmit a flow of energy into Holly, which dazes and dazzles him. This language at the close of this erotic passage of unveiling has intimations of orgasm, again placing Ayesha in the masculine position. This moment is directly followed by her musical laughter, so increasing the link between Ayesha's sublimity, music and 'Oriental' sexuality.

Haggard presents similarly sublime women in a few of his other romances: Cleopatra's beauty 'thrilled the beholder as he is thrilled by the rushing of the midnight gale, or by the sight of stormy waters',<sup>109</sup> for 'when she woke and the lightning leapt suddenly from her eyes and the passion-laden music of her speech chimed upon her lips, ah! then, who can tell how Cleopatra seemed? For in her met all the splendours that have been given to woman for her glory, and all the genius which man has won from heaven'.<sup>110</sup> Although Cleopatra is sublime, Haggard reaches the pinnacle of these representations in the Asika of *The Yellow God*, when in her spirit incarnation representing thousands of years of Asikas it was 'the Asika, only a thousand times more splendid; clothed in all the glory of hell. Majestically she bent towards him, her glowing eyes held his, the deadly perfume of her breath beat upon his brow and made him drunken. She spoke to him, and her voice sounded like distant bells.'<sup>111</sup> Like Ayesha, the Asika's musicality is directly linked to her sublimity.

Cleopatra's, the Asika's and Ayesha's sexuality and powers are sublime, and their characterisations include many aspects typical of the "gothic sublime" at the *fin de siècle*; these characters embody 'the unthinkable, the unnameable, and the unspeakable'<sup>112</sup> of Other womanhood. In her apparent immortality Ayesha particularly represents what Vijay Mishra calls the 'projection of a psychic terror' associated with the sublime of this era that eventually develops into an absorption with the nature and horror of death and its 'unpresentability'.<sup>113</sup> Ayesha's sublime musical style acts as a metaphor for her sexuality and strength; She does not compose and improvise trifling, women's songs, but grand, eloquent, declamatory odes in a cantata style. Just as her song combines elements of beauty and the sublime, Ayesha herself is not only sublime, but beautiful also. Patricia Murphy writes that in Ayesha 'The coupling of beauty with sublimity complicates the Burkean distinction between the two conditions, uneasily

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<sup>107</sup> Freeman, *The Feminine Sublime*: 5.

<sup>108</sup> Haggard, *She*: 159.

<sup>109</sup> Haggard, *Cleopatra*, n.d.: 97.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*: 77-78.

<sup>111</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 239.

<sup>112</sup> Mishra, *The Gothic Sublime*: 23.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

blending the splendour and harmony attributed to the beautiful to the overpowering emotion and vague terror indicative of the sublime.’<sup>114</sup> This chapter contends that rather than a blending of these elements, She’s music and sexuality place a beautiful, feminine veneer on a masculine strength and sublimity; She can still *appear* to be feminine and beautiful, whilst beneath the surface taking the control, talents and station believed fit for only men. She is the most fearful of the New Women, as unlike the Asika and Cleopatra, She is one who can maintain a false veneer of traditional femininity and beautiful purity.

## A ‘call to arms’: music and violence

Just as Ayesha’s musical laughter punctuates her death sentences and murders, when Sorais is at her most violent, music is invoked by Haggard. Sorais threatens the Englishmen: “I will wrap you in sheets of gold and hang you yet alive in chains from the four golden trumpets of the four angels that fly east and west and north and south from the giddiest pinnacle of the Temple, so that ye may be a token and a warning to the land”,<sup>115</sup> so images of violence, torture, desecration of religion and extravagant wealth are entwined with music in Sorais’ words. Sorais’ power is indicated when Quatermain tells her sister Nyleptha, “Already Sorais’ horsemen go forth and call to arms. [...] The “Lady of the Night” [Sorais] hath a sweet voice, and she will not sing in vain.”<sup>116</sup> So Haggard associates her rallying call with melodious song – powerful, manipulative and alluring to the men who hear it, yet again dangerous, and in this case fatal. Sorais warns Allan that her songs “are not such as to lighten the heavy heart”, and indeed her ‘rounded voice’ sings ‘so wildly sweet, and yet with so eerie and sad a refrain, that it made the very blood stand still. Up, up soared the golden notes, that seemed to melt far away’.<sup>117</sup> This imagery anticipates that of her violent warning – gold, wildness and despair, and also echoes Ayesha’s hissed blood-curdling note in Arabic that stops Holly’s heart.<sup>118</sup>

According to Haggard, Agnes Barber, his sister-in-law who assisted as his quasi-secretary for some years, wrote ‘Sorais’ Song’ and ‘made other useful contributions to his work’.<sup>119</sup> It is difficult to know, therefore, how much input Haggard had into this poem.<sup>120</sup> Whether or not Haggard wrote the words, in choosing to give Sorais the only song in this romance Haggard is augmenting his general theme of Sorais’ musicality as a representation of her othered, manipulating and sensual powers. Sorais sings of life, love, power and death – themes similar to those of Ayesha’s song, yet much more desolate and bitter in tone, at the brevity of it all – a definite difference from Ayesha who has found eternal youth. The violent refrain ‘*Oh, the world*

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<sup>114</sup> Murphy, *Time is of the Essence*: 50.

<sup>115</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 223.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*: 207.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*: 189.

<sup>118</sup> Haggard, *She*: 167.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*: 189.

<sup>120</sup> See Appendix XV.

is fair at the dawning [...] But the red sun sinks in blood' asserts the song's meaning that nothing is permanent – a contrast to Ayesha's paean on power and life eternal.<sup>121</sup>

In *Woman and the Demon* (1982) Nina Auerbach writes of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's painting *Beata Beatrix* (1864) that 'Like our other mesmerized, somnambulist, vampirized, or variously transfigured women, Rossetti's Beatrice has not yet died but has miraculously taken into herself life and death simultaneously.'<sup>122</sup> She believes that such women came as close as possible to realising the fantasy of the animated Sleeping Beauty at Madame Tussaud's waxworks exhibition which 'drew unprecedented crowds' in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>123</sup> Female sleep was frequently used in the Victorian visual arts to represent sexual fulfilment through its metaphorical implications of helplessness and physical abandonment.<sup>124</sup> Further, for Auerbach, 'The Sleeping Beauty's meaning lies in her destined awakening and her attendant power to awake her world.'<sup>125</sup> Ayesha is another such figure – divinely powerful, seductively beautiful, sexually aware, sublime and apparently immortal, she awaits her reincarnated lover whilst she is in a form of living death in the tombs of Kôr. Once she believes her lover returned she begins to awake, both mentally and physically, and plans to transform the entire world. Following the apparent death and failure of this seemingly immortal Ayesha, Haggard creates a mortal woman with similar attributes, but who no longer embodies the allure of the receptacle of collective culture as Ayesha can be perceived to have done; the primary evolution in Haggard's characterisation from Ayesha to Sorais is in the latter's bitterness and nihilism.

## The white woman's song

Haggard makes only occasional references to European women and music; these characters conform to the contemporary idea that 'women must act as women: they should not gaze and cannot compose',<sup>126</sup> both aberrations of which Haggard's 'Oriental' *femmes fatales* are guilty. The references typically involve (often reminiscences of) musical forms that can only be thought of as European – for example Suzanne's memories of playing the spinet at her 'grandfather's house away in the Old Colony', in *Swallow* (1919).<sup>127</sup> In *Montezuma's Daughter* Thomas Wingfield's dreams of his English love, Lily (a name signifying whiteness and purity), involve the moon shining 'sweetly on the meadows and the river, while from every side came the music of the nightingale', 'Then there came a sound of singing from beyond the hill [...] and presently between the apple trees I saw a white figure on its crest. Slowly it came towards me and I knew

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<sup>121</sup> The theme of violence, women and music arises in a number of Haggard works: see Appendix XVI.

<sup>122</sup> Auerbach, *Woman and the Demon*: 39.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*: 41.

<sup>124</sup> Christine Poulson. 'Death and the Maiden: The Lady of Shalott and the Pre-Raphaelites.' In *Re-framing the Pre-Raphaelites: Historical and Theoretical Essays*, ed. Ellen Harding, 173-94. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995: 188.

<sup>125</sup> Auerbach, *Woman and the Demon*: 42.

<sup>126</sup> Carolyn Abbate. 'Opera; or, the Envoicing of Women'. In *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, ed. Ruth A. Solie, 225-58. London: University of California Press, 1993: 238.

<sup>127</sup> Haggard, *Swallow*: 1.



that it was she for whom I waited, Lily my beloved. Now she ceased to sing, but drew on gently'.<sup>128</sup> These scenes of "pure" English femininity in a beautiful English landscape are quite typical of nineteenth-century sentimentality. Indeed, the majority of the sparse references to music and European women that Haggard makes are in this mould of purity. Interestingly, this vulnerable woman whom it was felt must be defended by a father figure was a characteristic allegory for Englishness,<sup>129</sup> reflecting this belief in English feminine purity: according to Hutchins, 'purity connoted weakness, a spirituality which was too fragile to face the grim realities of life head on'.<sup>130</sup> Despite these common depictions of fragility however, British women were considered to be inseparable from British moral strength, as Vron Ware has argued: 'as Mothers of the Empire or Britannia's Daughters, women were able to symbolize the idea of moral strength that bound the great imperial family together'.<sup>131</sup>

Derek Scott notes that in early nineteenth-century ethnology, in the days before formal anthropology, "Englishness" was considered to rest chiefly in the possession of particular merits and positive character traits,<sup>132</sup> such as feminine "purity" and "morality". Indeed, according to MacKay and Thane, the qualities of the perfect Englishwoman were not generally perceived as being specifically English, they were ideals of domesticity and motherhood, but the English woman's uniqueness was in her ability to embody these virtues in a manner above all other women.<sup>133</sup> English femininity could be transferred with integrity to the 'wilds', for example when Quatermain's wife Stella in 'Allan's Wife' (1889) sings hymns to sooth Hendrika the 'baboon' woman who has kidnapped her,<sup>134</sup> so combating savagery with Christianity. However in contrast to these bastions of English womanhood some of the musical white women in Haggard's works have 'gone native' – that is they have become affected (at the time many would have said 'tainted') by 'native' attributes, in these cases 'native' musicality. In *The People of the Mist* (1894) Juanna Rodd<sup>135</sup> not only sings Portuguese love-songs in her 'rich contralto voice', but also a 'Kaffir boat-song',<sup>136</sup> and later 'the refrain of the sacred song which she sang in the ancient language of the People of the Mist, the tongue that Soa [her nurse] had taught her as a child'.<sup>137</sup> By singing this song and pretending to be their goddess she saves the travellers' lives. In *Allan and the Holy Flower* (1915), following her rescue from the cannibal Pongo people in Africa, the American Elizabeth performs 'the rites of the Flower' (of which she was chief

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<sup>128</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma's Daughter*: 159.

<sup>129</sup> James Buzard. "'Then on the Shore of the Wide World": The Victorian Nation and its Others'. In *A Companion to Victorian Literature and Culture*, ed. Herbert F. Tucker, 438-55. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999: 445.

<sup>130</sup> Francis G. Hutchins. *The Illusion of Permanence: British Imperialism in India*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967: 49-50.

<sup>131</sup> Vron Ware. *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History*. London: Verso, 1992: 162.

<sup>132</sup> Scott, *The Singing Bourgeois*: 175.

<sup>133</sup> Jane MacKay and Pat Thane. 'The Englishwoman'. In *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, ed. Robert Colls and Philip Dodd, 191-229. London: Croom Helm, 1986: 191.

<sup>134</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Allan's Wife'. In *Allan's Wife with Hunter Quatermain's Story, a Tale of Three Lions, and Long Odds*, 11-162. London: MacDonald, 1963 [1889]: 150.

<sup>135</sup> With an English father and a Spanish mother.

<sup>136</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *The People of the Mist*. London: MacDonald, 1951 [1894]: 141.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*: 179.

priestess) to a laurustinus bush at her husband's rectory. She can be found 'wearing a white robe and singing some mystical native song.'<sup>138</sup> Like Elizabeth, Lady Ragnall<sup>139</sup> is kidnapped in *The Ivory Child* (1916), but by 'Somali Arabs' who take her to Kendah where she is made chief priestess of the Child (a bastardised form of Horus worship). In front of all of the 'People of the Child' Lady Ragnall sings 'in a beautiful, contralto voice, but in a language I do not know, for I could not catch the words, if these were words and not only musical notes,'<sup>140</sup> whilst dressed as Isis in diaphanous 'clinging draperies' and a snake headdress.<sup>141</sup> Despite her rescue and subsequent marriage, the next time Allan meets Lady Ragnall she is still somewhat 'native', as in *The Ancient Allan* (1920) she dresses in her priestess robes<sup>142</sup> and begins 'to sing in a rich and thrilling voice. What she sang I do not know for I could not understand the language, but I presume it was some ancient chant that she learned in Kendah Land'. She then burns some hallucinogenic 'Taduki weed and with words of incantation'<sup>143</sup> takes them back to a past life in Pharaonic Egypt. Images like these, of otherwise genteel Western women turned 'native', would perhaps unsettle Haggard's readers, as there was still an underlying fear that the veneer of 'civilisation' was merely that, and that once scratched, the 'savage' woman may surface from beneath (as indeed Haggard believed possible).<sup>144</sup>

### 'The virgin and the whore': concluding remarks

In *Idols of Perversity* (1986) Bram Dijkstra writes 'The virgin and the whore, the saint and the vampire – two designations for a single dualistic opposition: that of woman as man's exclusive and forever pliable private property, on the one hand, and her transformation, upon her denial of man's ownership rights to her, into a polyandrous predator indiscriminately lusting after man's seminal essence, on the other.'<sup>145</sup> Ayesha embodies both of these aspects – on the surface forever belonging to Kallikrates/Leo, yet evolving into an independent and sensual force in her solitude; she is, as Sidney Higgins says, 'the angelic whore'.<sup>146</sup> In *Allan Quatermain* this single contradiction of Victorian womanhood has developed into the twin characters of Nyleptha (pure, fair and non-musical) and Sorais (evil and dark, the Lady of the Night), both of whom attract the Englishmen. When these Other women most embody the aspects abhorred and feared (yet desired) in concepts of ideal womanhood they are at their most musical. As Carolyn Abbate writes, the act of listening to the female singing voice is a 'complicated phenomenon' as 'Visually, the character singing is the passive object of our gaze. But, aurally, she is resonant; her musical speech drowns out everything in range, and we sit as passive objects, battered by that

<sup>138</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Allan and the Holy Flower*. London: MacDonald Illustrated Editions, 1963 [1915]: 303.

<sup>139</sup> Here still Miss Holmes.

<sup>140</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *The Ivory Child*. London: MacDonald, 1958 [1916]: 210.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*: 211-12.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*: 53.

<sup>143</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *The Ancient Allan*. London: Cassell & Company, 1925 [1920]: 57. For discussion of the illustration accompanying this passage see *Visual Culture: Chapter 13, footnote 23*.

<sup>144</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 10.

<sup>145</sup> Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*: 334.

<sup>146</sup> Sidney Higgins. *The Great Storyteller*. London: Cassell, 1981: 95. Cited in Vogelsberger, "King Romance": 18-19.

voice. As a voice she slips into the “male/active/subject” position’.<sup>147</sup> This elucidates much of the contradictory representation of Haggard’s *femmes fatales* – they are visually appealing and welcome the men’s ‘gaze’, yet with their music they subvert power relations and gain control. However, the romances conclude with a rectification of social norms – Sorais’ danger is eliminated and Curtis marries Nyleptha and so gains rule of the Zu-Vendis – patriarchy is established, and Ayesha is destroyed by the very temptation that she offers to the Englishmen.<sup>148</sup> The female duality in *Quatermain* and imagery of veiling in *She* express the popular-Darwinist contention that underneath the constrained white female lurks the dangerous sexuality attributed to black women,<sup>149</sup> as indeed Haggard writes (but in indirect terms) as Allan Quatermain:

I dare say that the highly civilised lady reading this will smile at an old fool of a hunter’s simplicity when she thinks of her black bead-bedecked sister [...] And yet, my dear young lady, what are those pretty things round your own neck? – they have a strong resemblance, especially when you wear that *very* low dress, to the savage woman’s beads. Your habit of turning round and round to the sound of horns and tom-toms, your fondness for pigments and powders, the way in which you love to subjugate yourself to the rich warrior who has captured you in marriage, and the quickness with which your taste in feathered head-dresses varies, – all these things suggest touches of kinship; and remember that in the fundamental principles of your nature you are quite identical.<sup>150</sup>

Haggard himself believed that ‘sexual passion lies at the root of all things human’,<sup>151</sup> and indeed these penetrations into unknown Africa find ‘the landscape of potential empire becom[ing] the landscape of pornographic fantasies and of sexual terrors’,<sup>152</sup> creating what has been described as ‘a steamy brew of late-Victorian soft pornography’.<sup>153</sup> This sexuality is embodied in these sensual, dark women and an essential aspect of characterisation for this perilous, potent feminine carnality is musicality, which Haggard connects with allure, sensuality, danger, power-lust and ultimately violence.

A large concern of the masculine imperialising mentality was the desire for rationalisation, mapping and categorisation of unknown terrains and peoples and this is a concern echoed in the

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<sup>147</sup> Abbate, ‘Opera; or, the Envoicing of Women’: 254.

<sup>148</sup> See Appendix XVII: ‘Conflicting interpretations’.

<sup>149</sup> Stott, ‘The Dark Continent’: 71.

<sup>150</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 10.

<sup>151</sup> Etherington, *Rider Haggard*: 78.

<sup>152</sup> Stott, ‘The Dark Continent’: 84.

<sup>153</sup> David, *Rule Britain*: 196.

romance. Haggard's uncomplicated written style reflects the goal of the quest romance – for the (male) characters to gain knowledge, categorise their findings, and so gain control, either of peoples, countries, wealth or all of these. However Haggard's sexualised female characters rupture this clear-cut process and hence the language that surrounds them indicates this change of focus. The passages that pass slowest in Haggard's writings are those concerning these women, owing to his sudden adoption of a descriptive technique, breaking up the clarity of the text by its noticeably different, elaborated style.<sup>154</sup> At these points Haggard utilises music as a metaphor for othered feminine sexuality; perhaps Haggard allies these two concepts because it is difficult to clearly rationalise either of them. Thus music becomes a tool used to other his orientalised and predatory New Women figures.

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<sup>154</sup> For example when Holly muses whilst waiting to see She: 'At length the curtain began to move. Who could be behind it? – some naked savage queen, a languishing Oriental beauty, or a nineteenth-century young lady, drinking afternoon tea? I had not the slightest idea, and should not have been astonished at seeing any of the three. I was getting beyond astonishment. The curtain agitated itself a little, then suddenly between its folds there appeared a most beautiful white hand (white as snow), and with long tapering fingers, ending in the pinkest nails. The hand grasped the curtain, and drew it aside, and as it did so I heard a voice, I think the softest and yet most silvery voice I ever heard. It reminded me of the murmur of a brook.' [Haggard, *She*: 145.]

## Chapter 8: Haggard's constructions of African masculinity: otherness, violence and music.

Just as Haggard's Other women are attributed a musicality that their European sisters cannot share, Haggard's 'native' men are musical in a way that helps to differentiate them (more) completely from their Western counterparts. In contrast to the way in which music tends to draw attention to particular non-European women in his romances, Haggard's masculine music is normally communal, often emphasising the facelessness of these men and their membership to a general 'racial' group, in alignment with the orientalist view of the Other in 'large collective terms',<sup>1</sup> as written of by Edward Said. Music is one of the devices that Haggard uses to other his non-European men, and it is an important component of his construction of their masculinity. As John Tosh has investigated, a 'weary scepticism' is a common response to studies into masculinity, with historians seeing it as 'the latest in a series of ideological red-herrings which will add nothing to what we already know about identity, social consciousness and social agency in the past – and indeed will probably obscure what we *do* know.' Tosh believes that this is because in many modern societies masculinity is relatively invisible because it is viewed as 'the norm against which women and children should be measured.'<sup>2</sup> Masculinity (like femininity) is a social construction with its own characteristics that are particular to a certain time and specific place;<sup>3</sup> 'For historians, the interesting questions are, which symbolic representations [of gender] are evoked, how, and in what contexts?'<sup>4</sup> in order to create and uphold these constructions. The gendered construction of masculinity is an integral part of male identity,<sup>5</sup> with the "norms" of masculinity, learnt as a child, (usually) becoming fundamental components of a man's character, beliefs and hence behaviour.

Balancing out Reina Lewis's assertion (as discussed in the first chapter of this section) that women's texts are 'specifically gendered because of the social and psychological restraints on their experience and representation of the Orient',<sup>6</sup> Karen Volland Waters comments that when studying late British Victorian fiction by men it becomes apparent that much energy was expended in confirming concepts of masculine identity that were considered as "natural".<sup>7</sup> One way of creating and supporting this "superiority" was to set white European men fictionally in direct contrast with non-Europeans, as Haggard does. Waters believes that the nineteenth century

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<sup>1</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>2</sup> John Tosh. 'What Should Historians Do With Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-Century Britain'. In *Gender and History in Western Europe*, ed. Robert Shoemaker and Mary Vincent, 65-84. London: Arnold, 1998: 66.

<sup>3</sup> Marcia Herndon. 'Biology and Culture: Music, Gender, Power, and Ambiguity'. In *Music, Gender and Culture*, ed. Marcia Herndon and Susanne Ziegler, 11-26. Wilhelmshaven: Florian Noetzel Verlag, 1990: 12.

<sup>4</sup> Joan W. Scott. 'Gender: a useful category of historical analysis'. In *Gender and History in Western Europe*, ed. Robert Shoemaker and Mary Vincent, 42-65. London: Arnold, 1998: 55.

<sup>5</sup> Tosh, 'What Should Historians Do With Masculinity?': 77.

<sup>6</sup> Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*: 184.

<sup>7</sup> Karen Volland Waters. *The Perfect Gentleman: Masculine Control in Victorian Men's Fiction, 1870-1901*. Studies in Nineteenth-Century British Literature. New York: Peter Lang, 1997: 145.

was 'characterized by man's quest for identity. In a society that increasingly undermined traditional forms of male power, the gentleman needed to assure himself that, if he could maintain control nowhere else, he could exercise control of himself. In order to assure his dominance, he had to look for and fix the nature of his identity'.<sup>8</sup> In doing so he often fixed the identity of others so that *he* was the favourable comparison; this is an example of Meyda Yeğenoğlu's idea of the 'cultural representation of the West to *itself* by way of a detour through the other.'<sup>9</sup>

Haggard, having spent time among the Zulus, identified with their society in his romances, presenting them as the 'prototypical African' to stage a fictional idea of an empowered masculinity free from the current gender anxieties and decline of Empire.<sup>10</sup> Haggard admired what he viewed as the Zulus' brute masculinity and often coupled it with a 'noble savagery',<sup>11</sup> conflicting with his belief in ultimate white superiority, as discussed earlier.<sup>12</sup> Haggard focuses on the Zulu era that he had experienced in his youth, so the years directly preceding their decline, thus in a way he aligns with Ziauddin Sardar's idea that writers focused on the glorious past of Other cultures.<sup>13</sup> However, this is no distant past, but is one that Haggard had experienced, marking him as different from many of his contemporaries who focused on a more timeless, unpolitically/historically grounded "past". Haggard particularly respects Zulu war-craft and uses music to accentuate the spectacle of these moments (reflecting his experiences of contemporary Zulu practices). Even Haggard's critics recognised his prowess at portraying the nobility considered inherent in some African 'savages', and his personal experiences led credence to his fictional depictions.<sup>14</sup> However, Haggard presents non-European, non-Zulu men in a completely different manner, and many moments of particular negativity are highlighted with music. The musicality that Haggard gives to his non-European men tends to highlight two characterisations – 'native' otherness, or 'savagery' and violence ('noble' and otherwise).

### '[S]o innately musical'

Haggard often sets a scene of picturesque otherness by devices for 'calling': be they 'death drums',<sup>15</sup> 'a hollowed elephant tusk' with a 'hole bored in its side',<sup>16</sup> 'golden trumpets'<sup>17</sup> or the 'shrill note [blown] upon a shell'.<sup>18</sup> These calls are linked to masculine activity, usually in war or religious practice, and immediately other the landscape and society presented, especially when

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<sup>8</sup> Waters, *The Perfect Gentleman*: 115.

<sup>9</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 1.

<sup>10</sup> Low, *White Skins/Black Masks*: 264.

<sup>11</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4*. Just as the non-European males in early-twentieth-century stage works were polarised between the noble warrior of places like Japan and Zululand and the caricatures of the imbecilic Chinese or violent Arab.

<sup>12</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 5*, at footnote 14.

<sup>13</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 60.

<sup>14</sup> Anon. 'The Culture of the Horrible': 396.

<sup>15</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 191.

<sup>16</sup> Haggard, *She*: 93.

<sup>17</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 158.

<sup>18</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma's Daughter*: 155.

composed of natural and seemingly 'primitive' materials like tusks and shells, in contrast to the increasing telecommunications technology in Britain.<sup>19</sup> Here Haggard is reflecting a commonly held belief in 'primitive' societies' instinctive musicality. This was a theory supported by writers like Thomas Carlyle, who declared the African to have 'a great deal of melody [...] in his composition [that is character, not musical composition]'<sup>20</sup> and Herbert Spencer who writes that some of 'the negroes [...] are so innately musical that, as I have been told by a missionary among them, the children in native schools, when taught European psalm-tunes, spontaneously sing seconds to them. Whether any causes can be discovered for race-peculiarities of this kind is a question of interest.'<sup>21</sup> Continuing this everyday musicality, Haggard's non-European men typically sing when travelling. When Holly and Leo are carried by the Amahagger to Ayesha the bearers accompany their steps with a 'monotonous song' and 'sombre and evil countenances';<sup>22</sup> it is a 'melancholy little chant' producing a 'very curious' effect 'quite indescribable on paper.'<sup>23</sup> Haggard characterises his South American men in a similar musical fashion: his protagonist is 'accompanied by an army of at least ten thousand mountaineers, great men and wild, who made a savage music as they marched.'<sup>24</sup> These statements continue a commonly held belief that Africans (and indeed other 'primitive' 'natives') would always sing when travelling, a stereotype eloquently expressed by F. Harrison Rankin: 'No negro spins his canoe through the water without a melody, and, if he be not alone, without the long wild chorus. All sing'.<sup>25</sup> However this singing is not presented as pleasurable by Haggard, but solemn, malevolent and depressive, or merely wild and savage.

The 'natives' likewise sing whilst they work. For example in Haggard's short story 'Smith and the Pharaohs', Smith is in the Cairo Museum and he pauses 'to watch some native labourers' dragging a sarcophagus and singing: 'each line of the immemorial chant of toil ended with an invocation to Amen, now transformed to Allah. The East may change its masters and its gods, but its customs never change'.<sup>26</sup> Here Haggard is influenced by another pseudo-scientific theory, that of 'arrested development', which became deep-rooted from the mid-century onwards.<sup>27</sup> Smith believes that non-European people, like their 'immemorial' music, will 'never change' or progress – reflecting Sardar's contention that an unchanging 'Orient'<sup>28</sup> was frequently created – such views were reassuring for the Europeans who wished to consider themselves to be

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<sup>19</sup> For a brief discussion of the telephone and British Victorian literature see John M. Picker. *Victorian Soundscapes*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003: 100-09.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Carlyle. [published anonymously]. *Occasional Discourse on The Nigger Question*. London: Thomas Bosworth, 1853 [1849]: 14.

<sup>21</sup> Herbert Spencer. 'The Comparative Psychology of Man'. *Popular Science Monthly*, 8 (1876): 257-69. In *Images of Race*, ed. Michael D. Biddiss, 187-204. Old Woking: Leicester University Press, 1979: 200.

<sup>22</sup> Haggard, *She*: 83.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*: 134.

<sup>24</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma's Daughter*: 203.

<sup>25</sup> Rankin, *The White Man's Grave*: Vol. II, 199-200.

<sup>26</sup> H. Rider Haggard. "'Smith and the Pharaohs' with illustrations by Alec Ball from the serialisation published by *The Strand Magazine*'. In *Rider Haggard and Egypt*, ed. Shirley M. Addy, 139-67. Suffolk: AL Publications, 1998: 152.

<sup>27</sup> Jahoda, *Images of Savages*: 152.

<sup>28</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 96.

inherently superior. Worse than arrested development was the possibility of degeneration,<sup>29</sup> which Haggard's contemporary, the biologist E. Ray Lankester (1847-1929), defined as a biological 'loss of organisation making the descendant far *simpler* or *lower* in structure than its ancestor'.<sup>30</sup> Haggard's 'natives' of the South Sea Island of Orofena<sup>31</sup> are degenerate; they are 'poetical, and sang songs in a language which themselves they could not understand; they said that it was the tongue their forefathers had spoken', he considers that 'they were in fact a shrunken and deteriorated remnant of some high race now coming to its end through age and inter-breeding'.<sup>32</sup> According to Charles Darwin (1809-1882) actions become 'degraded in character' when 'they are no longer performed through reason or experience';<sup>33</sup> this musical behaviour of the Orofenans, which is no longer understood, indicates their degeneracy. Indeed the society is reduced to a mere vestige of a once 'high' people, with the phrase 'inter-breeding' creating overtones of licentiousness and possible incest as the cause of this decline. Indeed their musical ability seems to be one of the few things that has yet to deteriorate, implying its intrinsic nature.

Music is also invoked when Haggard is portraying comic characteristics in his 'natives' – occasions when they are often shown to be particularly inferior to Europeans. Following Mameena's advantageous marriage, her father Umbezi is described as follows: 'For whole hours he danced and sang and took snuff and saluted with his hand'.<sup>34</sup> This foolish image of Umbezi dancing and singing by himself in a vain and self-gratified fashion is comical, but also negative. Likewise in *The Ancient Allan Bes*<sup>35</sup> is depicted as daft; he is lion hunting and 'Out of the reeds bounded Bes, naked and bloody, waving the lion's tail and singing some wild Ethiopian chant, [...] having ceased his song, [he] was jumping about carrying the beast's tail in his mouth as a dog carries a bone.'<sup>36</sup> Despite Bes's feat of bravery in killing a lion by hand, by singing his 'wild' chant whilst half-naked and bloody he is portrayed as the 'savage native', and then an image of animalistic inferiority is grafted onto this savagery with Bes finishing his song so that he can carry the lion's tail in his teeth. The dog simile emphasises Quatermain's<sup>37</sup> position as master over Bes. Another comical African servant is Jeekie in *The Yellow God*; Jeekie has a 'full, melodious voice' and speaks 'the most perfect if laboured English'.<sup>38</sup> When excited, Jeekie forgets his highly-practised correct English and speaks in pidgin-English,<sup>39</sup> an attribute that

<sup>29</sup> As witnessed in many Haggard romances, for example the Amahagger of *She*.

<sup>30</sup> E. Ray Lankester. *Degeneration. A Chapter in Darwinism*. Nature Series. London: Macmillan and Co., 1880: 30.

<sup>31</sup> Imaginary island in Polynesia.

<sup>32</sup> Haggard, *When the World Shook*: 64.

<sup>33</sup> Charles Darwin. *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*. Second edition. London: John Murray, 1883 [1871]: 67-68. Cited in *Embodied Selves: An Anthology of Psychological Texts 1830-1890*, ed. Jenny Bourne Taylor and Sally Shuttleworth, 303-05. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998: 304.

<sup>34</sup> Haggard, *Child of Storm*: 45.

<sup>35</sup> A previous incarnation of Quatermain's 'Hottentot' servant Bors. See *Visual Culture: Chapter 13, footnotes 15-20* for a discussion of the illustration accompanying this description.

<sup>36</sup> Haggard, *The Ancient Allan*: 78.

<sup>37</sup> As the Ancient Allan, Shabaka, an Egyptian in Pharaonic times.

<sup>38</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 38.

<sup>39</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4, footnotes 10-11 and 84*.



Haggard only gives to Christianised Africans. Jeekie is described as having a 'full, melodious voice' to highlight his otherness. Even if he speaks perfect English when necessary, Jeekie will always be Other. Although these are comical depictions, the characters are made foolish through images of music and thus othered and further removed from presentations of the "advanced" British.

### Mystical musicality: 'to pass the night in mutterings and magic'

In Haggard's works music is an important component of 'native' magical rituals, which are primarily performed by men – this magic reaches across peoples and places in his writings, but has a primary focus in Africa. In *The Ivory Child* Harût and Marût, priest-doctors of the 'white Kendah people' ('high-class' Somali Arabs) of a secret African land, arrive at Lord Ragnall's in England and perform a magical rite. Harût burns a herb giving 'a very sweet odour' and sings, whilst Marût plays 'a wild and melancholy music' on a reed flute: the sound affects Allan at his 'backbone as standing on a great height often does'.<sup>40</sup> The scent of the magical and hallucinogenic herb accompanying the 'Oriental' Arab music is sweetness masking danger. This parallels the music made by the doctors (again on a 'primitive' instrument, here made of reed) which although on the surface seems 'wild' and sad (but presumably beautiful) at the same time makes Quatermain's spine tingle with danger; the priests' music creates a physical aversion in Quatermain, perhaps owing to its 'Oriental' otherness and unintelligibility (for he 'could not understand a word').

Music is also associated with magic by Haggard in the Zulu culture: in 'Allan's Wife' the chief's son (a wizard) is entering into a literal 'trial by lightening' and 'he spoke, or rather chanted, and all the while rubbed his broad chest – for he was a very fine man – with some filthy compound of medicine or *mout*.'<sup>41</sup> This display, which again involves 'magical' but 'filthy' compounds, 'tires' Quatermain who walks away from the wizard; so once more he does not get pleasure from African music used for witchcraft.<sup>42</sup> The *Ingomboco* or witch-hunt scenes in Haggard's corpus invariably contain music and dance, presumably a reflection of the events that he saw and attempted to stop in his time as an official in South Africa. The witch-hunters song<sup>43</sup> focuses on the violence of their mission: 'To wash in the blood of the slain'<sup>44</sup> in order to discover who has tried to bewitch the Zulu king Chaka by smearing blood on the gateway of the *Intunkulu* ('house of the king'). Chaka plans to kill the entire family of whoever is smelt-out by the hunters, and the hunters' sung words 'We count you by hundreds, you who cried for a curse on the king. / Ha! soon shall we bid *you* farewell!' reflect this bloodthirsty nature. In scenes of Zulu magic Haggard invariably associates sorcery and often violence with music.

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<sup>40</sup> Haggard, *The Ivory Child*: 49.

<sup>41</sup> Haggard, 'Allan's Wife': 24.

<sup>42</sup> Unlike the interest in (and enjoyment from) women's witchcraft that Quatermain has – see *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, at footnote 91*.

<sup>43</sup> See Appendix XVIII.

<sup>44</sup> Haggard, *Nada the Lily*: 74.

## Human sacrifice and cannibalism

Just as music is associated with 'native' magical ritual, it is likewise related to religious ritual in Haggard's work; indeed in a number of Haggard's texts these elements overlap. In *Ayesha* Holly stops a witch-hunting ceremony where 'the unholy chant and its volleying chorus, all helped to make it extraordinarily impressive', as 'these savages were celebrating their worship'<sup>45</sup> and the priests were 'all of them [...] chanting some wild and thrilling hymn'.<sup>46</sup> Words such as 'unholy', 'savages', and 'wild', highlight the difference and otherness of non-European worship. The music is particularly significant in this representation as the priests' chant makes the ritual so imposing and gripping. Ritualistic music acts in a similar way in *The Yellow God* where 'Above the perpetual booming of the death drums rose [sic] a sound of wild music. The door burst open, and through it came a number of priests, their nearly naked bodies hideously painted and on their heads the most devilish-looking masks.'<sup>47</sup> This cacophony of musical noise emitting from a band of nearly-naked<sup>48</sup> African priests highlights the difference between European religious practices and the negative and licentious character of those of 'savage' African peoples.

The most vivid and violent account of musical religious practice occurs in *Montezuma's Daughter* – perhaps the spatial and geographical distance of the romance's setting in sixteenth-century Mexico explains the toleration of such descriptions. The hero Thomas Wingfield describes 'the feast of Huitzel, that was held with sacrifice, songs, and dances in the great court of the temple, that court which was surrounded by a wall carved over with the writhing shapes of snakes.'<sup>49</sup> 'Here, too, were the holy fires that burned eternally, the sacrificial stones, the implements of torment, and the huge drum of snakes' skins'<sup>50</sup> that is played by the 'villainous' priests.<sup>51</sup> Again Haggard creates the association of 'natives' and serpents, but here the male priests worship snakes, producing associations with phallic worship and the veneration of *femme fatale* figures. Haggard's romance (in a way that is reminiscent of Henry Bishop's operas dating back three quarters of a century)<sup>52</sup> focuses on human sacrifice by the 'natives' of Mexico. The sacrifice is presented in a frenzied, orgiastic scene which 'went on till I grew dizzy with the worship, and the shouting, and the sounds of music, and the sights of death'.<sup>53</sup> Thomas hears 'the dreadful song of sacrifice', the 'wild refrain' of which 'rang out upon the silence: To Thee we sacrifice! / Save us, O Huitzel, / Huitzel, lord god!'<sup>54</sup> As with his African witch-hunters, Haggard's priestly sacrifices are accompanied by wild music, heightening the 'primitive' and

<sup>45</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 189.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*: 211.

<sup>47</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 191.

<sup>48</sup> It is important to note that 'Nineteenth-century sensibilities were also, of course, assaulted by African nudity, which was generally associated with a deliberate shamelessness and immodesty'. [Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*: 134.] Subsequently 'Lack of modesty on the part of Africans was equated, in the mind of the European, with lack of sexual restraint'. [*Ibid.*: 136.] So nearly-naked priests implies that the religion is licentious as well as 'primitive'.

<sup>49</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma's Daughter*: 152.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*: 167.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*: 165.

<sup>52</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4, 'Violence, human sacrifice and cannibalism'*.

<sup>53</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma's Daughter*: 124.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*: 208.

'savage' nature of the scene. Haggard increases the awfulness of the scene by describing 'a wide circle of women that watched, and from whose lips swelled the awful chant',<sup>55</sup> so creating a female musical chorus to support vile male 'religious' practice.

The women are altered from accomplice to victim in Haggard's description of the African Pongo people of Rica Town in *Allan and the Holy Flower*:

forty or fifty men, who wore white robes and peculiar caps and who were engaged in chanting a dreadful, melancholy song, were gathered on three sides of a huge fire that burned in a pit in the ground. [...] Now we saw by the glow of the great fire, that over it was an iron grid not unlike a small bedstead, and that on this grid lay some fearful object. Stephen,<sup>[56]</sup> who was a little ahead, stared, then exclaimed in a horrified voice:

"My God! It is a woman!"

In another second the blinds fell down, hiding everything, and the singing ceased.<sup>57</sup>

The death of the woman who is being sacrificed over the fire is accompanied by the all-male priesthood chanting a suitably 'dreadful' and 'melancholy song', continuing Haggard's association between 'native' music and male violence.<sup>58</sup> The fact that the sacrificial 'grid' is 'not unlike a small bedstead' associates images of sexuality and sadistic violence with this 'religious' ceremony.

Haggard's representation of human sacrifice in Africa is completely in line with popular Victorian thought (although for 1915 is perhaps somewhat outdated and old-fashioned).<sup>59</sup> Many Victorian writers focused on the 'primitive barbarism'<sup>60</sup> of Africans, where it was believed by many that 'Human nature' could be 'viewed in its crude state [...] quite on a level with brute nature'.<sup>61</sup> In his 1890 memoirs *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals*, Herbert Ward writes of the Bolobo district of the Upper Congo, stating: 'They seem to take the keenest delight in the sacrifice of human life, and the execution of their slaves is considered an advertisement of their wealth. As this is a thickly peopled country, some dark deed of barbarism is taking place almost every day, in connection with their inhuman ceremonies.'<sup>62</sup> Thus descriptions of African

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<sup>55</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma's Daughter*: 208.

<sup>56</sup> Stephen's understated reaction here could be ascribed to the contemporary British ideal of the "stiff upper lip". See John Tosh. *A Man's Place: Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England*. London: Yale University Press, 1999: 184.

<sup>57</sup> Haggard, *Allan and the Holy Flower*: 189-90.

<sup>58</sup> Similar accounts of African cruelty are not unusual in contemporary travel writing and are frequently associated with music. See Appendix XIX.

<sup>59</sup> Despite these recurrent violent (and musical) images of sacrifice and cannibalism in his fiction, this author is aware of no non-fictional descriptions of such activities written by Haggard in his (published) correspondence, diaries or autobiographical pieces.

<sup>60</sup> Charles Mackay. 'The Negro and the Negrophilists'. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 99 (1866): 581-97. Cited in *Images of Race*, ed. Michael D. Biddiss, 89-112. Old Woking: Leicester University Press, 1979: 97.

<sup>61</sup> Sir Samuel Baker. Journal entry 10 April 1863. Cited in Pat Shipman. *The Stolen Woman: Florence Baker's Extraordinary Life from the Harem to the Heart of Africa*. London: Bantam Press, 2004: 161.

<sup>62</sup> Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals*: 105.

ceremonies of human sacrifice are not unusual amongst writers contemporary to Haggard, and the simple step from sacrifice to cannibalism was often made. The image of the woman being (in effect) roasted in *Allan and the Holy Flower* has implications of cannibalism even if they are not specifically stated at this point in the narrative (these suspicions are later confirmed).

As H.L. Malchow writes, 'By the late nineteenth century, there was hardly a "primitive" culture, from the Eskimo to the Tierra del Fuegians, that had not been accused of cannibal practice, cannibal inclination, or at least a cannibal past.'<sup>63</sup> In *Allan and the Holy Flower* Haggard attributes cannibalism to another group of Africans as well; indeed it seems to be one of the major themes of violence in this romance. The white men have freed some African slaves who were taken by Arabs, and Quatermain describes the disturbing 'fearful hubbub' created as every one 'seemed to be howling his loudest to an accompaniment of clashing iron pots or stones, which, lacking their native drums, they beat with sticks.' They remind him 'of some mediæval pictures of hell, which I had seen in an old book.'<sup>64</sup> In fact they are cooking the 'Oriental' slavers from whom they have been saved, and the freedmen's music (which Quatermain can only describe in terms of disquiet) reflects the hellish and 'degenerate' cannibalism of the Africans. As Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow note 'in the imperial period writers were far more addicted to tales of cannibalism than ... Africans ever were to cannibalism.'<sup>65</sup> Brantlinger believes that this stems from the illusions created as 'The more that Europeans dominated Africans, the more "savage" Africans came to seem; cannibalism represented the nadir of savagery, more extreme even than slavery';<sup>66</sup> in this extract both of these extremes of savagery are found. Although in *Allan and the Holy Flower* no white men are threatened with sacrifice, in *Montezuma's Daughter* Wingfield is imprisoned to be sacrificed (with hints of cannibalistic practice). The endangerment of a white man is so fearful because 'by threatening literally to eradicate boundaries: by incorporating others within himself, he [the cannibal] becomes the image of chaos beyond the structured world'.<sup>67</sup> The fear of being overcome by 'natives' often became expressed in the 'cannibal trope'.<sup>68</sup>

Haggard earlier focuses on African cannibalism in his 1896 short story 'Black Heart and White Heart'. The Zulu heroine, Nanea, witnesses a cannibalistic feast, at first believing the shapes in the darkness to be 'Esemkofu' (evil ghosts): 'the sight of them held her with a horrible fascination. But if they were ghosts, why did they sing and dance like men? [...] they were

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<sup>63</sup> H.L. Malchow. *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996: 42.

<sup>64</sup> Haggard, *Allan and the Holy Flower*: 110.

<sup>65</sup> Dorothy Hammond and Alta Jablow. *The Africa That Never Was: Four Centuries of British Writing About Africa*. Illinois: Waveland, 1992: 97. Cited in Patrick Brantlinger. 'Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the Dark Continent'. In "Race," *Writing and Difference*, ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., 185-222. London: The University of Chicago Press, 1985: 203.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race*: 44.

<sup>68</sup> Anne McClintock. *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*. London: Routledge, 1995: 27.

cannibals of whom when she was little, her mother had told her tales'.<sup>69</sup> These cannibals are so base and animalistic that they are de-humanised as merely 'like men'. In the subsequent passage Haggard describes them as 'outcasts' and 'poor savage wretch[es]' in contrast to the 'stately figure' of Nanea, who is symbolically 'wrapped in a white garment'.<sup>70</sup> In a tale that questions the associations of black and white (Black Heart is Philip Hadden, an Englishman who by treachery and betrayal tries to kill White Heart, the Zulu Nahoon, to steal his love Nanea) Haggard still utilises the trope of cannibalism and Africa – Haggard seems to admire the Zulus alone in Africa, because of their ostensible honour.

### A Zulu War-Dance: 'that wild, characteristic song'

The honourable war-songs of the Zulu (and occasionally other African tribes) are described at length by Haggard in both his factual and fictional works, with scenes occurring in many of his African romances.<sup>71</sup> Haggard was frequently praised for his 'genuine admiration of manly pluck and fighting skill', which (even generally disapproving) critics found to be 'specially [sic] attractive'.<sup>72</sup> Haggard's knowledge of Zulu culture is often apparent in these descriptions when he talks about individual improvisation,<sup>73</sup> praise-singing,<sup>74</sup> and most commonly the *Ingoma* or *Ingomo*, a display of which he witnessed in 1876, when it was performed by five hundred Zulu, creating 'as wild a spectacle as it is possible to conceive'.<sup>75</sup> The Zulu war-song is described by Haggard as almost illustrative, 'a triumphant pæan of the rush of conquering impis interspersed with the wails of women and the groans of the dying'.<sup>76</sup> Despite its set text, Haggard wishes the reader to hear all that the song suggests. In *Child of Storm* (1913) Haggard quotes the original Zulu *Ingoma* 'or national chant' and a poetic rendition, but also includes a literal translation which he believes to be the first published.<sup>77</sup> So here, Haggard (once a colonial administrator) now shows himself to be almost an amateur ethnomusicologist of Zulu music. It has not been pertinent to this study to analyse the text of this song (which focuses on death, violence and loyalty), as one has to presume that Haggard attempted to be accurate in his translations, but his usage and contextualising of the *Ingoma* tells modern critics much about his construal of the chants. Haggard's attempts to explain and represent the *Ingoma* began in 1876 with a letter written at the chief Pagete's kraal and dated 13 May, describing the 'splendidly barbaric sight. The singing was the finest part of it'.<sup>78</sup> The juxtaposition of the splendour but barbarism of the song and dance reflects Haggard's ambivalent reaction to Africa – admiration, but at the same

<sup>69</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Black Heart and White Heart'. In *The Best Short Stories of Rider Haggard*, ed. Peter Haining, 68-119. London: Michael Joseph, 1981 [1896]: 112.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*: 113.

<sup>71</sup> Including 'Hunter Quatermain's Story', *The People of the Mist*, *King Solomon's Mines*, *Allan Quatermain*, *Nada the Lily*, *She and Allan*, *Child of Storm*, 'Allan's Wife' and *Maiwa's Revenge*.

<sup>72</sup> Anon., 'The Culture of the Horrible': 390.

<sup>73</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Hunter Quatermain's Story'. In *Allan's Wife with Hunter Quatermain's Story, a Tale of Three Lions, and Long Odds*. London: MacDonald, 1963 [1889]: 177.

<sup>74</sup> Haggard, *She and Allan*: 216-17.

<sup>75</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'A Zulu War-Dance'. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 243 (July 1877) [reprinted 1968]: 103.

<sup>76</sup> Haggard, *The People of the Mist*: 278-79.

<sup>77</sup> See Appendix XX. Haggard, *Child of Storm*: 224-25.

<sup>78</sup> Ellis, *H. Rider Haggard*: 37.

time condescension. It was his notes about this spectacle that Haggard later used to write his article on 'A Zulu War-Dance' in which he gives a lengthy pseudo-anthropological description of the song. Haggard describes the *Ingoma* as sung by 'voices so weird, so soft and yet so savage, so simple and yet so all-expressive of the fiercest passions known to the human heart'.<sup>79</sup> He experiences conflicting reactions, feeling that the music is expressing everything, but is incredibly simple, that it is soft yet fierce; this summarises Haggard's overriding ambivalence towards Other cultures.

Haggard often gives key male Zulu characters songs, especially the warrior Umslopogaas who features in a number of his romances. In *Allan Quatermain* Umslopogaas 'spake, or rather chanted, his wild war-song',<sup>80</sup> and in *She and Allan* Umslopogaas throws his axe into the air and catches it as he 'began to chant his own praises Zulu fashion' in 'his fierce, boastful way'.<sup>81</sup> Haggard bases the character upon a Swazi warrior named M'hlopekazi<sup>82</sup> whom he met in South Africa<sup>83</sup> and called 'my Zulu hero',<sup>84</sup> so this behaviour may indeed be a reflection of M'hlopekazi's actual behaviour as much as a fictional characterisation. Haggard utilises male song in this manner to reflect bravery and honour, as well as success in war. He gives song to other noble Zulus, for example Makedama in *Nada the Lily* has a song so affecting that King Chaka cries.<sup>85</sup>

Most affective of all for Haggard was the Zulu war-song and he frequently utilises his specialist knowledge of the *Ingoma* in his fictional Zulu texts. He describes Zulu war-chant as 'deep-throated song',<sup>86</sup> 'deep, awe-inspiring music',<sup>87</sup> representing 'various phases of human passions, fears, and joys. Now it seemed to be a love song, now a majestic swelling war chant, and last of all a death dirge ending suddenly in one heartbreaking wail that went echoing and rolling away in a volume of bloodcurdling sound.'<sup>88</sup> Despite its touching, noble and deep allusions, the chant is nonetheless described as 'bloodcurdling' – it must be remembered that no matter how affecting in an abstract sense, this is a war-chant that will accompany the 'clashing music of meeting spears',<sup>89</sup> 'the thunder of the shields', 'the song of battle!'<sup>90</sup> and death. In *Nada the Lily*, the *Ingomo* is described as 'the music [...] which has the power to drive men mad [...] it was thrown along from regiment to regiment – a rolling ball of sound'.<sup>91</sup> Thus the violent war-song sung by thousands of warriors becomes almost a tangible thing that moves between the regiments.

<sup>79</sup> See Appendix XXI. Haggard, 'A Zulu War-Dance': 103.

<sup>80</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 259.

<sup>81</sup> Haggard, *She and Allan*: 216-17.

<sup>82</sup> Haggard calls him 'Umhlopekazi'. [12 January 1920] Haggard, *The Private Diaries of Sir Henry Rider Haggard*: 185.

<sup>83</sup> See Appendix XXII.

<sup>84</sup> Haggard, *The Private Diaries of Sir Henry Rider Haggard*: 185.

<sup>85</sup> Haggard, *Nada the Lily*: 169-70. See Appendix XXIII.

<sup>86</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *King Solomon's Mines*. London: The Reader's Digest Association, 1996 [1885]: 142.

<sup>87</sup> Haggard, *Child of Storm*: 224-25.

<sup>88</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*: 109.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*: 152.

<sup>90</sup> Haggard, *Nada the Lily*: 52.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

Quatermain, when trapped with some Boers in a Zulu ambush describes the *Ingomo* as that 'hateful chant which to this very day I often seem to hear. It does not look particularly imposing on paper, but if, while he waited to be killed, the reader could have heard it as it rolled through the still air from the throats of nearly three thousand warriors singing all to time, he would have found it impressive enough.'<sup>92</sup> Haggard is keen to translate into fiction his own impression of the awe created by the Zulu war-song.

### White men's music: 'Home, Sweet Home'

Just as Haggard bestows a very different musicality upon his white women in relation to Other women, Haggard's white men are seldom associated with music, but when they are it is in a completely different way to his non-European men. Just as 'blackness' or 'Orientalness' is a social construction, so is (the often unanalysed and 'taken for granted')<sup>93</sup> concept of whiteness; Haggard uses music to clarify the whiteness of his male characters, so contrasting them with the Other men in his romances. Practically all of the European male musical references relate to song, presumably as the characters are in foreign climes away from instruments and because they are primarily explorers or soldiers and not artists. Most of the occasions of song are normal within a European male context and include: 'the music of the sailors as they worked at getting the anchor up';<sup>94</sup> whistling a well-known tune;<sup>95</sup> a Frenchman warbling 'snatches of French songs';<sup>96</sup> and whistling a hymn tune.<sup>97</sup> All of these are acceptable Victorian male forms of musicality and especially whistling is a very masculinised form of musicality, as ladies did not whistle. One particularly interesting passage of Western music is the parade to the Mazitu king in *Allan and the Holy Flower*: 'To give an unusual note to the proceedings I made Hans walk first, carrying on his head the rejected musical box from which flowed the touching melody of "Home, Sweet Home." Then came Stephen bearing the Union Jack on a pole'.<sup>98</sup> Sir Henry Bishop's song 'Home, Sweet Home' of nearly a century earlier<sup>99</sup> is particularly poignant for imperial travellers and explorers away from Britain, and its coupling with the Union Jack here has an explicit message of patriotism. Quatermain tells Bausi that it 'sings the war-song of our people'<sup>100</sup> implying that the battle cry of Britain is its appreciation of its own culture – a 'war-song' that proved successful in colonising a quarter of the globe. Here the characters present their own music as a gift to an African King, and it is in the format of a music box – an advanced, mechanised, and modern music.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Haggard, 'Allan's Wife': 53-54.

<sup>93</sup> Haleh Afshar and Mary Maynard. 'Introduction'. In *The Dynamics of 'Race' and Gender: Some Feminist Interventions*, ed. Haleh Afshar and Mary Maynard, 1-8. London: Taylor & Francis, 1994: 1.

<sup>94</sup> Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*: 24.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*: 50.

<sup>96</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 97.

<sup>97</sup> Haggard, *Child of Storm*: 217.

<sup>98</sup> Haggard, *Allan and the Holy Flower*: 134.

<sup>99</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 1, after footnote 6*.

<sup>100</sup> Haggard, *Allan and the Holy Flower*: 136.

<sup>101</sup> Interestingly Herbert Ward mentions a very similar incident in his travel writings published twenty-five years before Haggard's romance; it is perhaps from here that Haggard gleaned the idea of the 'Home, Sweet Home' music box. See Appendix XXIV.

The image of Hans carrying a music box on his head in a stately procession is somewhat absurd and Haggard occasionally also uses music to comic effect with his humorous male European characters. In *When the World Shook* Bastin 'very badly' sings a standard amorous song to Yva in his 'somewhat raucous' voice.<sup>102</sup> Similarly Captain Good serenades Sorais in *Allan Quatermain* with his 'caterwauling' 'amorous yells' realising his 'abominable song'.<sup>103</sup> Good is a comical character so this behaviour fits with his general portrayal, however his 'jerky, jingling accompaniment' upon a 'native zither' has mild connotations of 'going native', which supports the fact that he is serenading one of Haggard's dark, Other women, suggesting her influence over him. Another amusing incident occurs in *The Yellow God* when Jeekie and Vernon sing in Gregorian tones (as Vernon is posing as a God, so cannot be heard speaking) – Jeekie displays his partial assimilation of British culture as he knows religious music well, but uses it in a secular and somewhat disrespectful manner here; Vernon (like most of Haggard's heroes, not an overly religious man) laughingly follows his lead.<sup>104</sup> Directly preceding this, Vernon's life is saved because he is wearing the Yellow God (a golden African mask) and the 'natives' believe him to be Little Bonsa. The mask contains a whistle mouthpiece which Jeekie encourages the Major to blow.<sup>105</sup> Like Good's adoption of the African zither this has indications of Vernon 'going native'; yet these steps towards going native are overruled by Vernon's usurpation of an African fetish and its music for his own survival as a European alone in a 'savage' African culture.

## Concluding remarks

All of Haggard's musical images involving Other men, and indeed his non-European male characterisations in general, almost deliberately avoid any sexualisation; this acts as a complete contrast to Haggard's othered women. In Other women Haggard sees the threat of a powerful sexuality and associates music with this, whereas his Other men are far less sinister. They may be violent and bloodthirsty, and 'primitive' in their worship, but they can often be noble and loyal, and the music that Haggard gives to them highlights these qualities, whether good or bad. In Zulu men Haggard sees the glory and nobility now lost by his 'civilised' brother in Europe, so an overt sexualisation would work against Haggard's overall characterisation of the 'noble' Zulu 'savage'. Unlike Haggard's women who are primarily individualised by their music, Haggard often uses masculine music in a form that 'commodifies the native by negating his individuality so that he is perceived as a generic phenomenon that can be exchanged for any other native.'<sup>106</sup> The songs are repeatedly performed by thousands of singers, and it is only upon his most noble Zulu men that Haggard bestows an individual musical voice. This acts in direct contrast to the white man's musicality, which is primarily solo.

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<sup>102</sup> Haggard, *When the World Shook*: 139.

<sup>103</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, 1995: 201.

<sup>104</sup> See Appendix XXV.

<sup>105</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 145.

<sup>106</sup> J.A. Mangan. *The Imperial Curriculum: Racial Images and Education in the British Colonial Experience*. London: Routledge, 1993: 9.



As Douglas Lorimer has emphasised 'The Victorians looked upon the Negro as the photographic negative of the Anglo-Saxon, and they seemed to get a clearer perception of their own supposed racial uniqueness from the inverted image of the black man.'<sup>107</sup> Haggard not only attributed negative non-white characteristics to his black men (such as idolatry, sacrifice and violence), he also othered them by attributing to them a very physical form of warfare and sense of honour and loyalty now defunct in Europe, and music is one of Haggard's means of expressing these characteristics (Haggard created a binarism not unlike that of the angel/demon discussed in relation to musical stage works in Chapter 4). The 'invention of whiteness'<sup>108</sup> is as much at play here as any perception of blackness – through defining the 'native' as Other (whether positive or negative) Haggard built upon and developed the myth of whiteness, and, as Meyda Yeğenoğlu says, represented aspects of his own culture 'to *itself* by way of a detour through the other.'<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Douglas A. Lorimer. *Colour, Class and the Victorians*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1978: 11.

<sup>108</sup> McClintock, *Imperial Leather*: 8.

<sup>109</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 1.

## Chapter 9: '[T]hat unknown man's singing has stirred you deeply': E.M. Hull's *The Sheik* (1919) – an exploration of orientalised gender.

Rider Haggard continued to write his romances into the 1920s very rarely deviating from the plot patterns and writing devices that he had (in many ways) pioneered nearly forty years earlier. Haggard's non-European *femmes fatales* lost the newness and impact of She, and whilst their characteristics solidified, musicality remained an essential metaphor. However themes in contemporary popular literature altered around Haggard, and this section investigates 'Oriental' music in a completely different type of romance, E.M. Hull's *The Sheik* (1919). Whilst Haggard fashions highly sensual and musical images to surround She, similar images are created by Hull in her romance just over thirty years later, but Hull (a female author, the pseudonym for Edith Maude Winstanley) applies them to the *male* Sheik; this chapter thus acts as a short coda to this section on Haggard and his milieu. It explores the connotations of gender in Hull's romance, returning to Reina Lewis's idea that women's texts are 'specifically gendered because of the social and psychological restraints on their experience and representation of the Orient.'<sup>1</sup> Through examination of *The Sheik*, this chapter considers the means by which orientalist precepts concerning sexuality, gender and music continued to be employed (and also subverted) to eroticise the 'Orient' at the close of the long nineteenth century.

### E.M. Hull

There is little (even basic) biographical information about Edith Maud Winstanley; it would appear that she was the modest wife of a farmer in Derbyshire, and she took on the pseudonym E.M. Hull to avoid disgracing her family. Her pseudonym is notable for its deliberate avoidance of gender specification, perhaps because of the nature of the highly sexualised material that she was writing. At the time that Hull wrote *The Sheik* she had never visited 'Arabia'.<sup>2</sup> Billie Melman has noted that for 'literary critics her name was beneath contempt', but unusually, popular newspapers entirely ignored Hull; indeed she was neither interviewed nor featured in 'the society and gossip columns'.<sup>3</sup> Melman follows this information with the observation that

What is particularly remarkable in contemporary commentary on *The Sheik* is that, regardless of the critics' platform and the readers they address, it is the best-selling *book*, not the best-selling *writer*, they focus on. The same may be said about the bulk of the reviews of love-in-the-desert' [sic] novels. And this obliteration of the persona of the writer (significantly, no

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*: 184.

<sup>2</sup> Billie Melman. *Woman and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties: Flappers and Nymphs*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988: 90. But in 1925 or 1926 toured Morocco 'The experience was recorded in *Camping in the Sahara*. Hull is pre-eminently a case of life imitating fiction (for she first fictionalised the landscapes of North Africa and only afterwards explored them.)' [Ibid.: 94.]

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.: 90.

photograph of E.M. Hull survives) at a period when best-selling writers made headlines is striking.<sup>4</sup>

One is led to speculate why this obliteration occurs and it is most likely that it is owing to the nature of the female sexuality explored in Hull's work.

## The text

*The Sheik* follows the capture and sexual subjugation of the nineteen-year-old orphaned Englishwoman Lady Diana Mayo. She decides to travel into the desert against her brother's wishes with (as he believes) only 'those damned niggers'.<sup>5</sup> Diana is kidnapped by the Arab Sheik Ahmed Ben Hassan, and is filled with 'blind, passionate rage against the man who had dared to touch her [...] and those hands the hands of a native. A shiver of revulsion ran through her.'<sup>6</sup> She has vowed to always stay celibate and unmarried<sup>7</sup> as she feels no desire towards men, however the Sheik, with his cruel and sadistic behaviour, breaks Diana, instigating her sexual awakening and love. The Sheik realises his own love for Diana when she is kidnapped and nearly killed by his enemy and he must rescue her. In his love, the Sheik asks Diana to leave him to protect her own security and social position, but as she loves him she refuses. She discovers that he is in fact not an Arab, but a British Viscount who was adopted by the previous Sheik.<sup>8</sup> This romance not only explores the (self-)perception of women and gender roles, but also the decline of imperial power and fissures in the discourses of 'race'.<sup>9</sup>

Fictional desert romances were not without precedent; in 1898 in *Twenty Years in the Near East* Arden Hulme-Beaman describes the predicament of Lady Digby whose

party was attacked by Bedouins, and some of them being about to offer violence to her person, a handsome young Sheikh [...] vowed he would defend her with his life. Struck at once by his chivalry and manly beauty, the eccentric Englishwoman fell in love with her deliverer, and having exhausted all the various pleasures of civilisation, she elected to cast in her lot with the Children of the Desert. [...] To his credit be it said that he

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<sup>4</sup> Melman, *Woman and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties*: 90.

<sup>5</sup> E.M. Hull. *The Sheik*. London: George Newnes, Limited, 1923 [1919]: 26.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 48-49.

<sup>7</sup> 'That women could submit to the degrading intimacy and fettered existence of married life filled her with scornful wonder. [...] For a Western woman it was bad enough, but for the women of the East, mere slaves to the passion of the men who owned them, unconsidered, disregarded, reduced to the level of animals, the bare idea made her quiver'. [*Ibid.*: 24-25.]

<sup>8</sup> The Sheik's father is Lord Glencaryll, and his mother was Spanish. She wanders into Ahmed Ben Hassan's camp, mad (after Glencaryll's alcohol fuelled abuse) and pregnant and gives birth to the young Ahmed. The old Sheik falls in love with her but she refuses his propositions as she is married. Following her death Ahmed adopts the child. At fifteen he is sent to Paris to be schooled, then to England to a tutor, followed by another year in Paris. When Ahmed is twenty-one the old Sheik finds his father and tells him about his son. Ahmed is called to Paris but on finding out the truth refuses to see his real father. Ahmed does not blame his adoptive father, but develops a hatred for the English. His courtesy title is Viscount Caryll.

<sup>9</sup> Susan L. Blake. 'What "Race" is the Sheik?: Rereading a Desert Romance'. In *Doubled Plots: Romance and History*, ed. Susan Strehle and Mary Paniccia Carden, 67-85. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2003: 69.

always treated Lady Digby with the greatest affection and respect, and her love for him was unbounded.<sup>10</sup>

Many warnings were published on the potential dangers (and consequent excitements) awaiting female travellers in the desert, helping to further the 'myth that English women went to the East in search of illicit love and adventure.'<sup>11</sup> Owing to the attractiveness of this mythology, in 1921 Hollywood transformed Hull's desert-romance into the most successful silent film ever made<sup>12</sup> catapulting Rudolph Valentino to lasting fame as the Sheik.<sup>13</sup> The film was seen by 125 million viewers, the majority being women, and indeed 'Such was the sheik mania that newspapers in Britain and America pontificated that the emergence and spread of the stereotype of the Eastern lover was a threat to the ideals of Western manhood.'<sup>14</sup> In *Orientalism* (1999), Ziauddin Sardar asserts that 'From Valentino's *The Sheik* [sic] (1921) onwards, all lands east of the West have been depicted as arenas of sexual licence and perversion where women (and boys) are easy and unspeakable things happen';<sup>15</sup> Sardar considers this story to open up a new orientalist arena in which overt sexuality and perversion are accepted (and almost expected) characteristics of the Other.

Melman highlights that the close of this romance is ambiguous; the lovers decide to stay together but 'At no point in the whole story is matrimony presented as a necessary alternative to an unlawful but happy concubinage'<sup>16</sup> – after the book closes the reader is free to speculate that they may marry but there is no confirmation of this in the text. One of the elements of this romance that modern critics have found particularly interesting is the unconventionality of both the hero and heroine; Ahmed is both hero and villain as he sexually abuses Diana then loves her and attempts to save her.<sup>17</sup> Likewise Diana cannot be pigeonholed in the traditional victim/heroine role: she is (as is expected) initially distraught at Ahmed's brutal sexuality, but then responds to it transforming herself from victim into willing equal sexual partner<sup>18</sup> (in an unsanctified union). Melman questions how to 'grapple' with this 'changing image of womanhood'<sup>19</sup> and sexuality. This was something that contemporary reviewers found near impossible, hence (for example) *The Literary Review*'s 1921 assessment denouncing *The Sheik* as 'poisonously salacious in conception',<sup>20</sup> as the protagonists' love is certainly more physical than spiritual.<sup>21</sup> Diana's sexual response to this (seeming) Arab and his rough brutality was shocking, as it was usual in seduction

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<sup>10</sup> Arden G. Hulme-Beaman. *Twenty Years in the Near East*. London: Methuen & Co., 1898: 24-25.

<sup>11</sup> Melman, *Woman and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties*: 93.

<sup>12</sup> Carol Thurston. *The Romance Revolution: Erotic Novels for Women and the Quest for a New Sexual Identity*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987: 39.

<sup>13</sup> *The Sheik* (Famous Players Lasky Corp., 1921), George Melford (dir.). [I was surprised that this was not easier to purchase: I would not recommend the InstantVision DVD version that I used as its looped electronic musical accompaniment grates upon a musicologist's ears.]

<sup>14</sup> Melman, *Woman and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties*: 90-91.

<sup>15</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 105.

<sup>16</sup> Melman, *Woman and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties*: 102-03.

<sup>17</sup> Patricia Raub. 'Issues of passion and power in E.M. Hull's *The Sheik*'. *Women's Studies*, 21/1 (1992): 124.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Melman, *Woman and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties*: 104.

<sup>20</sup> *The Literary Review*, (5 March 1921): 12. Cited in Raub, 'Issues of passion and power': 126.

<sup>21</sup> Thurston, *The Romance Revolution*: 38.

novels for the heroine to be depicted as 'an asexual being', however Hull's work reflects the beginning of woman's sexual emancipation following the Great War.<sup>22</sup> The tale does not seem to validate women's independence and free sexuality though; Carol Thurston makes an interesting point about the lovers' relationship when she comments that 'In requiring her submission, Ahmed (who it turns out is English himself) forces Diana both to conform to her own culture's norms'<sup>23</sup> as well as to their relationship. Diana's determination to remain single and to behave as a rich European bachelor (all but sexually) was something considered completely alien and unwomanly to British contemporaries, but Ahmed 'breaks' her (indeed the book contains many paralleled horse-breaking references) into a dependence upon himself – her English male protector.

### 'Kashmiri Song'

Hull's depiction of the orientalised Ahmed utilises a similar musicality to that which Haggard employs in his dangerous 'Oriental' women,<sup>24</sup> and like Haggard at moments when the English object of sexual interest is most in danger of seduction and submersion. It must be noted that Diana is in no way attributed any form of her own musicality in this romance; the only character who is is Ahmed, and like Haggard's Other women he gains his musical voice in song. Towards the opening of the romance the Englishman Jim Arbuthnot and Diana are sitting outside her farewell ball smoking together. She has just refused him, uttering the ill-fated words that 'Marriage for a woman means the end of independence [...] I have never obeyed any one in my life; I do not wish to try the experiment',<sup>25</sup> so very much aligning herself with New Woman ideas.<sup>26</sup> Immediately following this declamation of her views on men and matrimony they hear a 'strangely un-English' 'passionate, vibrating baritone' voice<sup>27</sup> singing the 'Kashmiri Song',<sup>28</sup> from the *Four Indian Love Lyrics* of Amy Woodforde-Finden.<sup>29</sup> Hull sensualises the singer's voice as 'passionate' – a voice that lingers 'caressingly on the words' creating images of sexual intimacy and the body. In this way Hull combats the voice's apparent disembodiment and physicalises it by situating it in bodily metaphors. The voice is full of mystery as the singer is unknown and physically hidden and although singing in English is deliberately othered and presented as 'un-English', and even compared by Diana to an Indian singer whom she has heard. The Other voice is contextualised in secrecy, rising 'in the stillness of the night' and seeming to 'come from the dark shadows at the end of the garden, or it might have been further away out in

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<sup>22</sup> Raub, 'Issues of passion and power': 124.

<sup>23</sup> Thurston, *The Romance Revolution*: 39.

<sup>24</sup> In 'The Young King' Oscar Wilde characterises the seducer ('a young man of marvellous and foreign beauty') of a princess ('the white girl') with a similar musicality: the narrator speaks of the Young King born of 'the old king's only daughter by a secret marriage with one much beneath her in station – a stranger, some said, who, by the wonderful magic of his lute playing, had made the young princess love him'. [Wilde, 'The Young King': 247.]

<sup>25</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 13.

<sup>26</sup> Ann Ardis. 'E.M. Hull, Mass Market Romance and the New Woman Novel in the Early Twentieth Century'. *Women's Writing*, 3/3 (1996): 291.

<sup>27</sup> See Appendix XXVI.

<sup>28</sup> There is still extant a (less than sensual) recording of Rudolph Valentino singing the 'Kashmiri Song'. Private Communication, 13 July 2005, from Derek Scott to Claire Mabilat (then Walsh).

<sup>29</sup> See Appendix XXVII.

the road beyond the cactus hedge.<sup>30</sup> It is unplaceable, just as its singer's nationality is unplaceable and confused – an interesting metaphor for the knowledge that we later gain that Ahmed is an orientalised Englishman who speaks no English, just French and Arabic.

The qualities of the voice and its mystery immediately arouse a 'sudden interest' and 'animation' in the usually placid Diana – an interest that is only similarly sparked by her desire to explore the desert (and much later by the voice's owner himself). Arbuthnot angrily accuses Diana of deception, jibing her with the words "“You say you have no emotion in your nature, and yet that unknown man's singing has stirred you deeply. How do you reconcile the two?”" Diana either seems to mistake her emotional response to the voice as mere 'appreciation of the beautiful', or she deliberately misleads Arbuthnot by saying so. As she then sits 'silent, hoping that the singer might not have gone'<sup>31</sup> it would seem that the latter interpretation is more viable. In fact the singing moves her so deeply that later that night, when alone, 'Settling herself comfortably with her back against the column she looked out over the hotel gardens into the night, humming softly the Kashmiri song she had heard earlier in the evening.'<sup>32</sup> This is Diana's only moment of musicality, and in it she is reflecting Ahmed's sensual music rather than creating her own, such is his strong influence upon her. This moment anticipates her later response to Ahmed's physical sensuality.

Unlike Haggard's composer *femmes fatales*, Hull gives to Ahmed a well-known popular song and does not allow him to create his own music. Perhaps this is because any composition by Ahmed would be in French or Arabic (and necessitating a translation for readers), so not as mysterious and intriguing to Diana as the othered English in which he sings. In giving Ahmed a song from Amy Woodforde-Finden's (1860-1919) *Four Indian Love Lyrics* (1902) Hull has made an interesting selection. Although Woodforde-Finden's songs are today often classified as 'popular turn-of-the-century kitsch',<sup>33</sup> at the time they were fashionable. Philip Brett makes an analysis of the songs that is highly pertinent to their use in *The Sheik*:

In the erotic lyrics, written by a woman with the male *nom de plume* of Laurence Hope, the gendered female figure exists in a lightly masochistic relation to the dominant male ("Less than the dust beneath thy chariot wheel, / Less than the rust that never stained thy sword, / Less than the trust thou hast in me, my Lord: / Even less than these, even less than these!"). Woodforde-Finden complements their brand of sexual fantasy with a musical style that embodies the exotic in the simplest of ways – a modal inflection here and there, a vaguely "Eastern" ornament in the melodic line.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 15.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*: 15-16.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*: 19.

<sup>33</sup> Brett, 'Eros and Orientalism in Britten's Operas': 236.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

Much like Hull's own gender-neutral pseudonym, Adela Florence Nicolson (1865-1904), the female poet set by Woodforde-Finden, adopts a male name (Laurence Hope) so that she (like Hull) can explore images of female sexual subjugation.<sup>35</sup> Ahmed's singing of this work has connotations of hybridity, a reflection of his own hybrid situation as a non-English/Spanish speaking Englishman/Spaniard with a Parisian education, an Arabic cultural background and the leadership of a Bedouin tribe. The songs are essentially in the light popular English style of the late nineteenth century with a veneer of 'Oriental' musical colouring, just as Ahmed is at base English even if he appears to be an Arab. He sings the song in English, a language that he (claims that he) cannot understand, implying that the songs appeal to him at some subconscious level in both content and in their orientalised othered nature.<sup>36</sup>

The 'Kashmiri Song' (although gender neutral) seems to tell of an 'Oriental' *femme fatale* who torments men by seducing them with her 'spell' and then abandoning them to 'agon[y]'.<sup>37</sup> The imagery of magic is augmented by comparing her hands to 'Lotus buds' as the lotus flower was used in ancient cultures as a powerful hallucinogenic drug, so her touch is like a narcotic that leaves you wanting more. The singer imagines being strangled by his lover as a preference to being abandoned – a masochistic impulse that later in the text Diana herself may have felt for Ahmed. The Sheik is using this song about an 'Oriental' temptress to address Diana, a white woman, thus almost inverting their roles with him becoming the sexually tormented Englishman and her the 'Oriental' vixen. The song is however (as previously mentioned) gender neutral: he could be using it to address Diana viewing her as a sexual temptress; however he may also be using the song to describe himself and the string of lovers (that it subsequently appears that) he has sadistically tormented and then discarded. Diana misses this veiled warning and hears only passion and attraction in the song. In choosing this song Hull has deliberately made aspects of gender ambiguous in her characters, something that she is doing to herself in the very act of writing *The Sheik* under an assumed gender-neutral name.

Occasional parts of Ahmed's gender presentation are contradictory – in his general behaviour he is highly masculine (a 'picturesque, barbaric figure'<sup>38</sup> fighting wars, ruling his tribe, subjugating Diana) yet Hull gives Ahmed a few small feminised touches (his bed has a 'soft pillow' and 'silken coverings',<sup>39</sup> he has the 'vanity' to furnish his tent so that it contrasts with his whiter

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<sup>35</sup> Interestingly both Nicolson and Woodforde-Finden were wives of British officers in the Bengal Cavalry and spent time in India, where their husbands were colleagues. [Michael R. Turner and Antony Miall. *The Edwardian Song Book: Drawing-Room Ballads, 1900-1914, from the catalogue of Boosey and Co.* London: Methuen, 1982: 135, 140.]

<sup>36</sup> John Buchan presents Greenmantle in a similar light when he takes on the character of a Turkish mystic to protect his friends and to succeed in their Great War secret mission. See Appendix XXIX. This reflects the danger for an Englishman who plays at 'going native' – there is much beauty to gain, but appreciation may develop into true 'savagery' – a savagery that is apparent in Ahmed's treatment of Diana.

<sup>37</sup> Amy Woodforde-Finden. 'Kashmiri Song'. compact disc booklet in *In Praise of Women: 150 Years of English Women Composers*. Antony Rolfe Johnson (tenor), Graham Johnson (piano). Hyperion, 1993: 21.

<sup>38</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 65.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*: 56.

robes)<sup>40</sup> including his voice which is ‘soft, pitched in a deep musical key, but with all its softness unmistakably authoritative’.<sup>41</sup> This description of his voice depicts a blend of masculine depth and authority with feminising musicality (similar to that which Haggard’s women display). This may be again a reflection of his hybridity – underneath his ‘Oriental’ Other veneer (with characteristics that contemporaries often considered feminised) he is an Englishman with the associated qualities – qualities that need English love to awaken them.

Ahmed reprises the ‘Kashmiri Song’ in the middle of the romance and once again his song breaks into Diana’s thoughts.<sup>42</sup> Hull chooses a pertinent moment in these thoughts when Diana is considering how ‘It was difficult to remember that she must make a show of reluctance when she was longing to give unreservedly’. These almost masochistic and highly sexualised feelings are interrupted by ‘the same low, vibrating baritone’ which is ‘singing the Kashmiri love song that she had heard the last night before she left Biskra’.<sup>43</sup> The song mirrors her thoughts with a warning that Ahmed could be lost and her desire to die rather than to lose him. When the song first broke into her thoughts in Biskra she was musing on how celibacy was the only option for her and now the difference of her thoughts at the moment that Ahmed sings shows that he has completely subjugated her, just as the narrator of the song has been dominated: the fact that she now calls it the Kashmiri *love* song indicates this change. In the reprise the voice is no longer disembodied, and Hull physically situates the song by having Ahmed ‘catch’ (a form of confinement) ‘her fingers in his up to his lips’.<sup>44</sup> It is with the comprehension that Ahmed was the singer in Biskra that Diana realises that he must have stolen into her bedroom and replaced her bullets with blanks, which partly caused her desert capture.<sup>45</sup> This is the first time that she recognises that her abduction was no accident, and he metaphorically re-enacts this theft and domination as ‘His arm stole round her, drawing her to him, and he tilted her head up so that he could look into her eyes. “Do you think that I would have allowed anybody else to go to your room at night? – I, an Arab, when I meant you for myself?”’<sup>46</sup> So even before his physical possession of her, he felt that he owned her and when he first sings the ‘Kashmiri Song’ he is claiming her.

Diana irritates Ahmed with her questioning and he replies “‘*Ma petite* Diane, your lips are of an adorable redness and your voice is music in my ears, but – I detest questions. They bore me to a point of exasperation,” he said at last lightly, and started humming the Kashmiri song again.’<sup>47</sup> The ‘light’ way in which he pays Diana these standard compliments means that Ahmed is aware of their emptiness – he is not actually attributing musicality to Diana’s voice but merely a barren compliment – he has the true musicality, as is then reinforced when following these words he

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<sup>40</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 60.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*: 65.

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix XXVIII.

<sup>43</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 126.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*: 127.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*: 129.



begins to hum the song again. Hull has subverted the depictions of musical 'Oriental' female sexuality displayed by Haggard and his peers and she, a woman writer, attributes this musical sensuality to a male 'Oriental' Other.

## Concluding remarks

The trope of 'Oriental' female musicality is not the only behaviour that Hull subverts in this romance; despite its apparently simple manifestation as a desert-romance, Hull's work has no straightforward ultimate "message" – initially Hull seems to support Diana's independence and chosen celibacy, however she makes Diana love Ahmed despite (or perhaps because of?) the sexual degradation that he inflicts upon her. Indeed, she makes Diana enjoy his sexual brutality. Even though Hull nowhere intimates that the lovers will marry, she gives Ahmed a social standing equal to Diana's own and although he seems to be a Bedouin, he is an Englishman – thus she creates terms on which a marriage would be acceptable to their society. She seems to admire Diana's spirit and sense of herself, yet she makes her ultimately conform to the cultural "norm" of depending upon a man's protection. Hull's ambivalent treatment of her sexual and gendered subject-matter is perhaps reflected in the ambivalence of her hero and heroine's own positions in society – an 'Orientalised', othered English gentleman and an independent-spirited lady, both of whom reject their own culture and its dictates.

Returning to the music, despite the fact that George Melford's 1921 film version of *The Sheik* seems to be rather loosely based upon Hull's novel with many aspects straying from her original content and descriptions, the adaptors felt that both of Ahmed's moments of song were essential enough to be retained. Indeed this expression of Ahmed's musicality as an aspect of his ambiguously-gendered 'Oriental' sexuality is integral to his characterisation. The musicologist Ian Biddle has commented that at the end of the long nineteenth century 'music was often appropriated as a secondary "site" or proxy for debates about gender', undertaking 'highly explicit, indeed contested work'.<sup>48</sup> Although Biddle is writing about a different *fin-de-siècle* context, his interpretation is equally applicable here; Hull exploits music and its widespread associations with female 'Oriental' sexuality and danger and subverts them to illustrate aspects of hybridity and gender in Ahmed's othered, orientalised characterisation.

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<sup>48</sup> Ian Biddle. 'Of Mice and Dogs: Music, Gender, and Sexuality at the Long Fin de Siècle'. In *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton, 215-26. London: Routledge, 2003: 222.

## SECTION III

# Visual Culture

## Chapter 10: Hearing art: an introduction.

There are two ways of looking at a painting with musical elements: as a work of art, or as a document on the practice of music; through the spectacles of an art historian or a musicologist. In the most favourable situation, these two cooperate, that is, they use each other's knowledge and insight.<sup>1</sup>

Louis Peter Grijp, Catalogue for The Hoogsteder Exhibition  
of Music and Painting in the Golden Age.

What a modern scholar or viewer will discover from an artwork is influenced by their personal circumstances and intentions:<sup>2</sup> this study (with its focus on music, orientalisation and othering) therefore explores examples of visual culture in order to learn about nineteenth-century British opinions, prejudices and ideas regarding non-European peoples, with a focus on musicians and musical practice. The corpus of British visual representations of the Other in the long nineteenth century is vast; in any study one must choose which subject-matter to examine and this investigation of visual culture focuses on representations of non-Europeans musicians. Music is a compelling area of attention in images of the Other as it is a representation that frequently appears in such visualisations, particularly of the 'Orient'.

### Interpreting art

From the middle decades of the nineteenth century an ever more visual culture developed in Britain<sup>3</sup> with the increase in printed sources, theatre going, the popularity of exhibitions and spectacles, and the rise of photography, and later film. The making and viewing of visual sources does not take place in a vacuum;<sup>4</sup> their production is a social practice influenced by the contemporary cultural climate.<sup>5</sup> There has been a (relatively) recent branching out from traditional forms of art critique (such as museum catalogues that may focus on the objects themselves<sup>6</sup> and art 'histories' focusing on the artists) into visual iconography. Iconographic analysis is becoming increasingly important, where historians attempt to interpret pictorial symbolism and details within a cultural context. The seminal art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) separated visual material into three levels of 'meaning': natural/pre-iconographic (primary), conventional/iconographic (secondary) and symbolic/iconological (intrinsic). The first of these entails straightforward description that needs minimum specialised knowledge; the second is more specific, incorporating 'identifications and labels'; and the final ascertains the "meanings" inherent in aspects of the work, for example stylistic traits demonstrating elements of

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Peter Grijp. 'Conclusions and Perspectives'. In *The Hoogsteder Exhibition of Music and Painting in the Golden Age*, 111-26. Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1994: 111.

<sup>2</sup> Cynthia Freeland. *Art Theory. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001: 112.

<sup>3</sup> Cherry, *Beyond the Frame*: 33.

<sup>4</sup> Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*: 5.

<sup>5</sup> Cherry, *Beyond the Frame*: 3.

<sup>6</sup> John Berger. *Ways of Seeing*. London: BBC and Penguin Books, 1973: 30.

the artist, their society, or age.<sup>7</sup> This section is an attempt at iconographical analysis, and aims to provide iconological insight in order to explore the ways in which musical images were utilised in British visualisations of its Others.

To understand both the content and “meaning” of a visual artwork, the critic must interpret the material and form of the object (thus avoiding the danger of some iconological analyses where the image itself is overlooked),<sup>8</sup> the cultural and historical content, and (if known) maybe the artist’s intentions. Owing to the physical nature of an object of visual art it is appropriate for the art historian to consider the intention of the artist<sup>9</sup> as it is expressed through the purpose of the object – for example when an image is intended as a book illustration its analysis must contextualise it accordingly. It is impossible to recover the artist’s thought processes in artistic creation, but as Richard Leppert notes, what the artist thought that they were representing is often of less relevance to the modern scholar than the contemporary cultural and social issues that were subconsciously imbued within the work.<sup>10</sup> The “meaning” of an artwork is influenced by the viewer’s own preconceptions and ideas – and that includes the modern critic, who must recognise that their own socio-historic context and scholarly purpose will influence the “meanings” that they discover. This study aims to balance the material and artistic nature of visual cultures as forms of artistic expression alongside social and contextual knowledge.

The art theorist John Dewey claims that the study of art is a useful approach to understanding a culture.<sup>11</sup> Conversely, in order to understand art, knowledge of its context is central<sup>12</sup> and contextualised enquiry can be rewarded by a greater understanding and insight into that culture and what its adherents consider to be ‘Reality’.<sup>13</sup> As Cynthia Freeland writes, the ‘expression theories’ preached by writers such as Tolstoy and Freud are too limiting in insisting that the visual arts can simply convey emotions,<sup>14</sup> and this study ascribes to the conjecture that ‘art can express or communicate not just feelings but also *ideas*.’<sup>15</sup> As the production of the visual arts is culturally implicated, the ideas of the contextualising culture can be expressed in and through the artworks themselves, and in their reception at the time of production. Although the artist’s own experiences and thoughts affect the artwork produced, both they and their art are products of their era and will be influenced by the intellectual and political currents of the day.<sup>16</sup> Art (including its visual manifestations) often expresses not only a visual interpretation of the artist’s understanding

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<sup>7</sup> Eric Fernie. *Art History and Its Methods: A Critical Anthology*. London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1995: 345.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*: 47.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: 346.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Leppert. *Music and Image: Domesticity, Ideology and Socio-Cultural Formation in Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988: 4.

<sup>11</sup> Freeland, *Art Theory*: 100.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Norman Bryson. *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze*. London: Yale University Press, 1983: 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*: 107.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*: 111.

of the world,<sup>17</sup> but can also act prescriptively – influencing how viewers consider the world.<sup>18</sup> This two-way process occurs in representations of the difference of Other peoples and places, something that in many ways is more clearly expressed visually than in other art forms.

## Orientalism and art

Artworks including representations of the ‘Orient’ and the Other in the nineteenth-century British visual arts make up a huge body of artistic work. In *The Orientalists: European painters of Eastern Scenes* (1977), Philippe Jullian states that ‘Orientalism as an art form’ is ‘difficult to define, for it transformed all the traditional genres’,<sup>19</sup> although aesthetically it was ‘spread very unevenly’.<sup>20</sup> With consideration of this fashionable desire to represent the ‘Orient’ in nineteenth-century European art, and the increasing number of modern publications regarding theories of orientalism, it is unsurprising that much valuable criticism has recently been published about art and the ‘Orient’ or Empire, but often with a focus on the artists of Continental Europe. Deborah Cherry, when writing of French artists and Algeria, notes that the ‘pictorialising’ of France’s territory placed the country and its peoples within European visual classifications, so making them comprehensible within these structures.<sup>21</sup> For her the ‘pictorialising’ of the Other and the translation of ‘sites into sights’<sup>22</sup> made imperial expansion possible.<sup>23</sup> Thus the picturing of non-European (and often subject) peoples rationalises them, consequently increasing Europe’s perceived control with this “knowledge”, and continuing the process of ‘dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’,<sup>24</sup> as discussed by Edward Said. Cherry also believes that one can take up Derrida’s theory and argue that if landscape painting tried to brutally enclose non-European land within Western aesthetics and visual conventions,<sup>25</sup> in picturing the Other, the subjects become bound within European artistic practices and thus metaphorically conquered and “discovered”. For example many of the case studies here explored incorporate the motif of the Other woman as captive – not only is she literally trapped in her harem, she is furthermore enclosed into a visual and imaginary world created by the artist, into which she has no input and from which throughout the long nineteenth century the artists and their fantastically transformed models find it hard to escape. When analysing visual culture it must be remembered that ‘Images show us *a* world but not *the* world itself.’<sup>26</sup> Likewise one must not presume solely that artistic productions reflect “accepted cultural norms”, as they can be

<sup>17</sup> Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*: 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*: 112.

<sup>19</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 29.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*: 47.

<sup>21</sup> Deborah Cherry. *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850-1900*. London: Routledge, 2000: 80.

<sup>22</sup> Deborah Cherry. ‘Earth into World, Land into Landscape: the “Worlding” of Algeria in Nineteenth-Century British Feminism’. In *Orientalism’s Interlocutors: Painting, Architecture, Photography*, ed. Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts, 103-30. London: Duke University Press, 2002: 107.

<sup>23</sup> Cherry, *Beyond the Frame*: 80.

<sup>24</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 3.

<sup>25</sup> Cherry, *Beyond the Frame*: 98.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Leppert. *Art and the Committed Eye: The Cultural Functions of Imagery*. Oxford: Westview Press, 1996: 3.

explorations that query culturally accepted ideas.<sup>27</sup> The focus of this section is on artistic visual productions which incorporate music in conjunction with orientalism and the Other. This is a valuable subcategory of the large artistic body of British 'Oriental' imagery; 'Music is a metaphor of self and being in history',<sup>28</sup> and it augments the "meanings" of the artworks here used as case studies when they are soundly contextualised in their cultural circumstances.

## Music in art

Explorations of music iconography are in the process of change. Traditionally, critics have tended to *describe* music in art, rather than contextually analysing it; for example, in Eric Blom's *A History of Music in Pictures* (1930), the writer states that his focus is on composers, and instruments, with 'the briefest of notes' which 'presents facts without explaining them'.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the description of musical instruments or musical practice, almost as recuperative archaeology, has been a particular focal point in music iconography. Considering that Blom titles his work *A History of Music in Pictures* it is interesting that in 363 pages he devotes only eight pages to "Non-European" music. He actually justifies this disproportionate representation in orientalist terms: 'What is least usefully informative about music as an art is the section dealing with Oriental instruments, for although we can still hear the music of the East to-day very much as it must have been in ancient times, it is so completely divorced from our own as to be of no significance to our musical history. That is why after p. 29 the extra-European countries are dismissed for good and all.'<sup>30</sup> Thus traditional musical iconographical writers saw no sense in exploring contextual aspects of the image.

Richard Leppert is a noteworthy example of newer styles in music iconography, and his innovative work on music and the image has been greatly influential in this study. Like Leppert's work, this investigation concentrates on 'how, in what ways and why music is an agent'<sup>31</sup> in works of visual art. As Leppert asserts, it is not the imagined sound itself that is of importance in 'musical' paintings, but the contextual *function* of the music's appearance in the picture,<sup>32</sup> and how the music is '*made to look* in art'.<sup>33</sup> Music occurs in visual art because sound is meaningful and the artist will (usually) have selected that particular musical representation with a deliberate intention.<sup>34</sup> Leppert links music and physicality because sonority is almost always pictured through musical practices that are 'invariably embodied',<sup>35</sup> in due course leading to a discussion of the human body and often of that body's frequent physical response to music, namely dance.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*: 6.

<sup>28</sup> Leppert, *The Sight of Sound*: 230.

<sup>29</sup> Eric Blom. *A History of Music in Pictures*. George Kinsky (ed.) With the co-operation of Robert Haas, Hans Schnoor and other experts. London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1930: VIII.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*: x.

<sup>31</sup> Leppert, *Music and Image*: 2.

<sup>32</sup> Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*: 105.

<sup>33</sup> Leppert, *Music and Image*: 4.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*: 3.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Leppert. *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body*. London: University of California Press, 1993: 230.

<sup>36</sup> Leppert, *Music and Image*: 2.

Thus through the inclusion of music in visual art, the viewer is often led to consider the body of the performer him- or herself. Although Leppert's primary focus has been on eighteenth-century works, his methodology is a tremendous example for all critics investigating music in art, as it analyses and contextualises the ways in which music is used in an image.

Alongside analytical enquiries like Leppert's, there are a number of publications from the last few decades which focus on other aspects of the visual arts and music, although interesting these volumes have been less directly influential on this study. Edward Lockspeiser's *Music and Painting* (1973) takes a philosophical approach and studies 'Comparative Ideas from Turner to Schoenberg', focusing on nineteenth-century aspirations for the 'unification of the artistic experience'.<sup>37</sup> In contrast, in the volume of *Festschrift* essays for Alan Raitt, *The Process of Art* (1998), the writers consider French nineteenth-century 'literature and the other arts 'in process'',<sup>38</sup> through varied theoretical concepts and in an interdisciplinary context. Amalgamating methodological aspects of these two previous publications, the essays in the interdisciplinary volume *The Arts Entwined* (2000) consider nineteenth-century music and art, focusing on the interchanges, interconnections and reciprocal influences (both practical and philosophical) between these two art-forms in nineteenth-century European 'high art'. This volume considers the later-nineteenth-century 'vogue for painterly-musical fusion',<sup>39</sup> ideas of synesthesia,<sup>40</sup> the influence of the visual arts on programmatic music, and conversely the 'desire' to make paintings more like music, which 'motivated painters, paradoxically, to discover and use what was unique about their own medium.'<sup>41</sup>

When music is incorporated visually into an image it creates an extra dimension, appealing to the viewer's sense of sound as well as sight; they are differentiated from other artworks not only in this aural aspect, but also in their references to the sister-art of music, thus creating a "interdisciplinary" context. Today it is almost taken for granted that painting is seen whereas conversely music is listened to,<sup>42</sup> but in his 1982 article 'Some Reflections on Sound and Silence in the Visual Arts' Robert Chirico asks the provocative question 'What do we listen for in the visual arts?'<sup>43</sup> Despite the regularity of musical depictions in these arts, Chirico believes that these depictions are often 'soundless' to the modern observer as we are preconditioned to

<sup>37</sup> Edward Lockspeiser. *Music and Painting: A Study in Comparative Ideas from Turner to Schoenberg*. London: Cassell, 1973: 4.

<sup>38</sup> Roger Pearson. 'Introduction.' In *The Process of Art: Essays on Nineteenth-Century French Literature, Music, and Painting in Honour of Alan Raitt*, ed. Mike Freeman, Elizabeth Fallaize, Jill Forbes, Toby Garfitt, and Roger Pearson, with Janis Spurlock, vii-xiii. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998: xi.

<sup>39</sup> Marsha L. Morton "'From the Other Side": An Introduction'. *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century*, (ed.) Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, 1-22. *Critical and Cultural Musicology*, (series ed.) Martha Feldman. London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000: 9.

<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Prelinger. 'Music to Our Ears? Munch's *Scream* and Romantic Music Theory.' *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century*, (ed.) Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, 209-225. *Critical and Cultural Musicology*, (series ed.) Martha Feldman. London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000: 209-10.

<sup>41</sup> Morton, "'From the Other Side": 12.

<sup>42</sup> Robert F. Chirico. 'Some Reflections on Sound and Silence in the Visual Arts'. *Arts Magazine*, 56 (April 1982): 104.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*: 101.

distinguish the visual arts as silent so do not judge the 'sensory value' of listening to art (something that he believes that many (for example) eighteenth- or nineteenth-century viewers would have done).<sup>44</sup> Chirico proposes that this change towards silence began in the mid-nineteenth century when art became more abstract and non-figurative, a trend which was exacerbated by the rise of photography. As painting immediately engages the viewer to participate visually, they are less likely to focus on any embedded acoustic reaction. According to Chirico's theory the film industry (especially the emergence of "talkies")<sup>45</sup> and the accessibility of recorded music mean that today's audiences have a decreased receptivity to sound in painting,<sup>46</sup> however he fails to recognise that musical sound is also represented in these new visual artistic mediums (photography and film) and needs to be addressed there also. This section explores visual (and literally although not metaphorically) 'silent' forms of art: painting, illustration and photography (categories that sometimes overlap).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Chirico, 'Some Reflections on Sound and Silence': 102.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*: 104.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*: 101-02.

<sup>47</sup> In Appendix XXXII this study also touches upon silent film, a medium that includes visual representations accompanied by actual sound. Of this latter grouping it is not the sounds themselves (which are in many cases now lost) that are of primary concern to this study, but the photographic evidence still extant that suggests the ways in which the musical Other was played out visually upon the stage or screen to the accompaniment of this music.



## Chapter 11: 'High art' and the musical 'Orient'

The accessibility to 'high art' images in Britain in the long nineteenth century increased as the century progressed. Mechanical reproductions of paintings as 'high art' prints and in periodicals such as *The Illustrated London News*<sup>1</sup> increased availability of these artworks to a (primarily) middle-class general public which had a desire for betterment and self-education. From the mid-century, art exhibitions also became more common and more frequently open to a paying viewing public. In his article on exhibitions in *Grove Art*, Christopher Rowell states that in the 1850s 50,000 people a year visited the annual exhibition of early paintings in the Egyptian Hall (public gallery) in London; the example of the numbers attending just this one exhibition highlights the increasing accessibility of paintings in Britain, and these numbers rose as the century wore on. Furthermore, reviews of these exhibitions were printed in many journals and newspapers (a number of which have been quoted in this chapter). As previously stated in this thesis, one prominent feature of these case-study explorations of visual culture is the inter-relatedness of the different visual disciplines. The imagery established in painting was highly influential on the work of photographers and illustrators; in fact all of these disciplines take elements from and are influenced by the representations established in one another. Thus although designated as 'high art', the paintings looked at in this chapter were in a sense popular, as they were accessible to, and influential on, a large audience.

British artists in the long nineteenth century produced a vast outpouring of paintings (and indeed other images) of non-European peoples,<sup>2</sup> most particularly of the 'Orient' (both "real" and fantastical). These artists specifically *chose* to depict<sup>3</sup> the 'Orient'; the reasons could be myriad – popularity with viewers; a desire to "escape" industrialised contemporary society;<sup>4</sup> an interest in Other places – nevertheless for the critic Leonard Bell what unifies many of these diverse images is their 'common ideological base' in attempting to create 'realities' of non-Europeans, that were aimed at and conformed to British beliefs-systems.<sup>5</sup> Many of these 'Oriental' works display the Other as a negative foil to accepted and acceptable behaviour in a British context – a fascination with the unallowable. Once again, these works act as examples of Britain defining itself 'by way of a detour through the other.'<sup>6</sup> These primarily fictional images reinforced and reflected the establishment of 'myths'<sup>7</sup> of the Other, a major case in point here being ideas of the harem inhabitant. British orientalist art was primarily concerned with the difference, timelessness and

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<sup>1</sup> Such as the two paintings by Alma-Tadema discussed in this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Leonard Bell. 'Artists and Empire: Victorian Representations of Subject People'. *Art History*, 5 (1982): 73.

<sup>3</sup> Bryson, *Vision and Painting*: 32.

<sup>4</sup> MaryAnne Stephens. 'Symbolism – A French Monopoly'. In *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Watts: Symbolism in Britain, 1860-1910*, ed. Andrew Wilton and Robert Upstone, 47-64. London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1997: 61.

<sup>5</sup> Bell, 'Artists and Empire': 73.

<sup>6</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 1.

<sup>7</sup> Bell, 'Artists and Empire': 74.

exoticness of the 'Orient', and although it avoided the 'explicit sexual fantasies' of contemporary French art,<sup>8</sup> it still frequently emphasised the heightened sensuality of the 'Oriental' Other.

Both Leonard Bell and John Berger refer to the anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss's (1908- ) assertion that the ambition to own an art object individually (such as the oil paintings and watercolours here discussed) is particular to Western civilisation.<sup>9</sup> Berger proposes that when you purchase a painting you also buy the right to look at the thing it represents,<sup>10</sup> in possessing the artwork you gain the (exclusive) right to gaze at whatever is depicted. Bell address this argument in an orientalist and imperial context seeing this desire to possess an object, such as an orientalist painting, to be a wish for the 'symbolic possession' of the subject<sup>11</sup> – something particularly resonant in the desire for artworks depicting unobtainable harem women.

On surveying images of non-European music in 'fine art' for this study it became apparent that nineteenth-century British orientalist painters tended to use North African Islamic culture as their reference when depicting musical subject matter. Islam in the 'Near East' is geographically the closest 'Oriental' Other to Britain making it a practical and relatively safe destination for artists to visit, and it is also the best-known and most deeply surveyed 'Oriental' area of the time. Islam was criticised by the British for many of its cultural practices and concepts, but it was still regarded as almost "civilised" and certainly above the "savage". Owing to this level of civilisation, Islamic musicians were perhaps viewed as artistic and skilled enough to be represented in 'high art' forms. In comparison, few British paintings of Asia or Africa include non-European musicians. As Asia included many colonies a lot of the artworks depicting it focus upon the settled British communities or important military events affecting them;<sup>12</sup> they seem to be either depictions of a transplanted British culture or, when of the 'natives', frequently traditional Western-style portraiture of important Asian figures.<sup>13</sup> Likewise 'fine art' that incorporates black African figures is most often portraiture of (usually Christianised) dignitaries<sup>14</sup> or idealised imagery of the 'noble savage',<sup>15</sup> and black people living in Britain were frequently dressed in 'native' attire to be visually represented.<sup>16</sup> This trend could be viewed in the 'Black Victorians' exhibition at Manchester Art Gallery (1 October 2005 to 8 January 2006) which displayed more than one hundred British works of art, most of which were portraits.<sup>17</sup> Imagery of

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<sup>8</sup> Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*: 111.

<sup>9</sup> Berger, *Ways of Seeing*: 84.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*: 83.

<sup>11</sup> Bell, 'Artists and Empire': 81-82.

<sup>12</sup> Such as the quashing of the Indian Mutiny (1857-58), for example Orlando Norie's watercolour *The 42<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of Foot during the Indian Mutiny (1857)*.

<sup>13</sup> For instance Robert Home. *Ghazi-ud-din Hyder, King of Awadh, Receiving Tribute* (c.1820). Oil on canvas. Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta.

<sup>14</sup> For example the famous *The Secret of England's Greatness* by Thomas Jones Barker (1863). Oil on Canvas. National Portrait Gallery. In which a young Queen Victoria, resplendent in white silk, presents a Bible to a bending/crouching African King.

<sup>15</sup> Including Octavius Oakley's watercolour of Sarah Forbes Bonetta (c.1842-1880), for which he set her as an African 'native' even though she had been living in Britain for over a year by the time that she was painted.

<sup>16</sup> Sarah Williams. 'Black Victorians'. *BBC History Magazine*, 6/10 (Oct. 2005): 30.

<sup>17</sup> See the *Manchester Art Gallery* website [www.manchestergalleries.org](http://www.manchestergalleries.org)

the inhabitants of non-Islamic Africa and Asia is usually more staged or official with an overt political message, whereas paintings of North Africa such as those explored here tend to focus on 'Oriental' luxury, wealth and the sexual availability and accomplishments of its women.

In orientalist artworks, and particularly those concerning women, imagery of music is a recurrent theme. Victorian painters usually associated music with one of two diametrically opposed concepts – religious belief or heightened (feminine) sensuality.<sup>18</sup> Music was particularly important in the works of the Pre-Raphaelites who discovered that through the representation of music in their paintings they were able to create images where 'sensory pleasure was paramount.'<sup>19</sup> Not only did music have implications of sensuality and overtones of 'love-making', but also resonances of 'a decadent continental influence', often appearing in paintings that were spatially and geographically unfixed.<sup>20</sup> This heightened sensuousness and temporal ambiguity was fitting for imagery involving a frequently unspecified, abstractly general<sup>21</sup> 'Orient' and particularly its women. As Leppert has proposed, music often creates a tension in artistic representations because nineteenth-century British culture 'genders it as feminine; it is simultaneously a source of bliss to men and a threat to them.'<sup>22</sup> He has demonstrated how such associations between women and music stretch back to at least Ovid,<sup>23</sup> so these artists are continuing a long representational tradition. These musical 'Oriental' women are both alluring and threatening, and their musicality is a symbol for this.

## An imagined 'Orient'

The 'Orient' was a realm in which the visual imagination roamed free in the long nineteenth century, and this section considers the ways in which one artist imagined the musical 'Orient', and visualised these fantasies. Richard Parkes Bonington (1802-1828) trained in Paris specialising in watercolours before moving into oils. Between September 1825 and January 1826 he shared a studio with his friend Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863),<sup>24</sup> the influence of whom becomes apparent in Bonington's increasing concentration on 'exotic' and historical subjects.<sup>25</sup> Bonington was a 'phenomenon – an artist of extraordinary facility who produced hundreds of paintings and drawings with seemingly nonchalant ease'<sup>26</sup> before his untimely death from consumption, aged only twenty-six.<sup>27</sup> The watercolour medium is differentiated from oil works which were intended primarily for public display; a watercolour can be more private, because as

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<sup>18</sup> Cooper, 'Aspiring to the Condition of Music': 255.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.: 252.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>22</sup> Leppert, *The Sight of Sound*: 147.

<sup>23</sup> See Appendix XXX.

<sup>24</sup> Anon. 'Richard Parkes Bonington (1802-1828)'. *The Wallace Collection*. See the website [http://www.wallacecollection.org/c/w\\_a/p\\_w\\_d/b/a/bonington.htm](http://www.wallacecollection.org/c/w_a/p_w_d/b/a/bonington.htm) (Accessed 01 February 2006).

<sup>25</sup> Patrick Noon. 'Bonington, Richard Parkes'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2845> (Accessed 19 March 2006).

<sup>26</sup> Stephen Duffy. *Richard Parkes Bonington*. London: The Trustees of the Wallace Collection, 2003: 9.

<sup>27</sup> Marcia Pointon. 'Bonington, Richard Parkes.' *Grove Art Online*. Oxford University Press. (Accessed 20 March 2006). [www.groveart.com](http://www.groveart.com)

well as being displayed on gallery walls, watercolour images might be stored in folders and contemplated in private,<sup>28</sup> bestowing more intimacy upon the image.



There is no evidence to suggest that Bonington travelled any further East than Venice,<sup>29</sup> making him unique in this case study of orientalist British artists, so his small vibrant watercolour *Odalisque in Yellow* (1826)<sup>30</sup> is of fictional subject matter. Bonington was inspired by miniatures and poetry about the 'Orient', and engravings in travel books;<sup>31</sup> the entirely imaginary or second-hand nature of his images of the 'Orient' implies that Bonington is in no way attempting to portray the "real", but more a fantasy of 'Orient'. Indeed, this image supports this analysis as the indistinct contour lines of this watercolour give the work an imaginary quality. Bonington incorporates 'Oriental' signifiers including the feather fan, vase, rug, and 'oud, and he utilises the background merely to situate his figure – she seems to be on a balcony or roof overlooking majestic scenery of an imaginary, non-specified 'Orient'. The mountain echoes the shape of her veiled body demonstrating her role as the central feature of the painting. Bonington gives his odalisque (a female slave or a concubine in a harem) no name, she is depersonalised and designated merely by the colour of her dress, so he uses her as representative of the 'Odalisque' as a type of 'Other'. Her figure is presented as recumbent and almost completely lying on her divan and her body (shown in its entirety) takes up nearly the whole space of the picture – the focus is clearly upon her and not her surroundings.

Ella Shohat's assertion that the process of unveiling the 'Oriental' woman came 'to allegorise the Western masculinist power of possession, that she, as a metaphor for her land, becomes available

<sup>28</sup> Leppert, *The Sight of Sound*: 180.

<sup>29</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 34.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Parkes Bonington. *Odalisque in Yellow* (1826). Water- and body-colour with gum varnish over the darker areas, on paper. The Wallace Collection, Hertford House, London.

<sup>31</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 34.

for Western penetration and knowledge',<sup>32</sup> is particularly applicable here. Bonington's odalisque's head is merely half-covered by her veil<sup>33</sup> insinuating her willingness to exhibit herself for the viewer, and thus please the (one presumes male, European) observer; indeed the light reflecting upon the fabric on her legs attracts the eye allowing the observer to follow the line of her body up to her naked breast and shadowy face. The posed *contrapposto* of the odalisque's body and the turn of her face away from her viewer to her right heighten the effect that she is provocatively displaying her body and herself. Her pose is staged and static. The string instrument at her side is used by Bonington to echo her diagonal posture and he also uses similar colours for the 'oud moving from a light yellow up to a darker brown; it too is wrapped in fine fabric, thus she is still connected to the music that she chooses not to perform. This not only suggests the lethargy of the odalisque as she has not used the satin-swathed instrument for quite some time, but it also explicitly links her to music and the associated sexual inferences of a heightened sensuality. The viewer might initially think that she is resting between performances of music or dance, but the fabric over the instrument and the general stasis of the image imply that this is not the case.

## Imagined spaces

Imagined or staged harem scenes like Bonington's became more prevalent by the middle of the nineteenth century, as many of the 'classicizing and biblical efforts' that lent a 'subtlety' to orientalist artworks were steadily replaced by more 'sensationalized imagery'.<sup>34</sup> One can be sure that harem scenes were imaginary because no European man would have had access to an Islamic harem, and contemporary visual depictions are nearly all by men.<sup>35</sup> All of the artists in this section had visited parts of the 'Orient', yet they all chose to paint the one place that they could not have been, but probably most desired to see – the harem. Thus although aspects of these works might be drawn from experience, the scenarios are most likely fantastical. David Roberts' (1796-1864)<sup>36</sup> lithograph *The Ghawazee of Cairo* (1856)<sup>37</sup> is set in the harem, yet the private and the public are merged as the musicians in this work are professional entertainers performing for the harem's inhabitants. Roberts' travels in the 'Near East' and particularly Egypt (dressed as an Arab)<sup>38</sup> in the 1830s and 1840s made him one of the first 'independent and

<sup>32</sup> Shohat, 'Gender and Culture of Empire': 32-33.

<sup>33</sup> For further discussion of veils see 'Orientalism and its relation to music' 54-57, *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, 'Veils, Polygamy and Harems'*, and *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, 'White-veiled women'*.

<sup>34</sup> Patricia Johnston. 'Advertising Paradise: Hawai'i in art, anthropology, and commercial photography'. In *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, ed. Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson, 188-225. London: Routledge, 2002: 201.

<sup>35</sup> As Deborah Cherry highlights, 'Although feminist visions of the Orient overlapped, supplemented, drew on, matched and contradicted those by their [male] contemporaries' none of the most prominent female painters of the 'Orient', such as Barbara Leigh-Smith Bodichon (1827-1891) '(so far as may be ascertained) exhibited pictures of the harem.' [Cherry, *Beyond the Frame*: 74.]

<sup>36</sup> Roberts also designed scenery for the theatre at Covent Garden [Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 43.], offering an interesting link between his view of the 'Orient' on the page, and its presentations on the stage.

<sup>37</sup> David Roberts. *The Ghawazee of Cairo* (1856). Colour Lithograph. In *The Holy Land with historical notes by William Brockedon [lithographer], Vol. 6, Egypt and Nubia*. London: Day & Son, 1856: Plate 249.

<sup>38</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 135.

professional' British artists to visit the 'Orient'<sup>39</sup> and furnished him with enough material to publish many lithograph engravings of 'Oriental' subjects (including this one), work for which he is recognised today.<sup>40</sup> At the time of their creation, an anonymous critic in *The Times* praised them as 'valuable for the great freedom with which they are drawn, the truth with which they abound',<sup>41</sup> so it seems that Roberts' images of the 'Orient' were perceived as "true" by his contemporaries.



Roberts had this painting reproduced as a lithograph, so unlike the rest of the paintings here studied, this work is intended for mass dissemination; it is thus created to appeal to a wide audience. In a similar way to Bonington's painting, the title here specifies the *type* of Egyptians depicted, using them as representative of their cultural group so that the performers are not individualised, but are *The Ghawazee*,<sup>42</sup> underlining Edward Said's contention that orientalists frequently saw Others in 'large collective terms'.<sup>43</sup> The Ghawazee tribe, famous in Egypt for its female prostitute/dancers, was nominally Muslim and its women were frequently considered the most beautiful in the country. Their beauty was easily viewed because they did not wear the veil, causing their banishment from Cairo on religious grounds in 1834.<sup>44</sup> This predates Roberts' Egyptian visit by four years, so either he is painting from the lucky experience of actually seeing some Ghawazee in Esna or elsewhere, or his painting is imaginatively based upon other second-hand accounts. In either case some "artistic licence" seems to have been taken by Roberts as travelling Ghawazee groups usually performed in the street or were employed in the harem to

<sup>39</sup> Briony Llewellyn. 'Roberts, David'. *Grove Art Online*. Oxford University Press. (Accessed 20 March 2006). [www.groveart.com](http://www.groveart.com)

<sup>40</sup> Krystyna Matyjaszekiewicz. 'Roberts, David'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23746?docPos=2> (Accessed 29 January 2006).

<sup>41</sup> Anon. 'Mr. David Roberts's Views in Palestine, Egypt, Arabia, &c.' *The Times* (10 June 1840): 5.

<sup>42</sup> Anticipating the later trend of "type" photographic books, See *Visual Culture: Chapter 12, "Type" photographs*.

<sup>43</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>44</sup> Jasmin Jahal. 'The Ghawazee of Egypt'. *Jasmin Jahal: Authentic Mid-East Belly Dance*. See the website [http://www.jasminjahal.com/articles/art\\_ghawazee\\_of\\_egypt.html](http://www.jasminjahal.com/articles/art_ghawazee_of_egypt.html) (Accessed 15 January 2006).

celebrate births and marriages,<sup>45</sup> yet Roberts' depiction of an internal (presumably harem) scene seems somewhat confused, as if this is a harem the male musicians would be excluded and Roberts would not be permitted in to paint from life. Regardless of the "accuracy" of the representation, Roberts' choice of moment and composition affect the viewers' perceptions.

There is no audience in the picture itself, and the viewer is placed to act as that imaginary audience. The dancers are thus the primary focus of the painting, with the performer in the low-cut top central to the piece. Their movement, as depicted by their flowing robes and hair, their arched arms, and their curved postures against the straight lines of the patterned divans, causes the viewer's eyes to travel all over their bodies (of which the viewer is given both a frontal and rear view with the pair of dancers). The image of their loose hair 'invites a sexual response' as 'a conventional Victorian sign of sexuality and sexual availability'<sup>46</sup> and the tonal contrast between their dark hair and tops against the neutral walls heightens this focus upon them. This acts in distinction to the colour palette that Roberts uses for the musicians which tones in with the divans, indicating their background function. The dancers are harmoniously related reflecting each other's postures, and the foreground dancer's hand placed in front of the arm of the dancer behind her seems to physically connect the two women. The dancers also hold one another's gaze and the tambourine player is tied to them with her own smiling look, perhaps with implications of the homoerotic undertones that were frequently exploited by such representations of dances by 'Oriental' women, and the idea of the harem more generally.

The clothing of Ghawazee women was usually 'almost identical to that of Egyptian middle class women'<sup>47</sup> and in the later nineteenth century Ghawazee dancers were described in *The Times* on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's visit to Egypt as 'dressed in loose Turkish dress'.<sup>48</sup> Unlike these descriptions, the breasts of Roberts' main dancer are prominently displayed suggesting that this aspect of the work is probably imaginatively altered, perhaps to reflect the dancers' position as prostitutes. As Andrew Wilton writes 'Degeneracy is [often] associated with dress, with accoutrements rather than with the body itself. Those preoccupied with the darker side of human nature were more inclined to portray the idea of the female enveloped in a nexus of symbols: dressed or half-dressed and dancing like Salome'.<sup>49</sup> This brazen sexuality is somewhat tempered here by the dancer's sweet, smiling expression, or perhaps this was chosen by Roberts to heighten her appeal. The plunging neckline of the dancers contrasts with that of the tambourine player perhaps signifying that she is only a musician and does not have the same sexual/social standing as the dancers. The tambourine player is however connected to the dancers by her smile of approval, her gaze and her posture as she leans towards them, so her moral standing is related to

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<sup>45</sup> Jahal, 'The Ghawazee of Egypt', [http://www.jasminjahal.com/articles/art\\_ghawazee\\_of\\_egypt.html](http://www.jasminjahal.com/articles/art_ghawazee_of_egypt.html).

<sup>46</sup> Leppert, *The Sight of Sound*, 139.

<sup>47</sup> Jahal, 'The Ghawazee of Egypt', [http://www.jasminjahal.com/articles/art\\_ghawazee\\_of\\_egypt.html](http://www.jasminjahal.com/articles/art_ghawazee_of_egypt.html)

<sup>48</sup> Anon. 'The Prince of Wales in Egypt'. *The Times* (09 November 1875): 6. For a discussion of *nautch* dancing see *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, footnotes 51-67*.

<sup>49</sup> Andrew Wilton. 'Symbolism in Britain'. In *The Age of Rossetti, Burne-Jones and Watts: Symbolism in Britain, 1860-1910*, ed. Andrew Wilton and Robert Upstone, 11-34. London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1997: 16.

theirs. The music acts as an aural backdrop: the dancing and not the music is the central focus of this painting, however the music is essential as it functions to allow the dancers to perform for their audience (and the viewer) with Roberts' inclusion of the three musicians making sense of the movements of the central women. The male musicians lean towards one another appearing quite separate, and thus seem to be non-threatening to the voyeuristic (male) viewer, whose gaze is not returned or challenged by any of those performing.

This voyeuristic gaze is further exploited in Richard Dadd's (1817-1886) *Fantasie de l'harem égyptien* (1865),<sup>50</sup> which he unusually clearly acknowledges to be an imagining. Dadd showed great promise whilst studying at the Royal Academy, and then he embarked on a year-long travel around Europe and the Middle East in 1842<sup>51</sup> over which time he began to show signs of mental illness, believing that he was under the influence of the Egyptian god Osiris.<sup>52</sup> In 1843 following his return to Britain and his diagnosis with mental illness Dadd fatally stabbed his father and during his flight to Paris attempted to murder a fellow passenger. He was arrested and institutionalised. He spent the rest of his life (another forty-three years) in the criminal departments of Bethlem and Broadmoor psychiatric hospitals where he was allowed to paint and draw. His meticulous watercolours display his fascination with fairies and the supernatural<sup>53</sup> as well as his continued interest in the 'Orient' that he experienced in his youth.



<sup>50</sup> Richard Dadd. *Fantasie de l'harem égyptien* (1865). Watercolour on pale blue-green paper, heightened with white gouache. The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

<sup>51</sup> Anon. 'Richard Dadd', *Getty Museum*. See the website <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/bio/a281-1.html> (Accessed 22 December 2005).

<sup>52</sup> Patricia H. Alderidge. 'Dadd, Richard'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37337> (Accessed 13 February 2006).

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.



Unlike the majority of Dadd's 'Oriental' watercolours which are figure studies, the *Fantasie* contains a confusion of (primarily) female figures. The women seem to be quite demurely dressed with faces that replicate each other's characteristics – there is little difference facially between the Elect of the Harem at the left of the work and the tambourine-player at whom she looks. Their bodies all seem to touch and overlap; this multiplication of the 'Oriental' woman and her body<sup>54</sup> symbolises the mystery, attraction, and sexual availability of the 'Orient' and its women.<sup>55</sup> Like Bonington, Dadd includes 'Oriental' signifiers such as the Eastern architecture, a Nile view, a Persian cat and again musical instruments – an 'oud and a tambourine.<sup>56</sup> The women are relegated to a relatively small area at the base of this small-scale watercolour and the confusion of bodies, fabric and faces contrasts with the lofty architectural arches and columns and the expansive view against which the figures are placed, making the harem seem extremely claustrophobic and crowded. Dadd places the tambourine and 'oud in a clear space at the front of the work and makes them larger than reality. The sexuality of the music is linked to images of animals in Dadd's depiction where a Persian cat reclines against the 'oud; indeed in imagery of Other sexual women there is occasionally 'a hint of bestiality. The fatal woman [frequently an 'Oriental'] is often attended by animals, and a kinship or secret understanding between them is implied'.<sup>57</sup> In the size and placing of these musical instruments Dadd focuses the viewer upon the musical imagery and its allied sexual associations.

In contrast to Dadd's fantasies, Frank Dillon's (1823-1909) gouache work *A Room in the House of Shayk Sadat, Cairo* (c.1875)<sup>58</sup> is a relatively conservative representation of the harem and its inhabitants. This conservativeness is probably because Dillon wished British designers to take more of an interest in the architecture and decorative arts of different cultures and was actively involved in campaigns to preserve Islamic buildings and decorative art in Cairo. He not only travelled to Egypt, but to Morocco and Japan as well where he also painted interiors.<sup>59</sup> Contemporary critics in *The Times* considered his 'Oriental' scenes to be almost unfailingly 'impressive and imaginatively conceived'<sup>60</sup> and his 'elaborate drawings of exquisitely-decorated Caireno [sic] interiors'<sup>61</sup> like this one are especially noted and praised. Dillon's aim was accurate architectural representation (something for which British artists were particularly noted)<sup>62</sup> but in this depiction of the *qaah* (main room) of the women's apartments of the Bayt al-Sadat, Dillon

<sup>54</sup> Another particularly famous example being Jean-August-Dominique Ingres's (1780-1867) *Le Bain turc* (*The Turkish Bath*) (1862).

<sup>55</sup> Mary Hunter. 'The alla turca Style in the Late Eighteenth Century: Race and Gender in the Symphony and Seraglio'. In *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathon Bellman, 43-73. Boston, Northeastern University Press: 1998: 55.

<sup>56</sup> Ian L. Phillips. Number 195 'Notes'. In *The Late Richard Dadd, 1817-1886*, ed. Patricia Allderidge, [130]. London: The Tate Gallery, 1974: [130].

<sup>57</sup> Patrick Bade. *Femme Fatale: Images of Evil and Fascinating Women*. London: Ash & Grant, 1979: 8.

<sup>58</sup> Frank Dillon. *A Room in the House of Shayk Sadat, Cairo*. (c.1875). Gouache on Paper. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<sup>59</sup> An example of his Japanese interiors is the oil painting *The Stray Shuttlecock* (1878). Again Dillon imagines inhabitants (a samisen-playing mother, and her child) in a "real" architectural interior and adds "Japanese" decorative objects and furniture.

<sup>60</sup> Anon. 'The British Institution'. *The Times* (09 February 1863): 12.

<sup>61</sup> Anon. 'The Dudley Gallery'. *The Times* (02 February 1876): 4.

<sup>62</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 106.

adds imaginary harem inhabitants and the figure of Shayk Sadat, perhaps to indicate the large scale of the room.<sup>63</sup>



Dillon, in his desire to preserve an image of this interior, depicts a highly detailed background for the figures. Roland Barthes has identified such 'gratuitous, accurate' detailing in 'Orientalist' artworks as 'signifiers of the category of real'.<sup>64</sup> Dillon's depiction of the building may be close to "reality" and the Shayk may have sat for the painting, but the female inhabitants are almost certainly fantasy. The Shayk is upright, noble-looking, somewhat formal and is compositionally placed above the women, reflecting the denotation in the title that this is *his* house – the women are not mentioned – they are nameless and positionless. Dillon does not even mention that this is specifically a women's room and deliberately avoids the laden term 'harem' as he is attempting to display the interior as an example of positive 'Orientalism'. Despite this desire for architectural "reality" he adds the women, but their relation to the Shayk remains ambiguous: are they his daughters, sisters, wives, or concubines? Dillon does not tell the viewer who they are, yet the presumption seems to be they are wives or concubines and just as this is *his* house, they are *his* women.

The women are placed below Sadat and less formal in posture; this is after all an imagined casual space in their apartments in the home, hence their relaxed attitudes and the lack of veils. Both women are paler than Sadat, perhaps so that they conform more easily to non-European ideas of attractiveness, or possibly to emphasise that their skin is never allowed to see the sun as their

<sup>63</sup> Anon. 'A Room in the House of Shayk Sadat, Cairo'. *Scran Libraries*. See the website [www.scran.ac.uk](http://www.scran.ac.uk) (Accessed 13 May 2005).

<sup>64</sup> Linda Nochlin. 'The Imaginary Orient'. *Art in America* (May 1983): 122-23.

faces and bodies must always be covered out of doors. The female figures are dressed in 'Turkish' trousers and generally loose clothing marking their otherness from European corseted ladies; this loose cut of their garments mirrors their fluid postures, contrasting them with the rigid lines of the background and the more vertical Shayk. Dillon creates no intimacy between the figures; none of them engage by making eye contact with one another and they are all leaning away from each other. The Shayk appears to command the picture by looking out towards the viewer, whereas the women gaze into space. The semi-recumbent woman has abandoned her shoes and one finds it hard to imagine a European Victorian woman being depicted in such an informal fashion. The women are filled with the ennui so often attributed to 'Oriental' harem inhabitants – they hold a fan and a lute, but do not use them – their music is silenced, as metaphorically so are they. The light through the open window draws attention to the silent musician and her instrument, and the silence where there should be music makes the architectural space seem emptier. The room appears enclosed and claustrophobic with just this one shaft of light piercing the blue shade. Indeed, despite the potential warmth of the browns and reds, Dillon makes the cold palette of blue most prominent, and even the brown has a bluish hue which exacerbates the feeling of emptiness and coldness. This ornate space with its listless, silent inhabitants does not portray a positive familial atmosphere in the 'Oriental' harem.

Not only do private imagined spaces feature in these artworks, but also more public ones, for example Frederick Goodall's Royal Academy Diploma work *The Song of the Nubian Slave* (1863).<sup>65</sup> Goodall (1822-1904) belonged to a family of artists and was friends with David Roberts and Lawrence Alma-Tadema both of whom encouraged him to become a professional artist.<sup>66</sup> In 1858 Goodall lived in the Coptic Quarter of Cairo for seven months with Queen Victoria's former drawing master Carl Haag; this was a defining moment in Goodall's artistic career as following this he specialised (almost exclusively) in Egyptian subjects. He sojourned in Egypt again in 1870 during which time he grew a beard and dressed in 'native' garments, then returned to England with many Egyptian artefacts to use as props in his subsequent artworks.<sup>67</sup> This piece, shown at the Royal Academy in 1864, would not have had the benefit of these "authentic" props and was most likely produced using studies drawn during his visit to Egypt six years earlier, where he was noted for standing in the streets rapidly sketching.<sup>68</sup>

As Philippe Jullian comments, 'The presence of slaves was an important aspect of paintings that carried the flirtation with an alien culture to the point of violent and erotic fantasies',<sup>69</sup> and the

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<sup>65</sup> Frederick Goodall. *The Song of the Nubian Slave* (1863). Oil on canvas. Royal Academy of Arts, London.

<sup>66</sup> Including clothing for models, doors and panelling from houses, and even a flock of Egyptian sheep. [F.W. Gibson rev. Briony Llewellyn. 'Goodall, Frederick'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33448?docPos=1> (Accessed 05 January 2006).]

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. See *Visual Culture: Chapter 12, at footnote 29*.

<sup>68</sup> Briony Llewellyn. 'Goodall'. *Grove Art Online*. Oxford University Press. (Accessed 20 March 2006). [www.groveart.com](http://www.groveart.com)

<sup>69</sup> Jullian, *The Orientalists*: 92.

title of this painting is crucial to the viewer's interpretation of its content: Goodall specifies that the singer is a slave, and if this word were omitted from the title many of the resonances of the painting's interpretation would disappear. The singer as a slave would, to a mid-Victorian audience, immediately provoke sympathy for this victim of the "barbarism" of the 'Oriental' Other. The light through an unseen archway illuminates the slave and his listeners, reducing the rest of the painting into mere background setting or scenery. He is raised above the other figures and foregrounded, perhaps expressing the idea that in spite of his bondage the slave is dignified and decent. There is no definitive answer to the way in which the figures are related narratively: the paler lady who is placed centrally in the painting seems to be an Arab of comfortable means – she is after all in clean white robes, wearing gold jewellery and an ornamental headdress, and is the only woman in the painting not undertaking manual labour. The three listeners seem to have paused in their journey; the way in which they stand so closely together suggests that they are a group, and the placing of the simpler-dressed figures behind the lady in white (along with their darker colouring) suggests that they are her servants or slaves.



The slave's posture is quite relaxed as he sits on his feet with his tunic riding up towards his knees showing his ankles, betokening his comfort in his music. His harp, which looks homemade, so acting as a sign of his poverty and lack of property, is his sole focus. Despite the pale woman's gaze he looks only at his harp, perhaps reflecting his low status – a slave would have no right to meet the eyes of a slave-owner. However the white, red and green of her attire mirror the colour in his, linking the two of them as they are linked by their attention to his song. Yet the bright white of her robe in the sunlight focuses attention onto her, clearly contrasting her with the Nubian woman behind her; her fluid, inactive, almost languishing body is placed in direct opposition to that of the working, upright Nubian. Her otherness is emphasised by her posture and dress, a posture that would be impossible for a corseted European woman.<sup>70</sup> The

<sup>70</sup> Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*: 172-73.

white robe is more obviously open at the breast and her clothing clearly shows the outline of her legs and pelvis underneath, unlike the shapeless black robes of the solid woman behind her. Thus the Nubian slave-woman seems to represent a "higher" morality than the Arabian sexuality of the woman in white. The lady in white is the only figure looking directly at the slave and indeed only she looks content (perhaps reflecting her comfortable existence based upon the labours of others). The slave's song has attracted her interest and admiration, so through music he is able to momentarily raise his lowly position. Song is often a defiant act and as the title of the painting states this is *his* song, his possession – to one who is himself a chattel, possessions become invaluable. As is reflected in their positioning in the painting, through the slave's music the (presumably) Arab lady becomes momentarily in awe of, and subservient to, the slave, and the viewer sees and experiences his skill and talent. Goodall seems to be critiquing the practice of slavery in Egypt and implying that the morality and skill of a slave may be superior to those in a higher position.

All of these imagined scenes (including Bonington's) exploit in visual terms many established stereotypes of the Other, particularly of 'Oriental' women. Harem ladies may dabble with music as a pastime in their solitude, but more often than not their instruments lie idle, merely a symbol of their sensuousness and a metaphor for their verbal silence and social situation. When music is actually heard the low social position of the musicians is emphasised, as in Goodall's slave and Roberts' prostitute/dancers. The ideas of slavery, separation, and female confinement are paramount in these works, as is the preoccupation with overt, othered female sexuality.

## Imagined times

Luxuriant female sexuality was also exploited by artists wishing to create an 'Oriental' past, focusing on an older, superior 'Orient'.<sup>71</sup> The Dutch-born artist Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836-1912) achieved great success in Britain<sup>72</sup> primarily with his scenes of ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece.<sup>73</sup> Alma-Tadema believed that

where my success comes in most specially is in my attempts to make the pictures living. I throw myself in to the past as far as I am able. That is where Rider Haggard has succeeded: he has feeling, although he may not be scientifically exact. No, I have never been in Egypt, and I dread to go there. I should only be able to see the Turks and the Arabs of today, and my soul would be swallowed up by them. And yet I should realize all the mystery

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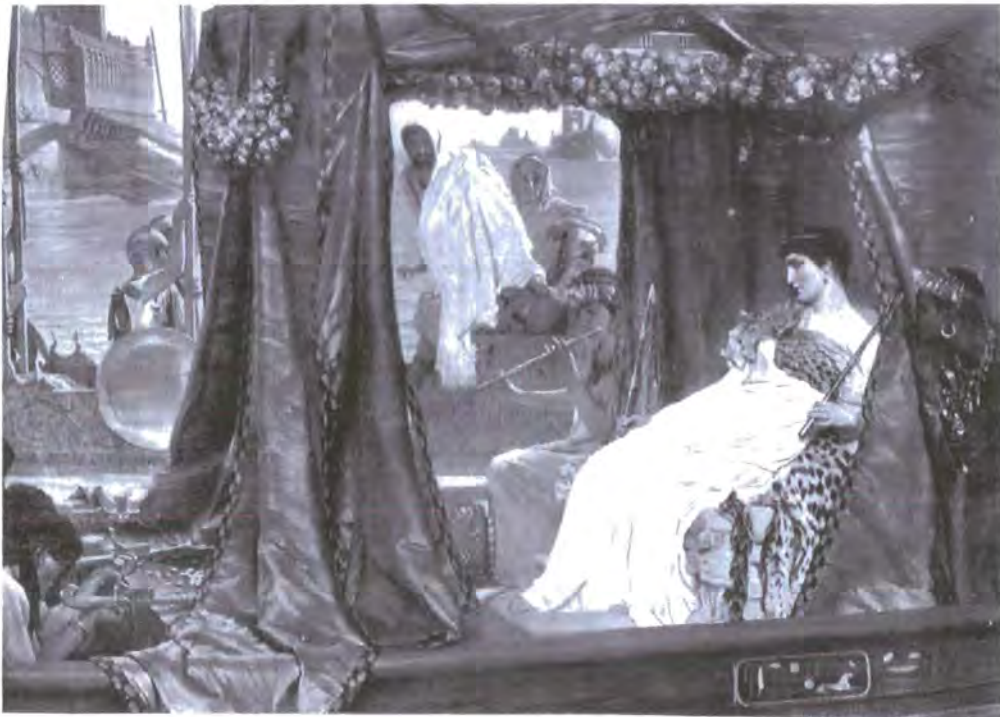
<sup>71</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 60.

<sup>72</sup> Vern G. Swanson. *Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema: The Painter of the Victorian Vision of the Ancient World*. London: Ash and Grant, 1977: 18.

<sup>73</sup> Rosemary Barrow. 'Tadema, Sir Lawrence Alma-'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30396?docPos=2> (Accessed 11 January 2006).

and the beauty or its antiquity if I could find myself alone in the ruins of Carnac [sic] or of Thebes.<sup>74</sup>

Alma-Tadema seems to admire Haggard and to attempt a similar success in his 'Oriental' art that Haggard achieves in his writings. So despite not actually visiting Egypt until 1902 (and apparently having no wish to), Alma-Tadema started painting Egyptian subjects in 1859.<sup>75</sup> The artist chose a well-known subject for his oil-painting *Antony and Cleopatra*<sup>76</sup> (1883), a work which was praised by *The Times*'s art critic: 'Both in dramatic and purely pictorial qualities the picture fully satisfies the high expectations which had been formed of it.'<sup>77</sup> In all likelihood Alma-Tadema was influenced by previous descriptions of the meeting of the famous lovers, the most-well known being Mestrius Plutarch's (c. 46-127) and William Shakespeare's (1564-1612); some small influence of these sources can be seen for example in the 'canopy of cloth of gold', the flautists, and Cleopatra half-lying to display herself to Antony.<sup>78</sup>



The viewer's eyes are initially drawn to Cleopatra's body owing to the contrast in tone between her robe and the barge – highlighting her physicality. The gaze is drawn upwards to her face which is more shadowed, mirroring the unreadable nature of her expression. She seems to be lost in thought and her face and eyes are turned away from her guests; this may however be a deliberate staging of herself and Alma-Tadema leaves this uncertain and open to interpretation. Cleopatra is the only figure in the painting whose whole body is shown, again suggesting the centrality of that body. The painter has placed her next to a black slave, a juxtaposition that has

<sup>74</sup> Anon. 'The Pictures of 1892 And The Men who Paint them'. *Pall Mall Gazette Extra*, 62 (1892): [Page not specified]. Cited in Paul Ripley. 'Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema, 1836-1912'. *Victorian Art in Britain*. See the website <http://www.victorianartinbritain.co.uk/biog/alma-tadema.htm> (Accessed 24 March 2006).

<sup>75</sup> R.J. Barrow. *Lawrence Alma-Tadema*. London: Phaidon, 2001: 23.

<sup>76</sup> Lawrence Alma-Tadema. *Antony and Cleopatra* (1883). Oil on canvas. Private Collection.

<sup>77</sup> Anon. 'The Grosvenor Gallery'. *The Times*. (09 January 1883): 8.

<sup>78</sup> See Appendix XXXI.

traditionally signified lesbianism in art,<sup>79</sup> so her physical nature is overlaid with insinuations of sexual deviancy. The artist's depiction of Cleopatra is also aligned with Bram Dijkstra's controversial categorisation of the Victorian "collapsing woman":<sup>80</sup> she is accompanied by female attendants,<sup>81</sup> leaning 'languorously' and despite 'being in excellent physical health' she seems 'weighted down by the sheer rotund volume of her material existence' – she 'simply could not seem to manage to keep herself upright.'<sup>82</sup> Dijkstra feels that the implication is that the collapsing woman's 'energy has apparently been sapped by excessive indulgence in solitary pleasures.'<sup>83</sup> So suggestions of the "vice" of masturbation<sup>84</sup> are compounded upon the lesbian inference. Although Dijkstra's idea of the "collapsing woman" could be applied here as a dimension of a possible interpretation, he has been criticised for disregarding distinctions between different places and periods of art.<sup>85</sup> A more moderate reading of such women is encountered in Robyn Asleson's discussion of Albert Moore's (1841-1893) large oil painting *A Summer Night* (1884-90),<sup>86</sup> where the reclining semi-clad women are described as being placed by Moore in poses approaching 'a mildly erotic peepshow' the details of which encourage the viewer to look but not touch;<sup>87</sup> the static opulence of Cleopatra's figure in Alma-Tadema's painting invites a similar audience response and critical interpretation.

Despite the fact that her skin is as fair as the Romans', Cleopatra's Greekness seems to be only a veneer, as she is displayed as entirely 'Oriental'. The leopard skin in which she is draped is clasped across her breasts, drawing attention to them, and stressing her otherness; the leopard is an animal sacred to Dionysus/Bacchus<sup>88</sup> whom Antony claimed as his ancestor, so in draping Cleopatra in a leopard pelt there are suggestions of Antony himself resting on her body, and inferences of caution to Antony that the results of their union will not be positive. In ancient Egyptian culture leopard pelts were worn when performing funerary rites and the deceased may be pictured similarly attired indicating their survival after death;<sup>89</sup> so as Cleopatra is wearing the skin, it could be interpreted as a warning of death to *both* of the lovers, however it is impossible to know the depth of Alma-Tadema's knowledge of ancient Egyptian culture, and even if he was aware of this inference it is unlikely that contemporary viewers would be so.

<sup>79</sup> Nochlin, 'The Imaginary Orient': 126.

<sup>80</sup> Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*: 70.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*: 76.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*: 70.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*: 74.

<sup>84</sup> Dijkstra expounds the contemporary medical evidence: 'Physicians explained to horrified husbands that as blood drained from their wives' brains to rush to their excited reproductive organs, their minds as well as their bodies weakened, and soul and body alike would trail off into a sleep induced by erotic self-stimulation. Such a singular condition of passivity and crime, such fascinating new evidence for women's preoccupation with graceful-self-abuse, could not but hypnotize the painters of the time.' [*Ibid.*: 75.]

<sup>85</sup> Private Communication, 06 March 2006, from Suzanne Fagence Cooper to Claire Mabilat (then Walsh).

<sup>86</sup> Albert Moore. *A Summer Night*. (1884-90). Oil on canvas. Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

<sup>87</sup> Robyn Asleson. *Albert Moore*. London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2000: 185.

<sup>88</sup> James Hall. *Illustrated Dictionary of Symbols in Eastern and Western Art*. Illustrated by Chris Puleston. London: John Murray, 1994: 32-33.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*: 32.

Cleopatra is separated from the other figures by the confines of her canopy and Antony and his companion<sup>90</sup> are framed by the canopy's draperies – they are caught by Cleopatra's world and their own (as represented by the attendant soldiers and ships) is left outside of the frame created by her bower. Antony's white robes mirror hers designating a physical harmony between the future lovers. Although the two men are gazing at Cleopatra, they do not seem able to see her face which is hidden by the draperies, and their gaze is only returned by the black slave at the forefront of the picture, an emblem of 'Oriental' otherness. Thus Antony is staring at Cleopatra's recumbent and passive body, which is in direct contrast to his own rising, active posture (this may be symbolic of sexual activity). Antony's sudden movement is in noticeable disparity to Cleopatra's lethargy, very clearly showing that *he* is going to her (as any viewer conscious of the historical context would be aware); this is the moment at which Antony's fall could still be averted, yet he chooses to board Cleopatra's barque.

Despite the fact that Antony's name is first in the title, Cleopatra's body covers approximately a quarter of the canvas and it is she and her 'Oriental' world that are foregrounded. Alma-Tadema uses many contrasts to differentiate this 'Orientalness' from the Westernised Romans. The Queen is surrounded by fluid lines, and even the angles and lines of her canopy are softened by the fabric and broken by flowers, whereas the Romans are characterised by straight lines and angles, so contrasting 'Oriental' voluptuousness and identification with nature with austere Roman 'civilisation'. However Antony's robe is more fluid implying his susceptibility to 'Oriental' influence. Golds, browns and pinks, all earthy and rich colours, surround Cleopatra and her attendants, while the Romans and their boats are painted in lighter green-tinted hues; nonetheless the Roman guard's shield reflects the hues of the draperies, connoting the pervasiveness of 'Oriental' influence. Alma-Tadema uses a difference in tone to act as a metaphor – the barge is dark in contrast to the bright sun outside, and in anticipation of Antony's enjoyment of 'Oriental' pleasures his face is shadowed by the hood of his robe as he leaves the sunlight to enter the darkness of the canopy. Alma-Tadema creates a great sense of depth; Antony's ship seems very far from him, and indeed he is separated from it by the draperies as he metaphorically leaves one world for another.

The general is unable to see Cleopatra's face yet he can view her body and his gaze is accompanied by a female flautist's music; Cleopatra is frequently associated with music<sup>91</sup> and in this context it acts as an expression of her sensuality. The flautist's posture (particularly her arms, legs, and face) and pale clothing echo Cleopatra's, directly linking the Queen to the musician and her music. Traditionally, indeed until the close of the nineteenth century, the flute

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<sup>90</sup> Perhaps Enobarbus.

<sup>91</sup> Both Plutarch and Shakespeare's early accounts connect Cleopatra to music, as do more contemporary depictions, including that by Rider Haggard (*See Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 89-90*) and other visual arts, for example the cameo glass plaque *Cleopatra and her Attendants* (c.1898) by the brothers Thomas (1849-1926) (a skilled musician) and George Woodall (1850-1925) who together decorated twenty-eight unique cameos and glass vases, with the former specialising in 'Oriental' subjects. [Christopher Perry. 'Thomas and John Woodall'. *The Official Website of Thomas & George Woodall*. See the website <http://www.cameo-glass.co.uk/victorian/tandgwoodall/index.html> (Accessed 23 January 2006).]



was considered to be unfeminine,<sup>92</sup> partly because of its phallic connotations. This particular flute is made of reed so a 'primitive' Other instrument, and resonates with Ovid's description of Pan's creation of his pipes: Richard Leppert describes how Pan chases Syrinx to rape her so the gods grant her deliverance and transform her into reeds on the riverbank. Pan hears the wind's music across the reeds and takes them, making from 'them/her' the first panpipes.<sup>93</sup> Leppert believes that this music can be 'accounted for as the twin result of violence against a woman and as woman in another, dismembered form. To avoid a sexual assault, she becomes music, though at the expense of her body', then Pan uses the reed instruments to seduce other women.<sup>94</sup> Thus the musician's already phallic flute has further connotations of sexual union as it is made of reed and it is placed directly between the two lovers. In contrast to the ambiguous musician in *The Finding of Moses* (see below), the musical metaphor in Alma-Tadema's *Antony and Cleopatra* clearly reflects the rest of the sensual and sexualised imagery presented in the painting.

The innocence depicted in Alma-Tadema's large-scale narrative oil painting *The Finding of Moses*<sup>95</sup> (1904) contrasts with his sexualised Egyptian Queen of nearly a quarter of a century earlier; it is considered one of his 'most spectacular works' and was influenced by his travels in Egypt in 1902.<sup>96</sup> The work occupied Alma-Tadema for nearly two years and was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1905,<sup>97</sup> where it was praised by *The Times*'s reviewer as having 'curious and varied interest'.<sup>98</sup>



<sup>92</sup> Moore, 'Women and the flute in the nineteenth century': 51.

<sup>93</sup> Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*: 224.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*: 225. See Appendix XXX.

<sup>95</sup> Lawrence Alma-Tadema. *The Finding of Moses* (1904). Oil on canvas. Private Collection. This painting sold for £1.5 million in 1995, highlighting Alma-Tadema's recent return to popularity.

<sup>96</sup> Alison Inglis. 'Alma-Tadema, Sir Lawrence'. *Grove Art Online*. Oxford University Press. (Accessed 20 March 2006). [www.groveart.com](http://www.groveart.com)

<sup>97</sup> Anon. 'The Sale Room: Paintings by Alma-Tadema'. *The Times* (02 April 1935): 8.

<sup>98</sup> Anon. 'The Royal Academy'. *The Times* (05 May 1906): 9.

Alma-Tadema situates the work in ancient Egypt with the use of signifiers such as the hieroglyphs, a sphinx and the ancient-Egyptian-style statuary. He also uses the Nile and the Pyramids of Memphis as symbols for Egypt, however he distorts reality to do so as the Pyramids cannot be viewed from the Nile. He attempts to extend this cultural situation to the figures by giving the men shaved heads and the women Egyptian-style jewellery, such as the handmaiden's pectoral, however the clothing worn by the figures is somewhat nondescript and simply denotes "ancientness". The scene is designed to appeal to all of the senses – the colours are high in key which draws the eyes, and material wealth (as expressed in the fineness of the fabrics, jewellery, feathers and the palanquin) reflects this visual richness. This is combined with the imagined scent of the prominent flowers, and the musician's music. These blue/violet flowers, reflecting the Nile's colour, seem to continue the river to the front of the picture and the influence of nature into the court. The Nile itself, complementing the yellow of the desert, adds to the voluptuousness of nature with ideas of fertility and supplements the splendour of the court. Alma-Tadema contrasts the detail of the court with the vast emptiness of the river (a vastness that is heightened by the smallness of the pyramids) bestowing an impression of space and depth to balance the fullness at the front of the painting.

The title refers only to Moses and not to the Pharaoh's<sup>99</sup> daughter, reflecting her namelessness in Exodus;<sup>100</sup> this depersonalises her and heightens the importance of the infant. The placing of the princess at the highest level in the picture reflects her social position, and Moses is closest to her indicating his importance. Her body falls between the two horizontal lines that organise the composition of the picture – the line of her palanquin and the land's horizon – and the fans surrounding her break these lines. This disruption, and the way in which she is set in relief against the emptiest space of the picture, initially draw the viewer's eye to her and particularly her face which is placed against the white feathers of the fan. The viewer is then directed to follow her gaze to the baby Moses who is pale in colouring and healthy-looking (acceptable to a primarily Christian audience). Unlike the more uniform male attendants, the princess and her three handmaids have individualised features and expressions. The figures seem to be serene and all of the movement in the scene appears to be slow and stately – the princess's semi-horizontal posture and the relatively stiff vertical bearings of the other figures maintain this stateliness.

Activity in the painting is clearly gendered; whereas physical labour is associated with the male figures as is indicated not only through their activity but also their muscular bodies, the women seem bodily softer and more rounded (the bracelet is cutting into the flesh of the upper arm of one of Moses' carriers) and they are linked to the feminine activities of child-rearing and music making. The women in this painting are foregrounded, partly by their placing and their greater

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<sup>99</sup> This unnamed Pharaoh of Exodus 1 and 2, often referred to as the 'Pharaoh of the Oppression', is probably either Sety I (1291-1279 B.C.E.) or Ramesses II (1279-1212 B.C.E.). [Robert Nguyen Cramer. 'Pharaoh'. *BibleTexts.com Bible Commentary*. See the website <http://www.bibletexts.com/glossary/pharaoh.htm> (Accessed 03 January 2006).] Owing to the large nature of the royal families it is impossible to name his daughter accurately.

<sup>100</sup> Exod. 2. 5-10. *The New King James Version Bible*.

individualisation, and partly by their lighter tone. Perhaps the women are depicted as much paler than the men and with Europeanised features because they are to bring up Moses – one of the major prophets of the Christian faith – so cannot seem to be too Other even if they are actually Egyptian. To emphasise this, the princess's body is completely covered indicating her purity. Alma-Tadema's painting conforms to many orientalist stereotypes of the nineteenth-century – the 'Oriental' world is viewed as splendid and luxurious, but harmonious with nature, and the 'Orientals' are perceived as somewhat indolent; yet because of the ramifications of Moses growing up in this culture the artist does not explore the more frequent negative prejudices of the period.

In a picture primarily built upon vertical and horizontal lines the conflicting diagonals of the musician's posture and musical instrument differentiate her from the otherwise harmoniously related figures. The musician directs her gaze at the viewer, her open mouth is singing and her fingers are gently plucking her lyre. Suzanne Fagence Cooper writes of Rossetti's *Blue Bower* that 'The viewer is drawn into the scene by the woman's gaze, and by the evocation of sensory pleasure. This includes the music which she confidently plucks from the strings. In this instance she takes on the traditional associations of a siren enticing her audience, as we are drawn into an exotic and timeless two-dimensional space.'<sup>101</sup> Alma-Tadema's musician can be viewed in a similar way; her head is leaned to one side signifying an empathy with the viewer and it seems to gesture towards her naked shoulder, highlighting her partial undress and otherness. The musician and her music are part of what draws the viewer into the picture, and are at the same time ambivalent in their partial incongruity. The musician could conform to the 'spiritual' category of female music making in art, yet her expression and posture seem to imply a physicality that gives her music-making more sensuous connotations. So Alma-Tadema's musician hints at an 'Oriental' sensuality that is otherwise deliberately omitted from this painting.

Alma-Tadema grafts his perceptions of the present-day 'Orient' onto his imaginings of an ancient Egypt, so creating fantasy imagery that still embodies many of the musical and sexual stereotypes of otherness that were becoming established by many artists (visual or otherwise) at this time. 'Orientals', as in the paintings already discussed, are depicted as sensual and indolent, and music is again associated with these qualities of otherness.

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<sup>101</sup> Cooper, 'Aspiring to the Condition of Music': 255.

'[T]he artificial thing I was searching for'<sup>102</sup>

Like many of his contemporaries the artist Sir John Lavery (1856-1941) was also attracted by North Africa, but for him it was Morocco in particular; he spent thirty consecutive winters in Tangiers between 1890 and 1920,<sup>103</sup> all of which greatly influenced his paintings. Stylistically Lavery is admired for aesthetic development of the sketch, and his evident brushwork which he used to craft an atmospheric effect.<sup>104</sup> Two such paintings are Lavery's Moroccan works *Habiba* (1892)<sup>105</sup> and *The Husetop, Evening* (1914),<sup>106</sup> both of which prominently feature musicians. The subject matter of *Habiba* is not dissimilar to Roberts' *The Ghawazee of Cairo*; it too depicts a light-skinned north-African female dancer, but in Lavery's painting she is poised ready to dance and is accompanied by two female musicians, a black woman with a tambourine and a Moroccan on the 'oud. The focus of the painting is on the named dancer, Habiba, which means 'beloved one'. If Lavery painted this work from life this may have been the model's name; if not perhaps he chose it with a real affection for her or conversely to hint at lax sexuality. In naming the dancer Lavery gives her individual autonomy as a person and goes some way to avoiding the idea of her as a 'representative' of a 'type' that is so prevalent in the earlier case studies. This individualisation may be owing to the large amount of time that he spent in Morocco.



<sup>102</sup> John Lavery. *The Life of a Painter*. London, Cassell and Co.: 1940: 103. Cited in James Thompson. *The East: Imagined, Experienced, Remembered*. Dublin: The National Gallery of Ireland: 1988: 176.

<sup>103</sup> Khalid Chaouch. 'British Travellers to Morocco and their Accounts from mid-16<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> Centuries: A Bibliography.' *Sheffield Hallam University: Working Papers on the Web*. See the website <http://www.shu.ac.uk/wpw/morocco/Chaouch/Chaouch.htm> (Accessed 12 January 2006).

<sup>104</sup> Anon. 'Sir John Lavery, Irish, 1856-1941'. *Artnet*. See the website <http://www.artnet.com/artist/554528/sir-john-lavery.html> (Accessed 19 January 2006).

<sup>105</sup> J. Lavery. *Habiba* (1892). Oil on Canvas. The Allied Irish Bank Collection, Dublin.

<sup>106</sup> J. Lavery. *The Husetop, Evening* (1914). Oil on canvas. Private Collection: Mr. Patrick O'Driscoll.

*Habiba* has an informal feel: the musicians are crossed-legged and leaning against walls, and Habiba has taken off her shoes and seems relaxed. This intimate portrait of a harem scene, a situation that is specified through the signifier of a latticed window, seems to be less staged than those of other contemporary artists such as John Frederick Lewis or Frank Dillon; *Habiba* also gives the impression of a more realistic harem scene than Roberts' image of Egyptian dancers as here all of the performers are women. Yet no matter how apparently "real", the subject matter must still be imagined.

The dark tonalities of the work add to the feeling of intimacy and also make the white of the performers' robes, and thus the women themselves, more prominent. The 'oud player looks out past Habiba to return the audience's gaze and her clothing and face echo that of the dancer so that they appear to be linked physically as well as musically. Habiba is modestly dressed and seems less staged or imaginary than a lot of contemporary depictions of 'Oriental' women. This modest dress coupled with her lowered eyes and dignified stance indicate a sense of decorum that is often omitted from harem scenes. Lavery's representation of the black musician is relatively conformist: as Reina Lewis has noted, although black women are quite frequently represented in Orientalist paintings they 'are not marked as the overt object of desire' and 'usually the pairing of a light and dark-skinned woman prioritizes a reading in which the white woman is the object of desire',<sup>107</sup> as is the case in *Habiba*. The inclusion of the black musician may also have resonances of lesbianism for a late Victorian viewer,<sup>108</sup> as often would the idea of a harem. So despite the seeming modesty of Habiba and her accompanists, there are underlying signifiers of heightened female sexuality, as is pretty universal to these images of 'Oriental' women associated with music.



<sup>107</sup> Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism*: 172.

<sup>108</sup> As discussed above for Alma-Tadema's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Twenty-two years later Lavery returned to the idea of music in Morocco in a different format in the much larger oil-painting *The Husetop, Evening*. Again Lavery presents an intimate portrait of Moroccan female life with two women on a rooftop<sup>109</sup> listening to a male 'oud player. The artist creates a great sense of tranquillity with the indistinct surrounding countryside, the large expanses of pink roof wall crossing the rectangular canvas, and the seeming inactivity of the figures. Presumably, to be allowed access to the women, the musician is either a family member or an eunuch slave. He is the central anchor of the piece yet the two women to his left by the roof wall are painted in more detail by Lavery, so are also central to the interpretation.

One woman gazes away from the viewer in solitary contemplation to the accompanying music with her back towards the heavily highlighted door that shuts off the rest of the house – despite the apparent intimacy this is a picture of confinement with the looming walls and the highlighted closed door. The only activity in the painting is the musician's performance yet even he seems to be relaxed and serene, perhaps reflecting the common contemporary perception of 'Oriental' inactivity and lassitude,<sup>110</sup> and suppositions of opiate use. In contrast to the woman in Goodall's *The Song of the Nubian Slave* of half a century earlier, Lavery's women do not focus on the musician and seem oblivious to his music; each character in Lavery's painting seems distinct and separate, and unusually the music appears not to bring them together but to make them seem more isolated from one another, as despite the melody there is no interaction between the figures.

Like his fellow artists, Lavery focuses on imaginary spaces to which he has no access and the fantasies that he has bound up with them. Lavery later regretted this focus on the imaginary female 'Orient'; in his biographical work *The Life of a Painter* (1940) Lavery lamented the difficulty in finding female Moroccan models and his own missed opportunities. The first time he employed models when they unveiled he found them 'two of the most hideous beldams I have ever seen out of a brothel – where they had really come from'<sup>111</sup> and rejected them both. On another occasion he was allowed to paint a woman who had been described as the most beautiful in Tunisia yet to Lavery she was merely 'a fat, hideous woman dressed with fantastic splendour.'<sup>112</sup> Instead the artist was reduced to spending a week secretly hidden fifty feet away from a harem in order to paint it.<sup>113</sup> Unusually for an orientalist, with hindsight Lavery actually acknowledged his short-sightedness and prejudice: 'Years afterwards, when I recalled the scene [of dismissing the Tunisian 'beauty'], I saw what I had missed – a real Oriental instead of the artificial thing I was searching for. Blinded by what I wanted, I could not see how wonderful a picture I might have painted'.<sup>114</sup> Instead of accepting and exploring Moroccan ideas of female beauty, Lavery chose to cling to European orientalist images of harem inmates, and to continue to perpetuate established conceptions of 'Oriental' women. Despite the natural feel of Lavery's

<sup>109</sup> The rooftop was often permitted to women as they remained hidden from unauthorised male eyes.

<sup>110</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 4, footnotes 77-81*.

<sup>111</sup> Lavery, *The Life of a Painter*: 103. Cited in Thompson, *The East*: 176.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Thompson, *The East*: 176.

<sup>114</sup> Lavery, *The Life of a Painter*: 104. Cited in ibid.

paintings he himself later acknowledged the artificiality of their subject matter and the influence of his own desires and imaginings.

## Concluding remarks

In this survey of images of non-European music in 'high art', music is always linked with women in the 'Orient', usually with their implicit sensuality, and more occasionally their explicit sexuality. In adding the extra dimension of sound to the images, the artists are able to augment the sensuous allure of these women with music – an element that was frequently aligned with sexual appeal in works about the Other. In *Music in Art* (1997), Tom Phillips argues that

The instrument can be an invaluable prop (in both senses) to a composition. It can give animation to stillness and provide the beginnings of a narrative. Most of all it can set the air of a picture alive with sound, can vivify its space. The world of performance is also one where women have known a proper equality for longer than in almost any other pursuit. Some feminist critics, preoccupied with the 'male gaze', might point out that the presence of an instrument serves as just another alibi for treating a woman as an object. This is luckily disproved in nine cases out of ten by the forceful personalities of the women musicians we meet with: either they are [...] sources of energy within the picture or they may gaze back with a confidence to match that of painter or observer.<sup>115</sup>

These images of 'Oriental' musical women do not conform with Phillips' assertions, as many of these women are presented as objects for the 'male gaze', and music is a part of this objectifying process. Not all of these women play the instruments that have been bestowed upon them, with a number reclining mutely beside silent instruments; this not only implies 'Oriental' indolence but mirrors the women's own inability to communicate with the outside world. Women's enclosure and isolation is an aspect of 'Oriental' life that is stressed in many of these musical paintings, with the harem preoccupying the majority of the artists. The seclusion of the harem is characterised either by silent luxury, as in Bonington and Dillon's paintings, or by sultry female dance, as pictured by Roberts and Lavery. In all cases the focus is on female bodily display, either through the performance of music and dance, or by a lassitude so profound that even creating music is too taxing. In a similar way to the imagined Other women of Haggard's romances and the 'Oriental' women created upon the nineteenth-century musical stage, in each of these paintings the 'Oriental' women, their music (heard or imagined), and their bodies, are created for the viewing pleasure (and perhaps titillation) of the audience.

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<sup>115</sup> Tom Phillips. *Music in Art: Through the Ages*. New York: Prestel, 1997: 10-11.

## Chapter 12: Staging the photographic 'Orient'.

the relationship between photographer and living human subject is far more problematic cross-culturally than within a single culture.<sup>1</sup>

There is a marked influence and interplay between British orientalist painting, drawing and photography<sup>2</sup> in the long nineteenth century, particularly from the 1860s onwards with the rise of mass-produced images by studio photographers resident in the 'Orient'.<sup>3</sup> Despite this interaction, to many Victorians photography seemed to be a scientific discipline divorced from artistic intention, so producing a "natural" and "authentic" image,<sup>4</sup> a perception with harmful implications when these nineteenth-century viewers were considering images of otherness. To the modern scholar these photographs provide a glimpse of Europe's encounter with the 'Oriental' Other.<sup>5</sup> In the early- to mid-nineteenth century the probability was that the photographer was a middle-class white man and although this began to alter towards the end of the long nineteenth century it remained the "norm" throughout this period;<sup>6</sup> thus images of women or the Other were primarily taken by this distinct cultural group. Although some of these photographs were commissioned by and became housed at important scientific institutions, most of these images were aimed at the consumer/public as book illustrations or postcards, and by the 1880s most British (and indeed American and Australasian) white middle-class households had a photographic postcard collection including pictures of the Other, often helpfully organised by the manufacturers into series and sets resembling 'the hierarchical taxonomies of race' and believed to 'offer an accurate visual record of life in the colonies'<sup>7</sup> or 'Orient'.

### Photography as representation

Even into the late twentieth century the aesthetician Roger Scruton upholds these fallacies of photographic realism, asserting that a photograph is not 'interesting as the realization of an intention but rather as a record of how an actual object looked',<sup>8</sup> showing the deep-seated nature of this erroneous belief in photographic "reality". Indeed, as Roland Barthes correctly asserts, 'in Photography I can never deny that *the thing has been there*',<sup>9</sup> but he recognises that the object of

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<sup>1</sup> Melissa Banta and Curtis M. Hinsley. *From Site to Sight: Anthropology, Photography, and the Power of Imagery*. Massachusetts: Peabody Museum Press, 1986: 58.

<sup>2</sup> The author had wished to give a brief overview of the relation of photography to music, but there are too few sources available upon which to base such an introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Nissan N. Perez. *Focus East: Early Photography in the Near East (1839-1885)*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1988: 66.

<sup>4</sup> Banta and Hinsley, *From Site to Sight*: 23-25.

<sup>5</sup> Gary D. Sampson. 'Unmasking the Colonial Picturesque: Samuel Bourne's photographs of Barrackpore Park'. In *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, ed. Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson, 84-106. London: Routledge, 2002: 84.

<sup>6</sup> Maxwell, *Colonial Photography and Exhibitions*: 9.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*: 11.

<sup>8</sup> Roger Scruton. *The Aesthetic Understanding: Essays in the Philosophy of Art and Culture*. Manchester: Carcanet Press, 1983: 103.

<sup>9</sup> Roland Barthes. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Trans. Richard Howe. London: Flamingo, 1984 [1980]: 76-77.



a photograph has (external) referents. The apparent "reality" of photography is 'a deceit' as during the often unacknowledged pre-photographic stage of production the photographer creates a setting and organises the objects before the camera, so fashioning a network of "meanings".<sup>10</sup> This artistic selection takes a 'moment' of time 'out of its context in the flow of real-life experience and places it in another, possibly unrelated, context', thus creating new "meanings"<sup>11</sup> which can be transformed by the photographer's choice of angle, focus and content as well as the context in which the picture is subsequently used or presented. Victor Burgin's analogy in 'Photographic Practice and Art Theory' (1982) clearly illustrates this idea: 'the relationship between a photographic image and its referent is one of reproduction only to the extent that Christopher Wren's death-mask reproduces Christopher Wren. The photograph abstracts from, and mediates, the actual.'<sup>12</sup> Modern theorists of visual culture generally subscribe to the more historically grounded theory that the wider context of a photograph's creation is fundamental to gaining an understanding of its production and its ensuing impact upon a viewer.<sup>13</sup> In his essay *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* Roland Barthes concludes that a photograph's meaning is determined more by the individual viewer than by the greater historical and social context of the photograph's creation,<sup>14</sup> although he concedes that a specific photograph itself is only infrequently regarded as distinguishable and separate from the referent (namely, what it represents).<sup>15</sup> So the photography critic must be aware that representation is a 'complex cultural process' requiring an understanding that photographs are historically defined 'moments' in a broader discourse of 'ways of seeing',<sup>16</sup> and work with an alertness to the danger of superimposing modern cultural values upon an historical document.<sup>17</sup>

## Fabricated photographs

The artistic inclination of the photographer, the desire to maintain the 'Oriental' fantasy, and the commercial demand for photographs of the Other, all aided in the creation of fabricated 'Oriental' photographs in the late nineteenth century, where a subject is staged to be photographed. These fictitious photographs acted as 'trick pictures' on an audience who believed that 'Photography never lies'; as Barthes qualifies, the photograph proves an object's existence, but it 'can lie as to the meaning of the thing'.<sup>18</sup> Without a doubt the difference in viewer perception between the artistry of a drawn or painted image and the "science" of a photograph enabled the acceptance of European studio images as "proof" of the ways in which Other peoples

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<sup>10</sup> Victor Burgin. 'Photographic Practice and Art Theory'. In *Thinking Photography*, ed. Victor Burgin, 39-83. London: The Macmillan Press, 1982: 47.

<sup>11</sup> Banta and Hinsley, *From Site to Sight*: 25.

<sup>12</sup> Burgin, 'Photographic Practice and Art Theory': 61.

<sup>13</sup> Sarah Graham-Brown. *Images of Women: The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East 1860-1950*. London: Quartet Books, 1988: 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Barthes, *Camera Lucida*: 5.

<sup>16</sup> Ryan, *Picturing Empire*: 19.

<sup>17</sup> Brian Street. 'British Popular Anthropology: Exhibiting and Photographing the Other'. In *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards, 122-31. London: Yale University Press in association with The Royal Anthropological Institute, 1992: 123.

<sup>18</sup> Barthes, *Camera Lucida*: 87.

looked and acted.<sup>19</sup> Although later on in the century there were a number of European-run, 'on-location' studios outside of Europe, from the 1840s onwards many European studios created 'genre scenes with Orientalist subjects'.<sup>20</sup> In studios of photographers, like those of painters, the objects placed into a picture of otherness were (almost always) deliberately positioned, including the model who could be 'draped, posed and clamped at the photographer's pleasure'; indeed the only thing about which the photographer had lessened control was the facial expression of the model him- or herself.<sup>21</sup>

Whilst the 'Oriental' studio set-up may be interpreted as a 'symbolic appropriation of space', the figure of the model as Other can be viewed as 'the symbolic appropriation of the [Other] body', a requisition heavily laden with 'connotative signs'.<sup>22</sup> The body was often that of a non-European woman as photographed by a white man (usually) in a position of power sufficient enough to dictate the terms in which she was photographically represented.<sup>23</sup> As Sarah Graham-Brown highlights, 'Once in the studio, the women could be posed and dressed, or undressed for a chosen part, and one of the few certainties about these photographs is that the women were seldom in real life what they appeared to be in the photograph';<sup>24</sup> this aspect of staging was often missed by the contemporary viewer who was hoping to find "reality" in the image. Graham-Brown's statement must however be tempered with the acknowledgement that although 'the relationship between photographer and subject was rarely one of equality or spontaneous co-operation' not every Other who was photographed by the British was photographed against their will, even if they rarely had any control over the resultant image.<sup>25</sup> Indeed as Karina Eileraas asserts in her discussion of French-Algerian *Ecarts d'identité*, an 'Oriental' woman may be able to challenge the gaze by returning it and adapting or mimicking aspects of stereotyped fantasy to assume a posture of defiance and so to gain distance and to 'misrecogniz[e] the colonial male gaze'.<sup>26</sup> Thus it is possible that the subject of the photographic gaze is able to reclaim or subvert the power of the photographer's lens.

## "Art" Photography

For the photographer Roger Fenton (1819-1869) who created a set of around fifty 'Oriental' "art" images in the summer of 1858, the encounter with the Other was pure fantasy, as his photographs were staged and taken in his London studio.<sup>27</sup> Fenton was influenced by fine-art painters

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<sup>19</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women*: 40.

<sup>20</sup> Perez, *Focus East*: 102.

<sup>21</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women*: 40.

<sup>22</sup> Malek Alloula. *The Colonial Harem*. Trans. Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986: 21.

<sup>23</sup> Graham-Brown, *Images of Women*: 62.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*: 63.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: 36.

<sup>26</sup> Karina Eileraas. 'Disorienting Looks, *Ecarts d'identité*: Colonial Photography and Creative Misrecognition in Leila Sebbar's *Sherazade*'. In *After Orientalism: Critical Entanglements, Productive Looks*, ed. Inge E. Boer, 9-22. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2003: 27-28.

<sup>27</sup> Gordon Baldwin. "'Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects'". In *All the Mighty World: The Photographs of Roger Fenton, 1852-1860*, ed. Gordon Baldwin, Malcolm Daniel and Sarah Greenough,

including David Roberts and John Frederick Lewis, and was friends with Frederick Goodall's travelling companion Carl Haag<sup>28</sup> (1820-1915) as well as the artist Frank Dillon. Haag has been identified as featuring in Fenton's 'Oriental' suite and Dillon owned a group of these pictures; indeed Dillon also posed in many of Fenton's 'Orientalist' set himself, in all likelihood influencing (and maybe even suggesting) the project, as he had recently returned from travels in Egypt.<sup>29</sup> Fenton originally trained as a painter and exhibited alongside Dillon at the Royal Academy in 1849 and 1850, and the example of an "art" photographer such as Fenton highlights the network of connections and influences between photography and the traditional arts in nineteenth-century Britain. When he created his photographs he was intending to make "art" and exhibit it in the traditional manner, contradicting modern critics like Scruton who believe that photography has 'representation' in common with painting, but is not aesthetically comparable, who gives the analogy that sound 'is common to music and to fountains, but only the first of these is properly described as an *art* of sound.'<sup>30</sup> In January 1859 Fenton exhibited seven of these 'Oriental' works in London and although Fenton's reviewer in the *Photographic News* criticised the figures' incorrect nationality and lack of facial expression,<sup>31</sup> his counterpart at the *Photographic Journal* praised Fenton for branching out from landscape photography into genre works and 'turning his attention to a department of the 'art' in which he is less known',<sup>32</sup> indicating that Fenton's contemporaries considered his photographs to be art.

One of those seven exhibited prints was (No. 43) *The Pasha and Bayadère*,<sup>33</sup> a title which again reinforces Said's statement that orientalists saw 'Orientals' in 'abstract generalities'.<sup>34</sup> Fenton (perhaps with Dillon's guidance) has clearly been influenced by contemporary artworks: if one compares this photograph to a picture such as David Roberts' lithograph *The Ghawazee of Cairo* (1856)<sup>35</sup> there are many similarities. Like other contemporary artists Fenton has used 'Oriental' props, including an Egyptian low wooden table, a Turkish-style coffee pot, a hookah and a Persian rug – Gordon Baldwin suggests that some of these props as well as elements of the costumes may have been Dillon's, and certainly the table is very similar to that in Dillon's later work *A Room in the House of Shayk Sadat, Cairo* (c.1875).<sup>36</sup>

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with contributions by Richard Pare, Pam Roberts, and Roger Taylor, 83-89. London: Yale University Press, 2004: 83.

<sup>28</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11, footnote 59*.

<sup>29</sup> Baldwin, "Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects": 84.

<sup>30</sup> Scruton, *The Aesthetic Understanding*: 102.

<sup>31</sup> Anon. 'Exhibition of the Photographic Society'. *Photographic News* (28 January 1859): 242. Cited in Baldwin, "Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects": 88.

<sup>32</sup> Anon. 'Photographic Society's Sixth Annual Exhibition'. *Photographic Journal* (1 February 1859): 35. Cited in *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> Roger Fenton. *The Pasha and Bayadère* (1858). In *All the Mighty World: The Photographs of Roger Fenton, 1852-1860*, ed. Gordon Baldwin, Malcolm Daniel and Sarah Greenough, with contributions by Richard Pare, Pam Roberts, and Roger Taylor. London: Yale University Press, 2004: Plate 62.

<sup>34</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>35</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11, footnote 37*.

<sup>36</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11, footnote 59*.



The photograph *The Pasha and Bayadère* features George Fenton as the Pasha watching the *bayadère*<sup>37</sup> (presumably a hired London model), and Frank Dillon posing as the musician. The dancer's dress echoes that of David Roberts' image *The Ghawazee of Cairo*, as do her posture and finger cymbals. Alongside the instruments heard in the image (the spiked fiddle and finger symbols) Fenton places an unplayed inlaid tambourine as well as a goblet drum on a raised space behind the men; so music, both sounded and merely symbolised by Other instruments, is essential to this image. Through the vivacity of music and dance the photographer attempts to give movement and life to an image created by a process which in fact requires long periods of the models' stasis. The posed nature of the picture is verified by the visible wires attached to the dancer's wrists to hold her arms in their raised and stationary position long enough for the photograph's exposure, something that was criticised by contemporary reviewers.<sup>38</sup> These wires and the skylight in this untrimmed photograph draw attention to the studio setting of this image,<sup>39</sup> and indeed the picture would seem much less staged if it were trimmed to show just the figures and their background. Despite this obvious staging, and Fenton's lack of 'Oriental' travels, both of his reviewers praise the "reality" of the images; one stated that 'With regard to the arrangement of dress and interior detail, there can be no doubt that Fenton is the one who ought to be well able to give us a correct idea of the household economy of the Orientals',<sup>40</sup> and another

<sup>37</sup> A French term for a dancing girl in an Indian temple, so mixing/confusing 'Orient's'.

<sup>38</sup> Anon. 'Exhibition of the Photographic Society' and Anon. 'Photographic Society's Sixth Annual Exhibition'. Cited in Baldwin, "Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects": 88.

<sup>39</sup> Baldwin, "Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects": 87.

<sup>40</sup> Anon. 'Exhibition of the Photographic Society'. Cited in Baldwin, "Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects": 87.

considered the photographs to be 'admirable illustrations of Eastern scenes of actual life.'<sup>41</sup> Thus even those who worked professionally in photography had trouble divorcing the fashioned image from a sense of "scientific reality".

In *The Pasha and Bayadère* Fenton's gaze is intent upon the expressionless face of the female model whilst she looks towards the ground and stands with hips thrust forward towards him in a pose that indicates an offering of her body. Fenton features in only two of his nearly fifty 'Oriental' images and in this one he chooses to be the Pasha – surely many a Victorian man's fantasy. In posing as the figure of authority and female ownership in this image the photographer gains a taste of the imagined experiences of the all-powerful 'Oriental' male. Dillon is focused on his (fictional) music-making, making it purely an accompaniment to (and he an unobtrusive presence in) the Pasha/Fenton's visual consumption of the physically submissive woman. Through the theatrical nature of this photographic session and with the ensuing resultant image Fenton is given a safe opportunity to play within the fantasies of the 'Oriental' world whilst remaining unsullied by their actual touch.

Unlike many of Fenton's 'Oriental' sitters, the female figure in *The Pasha and Bayadère* (who features in twenty-seven of these 'Oriental' images) has not been identified;<sup>42</sup> it is to be presumed that she was a hired model as no "respectable" British woman of the middle or upper classes could be photographed semi-clad and in the poses constructed by Fenton. As well as *The Pasha and Bayadère* she also features in another musical image exhibited by Fenton under the title *The Reverie*,<sup>43</sup> where she is made to represent an odalisque.



She is recumbent upon a divan and shows sizeable sections of her lower legs and arms, as well as wearing a very loose-fitting blouse under her jacket; a great deal of skin to a Victorian audience. She lethargically stares into space (perhaps suggesting an opium indulgence) as she lightly rests her right hand upon the body of the goblet drum from *The Pasha and Bayadère* lying unplayed in

<sup>41</sup> Anon. 'Photographic Society's Sixth Annual Exhibition'. Cited in *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Baldwin, "'Trying His Hand upon Some Oriental Figure Subjects'": 86.

<sup>43</sup> Roger Fenton. *The Reverie* (1858). In *ibid.*: Plate 61.

her lap. Again arises the phenomenon of the silent and listless female 'Oriental' musician, a device that Dillon exploits nearly twenty years later in *A Room in the House of Shayk Sadat, Cairo*.<sup>44</sup> The instrument is there to reinforce the sexual nature of the image yet she is so languorous (as was considered usual of 'Oriental' women) that she cannot even find the energy to play. She merely waits (presumably for her male owner) and displays herself to the viewer's gaze whilst doing so. In these images the gaze at this model of the viewer (also indeed of Fenton more obviously as she dances) and the photographer through his lens seems voyeuristic and sexual. Her body is there as display – this seeming visual/sexual exploitation of a British working-class woman resonates with that of the imagined 'Oriental' women subjugated by her Lord, a role that Fenton chooses to play in *The Pasha and Bayadère*. For Fenton the creation of these images of 'Oriental' fantasy is not merely an artistic exercise but an amusement in which both he and Dillon are the primary players, an opportunity to experience the (perceived) sexual liberty of their imaginary 'Orient'; a chance to play with the 'Oriental' 'sexual experience unobtainable in Europe'<sup>45</sup> described by Edward Said, whilst never having to leave the safety of his home.

### "Type" photographs

Moving from "art" images to commercial photography of the Other, one of the most marketable formats was the "type photograph" (Said's 'abstract generalities')<sup>46</sup> depicting figures considered "typical" of their culture, either photographed in the undertaking of an archetypal occupation or deemed just physically characteristic of the 'race'.<sup>47</sup> These were typically taken in studios in the country of representation where hired models were staged and manipulated in a manner similar to Fenton's 'Oriental' images. James Ryan has discussed how "type" photography was part of a wider Victorian discourse that held that aspects of character could be physically read on the human body, as was underlined in the "scientific" disciplines of physiognomy, phrenology and anthropometry which were influential in both the creation and reception of character in the arts of this time.<sup>48</sup> Not only did physical interpretation influence the understanding of these "type" images, but they were given descriptive titles and often lengthier textual explanation; the "meaning" of the photograph is thus 'framed' by these 'linguistic messages',<sup>49</sup> which can alter the viewer's perception of the subject.<sup>50</sup> Barthes describes this phenomenon in striking terms stating that 'the image no longer *illustrates* the words; it is now the words which, structurally, are

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<sup>44</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11, footnote 59*.

<sup>45</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 190.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*: 154-55.

<sup>47</sup> Ayshe Erdogdu. 'Picturing Alterity: Representational strategies in Victorian type photographs of Ottoman men'. In *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, ed. Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson: 107-25. London: Routledge, 2002: 107.

<sup>48</sup> Ryan, *Picturing Empire*: 147. [Physiognomy is the 'reading of 'character' in physical features (particularly of the face)', phrenology reading 'indication of character from the shape of the skull' (147) and by 1840 anthropometry 'had come to mean the measurement of the living human body with a view to determining its average dimensions at different ages and in different races or classes' (149).]

<sup>49</sup> Ryan, *Picturing Empire*: 19.

<sup>50</sup> As is apparent with Felice Beato's designation of his models as "geishas": see footnotes 64-69 below.

parasitic on the image.<sup>51</sup> The text, like the image, generally went unquestioned by the Victorian audience and was interpreted as a "real" designation for the person(s) depicted.

The most frequent ways of using "type" photography were either as individually purchased postcard images to create personal scrap-book collections or group publications in comparative illustrative volumes. One example of the latter is *The People of India* which was published between 1868 and 1875; of the two hundred sets produced half were kept for official and governmental use,<sup>52</sup> thus collections of "type" photography were considered to represent "reality" to such an extent that they were deemed valuable in administration. When the photographer Francis Frith's (1822-1898) first Indian collection was in print in the 1850s his publishers wrote that 'We may long have revelled in the poetry of the East, but this work enables us to look [...] upon its realities',<sup>53</sup> indicating that the publishers advertised these works as the "reality" of the Other. Frith and Co. became one of the best-known Victorian "type" studios and even though they were active between 1856 and 1860, in 1900 when H.N. Hutchinson's *The Living Races of Mankind*<sup>54</sup> was serialised the studio's photograph of *Nautch-Girls of Kashmir*<sup>55</sup> was still considered accurate enough to include.



Photo by Messrs. Frith & Co.]

NAUTCH-GIRLS OF KASHMIR

[Belton.

The "reality" of this photograph is three models in a blank studio-setting supplemented by a few 'Indian' props, yet forty years after its staging Hutchinson felt that the image was "true" enough to include in his new publication. As well as the more practical reasons for recycling an older image of the Other, this practice may have been partly undertaken because of the believed stasis

<sup>51</sup> Roland Barthes. 'The Photographic Message'. In *Image Music Text: Essays Selected and Translated by Stephen Heath*, 15-31. London: Fontana Press, 1977: 25.

<sup>52</sup> Ryan, *Picturing Empire*: 155.

<sup>53</sup> Quoted in *Egypt and the Holy Land in Historic Photographs 77 Views by Francis Frith*, ed. Julia Van Haaften and Jon E. Manchip White. New York: 1980: xvii. Cited in Michael Bartram. *The Pre-Raphaelite Camera*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985: 102.

<sup>54</sup> H.N. Hutchinson. *The Living Races of Mankind: A Popular Illustrated Account of the Customs, Habits, Pursuits, Feasts and Ceremonies of the Races of Mankind Throughout the World*. London: Hutchinson and Co., 1900.

<sup>55</sup> Frances Frith. *Nautch-Girls of Kashmir* (c. 1856-60). In *ibid.*: Part VI, 191.

of the 'Orient', and especially its art forms (the examples here being "traditional" Indian dancers). So these "real" images, once established, were difficult to overthrow.

The commercial photographer Felice Beato<sup>56</sup> (1825-1903) immersed himself in 'Oriental' fantasies akin to those of the artist Roger Fenton when he established his studio with Baron Raimond von Stillfried (1839-1911) in the British-controlled Japanese port of Yokohama in 1863. Beato's business focused on portraits and "type" photographs as well as picturesque Japanese landscapes and genre works and was influential in increasing the export market for Japanese-set photography.<sup>57</sup> Beato and Stillfried utilised contemporary Japanese *ukiyo-e* print imagery and adapted it creating images of orientalised fantasy for a European market.<sup>58</sup> They had these Japanese-styled photographic prints hand-coloured using Japanese methods, maybe by their Japanese employees.<sup>59</sup> In her 2002 article on the subject of Beato's photographs Eleanor M. Hight highlights how the photographer tended to depict the Japanese male "types" of a samurai warrior, an actor or a Buddhist monk, conversely Beato's Japanese women are portrayed as entertainers, servants, or sex-industry workers and are thus 'subjugated to male (both Japanese and Euro/American) sexual fantasies and behavior.'<sup>60</sup> These differentiations in imagery are apparent in Beato's photographs with musical content. Many of his photographs with mixed groups such as *Street Musicians* (c.1863-1873)<sup>61</sup> and *Travelling Players* (c.1863-1873)<sup>62</sup> are outside scenes; these depict Japanese male and female musicians and actors in traditional dress and in a relatively natural manner.



They are obviously staged to a degree to allow for the shutter speed, but Beato does not seem to have interfered with the image more than was necessary for the technology of the time, and these are evidently genre pieces or "type" works intended for mass distribution or possible illustrative publication. The works for which Beato is best known today however, are those of his *geishas*,

<sup>56</sup> Although a Venetian by birth, Beato was a naturalised English citizen.

<sup>57</sup> Hight, 'The Many Lives of Beato's "Beauties"': 136.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.: 128.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.: 144.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.: 152.

<sup>61</sup> Felice Beato. *Street Musicians* (c.1863-1873). In *Felice Beato in Japan: Photographien zum Ende der Feudalzeit, 1863-1873*, ed. Claudia Gabriele Philipp, Dietmar Siergert and Rainer Wick. München: Edition Braus, 1991: Plate 190 (*Straßenmusikanten*).

<sup>62</sup> Felice Beato. *Travelling Players* (c.1863-1873). In *ibid.*: Plate 175 (*Wanderschauspieler*).



and they were probably intended for a more specific audience consisting primarily of middle- to upper-class European and American men.

For this speciality in creating photographs of *geishas*<sup>63</sup> Beato employed not actual *geishas*, but *bijingas* – female entertainers and sex-trade workers.<sup>64</sup> Although *geishas* were frequently courtesans, their social standing was sufficiently high to make it difficult to photograph them, especially in the semi-clad poses occasionally planned by Beato. Instead the models procured by the photographer were the women of the “pleasure quarters” which had been established for foreigners by the Japanese government in treaty ports.<sup>65</sup> As is usual in colonial or ‘Orientalist’ commercial photography Beato utilised ‘Oriental’ props and situations,<sup>66</sup> here items and observances particular to Japan such as the tea ceremony, *sake*, the *shamisen*<sup>67</sup> or *koto*,<sup>68</sup> the traditional *kimono* robes, *tatami* matting and room screens are often in place. Beato uses a similar studio set-up and the same Japanese paraphernalia in many of his *geisha* images; indeed the same studio is used for *A Geisha Playing a Samisen* (c.1863-1873),<sup>69</sup> *Geisha Musicians* (c.1863-1873),<sup>70</sup> and *Geisha with Opium Pipe* (c.1863-1873),<sup>71</sup> but different models.



<sup>63</sup> For theatrical *geisha* representations, see *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, footnotes 14, 39-45*.

<sup>64</sup> Hight, ‘The Many Lives of Beato’s “Beauties”’: 149.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*: 126.

<sup>66</sup> Eileraas, ‘Disorienting Looks, *Ecarts d’identité*’: 25.

<sup>67</sup> A three-string fretless plucked lute used in many genres of performance, usually to accompany singing. [Anon. ‘Shamisen.’ In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 23, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 200. London: Macmillan, 2001: 200.]

<sup>68</sup> A long thirteen-string zither with moveable bridges, played seated on the floor cross-legged, or with one knee raised. [W. Adriaansz. ‘Koto.’ In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Second Edition, 13, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 839. London: Macmillan, 2001: 839.]

<sup>69</sup> Felice Beato. *A Geisha Playing a Samisen* (c.1863-1873). In *Felice Beato in Japan: Photographien zum Ende der Feudalzeit, 1863-1873*, ed. Claudia Gabriele Philipp, Dietmar Siergert and Rainer Wick. München: Edition Braus, 1991: Plate 187 (*Eine Geisha spielt auf der Shamisen*).

<sup>70</sup> Felice Beato. *Geisha Musicians* (c.1863-1873). In *ibid.*: Plate 188 (*Musizierende Geishas*).

<sup>71</sup> Felice Beato. *Geisha with Opium Pipe* (c.1863-1873). In *ibid.*: Plate 188 (*Geisha mit Opiumpfeife*).



Each of these photographs features a tea set and Japanese musical instruments to confirm the association between the *geishas* and the tea house setting in which they worked and performed. The models are coiffed and made-up in a traditional *geisha* style, yet their *kimonos* are relatively simple indicating their real status as *bijinga*. The woman in *Geisha with Opium Pipe* has unused musical instruments by her side just as Fenton's odalisque had a silent instrument and the specification of her opium use denotes the vice only hinted at in the lethargy of images like *The Reverie*. Beato's opium smoker is the only woman to return the photographer's and viewer's gaze in this set of his photographs here studied, yet this just seems to add to the seeming vulnerability of the model. In returning the photographer's gaze she is not empowered, but seems to be further dishonoured; indeed it is often when a woman is staged for a photograph as a lesbian or prostitute that her gaze meets the camera, fortifying the myth of the deviant and sexual 'Oriental' woman,<sup>72</sup> imagery here coupled with an indulgence in opium smoking.

In the photograph *Young Musicians Drinking Sake* (c.1870s)<sup>73</sup> attributed to Beato, he takes *geisha* imagery with suggestions of sensuality to a different level by partially undressing his four female models, exposing one breast on each and the (somewhat splayed) legs of the model to the right. He realises that it would no longer be plausible to identify them as *geishas*, so demotes them to mere 'Young musicians.' Beato poses two of the models with *samisens*, one with a drum, and the most exposed model as though she has just paused from pouring the *sake*, suggesting aural and oral pleasures alongside those more obvious ones embodied in the exposed flesh of the prostitutes. For Hight 'The samisen, the sake, the informal attire, the partially exposed bodies, and the lack of make-up or elaborate coiffures' act together to create 'a private, intimate, sexualized moment',<sup>74</sup> an "erotic" moment created by Beato for the titillation of his

<sup>72</sup> Eileraas, 'Disorienting Looks, *Ecarts d'identité*': 25.

<sup>73</sup> (Attributed to) Felice Beato. *Young Musicians Drinking Sake* (c.1870s). In Eleanor M. Hight. 'The Many Lives of Beato's "Beauties"'. In *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place*, ed. Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson, 126-58. London: Routledge, 2002: 144.

<sup>74</sup> Hight, 'The Many Lives of Beato's "Beauties"': 144.

customers. Hight writes that even though pornographic photographs had been created in Europe since the 1840s, there are no existing 'sexually explicit' photographs created in Japan,<sup>75</sup> implying that for the Victorian male who purchased images of Japanese women, 'the partially revealed bodies and the implied sexual availability of the photographers' models sufficed.'<sup>76</sup> However the image *Young Musicians Drinking Sake* lies in the grey area on the border between erotica and pornography. As Barthes asserts, whilst pornography usually represents the sexual organs, erotica does not make them central (if they even appear at all); as instead erotica 'takes the spectator outside its frame'<sup>77</sup> into the realms of sexual imagination.



Beato's photograph remains within the borders of erotica as it still provides this 'imaginative escape from the real'<sup>78</sup> and unlike the depersonalisation of true pornography there is still an 'identification with the human relations depicted.'<sup>79</sup> In *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality* (1992) Lynda Nead discusses 'the art/obscenity opposition', writing that the former should invoke a calm, meditative pleasure, whilst the latter (in forms such as pornography) would incite active sexual arousal;<sup>80</sup> it is difficult to believe that Beato created this photograph to generate simple aesthetic appreciation in the viewer, yet the image remains within the realms of erotica rather than pornography. The frequency of both erotic and pornographic photographic images of women in the nineteenth century indicates how what Lawrence Kramer calls 'the traditional privilege of men to scrutinise women's bodies' had become scopophilia (a sexual pleasure created by looking) which 'can plausibly be said to rival physical penetration as the

<sup>75</sup> Perhaps owing to the availability of pornographic art images created in Japan. Private Communication, 04 October 2006, from Derek Scott to Claire Mabilat. Timon Screech explores erotic and pornographic shunga ('spring pictures'), a subsection of ukiyo-e ('pictures of the Floating World') in *Sex and the Floating World: Erotic Images in Japan 1700-1820*. London: Reaktion Books, 1999.

<sup>76</sup> Hight, 'The Many Lives of Beato's "Beauties"': 149.

<sup>77</sup> Barthes, *Camera Lucida*: 57-58.

<sup>78</sup> Lynda Nead. *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity and Sexuality*. London: Routledge, 1992: 27.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*: 104.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*: 27.

chief means of satisfying sexual desire'.<sup>81</sup> It was this pleasure that photographers like Beato exploited. In her article Hight concludes that the 'Japanese themselves began this process by selling their young girls into the virtual slavery of the sex trade and by setting up entertainment districts for their own economic profit. It was left to the photographers to transform these poor hapless prostitutes into desirable "beauties" to satisfy the scopophilia of Western men',<sup>82</sup> a transformation that Beato staged in his studio for his primarily British audience.

## Concluding remarks

These case studies act as support for the statement that in the long nineteenth century photographs were believed to have the 'uncanny ability' to merge fantasy and reality.<sup>83</sup> When the British created "type" photographs of the people of Other cultures they were visually establishing images that attributed to another culture chosen stereotypical attributes or activities, that codified the 'large collective terms' and 'abstract generalities'<sup>84</sup> discussed by Edward Said in *Orientalism*. Musicians are one sub-group of this "type" designation, effectively displaying the difference between the "civilisation" of Europe and the Other. This stereotyping process extends past the staging of the 'Orient', into other cultures and even into scientific expeditions; when the Cambridge University sponsored anthropological Torres Strait Expedition photographed the 'natives' in 1898<sup>85</sup> Elizabeth Edwards documents that 'The *appearance* of the 'primitive', in performance of primitivist tropes such as dance, clothing, tattoo, is played out for the camera, despite the fact that the coastal villages were heavily missioned by this date' and indeed music and dance account for over a quarter of the images.<sup>86</sup> Despite the nineteenth-century belief in the "reality" of the scientifically taken photographic image the medium could be manipulated to create effects desired by the photographer,<sup>87</sup> thus as Banta and Hinsley write 'the ethical issues are not inherent in the technology itself but derive from its uses, the impact of photography depends less on the camera than on the person standing behind it.'<sup>88</sup> For the modern theorist these musical-photographic case studies present an opportunity to interpret the stereotypes of 'Orient' created, manipulated or upheld by nineteenth-century photographic artists and the implications of the general acceptance of such fantasies as "reality".

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<sup>81</sup> Lawrence Kramer. 'Culture and Musical Hermeneutics: The Salome Complex'. *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 2/3 (November 1990): 273.

<sup>82</sup> Hight, 'The Many Lives of Beato's "Beauties"': 153.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*: 152.

<sup>84</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>85</sup> Anita Herle and Sandra Rouse. 'Introduction: Cambridge and the Torres Strait'. In *Cambridge and the Torres Strait: Centenary Essays on the 1898 Anthropological Expedition*, ed. Anita Herle and Sandra Rouse, 1-22. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 1.

<sup>86</sup> Elizabeth Edwards. 'Performing Science: Still Photography and the Torres Strait Expedition'. In *Cambridge and the Torres Strait: Centenary Essays on the 1898 Anthropological Expedition*, ed. Anita Herle and Sandra Rouse, 106-135. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998: 113.

<sup>87</sup> Erdogdu, 'Picturing Alterity': 122.

<sup>88</sup> Banta and Hinsley, *From Site to Sight*: 127.

## Chapter 13: Visually realising the fictions of H. Rider Haggard.

Whilst artists creating works in oil or watercolour have a certain amount of freedom in choosing subject matter, an illustrator (whether in photographic or other mediums) is confined by the narrative and imagery of the literature which he<sup>1</sup> is augmenting with his art, and often more practically by the author and publisher. Although more recently drawn illustrations have sometimes been regarded as artistically 'dubious',<sup>2</sup> they were an important aspect of published fictional literature in nineteenth-century Britain, with illustrated editions of books being published from authors as diverse as Charles Dickens, Charlotte Brontë, Oscar Wilde and H. Rider Haggard. In the first half of the century the writer-artist relationship was often almost a symbiotic one, with writers frequently working closely with an artist whose caricature-style images were integral to the text, the most famous example being Dickens and George Cruickshank (1792-1878). In the 1890s there was a revival in the popularity of writer-artists creating whole works, creators like William Blake (1757-1827), Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) and William Morris (1824-1879), where there remained a 'happy marriage between visual interpretation and literary content'.<sup>3</sup> However the later decades of the century also saw a change in illustrative style with artists stylistically influenced by English genre painting and the example of John Everett Millais' (1829-1896) illustrations for Anthony Trollope (1815-1882) from the 1850s. This stylistic trend meant that illustrations no longer commented upon the text but more often reinforced it, which led to a decrease in the centrality of illustration in written fiction and ultimately to its present position appearing only in popular works and children's literature.<sup>4</sup> Despite the lessening importance of illustration, in the second half of the century many novels were still illustrated, especially those that were serialised.

Owing to the enormous corpus of this material, and the need to focus on a small portion of examples, this section considers illustrations in the fictional writings of H. Rider Haggard<sup>5</sup> as a case study and explores the ways in which Haggard's illustrators visually realise moments of music in his texts and respond to the ideas in his work. Many of these musical illustrations relate to Haggard's presentations of the Other or 'Oriental' and they frequently support and further the ways in which Haggard uses music to other his non-European characters, as discussed in Chapters 7 and 8.

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<sup>1</sup> I use 'he' in this section rather than '(s)he' because all of the illustrators discussed here are men, as was the "norm" in nineteenth-century Britain.

<sup>2</sup> Forrest Reid. *Illustrators of the Eighteen Sixties: An Illustrated Survey of the Work of 58 British Artists*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1975 [1928]: [2].

<sup>3</sup> Simon Houfe. *Fin de Siecle: The Illustrators of the 'Nineties*. London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1992: 2.

<sup>4</sup> Judith L. Fisher. 'Image versus Text in the Illustrated Novels of William Makepeace Thackeray'. In *Victorian Literature and the Victorian Visual Imagination*, ed. Carol T. Christ and John O. Jordan, 60-87. London: University of California Press, 1995: 60.

<sup>5</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapters 7-8*.

## The Ancient 'Orient'

Running in parallel to 'fine art' images of the time, in late-nineteenth-century literature there was a heightened interest in ancient 'Oriental' worlds, particularly Egypt, and there was thus a call for illustrators to depict their landscapes and peoples. When Haggard's *Cleopatra* was serialised by the *Illustrated London News* in 1889, R. Caton Woodville provided twenty-nine illustrations,<sup>6</sup> only eleven of which were included in Longmans, Green, and Co.'s 1889 first book edition (a further eighteen were commissioned from Maurice Greiffenhagen in place of Woodville's earlier pictures). The military illustrator Richard Caton Woodville (1856–1927) was not art-school trained yet he was employed by the *Illustrated London News* from 1877<sup>7</sup> and remained with them for almost his entire working life. Although Woodville created illustrations for the *Illustrated London News*'s serialisation of *Nada the Lily* by Haggard as well as *Cleopatra*, he did not just focus on fiction, but also illustrated 'society' and royalty articles including the special edition of the *Illustrated London News* for the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra in 1902.<sup>8</sup> He was best-known for his military illustrations, shaping the nation's vision of imperial warfare.<sup>9</sup> Of the forty-seven pictures created for Haggard's *Cleopatra* two by Woodville depict moments of text associated with music.

Woodville's illustrations are extremely detailed and somewhat dark because they are reproductions of painted images rather than the line drawings frequently used to illustrate fiction. The two musical images of the Queen by Woodville for *Cleopatra* in the *Illustrated London News* augment the dangerous and musical sensuality attributed to the Queen by the author, as discussed in Chapter 7. *She raised herself, and, bending the harp towards her, struck some wandering chords thereon*<sup>10</sup> depicts Harmachis's visit to Cleopatra's bedroom and (mainly owing to her sweet music) his inability to murder her as he had planned. Woodville has carefully read Haggard's text – Cleopatra is fanning herself with an ostrich-plume fan as Harmachis enters<sup>11</sup> and Woodville depicts the fan discarded on the Queen's bed. However, ignoring Haggard's placing of Harmachis in a low chair, Woodville positions the man crouching at Cleopatra's feet in a combination of traditional postures of suppliance and grief, heightening his dilemma and his attraction to the Queen. Her naked feet playing near his head, the way in which her robe outlines her legs and groin, and the rounded voluptuousness of her figure (particularly her exposed arms)

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<sup>6</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Cleopatra: Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian, as Set Forth by his Own Hand'. *Illustrated London News*, XCIV/2594-2619. (March to June 1889): 365.

<sup>7</sup> Simon Houfe. 'Woodville, Richard Caton, Jr.' *The Dictionary of 19th Century British Book Illustrators and Caricaturists*. Woodbridge: Antique Collector's Club, 1998: 355-56.

<sup>8</sup> R. Caton Woodville. *Illustrated London News of the coronation service and ceremony: King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra* (26 June 1902).

<sup>9</sup> Roger T. Stearn. 'Woodville, Richard Caton'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/68891> (Accessed 29 January 2006).

<sup>10</sup> R.C. Woodville. *She raised herself, and, bending the harp towards her, struck some wandering chords thereon*. In H. Rider Haggard. 'Cleopatra: Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian, as Set Forth by his Own Hand'. *Illustrated London News*, XCIV/2605 (23 March 1889): 365.

<sup>11</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Cleopatra, Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian, as Set Forth by his own Hand*. New Edition. London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1891: 145.

make Woodville's Cleopatra a highly sensual representation, yet her bound hair and covered breasts contrast with Haggard's more sexualised descriptions of the Queen.



In this illustration she is mid-song and plays upon a richly ornate harp at the base of which is a Pharaonic head. The placing of this head at her feet and literally under (the spell of) her music suggests her ability to subjugate rulers, as indeed she is now doing to Harmachis, the last of the true Pharaohs of Egypt. Later in the text the Queen reminisces of Harmachis, describing 'the passion of a man on which I played as on a lyre',<sup>12</sup> thus Woodville cleverly echoes Harmachis's position with this Pharaonic imagery, perhaps also anticipating her ability to subjugate other rulers such as Antony. Accordingly, and in support of Haggard's characterisation of Cleopatra,<sup>13</sup> Woodville emphasises that music is a central component of this sensual 'Oriental' power.

<sup>12</sup> Haggard, *Cleopatra*, n.d.: 239.

<sup>13</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7*, footnotes 89-90.

Woodville also illustrates the moment that Cleopatra drinks poison: "*O ye Gods of Egypt! who have deserted me, to you no longer will I pray, for deaf are your ears unto my crying and blind your eyes unto my griefs!*"<sup>14</sup>



With the dead Iras at her feet the Queen raises her cup to the gods who have forsaken her, whilst Harmachis (the instigator of her doom) and Charmion look on. Charmion is leaning her chin upon a harp as she stares at the body of her fellow handmaid; this harp is not the one from the artist's earlier image of Cleopatra's seduction of Harmachis, but a smaller, less ornate instrument. The spectre of Cleopatra's musical sexuality as embodied by the harp is still present, but less prevalent in the image; the harp is now quiet as her alluring music has been silenced, reflecting the powerless situation in which she now finds herself. Charmion's chin resting upon the harp could be interpreted as reflecting the part that she has had in aiding the downfall of her Queen – she now has control of the harp, as she has secretly controlled Cleopatra herself. Woodville's projection of Cleopatra's othered sexuality onto her harp is thus transformed in this second image to echo her undoing.

<sup>14</sup> R.C. Woodville. "*O ye Gods of Egypt! who have deserted me, to you no longer will I pray, for deaf are your ears unto my crying and blind your eyes unto my griefs!*" In H. Rider Haggard. 'Cleopatra: Being an Account of the Fall and Vengeance of Harmachis, the Royal Egyptian, as Set Forth by his Own Hand'. *Illustrated London News*, XCIV/2618 (22 June 1889): 789.



In contrast to the rounded illustrations by Woodville, the images provided by Albert Morrow for Haggard's other ancient Egyptian tale, *The Ancient Allan*, are black and white sketches with evident pen-strokes. The Irish-born artist Albert George Morrow (1863-1927) was a highly skilled poster artist and illustrator, however of Haggard's works he illustrated only Cassell and Co.'s first edition (serialisation and book) of *The Ancient Allan* with eight illustrations including the frontispiece; three of these pictures depict moments of music. Morrow illustrates Bes's victorious hunting song<sup>15</sup> with "Out of the reeds bounded Bes, waving the lion's tail and singing some wild Ethiopian chant".<sup>16</sup>



The dwarf Bes holds the lion's tail above his head whilst he leaps with outstretched arms and wild skyward eyes. Morrow places the black dwarf just behind Shabaka (the 'Ancient Allan') who is depicted with a contrasting nobility in features, stance, height, and dress, and also as obviously white as compared to the extreme blackness of Bes's almost-naked body. This juxtaposition of noble white and wild black has a clear Social Darwinian message about superiority and civilisation, something that Haggard himself treats with ambiguity in his texts. Morrow's representation of the musical figure of Bes is in line with many contemporary "non-fictional" illustrations of African music-making, for example Captain Grant's illustration *Grant dancing with Ukulima* in John Hanning Speke's travel narrative *Journal of the Discovery of the*

<sup>15</sup> The previous incarnation of Quatermain's 'Hottentot' servant Bors.

<sup>16</sup> Albert Morrow. "Out of the reeds bounded Bes, waving the lion's tail and singing some wild Ethiopian chant". In H. Rider Haggard. 'The Ancient Allan'. *Cassell's Magazine of Fiction*, (April 1919): 59.

*Source of the Nile* (1863),<sup>17</sup> and Herbert Ward's depiction of *The Antics of the Charm-Doctor*<sup>18</sup> in *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals* (1890).



Thus through music and the associated 'native' African dance postures, characters such as Bes are made Other and 'savage', embodying aspects of stereotypical cruelty and barbarism as described by Sardar in *Orientalism*.<sup>19</sup> Morrow's illustration echoes Haggard's own portrayal of Bes at this moment as foolish but savage, the Other to the 'Ancient Allan'.<sup>20</sup>

The Englishwoman Lady Ragnall becomes Other when she dons the robes which she once wore when she was kidnapped and forced to be an African priestess. In order to call up past lives she burns hallucinogenic *Taduki* with Allan Quatermain; as the weed smoulders she sings 'in a rich and thrilling voice' in the language of Kendah Land,<sup>21</sup> a moment represented in *Next she brought that accursed Taduki box*.<sup>22</sup> Despite the setting of an English country house, Morrow clearly captures Haggard's description of the 'Oriental' otherness of the room's contents and owner – the strangeness of the situation and clash of 'Orient' and Europe is highlighted in Morrow's depiction of the Other Lady Ragnall and the evening-dress-wearing Allan. In spite of her song, in Morrow's image Lady Ragnall seems spiritual and non-sexual in her imitation of a priestess: her body is well covered in loose-draping fabric, her face (with closed eyes) has a serene and noble expression, and her stance is majestic. This is in complete contrast to the illustrations of Cleopatra just discussed. Here Lady Ragnall's music reflects her mysticism and not her sexuality; after all she is still an Englishwoman dabbling in things 'Oriental' and not actually

<sup>17</sup> Captain Grant. *Grant dancing with Ukulima*. In John Hanning Speke. *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*. London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1863: 139.

<sup>18</sup> Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals*: 41.

<sup>19</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 2.

<sup>20</sup> See *Works of Fiction*: Chapter 8, footnotes 35-37.

<sup>21</sup> Haggard, *The Ancient Allan*: 57.

<sup>22</sup> Albert Morrow. *Next she brought that accursed Taduki box*. In H. Rider Haggard. 'The Ancient Allan'. *Cassell's Magazine of Fiction*, (March 1919): 39.

Other, although as discussed in Chapter 7,<sup>23</sup> the idea of an Englishwoman “going native” is a fear that arises a few times in Haggard’s romances.



Later in the text when in their earlier incarnations<sup>24</sup> the friends first meet as she is processing after singers to the temple ‘shaking a sistrum that made a little tinkling music’.<sup>25</sup> She drops this *sistrum*, which is absent from Morrow’s illustration of “‘*Begone, man!*’ cried a priest”,<sup>26</sup> thus her musicality is omitted when she is supposed to seem most pure as a virgin priestess.



<sup>23</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnotes 143-44*.

<sup>24</sup> Allan as Shabaka (an ancient Egyptian officer), and Lady Ragnall as the royal priestess Lady Amada.

<sup>25</sup> Haggard, *The Ancient Allan*: 136.

<sup>26</sup> Albert Morrow. “‘*Begone, man!*’ cried a priest”. In H. Rider Haggard. ‘The Ancient Allan’. *Cassell’s Magazine of Fiction*, (June 1919): 69.

The other priestess-singers are given no individuation by the artist and are just a swathe of figures in white veil-like robes, reflecting Edward Said's assertion that 'Orientals' were frequently considered in 'large collective terms'.<sup>27</sup>

F.H. Townsend presents the musicality of the priestesses of Baaltis and the heroine of 'Elissa' in a similar way and in analogous situations. In 1900 Frederick Henry Townsend (1868-1920) produced eight illustrations for 'Elissa or the Doom of Zimbabwe' in *Black Heart and White Heart and Other Stories*, for Longmans, Green, and Co. Townsend also illustrated serious novels such as *Jane Eyre* (1896), *Shirley* (1897) and *The Scarlet Letter* (1897) and contributed to a number of periodicals including *Punch Magazine*, *The Graphic*, and *The Illustrated London News*, becoming *Punch's* first Art Editor in 1905.<sup>28</sup> Townsend is now viewed as part of the 'Georgian School' of late-nineteenth-century illustrators, who were influenced by the style and subject-matter of their eighteenth-century counterparts.<sup>29</sup> The two musical images in 'Elissa' focus on the priestesses of Baaltis singing in procession and in both Elissa is differentiated from her fellow priestesses by her situation or stance. Following her unwilling ascendance to the incarnation of Baaltis (effectively high priestess) Townsend's illustration "In ... front walked Elissa"<sup>30</sup> shows her leading a funeral procession to the sound of 'mourners, women who sang a funeral dirge and from time to time broke into a wail of simulated grief.'<sup>31</sup>



"In ... front walked Elissa"

The artist depicts Elissa as separate from the undifferentiated throng of priestesses, reflecting her divergence from them in both religion (she is on the brink of converting to Judaism) and 'morality'. Her posture is repeated by the twisted tree behind her, perhaps referring to the gnarling caused to Elissa's soul by her false position in the priesthood. The music accompanying this image is mournful, as is Elissa's bearing and attitude.

<sup>27</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 154-55.

<sup>28</sup> Anon, 'F.H. Townsend'. *Spartacus Educational*. See the website <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/ARTtownsend.htm> (Accessed 02 February 2006).

<sup>29</sup> Houfe, *Fin de Siecle*: 170.

<sup>30</sup> F.H. Townsend. "In ... front walked Elissa". In H. Rider Haggard. 'Elissa; or, the Doom of Zimbabwe'. In *Black Heart and White Heart and Other Stories*, 69-232. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1900: face 208.

<sup>31</sup> Haggard, 'Elissa': 108.

In "Tell me, Metem, ... what mummery is this?"<sup>32</sup> Elissa is again distinguished by her posture, but more subtly in this earlier image.



"Tell me, Metem, . . . what mummery is this?"

The artist positions Elissa's face in profile so that she looks away from both the reader/viewer and Prince Aziel making the crescent on her forehead (a symbol of her otherness) less prominent.<sup>33</sup> Townsend depicts the 'gauze-like veil' worn by the priestesses and falling to their knees<sup>34</sup> so subtly and lightly that it is hard to see; whereas the other women look to the ground or straight ahead of them, Elissa's turned head seems to be struggling to escape her veil. Indeed, Elissa's stance and lack of concentration on the procession and the fact that she does not appear to be involved in singing the priestess's 'low and melancholy chant'<sup>35</sup> indicate that she is unhappy with her position as a priestess of Baaltis – something that is confirmed by her later embracing of Judaism. Her posture echoes that of Aziel linking the two figures and presaging later textual developments when the pair becomes lovers. So Townsend uses opportunities in this image to visually confirm Elissa's unease and restlessness at her position and to prefigure later developments and relationships, as well as to reinforce the depersonalisation of the other veiled priestesses<sup>36</sup> in their choral chant, as is focused upon by Haggard at this juncture.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>32</sup> F.H. Townsend. "Tell me, Metem, ... what mummery is this?" In H. Rider Haggard. 'Elissa; or, the Doom of Zimbabwe'. In *Black Heart and White Heart and Other Stories*, 69-232. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1900: face 105.

<sup>33</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7*, at footnotes 45-47.

<sup>34</sup> Haggard, 'Elissa': 104.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Again, the veil is focused on: for further discussion of veils see 'Orientalism and its relation to music' 60-61, *The Musical Stage: Chapter 3, 'Veils, Polygamy and Harems'*, and *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, 'White-veiled women'*.

<sup>37</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7*, after footnotes 47.

The illustrator C.A. Michael<sup>38</sup> (fl. 1903-1916) worked for the Cassell & Co. publishing house for which he provided illustrations for the first editions of eight of Haggard's books<sup>39</sup> and two serialisations.<sup>40</sup> Each of the books contains on average only three illustrations – a marked contrast to the earlier richly illustrated Longmans' editions of Haggard's works illustrated by Greiffenhagen amongst others. Michael illustrated Haggard's romance *The Ivory Child* which charts the retrieval of Lady Ragnall (see above) by Allan Quatermain after her abduction by the white Kendah people of a hidden African land.<sup>41</sup> She becomes chief priestess of the 'People of the Child' (a derivation of Horus worship) and is pictured by Michael in this role in "*The doors of the sanctuary were thrown wide and from between them issued – the goddess Isis of the Egyptians*".<sup>42</sup>



"The doors of the sanctuary were thrown wide and from between them issued—the goddess Isis of the Egyptians" (see page 264).

Although this novel is contemporary, all of the othered imagery in it is associated with the religious worship of ancient Egypt. Michael works closely from Haggard's description of this scene with this illustration capturing the moment in a 'pause' after a religious hymn sung by

<sup>38</sup> Dates of birth and death unidentified.

<sup>39</sup> *Ghost Kings*, *Child of Storm*, *The Ivory Child*, *Finished*, *Morning Star*, *Marie*, and *The Yellow God*.

<sup>40</sup> *When the World Shook* in *The Quiver*, 54/1-6 and *Marie* in *Cassell's Magazine*, LIII/1-6.

<sup>41</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7*, at footnotes 140-41.

<sup>42</sup> C.A. Michael. "*The doors of the sanctuary were thrown wide and from between them issued – the goddess Isis of the Egyptians*" In H. Rider Haggard. *The Ivory Child*, London: Cassell and Co., 1916: face 264.

thousands of worshippers;<sup>43</sup> thus the significance of the music and the following affective silence resonate within the image becoming part of its sense. This silence and 'pause' are reflected in the tranquil, firm carriage of the trio of priestesses. Lady Ragnall's 'beautiful, contralto voice' is heard singing just preceding this entrance, but it remains disembodied,<sup>44</sup> so her appealing voice remains separate from her voluptuous 'Oriental' physicality preventing her full descent into otherness and heightened sexuality.

Interestingly Michael chooses Haggard's sentence designating the woman as 'Isis' instead of Ragnall's declamation "'My God!' [...] 'it is my wife!'"<sup>45</sup> that just follows. This implies that the artist wishes to emphasise Lady Ragnall's otherness at having gone part-'native' as opposed to her Western-ness, a presupposition that is played out in the illustration itself. Michael chooses a simple dark background of the temple doors upon which to set the figures and although he uses none of the usual 'Oriental' background signifiers the dress is 'Oriental' enough to situate the women and it is they who are central to this image. There is no indication in the picture that Lady Ragnall is different from her companions, indeed they are all white-skinned, dark-haired, and have similar faces and expressions, making reference to 'high art' images of the replicating and interchangeable 'Oriental' woman.<sup>46</sup> Although she is supposed to be supported by the other women, in Michael's work Lady Ragnall looks extremely composed and able – the women seem more *connected with* her than *supporting* her, furthering the intimations of Lady Ragnall's otherness. While she is central, foregrounded and slightly higher in the image, her posture (especially her feet) is directly imitated by the 'Oriental' priestesses, relating the three women. The similar bodies of the women which are based on curves, particularly their arms, rounded stomachs and wide hips, denote 'Oriental' voluptuousness, a voluptuousness that is accentuated by the straight lines of their girdles. The sexual signifiers are continued by their long, unbound hair, something that Haggard specifies in the text. Despite this bodily sensuousness the women are well-covered (as was Lady Ragnall in Morrow's image of her), with Michael eschewing Haggard's descriptions of 'transparent garments'<sup>47</sup> as he is after all representing an Englishwoman. The ivory child in Lady Ragnall's arms is very ceremonial and "Egyptian", mirroring the immediately preceding ritual music and the religious settings and tempering and balancing the insinuations of her acquired 'Oriental' voluptuousness. Despite the balance of sensuous and sacred in his image of Lady Ragnall as Isis, Michael focuses on her 'Oriental' appearance, creating an arresting and tantalising image and emphasising what the reader/viewer's imagination alone may not be able to conjure – the Englishwoman masquerading as Other.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Haggard, *The Ivory Child*, 1958: 211-12.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*: 210.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*: 212.

<sup>46</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11, footnote 55-56*.

<sup>47</sup> Haggard, *The Ivory Child*, 1958: 212.

<sup>48</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7, footnote 144*.

## Sorais and Ayesha

The Ayesha trilogy and Allan Quatermain works here discussed are primarily set by Haggard in his contemporary Africa, yet it is a secret, undiscovered Africa with close links to the 'Orient' and ancient Egypt. The illustrations in Haggard's romances with a contemporary setting tend to be in the rounded, 'painted' style of Maurice Greiffenhagen (see below) and Woodville, with many by the former artist. Alongside Greiffenhagen, Charles Henry Malcolm Kerr (1858-1907) contributed illustrations to Haggard's *She* and 'Allan's Wife'. He also fully illustrated the first editions of five Haggard romances published by Longman's, Green, and Co., including *Allan Quatermain*,<sup>49</sup> for which he drew *SORAIS' SONG*<sup>50</sup> depicting the actual moment of her music-making.



SORAIS' SONG

Here Kerr clearly follows the narrative function of the song – Allan gets Sorais to sing to allow Nyleptha and Curtis to arrange a secret *rendezvous* and Kerr places Quatermain (and the seated Goode) between the singer and the lovers to shield them from Sorais' view. Thus even though the picture is named for Sorais' song the focus is on her sister and Curtis, as is apparent from the seeming urgency of Curtis's forward-leaning posture and the clustering of figures as a focus to the right of the illustration. Although Kerr follows the narrative at this point and some aspects of the figures' dress observe Haggard's descriptions (such as the women's identical white togas and their lack of jewellery except for torques on the arm) many of the physical attributes of the sisters are incorrect. In the text Haggard sets up the sisters as polar representations of goodness and evil with physical differences to represent these things. Kerr ignores Haggard's description of Nyleptha's hair forming 'a veritable crown of gold, clustered in short ringlets over her shapely head, half hiding the ivory brow', instead giving her dark locks and adding a pulled-back veil. Nyleptha has skin white as 'snow' in keeping with her hair, whereas Sorais has an olive complexion, again a clear difference that Kerr fails to convey in his illustration. The illustrator has correctly depicted the colour of Sorais hair ('coal-black'), but Haggard describes it as 'wavy

<sup>49</sup> Also, *Nada the Lily*, *Maiwa's Revenge*, 'Black Heart and White Heart' and 'The Wizard'.

<sup>50</sup> C.H.M. Kerr. *SORAIS' SONG*. In H. Rider Haggard. *Allan Quatermain*. London: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1887: face 184.



like Nyleptha's' and falling 'in masses on her shoulders'.<sup>51</sup> Through these differences Haggard clearly differentiates the two sisters in both sentiment and morality, a very visual element that is missing from Kerr's interpretation. Kerr likewise alters Haggard's description of their dress making it more chaste and classical, along the lines of Alma-Tadema's Egyptian women in *The Finding of Moses*.<sup>52</sup> Haggard tells how the 'right arm and breast, [is] bare after the custom of her people' and talks of knee-torques intimating that the sisters' knees can be seen, but Kerr creates relatively high-necked and shoulder-covering togas for the sisters revealing only their feet and ankles and certainly not their knees.

As designated by Haggard Sorais is singing and playing a zither-like instrument, but this picture of a curled-over, downward-looking queen does not reflect the images of power and passion in Sorais' words.<sup>53</sup> In contrast to the regal and strong feminine women created by other Haggard illustrators Kerr's image seems somewhat superficial, related only to the action and not to the inner workings of this romance. Owing to the changes made by Kerr, and the disregard for Haggard's detailed descriptions of the women, the central physical (representing moral) contrast between the sisters is missing. Kerr ignores the orientalisising of Haggard's descriptions of Sorais, instead classicalising her, and thus undermining the strength of Haggard's orientalisising musicality at this moment.



'Thou art my chosen.'

<sup>51</sup> H. Rider Haggard. *Allan Quatermain*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1949 [1887]: 165.

<sup>52</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 11, footnote 96-102*.

<sup>53</sup> See Appendix XV.

Three of Haggard's romances contain illustrations of specified songs: alongside Woodville's picture of Cleopatra and Kerr's image of Sorais (analysed above) the latter artist also drew Ustane singing in *She* in the illustration 'Thou art my chosen'.<sup>54</sup> Kerr chooses the first words of Ustane's song to Leo to title his picture, yet he is not representing Haggard's narrative of the song, as when she begins to sing Ustane has 'laid her hand upon Leo's golden curls'<sup>55</sup> to address him; the moment in the picture is the final line of the song 'And then, ah! then my Beloved –'<sup>56</sup> when she lifts her hand from Leo's head and points into the darkness to where (only) she sees a warning image of Ayesha. Kerr captures the atmosphere of the moment with an effective use of tone to represent the shadow and 'red flickering'<sup>57</sup> firelight and the focus of the illustration is clearly upon Ustane herself with the three Englishmen staring at her, mirroring the gaze of the reader/viewer, her large shadow stretching up past the top of the illustration. The 'primitive' nature of the Amahagger tribe is indicated by the simple pottery, open fire and skin rug in the cave setting, however Ustane looks quite European in features; indeed, much like in Kerr's illustration of Sorais and Nyleptha, Ustane looks more classical (Greek or Roman) than an African or an 'Oriental' Other, again undermining Haggard's othered descriptions. Owing to this disrespect for the clearly orientalist features (as discussed in Chapter 7) of Haggard's musical Other women, Kerr's illustrations are less successful in representing Haggard's characters than those of Greiffenhagen, his fellow illustrator for *She*.

The versatile artist Maurice William Greiffenhagen (1862-1931) trained at the Royal Academy where he later exhibited, and although in his later years he focused on portraiture, his original specialisation was illustration, particularly for the works of H. Rider Haggard,<sup>58</sup> and more "artistic" works such as the small magazine *Butterfly* (May 1893 – February 1894), for which he was one of the primary contributing artists.<sup>59</sup> Through an Academy artist such as Greiffenhagen, who was highly influenced by James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) and was a friend of John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), it may be observed that book illustration was in no way divorced from 'fine art'; it was respectable for nineteenth-century artists to work both in 'fine art' and the more commercial field of illustration. Indeed Greiffenhagen's obituary in *The Times* declares him to be 'a vigorous portrait painter, particularly of men, and a very capable designer in many mediums'.<sup>60</sup> The writer believes that 'With a suitable subject, something strange and romantic, he was a very good illustrator, and he entered thoroughly into the spirit of Rider Haggard, whose portrait he painted in 1897.'<sup>61</sup> Greiffenhagen was Haggard's close friend<sup>62</sup> and

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<sup>54</sup> C.M. Kerr. 'Thou art my chosen'. In H. Rider Haggard. *She*. London: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1888: face 83.

<sup>55</sup> Haggard, *She*: 97.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*: 98.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Paul Ripley. 'Maurice Greiffenhagen, (1862-1931)'. *Victorian Art in Britain*. See the website <http://www.victorianartinbritain.co.uk/biog/greiffenhagen.htm> (Accessed 03 January 2006).

<sup>59</sup> Houfe, *Fin de Siecle*: 99.

<sup>60</sup> Anon. 'OBITUARY Mr Greiffenhagen RA Portraits and Decorative Design' *The Times* (28 December 1931): 12.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

principal illustrator, illustrating or part-illustrating eight of Haggard's works,<sup>63</sup> so totalling around one hundred and forty separate pictures to be included in the writer's publications. Although in his obituary Greiffenhagen's paintings were criticised for their lack of 'psychological depth', for showing only 'a masculine grasp of external character', and denoted as having 'a rough-hewn character with a slight woodenness in the drawing which made him more successful as a rule with men than women, though, given the right type he could produce a robustly decorative female portrait',<sup>64</sup> for Greiffenhagen's illustrations of Haggard's 'Oriental' women this somewhat posed and non-realistic style is fitting and often adds to the implied voyeurism of his images. The artist's many pictures of Ayesha and indeed of Other Haggard women seem highly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite ideals of womanhood and probably also his friend John William Waterhouse. Greiffenhagen was particularly effective at illustrating Haggard's Ayesha works: *She, Ayesha: The Return of She* and *She and Allan*, and two of Greiffenhagen's illustrations for *Ayesha* are explicitly associated with music.

In *The Betrothal*<sup>65</sup> Greiffenhagen (as always) strongly heeds Haggard's description in the romance. The setting for the betrothal is Hes's (the deity that Ayesha acts as in this romance) shrine where the 'fearful torches of living flame'<sup>66</sup> act as reminders of Ayesha's death at Kôr and her recent transformation in the lake of volcanic fire.<sup>67</sup> With the flowing circular lines on the pillars of light Greiffenhagen depicts the only movement in this theatrical and generally motionless image, stressing their import. The chequered floor-tiles radiate out from her like the sun's rays, yet they are of stone and despite her rebirth Ayesha still resides in a dark cave, indicating that She is incapable of fruitfulness and natural growth in the actual sunlight. The 'worshippers',<sup>68</sup> all (perhaps unsurprisingly) male and non-descript in their simple robes, are purely the background to Ayesha's existence and to this image; they are there to benefit and celebrate Ayesha, as one could perhaps suggest that the Englishmen are also. The priests and worshippers form a musical prelude to the betrothal itself with 'The rhythmic movement' of their bodies and 'the rolling grandeur of their chant of welcome' echoing 'from the mighty roof'.<sup>69</sup> Ayesha halts this sacred chant by lifting her sistrum sceptre – so with a religious music usurped for her own unnatural power<sup>70</sup> Ayesha halts sacred music for the goddess whom She claims to be.

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<sup>62</sup> James Laver. rev. Ray McKenzie. 'Greiffenhagen, Maurice William'. From *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See the website <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/33558> (Accessed 02 February 2006).

<sup>63</sup> *She, Montezuma's Daughter, Ayesha, Cleopatra, Swallow, 'Allan's Wife', Allan and the Holy Flower, and The World's Desire*. The reference book D.E. Whatmore. *H. Rider Haggard: A Bibliography*. [Westport: Meckler, 1987.] was incredibly helpful in specifying illustrators for particular works.

<sup>64</sup> Anon. 'OBITUARY Mr Greiffenhagen RA Portraits and Decorative Design': 12.

<sup>65</sup> Maurice Greiffenhagen. *The Betrothal*. In H. Rider-Haggard. *Ayesha: The Return of She*. London: Ward Lock & Co. Limited, 1905: face 268.

<sup>66</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 268.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*: 234.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*: 268.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> See *Works of Fiction: Chapter 7*, at footnote 69-71.



Once more Ayesha's long hair flows free, indicating her sexual nature as well as her role as sorceress.<sup>71</sup> It blends into her heavy, dark robes, which Haggard's text describes as purple, so Ayesha associates herself with the traditional colour of emperors. These dark open robes contrast with Leo's golden-seeming, closely bound ceremonial dress, perhaps metaphorically indicating the difference between Ayesha's dark sensuality and Leo's attempts at constraint (but ultimate failure in the face of this *femme fatale*). Unlike in earlier images in the text, Greiffenhagen now depicts Ayesha's clothing as loose and opaque – perhaps now that she is to wed an Englishman her body is more properly covered. To augment this She is also now unveiled, implying that She is no longer just an 'Oriental' mystery but an affianced woman. As Haggard describes, 'Her naked arms were bare of ornament, and in her right hand she held the jewelled sistrum set with its gems and bells.'<sup>72</sup> Ayesha holds her *sistrum* confidently and lightly indicating her comfort with her power, unlike Leo who clasps his *ankh* sceptre somewhat awkwardly and with a stronger grasp, as if he must hold tight to his new-found power, perhaps to keep hold of it, or conversely to keep hold of himself. Greiffenhagen allows the reader/viewer to have a glimpse of Ayesha's throne on its raised dais behind her, but not the paired one for Leo that is mentioned in Haggard's account, indicating that despite their betrothal She is still the central figure in this illustration and indeed in the romance itself, which although it features her in less than half of its narrative is, after all, named for her. Greiffenhagen emphasises this point in further ways: even though Leo is

<sup>71</sup> Clément, 'Part 1. The Guilty One': 38.

<sup>72</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 268.

by Ayesha's side he still stands slightly behind her and she is at the centre of the illustration. Although Leo attempts to assert his control and masculinity in the small gesture of placing his hand on top of hers She is still subverting gender roles in her forward stance and indeed in her choosing of him and her declaration that she will marry him. Now that She has selected him Leo becomes the joint focus of this image, yet she is still central and to confuse the relationship a grim-faced Holly seems to be placed between the two lovers. The artist may have done this merely to reflect Holly's role as narrator and onlooker of the events, or to indicate his jealousy that both of the people whom he loves have chosen each other and he is alone and left behind. The couple do not look at one another; Ayesha seems to be staring straight ahead as she is accustomed to doing in her role as empress/goddess, whereas Leo's eyes seem inclined a little to his right and his bride-to-be, yet maybe he cannot look at her because of his awe and fear as described by Haggard in the text.

"*A shadowy Shape arose before the throne and bent the knee to her*"<sup>73</sup> is set in the same shrine with the pillars of living fire and black and white floor tiles radiating from Ayesha who is now seated on her dais-raised throne. Again Leo's (empty) throne is not seen, emphasising that it is Ayesha who has sole power. The light in this image is darker than the previous one reflecting Haggard's description that 'Now those pillars [of fire] were not bright; they were low and lurid; the rays from them scarcely reaching us standing in the dense shadow.'<sup>74</sup> This is reinforced by the artist as the space where the spirits stand is now shadowy, unlike in the earlier image where the reader/viewer had a clear view of the priests and the far walls of the hall. Ayesha on her throne is raised above the other figures and her light robes are prominent in the gloom of the picture, stressing her centrality and also tonally identifying her with the now dulled pillars of flame, the only other elements in the room with such light tonality. This link with the fire is again a reminder of her demise and re-birth in flame and thus of her unnaturalness. She has discarded her heavy betrothal robes and now sits on them; their flow down the throne and dais mirrors the dark stream of her hair emphasising her Other sensuality and perhaps indicating that now that she has succeeded in ensnaring Leo she no longer thinks to him, but to her power and position. In removing her robe she is now wearing just her thin shift dress again, maybe as she is no longer physically alongside Leo she does not have to appear to be chaste enough to be betrothed to an Englishman. Ayesha uses her *sistrum* to 'anoint' each warrior; 'As each vague Being appeared and bowed its starry head she raised her sceptre in answering salutation. We could hear the distant tinkle of the sistrum bells, the only sound in all that place, yes, and see her lips move, though no whisper reached us from them. Surely spirits were worshipping her!'<sup>75</sup> This silence, interrupted only by Ayesha's musical sceptre's bells, highlights the ghostliness of the scene and also the counterfeit "holiness" of both her shrine (as Hes) and the music of her *sistrum* (usurped from her days as a priestess of Isis). Greiffenhagen represents Ayesha in rigid

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<sup>73</sup> Maurice Greiffenhagen. "*A shadowy Shape arose before the throne and bent the knee to her*". In H. Rider Haggard. 'Ayesha: The Return of She', 169-82. *The Windsor Magazine*, 22 (July 1905): 179.

<sup>74</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 275.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*: 276.

lines that copy those of the throne and the pillars of fire, so he is again aligning her with the aberrant fire and also with royalty and power. In associating the two, the artist intimates that the fire is connected to her power, an association that Haggard also makes in the text: 'she was awful in her death-like majesty. The blue light of the sunken columns played upon her, and in it she sat erect, with such a face and mien of pride as no human creature ever wore.'<sup>76</sup> The fire is giving an abnormal blue light just as Ayesha herself is not normal. In fact here Haggard emphasises that she seems to be not even human, something that her association with and worship by spirits supports, as at this moment 'She seemed a Queen of Death receiving homage from the dead.'<sup>77</sup>



<sup>76</sup> 'A shadowy Slave arose before the throne and bent the knee to her.'

In the narrative, as Holly and Leo stand at the back of the hall and work their way through the horde 'Beings pressed about us; we could feel their robes, yet could not touch them; we could feel their breath, but it was *cold*.'<sup>78</sup> In this illustration Greiffenhagen places the reader/viewer

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<sup>76</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 276.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid: 275.

physically at the side of Holly and Leo thus allowing him/her to identify with the narrator. Only infrequently in his illustrations does Greiffenhagen place a figure to return the reader/viewer's gaze and in this way the artist keeps the action internal and does not break the narrative. However here, with the reader/viewer sharing the Englishmen's perspective, Greiffenhagen's Roman emperor (with his laurel wreath and robes of state) looks directly at the observer. The artist represents just over half of his face and body to continue the illusion that the space is crowded. Greiffenhagen gives the Roman a bright white eye, highlighting his returned gaze and adding to the disturbing and unsettling nature of the subject portrayed. Holly and Leo feel as if they have 'wandered into a hall of the Shades'<sup>79</sup> and Greiffenhagen illustrates this by representing spirits from many different periods (none of which are specified by Haggard's text) – a Roman emperor, a kneeling Greek soldier, a Phoenician fighter, and an Egyptian prince waiting in line, a line which recedes into indistinguishable shadows. All of the shades are warriors or leaders (as Ayesha is preparing for battle) and are mostly male – in worshipping Ayesha even after death they point towards her supreme power and also her feminine appeal. Ayesha is not looking at the Greek who kneels before her and none of the shades dare to look at Ayesha herself – She is so uncanny and powerful that she even frightens the spirits. Continuing the feeling of spectating alongside Holly and Leo, the artist places one figure with its back to the reader/viewer and a crown over its veiled, somewhat hunched form. The figure's one visible hand is rather claw-like and looks like a woman's hand; from the dress and simple crown the reader/viewer could imagine that she is a medieval queen. The fact that the reader/viewer is unsure of the figure's gender or person and the inability to see their face is disconcerting, adding to the sinister effect of the illustration. This eeriness is echoed in Haggard's description of complete silence in a space filled with so many beings, and the tinkle of bells from Ayesha's *sistrum*/sceptre's blessings augments the supernatural nature of an image that successfully represents this awful scene from Haggard's romance; an image of dangerous, uncanny, 'Oriental', feminine power and music.

## Concluding remarks

Through his careful interpretation of Haggard's words, Greiffenhagen adds to Haggard's texts, visualising moments of drama for a reader/viewer whose own imagination may not be able to do so successfully, whereas Kerr's images do not carefully follow aspects of the writer's characterisations and physical descriptions, making them somewhat incongruous in the published works. There has been little study of the 'structural' aspects of illustration in fiction yet there is a growing responsiveness in arts' criticism to exploring the 'signifying structure of 'illustration''.<sup>80</sup> In *Victorian Novelists and their Illustrators* (1970), J.R. Harvey focuses on serialised novels (like those of Haggard, although he uses different authors) believing that they present an unusual case where text and image create a single art;<sup>81</sup> this is an idea also expounded by Gerard Curtis in 'Shared Lines' (1995), who considers the *Illustrated London News* of the first half of the

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<sup>79</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 275.

<sup>80</sup> Roland Barthes. 'Rhetoric of the Image'. In *Image Music Text: Essays Selected and Translated by Stephen Heath*, 32-51. London: Fontana Press, 1977: 38.

<sup>81</sup> J.R. Harvey. *Victorian Novelists and their Illustrators*. London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1970: [2].

nineteenth century to demonstrate this most successfully.<sup>82</sup> The illustrator is frequently able to develop a novel's 'themes subtly, delicately, and powerfully, and in essentially visual terms', but there is still debate as to whether the image merely duplicates certain textual information<sup>83</sup> or as Harvey argues in some cases augments the reader/viewer's understanding of the text. It is however undeniable that the images are intended to be considered by the reader/viewer in conjunction with the text,<sup>84</sup> with the latter guiding the reader/viewer 'through the signifieds of the image, causing him [or her] to avoid some and receive others'.<sup>85</sup> Often the image only makes sense in relation to the text. Thus the two components act in conjunction to highlight aspects central to the work, provided that the illustrator sensitively responds to the writer's text; if the artist works in this way then instead of merely reflecting the author's words, the illustrator can augment the work as a whole.

These illustrations (excepting Kerr's)<sup>86</sup> augment and reinforce many of the musical orientalisms established by Haggard in the texts of his romances, thus fulfilling the illustrators' remit. The otherness of Haggard's African men is often displayed through musical utterance, as the illustration of Bes discussed illustrates. As examined in Chapter 7, Haggard's non-European women are presented as sexual, powerful and alluring, and music is frequently utilised to enhance these characteristics, as it is in many of the illustrations considered above. Thus the othering and orientalisising musical devices established by Haggard in his texts filter into the consciousness of his illustrators and so into the resultant images in these publications, reinforcing the Other nature of Haggard's non-European romance characters to his readers.

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<sup>82</sup> Gerard Curtis. 'Shared Lines: Pen and Pencil as Trace'. In *Victorian Literature and the Victorian Visual Imagination*, ed. Carol T. Christ and John O. Jordan, 27-59. London: University of California Press, 1995: 29.

<sup>83</sup> Harvey, *Victorian Novelists and their Illustrators*: [4].

<sup>84</sup> Paul Goldman. *Victorian Illustration: The Pre-Raphaelites, the Idyllic School and the High Victorians*. Aldershot: Scolar Press, 2004 [1996]: xvii.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid*: 40.

<sup>86</sup> It is tempting to speculate about this incongruousness; perhaps Kerr was uncomfortable with the overt, othered sexuality of Sorais and Ustane, or maybe Kerr simply did not read Haggard's texts in sufficient depth.



## Conclusion.

Certain aspects of the musical 'Orient' and Other pervade these case studies, despite the many nuances in presentation, and move between the different artworks and art-forms. Although frequently ambivalent, the negative nature of these images seems to increase following the mid-century crisis of faith in Empire,<sup>1</sup> with the later instability of Empire at the end of the long nineteenth century, exacerbated by gender issues at home, not only bringing negative stereotyping to a peak in works such as Haggard's *She*, but also heightening the ambivalence of feelings towards the Other.<sup>2</sup>

### Overarching conceptual ideas of an othered musical 'Orient'

#### *Sexuality and gender*

One of the major veins that this analysis has displayed is the idea that music can be used to sexualise and gender portrayals of the Other; in Victorian Britain, 'music was seen as a potentially dangerous force because its influence on the body, mind and emotions was so very strong.'<sup>3</sup> Images of music sexualising the Other occur in each of the art-forms here studied, from the earlier sensual women of Bishop's operas and Ella Haggard's poetry, to the sexual visual portrayal of Alma-Tadema's Cleopatra and musical depiction of Solomon's *nautch* girls, culminating in the othered *femmes fatales* created in words by Meredith and Rider Haggard, brought to the stage by Asche and visualised by Greiffenhagen. As well as music's frequent utilisation in sexualising Other women and consequently empowering them, music is also associated with the captivity of 'Oriental women and the voyeuristic desire of European men to unveil and enjoy their supposed suppliant and pliant sensuality; these images suffuse Monckton and Talbot's 'Oriental' stage works, are hinted at in Kipling and Balestier's book *The Naulahka*, and pervade the harem images here studied that were created in oils by Bonington, Dillon, and Lavery and photographically by Fenton and Beato. Just as music was utilised by these artists to sexualise women, similar imagery could be employed to sexualise 'Oriental' men, as is discussed in Chapter 9 which explores the ways in which E.M. Hull subverted these (by then) standardised images of sexual, musical, female otherness to characterise her male Sheik. Owing to the well-recognised tropes of female sexuality, otherness and music, musical imagery could also be utilised to effeminise the male Other, as it is occasionally in these case studies, for example in the literary works of Conrad and more particularly Wilde. Thus across these art-forms music is employed both to emphasise (primarily) female othered sexuality, highlighting what Edward Said designates as 'sexual experience unobtainable in Europe',<sup>4</sup> and/or to establish women as sexual voyeuristic object, as discussed theoretically by Meyda Yeğenoğlu<sup>5</sup> and Ella Shohat.<sup>6</sup> Less frequently, music is used to portray Other men as sensual or effeminate, or sadistic pleasure-seekers, enjoying 'the pleasure that comes from

<sup>1</sup> Caused by the Indian Mutiny (1857-58) and Jamaican Revolt (1865) amongst other things.

<sup>2</sup> With for example a renewed interest in the 'noble savage' concept.

<sup>3</sup> Weliver, *Women Musicians in Victorian Fiction*: 5-6.

<sup>4</sup> Said, *Orientalism*: 190.

<sup>5</sup> Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies*: 39-44.

<sup>6</sup> Shohat, 'Gender and Culture of Empire': 32-33.

giving pain.’<sup>7</sup> Regardless of the aspects of sexuality portrayed, gendering of the Other (whether feminised, hyper-masculinised, or effeminised) is inseparable for musical ‘Oriental’ imagery.

### *The ‘noble savage’*

Savage nobility is another theme that arises in each of the art-forms. It occurs on the musical stage in many of the works set by Bishop, and reprises a century later in Monckton and Talbot’s depictions of Japanese warriors; the *samurai* of Japan are likewise idealised by Beato in a number of his photographs. The ‘noble savage’ is a central aspect of Rider Haggard’s conception of Zulu men and music is frequently used by the author to highlight this nobility, particularly in warfare. The child-like ‘noble savages’ conceptualised in Bishop’s operas early on in the long nineteenth-century are self-sacrificing ‘natives’ who prioritise the safety of Europeans above their own and their culture’s; they are ‘willing to sacrifice themselves for the greater good’ (of the Europeans).<sup>8</sup> In contrast, the musical savage nobility portrayed by Haggard, Beato, Monckton and Talbot at the close of the long nineteenth century is a celebration and appreciation of masculine military otherness.

### *Music and othered religious practice*

Music is furthermore frequently incorporated into portrayals of Other beliefs and religions and their practices and rituals. In some cases, including Bishop’s opera *Aladdin*, Arthur Haggard’s story ‘The Kiss of Isis’ and Rider Haggard’s writings, music is associated with the mysticism and magic so frequently attributed to the ‘Orient’; this focus on magic is discussed by Reina Lewis.<sup>9</sup> Many musical images highlight the inability of Europeans to understand the religious practices of the Other, as in Conrad’s texts. More negative pictures of these practices focus on the violence of Other beliefs, whether it is the bloodthirstiness of Islam, the ‘tyrant or Muslim fanatic’,<sup>10</sup> as portrayed in Bishop’s operas, or the fear of human sacrifice and cannibalism as explored in the operas of Bishop and Arbuthnot, and the written works of Rider Haggard and Stevenson. As H.L. Malchow writes, ‘By the late nineteenth century, there was hardly a “primitive” culture, from the Eskimo to the Tierra del Fuegians, that had not been accused of cannibal practice, cannibal inclination, or at least a cannibal past’,<sup>11</sup> and music frequently acts as integral component of cannibal imagery.

### *Demonising the Other*

Violence founded on Other beliefs is only one form of the brutality attributed to the Other in many of these works; for long-nineteenth-century Britain, the ‘Orient’ was the place where a variety of ‘cruel and barbaric scenes are staged.’<sup>12</sup> Most shockingly for a Victorian audience, female violence is depicted, as in Wilde’s savage Sphinx, and in Ayesha, Mameena, the Asika, Cleopatra and Sorais (to name but a few) in Rider Haggard’s romances, thus solidifying the polarisation between ‘white’

<sup>7</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 10.

<sup>8</sup> Kutzer, *Empire’s Children*: 7.

<sup>9</sup> Kabbani, *Europe’s Myths of Orient*: 40.

<sup>10</sup> Locke, [www.grovemusic.com](http://www.grovemusic.com)

<sup>11</sup> Malchow. *Gothic Images of Race*: 42.

<sup>12</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 2.

women and their Others. In many of these women, and in most of the Other men depicted, the violence is based on an enjoyment of cruelty, illustrating the ‘despotism and thus inferiority’<sup>13</sup> highlighted by Ziauddin Sardar; this is established, for instance, in the operatic portrayals of Abu Hasan in *Chu Chin Chow* and the Soldan in Solomon’s setting of *Lord Bateman*. As with the latter character, violence is frequently linked with corruption, and building upon this basis of corrupt duplicity, many ‘Oriental’ characters in these works are filled with guile, including *Azan* in Bishop’s opera *Zuma*, Sorais in Haggard’s romance *Allan Quatermain*, and even the implied cunning of Alma-Tadema’s Cleopatra who craftily displays herself to entrap Antony. Indeed this painting of Cleopatra highlights another ‘Oriental’ vice, indolence; the concept of a slothful Other overarches these art-forms from the characters of Sullivan’s opera *The Rose of Persia*, to Wilde’s silent Sphinx, Kerr’s illustration of Sorais’ song, and Fenton, Bonington, Dadd, Dillon and Lavery’s paintings of lethargic harem inhabitants.

### Differences between art-forms

Despite these dominant conceptual features of musical otherness there are differences between these case studies, and the nature of the forms and genres of the artworks affects the styles of representation of the musical ‘Orient’ and Other within them. To generalise, the operatic illustrations tend to be more simplistic and are frequently more comical (even caricatured) than those in the other artistic mediums, owing to the way in which they must be easily understood on stage and prove “entertaining” for a paying audience. Just as the physical is highlighted by costume in some of these stage works (particularly by Asche), corporeality is central to the presentation of the musical ‘Orient’ in the visual arts, which in relation to music tend to focus on Other women and their sexuality or circumstances. Finally, because of the nature of fiction, the literary presentations are able to be more psychologically involved, and tend to investigate the individual reactions of British characters to the musical Other and ‘Orient’, as well as more complexly exploring numerous prejudices, thoughts and issues that were circulating at the time of writing, many of which have been briefly cited above. Despite the necessary differences between individual artists, artworks and art-forms, many aspects of the perception of the musical ‘Orient’ and Other override boundaries in long-nineteenth-century Britain

### Future study opportunities in the field

In this study I had originally also hoped to analyse the representation of ‘Oriental’ and Other musics in British films and plays,<sup>14</sup> but the examples that I wished to look at were unavailable and it would have been extremely labour-intensive to seek them out. I also wished to devote a section to British illustrated music covers depicting the Other, but despite considerable time searching I was unable to unearth a large enough pool of case studies. I feel that although these areas were not viable within the scope of my doctoral research, they are worthy of study and I hope to return to them. This thesis has been restricted by the availability of primary source material, but with time to explore further it would

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<sup>13</sup> Sardar, *Orientalism*: 48.

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix XXXII.

be beneficial to look at a larger pool of case studies, both by these artists and by other contemporary figures to see if broader trends continue in other artworks. Likewise it would be interesting to see if British song parallels the ideas presented on the operatic stage, and if sculpture portrays the musical Other in a way analogous to that in the other visual arts. Another project that would be valuable to expand the ideas explored here would be to see how these case-study works were received in Other places and by Other cultures, both recently and at the times of their production, for example to investigate if Haggard's books have been translated outside of Europe and America, or if the visual art case studies have been displayed there, and how they have been received. It would also be of value to look further into representations of Other musics in travel writings, diaries, letters and ethnomusicological works to see how they compare to popular representations, something that I have touched upon in this thesis, but have not had space to truly explore. Finally, it would be worthwhile to build upon this study and broaden the scope of its application, both in time-frame (to the eighteenth and twentieth centuries), but also in space, particularly to long-nineteenth-century America (with the idea of the Others within, namely black and Native Americans) and to France, her Empire, and her greater fascination with the sexual 'Orient'.

## Concluding remarks

Orientalism and gender studies are particularly pertinent in academia at this time and this thesis has utilised these contemporary theories to explore musical imagery of the Other in long-nineteenth-century Britain, thus adding to the growing corpus of writings on orientalism in music, but with new focuses on libretto analysis and representations of music in the other arts in an interdisciplinary framework. This analysis of these case studies aids a reader/viewer to see these works differently, and thus enhances their understanding of the context in which they were created. Orientalism still exists today, and is even now at times expressed in the arts. This exploration of the ways in which British prejudices of the 'Orient' and Other were developed and solidified in the nineteenth century aids the comprehension of where modern prejudices stem from; only when these are understood can they be properly dismantled and disposed of. Prejudices and orientalised ideas are not static entities, but change through time and differ between individuals, however a broad understanding of how some of these ideas interplay in British nineteenth-century thought, as is investigated in this thesis, can elucidate a greater understanding of modern British thought, and so help to clear the way for banishing orientalist thought and prejudice.

## APPENDICES.

### Appendix I: 'Cleopatra's Nile'.<sup>1</sup>

'When the blood-red sun is gilding o'er the Nile,  
There comes marching ghostly legions mile on mile,  
Whom great Antony in vain  
Led to death on Egypt's plain;  
Through Cleopatra's guile.

When the blue moonlight is silv'ring o'er the Nile,  
Then the ghosts of those she pleased for a while  
Come floating down the mist,  
To keep their midnight tryst –  
Ghosts of Passion's Pilgrims of the Nile.'

### Appendix II: Nautch dancers.

'A modern witness of the native customs of India thus describes a grand *Nautch* exhibition [...] "With rounded arms, and her veil floating, she turned herself slowly round with a gentle quivering of the body, so as to make her bells resound. The music, soft and languishing, seemed to lull her senses, and with eyes half closed she seemed to be clasping in her embrace some invisible being. All played their parts thus in succession: one feigning herself a serpent-charmer or a lute-player, another, ardent and impassioned, bounding and whirling round with rapidity, while another, adorned with an elegant cap embroidered with pearls, addressed us with strange gestures and followed the music with a coquettish movement of the body. They concluded their performances with an animated round dance, accompanied by songs and clapping of hands." The *Nautch* dance appears to have no attractions for an [sic] European after the novelty of a first performance. Deficient in variety of movement and grace, it is found to be wearisome. We unwisely make our own performances the standard by which we judge those of other countries. The interest in witnessing the customs and art-performances of distant continents should be derived from their entire unlikeness to those with which we are familiar, however extravagant and strange they may be.'<sup>2</sup>

'Indoors an entertainment of music and singing, with very often a dance, is arranged; but I must admit that Eastern dancing is as a rule woefully disappointing to European eyes. When one has seen the splendid grace of movement among the women as they carry their water-pots upon their heads, or marked the easy swing of their well-developed limbs, it is difficult to think that they

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<sup>1</sup> Norton, *Chu Chin Chow*: 14-16.

<sup>2</sup> Anon. Cited in Salaman, 'Music in connection with dancing': 266.

could ever be wanting in charm of movement. And yet when they come to pose and posture as “dancing,” all this seems subordinated to mere wriggings and contortions, supposed, I believe, to be voluptuously suggestive to the Oriental male mind, but rather resulting in monotonous muscular spasms.’<sup>3</sup>

‘The nautch-girls exhibited their fine figures in graceful attitudes, advancing and retiring, now with one hand held over the head, now with the other. Their faces were not so captivating as those of the female attendants [harem members] behind his majesty; but their forms were perfectly moulded, and they managed their limbs with a graceful dexterity not to be surpassed. Voluptuous is, perhaps, the title that most correctly indicates the entire character of their performance. Attendant musicians played upon a species of lute and tambourine behind them, advancing and retreating with them, and accompanying the instruments with their voices. The instrumental seemed the principal part of the musical performance; the voice accompanied it, rather than it the voice.’<sup>4</sup>

### Appendix III: Ella Haggard’s preface.

‘Advertisement to the Reader’ – ‘RETRIBUTION must and will be exacted; but when this bloody delirium has subsided, – when the strong arm of England has been put forth, effectively to crush the vipers she has nourished in her bosom, – let us hope that *then*, – brighter days may again dawn for India. Experience will have taught her lesson; and our rulers, profiting by her admonitions, will have learned, that these teeming millions, – comprising, as they do, so many varied religions and nationalities, – require alike, *that*, to which (till of late years) they have been, alike, accustomed, – A MASTER: one whose wise and enlightened judgment shall dictate measures which his vigorous and determined hand shall unfailingly execute.’<sup>5</sup>

### Appendix IV: Myra’s Song.<sup>6</sup>

“Oh come with me to the waves’ wild bed!  
On the billows I’ll rock thy slumbering head;  
The sea shall sing to thee, by night and by day,  
And in dreams I will waft thee away, love, away!

“I’ll show thee the magical coral caves,  
Far down in the depths of the dark blue waves;  
And we’ll float in the stately vessel’s wake,  
Where the billows in golden showers break.

<sup>3</sup> Billington, *Woman in India*: 68.

<sup>4</sup> Knighton, *The Private Life of an Eastern King*: 23.

<sup>5</sup> Haggard, Ella. *Myra*: no page number, dated 24 July 1857.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 28, Canto III, lines 140-65

“When the lightnings flash, and the gale sings high,  
 We will ride on the waves, as they mount to the sky;  
 Nor list we the death-shriek that sounds o’er the main,  
 For deep in the valleys they’ll plunge us again.

“And at last we will float to some Isle of the Blest,  
 Where Love folds his wings, and is ever at rest,  
 And there on the feathery sea-weed we’ll play,  
 And with shells I will claim thee, lest truant thou stay.

“Then come; – thou shalt ride on the albatross’ wing,  
 And the waves at thy feet all their treasures shall fling;  
 As the fond shell enfolds its bright pearl from the day,  
 E’en thus I’ll enshrine thee – then come, come away!”

She ceased; and rested, with a gentle smile,  
 Her graceful head upon her harp awhile;  
 But as she mused, soon passed the smile away,  
 Like gleam of sunshine on an April day;  
 And, gradual deepening, a look of pain  
 Crossed her pale brow, – and thus she sang again: –’

### Appendix V: Synopsis of *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*.

In grief at Zurvan’s death she runs from her village and is caught by Chief Ruark who loves her for her beauty. She escapes Ruark during a battle, and his enemy Prince Almeryl and Bhanavar fall in love and marry. When the Vizier Aswarak hears of her beauty he has Almeryl arrested and murdered and places Bhanavar in his harem by force. She cunningly displays her beauty to the King of Mashalleed who then takes her from the Vizier to make her his queen. She sacrifices Aswarak to her serpents to regain her fading beauty. Bhanavar again loses her beauty and the serpents require her to choose a sacrifice with a kiss. She chooses Ruark who has been imprisoned by the King, but then discovers that he has been searching for her since losing her to her husband, and responds to his devotion with love. So she sets her serpents upon the King who orders his men to kill Ruark. She hurls the Jewel to them and loses her beauty, and despite fleeing with Ruark they are caught and beheaded: ‘death had made the head again fair with a wondrous beauty, a loveliness never before seen on earth.’<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 131.

## Appendix VI: Almeryl's Song.<sup>8</sup>

'The rose is living in her cheeks,  
     The lily in her rounded chin;  
 She speaks but when her whole soul speaks,  
     And then the two flow out and in,  
 And mix their red and white to make  
 The hue for which I'd Paradise forsake.

Her brow from her black falling hair  
     Ascends like morn: her nose is clear  
 As morning hills, and finely fair  
     With pearly nostrils curving near  
 The red bow of her upper lip;  
 Her bosom's the white wave beneath the ship.

The fair full earth, the enraptured skies,  
     She images in constant play:  
 Night and the stars are in her eyes,  
     But her sweet face is beaming day,  
 A bounteous interblush of flowers:  
 A dewy brilliance in a dale of bowers.'

## Appendix VII: Bhanavar's Song.<sup>9</sup>

'Bhanavar gazed on her beloved [Prince Almeryl], and the bridal dew overflowed her underlids, and she loosed her hair to let it flow, part over her shoulders, part over his, and in sighs that were the measure of music she sang:

I thought not to love again!  
 But now I love as I loved not before;  
 I love not; I adore!  
 O my beloved, kiss, kiss me! waste thy kisses  
     like a rain.  
 Are not thy red lips fain?  
 Oh, and so softly they greet!  
 Am I not sweet?  
 Sweet must I be for thee, or sweet in vain:  
 Sweet to thee only, my dear love!

<sup>8</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 57.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: 54.



The lamps and censers sink, but cannot cheat  
 These eyes of thine that shoot above  
 Trembling lustres of the dove!  
 A darkness drowns all lustres: still I see  
     Thee, my love, thee!  
 Thee, my glory of gold, from head to feet!  
 Oh, how the lids of the world close quite when  
     our lips meet!

Almeryl strained her to him, and responded'.

### Appendix VIII: Extract from *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*.

'He [Vizier Aswarak] ground his teeth in fury, crying, "A conspiracy! And in the harem! Now, thou traitress! The logic of the lash shall be tried upon thee." And he roared, "Ho! Ye without there! – ho!"

But ere the slaves had entered Bhanavar rubbed the Jewel on her bosom, muttering, "I have forborne till now! Now will I have a sacrifice, though I be it." And rubbing the Jewel, she sang:

Hither! Hither!  
     Come to your Queen!  
 Come through the grey wall,  
     Come through the green!

There was heard a noise like the noise of a wind coming down a narrow gorge above falling waters, a hissing and a rushing of wings, and behold! Bhanavar was circled by rings and rings of serpent-folds that glowed round her, twisted each in each, with the fierceness of fire, she like a flame rising up white in the midst of them. The black slaves, when they had lifted the curtain of the harem-chamber, shrieked to see her, and Aswarak crouched at her feet with the aspect of an angry beast carved in stone. Then Bhanavar loosed on either of the slaves a serpent, saying, "What these have seen they shall not say." And while the sweat dropped heavily from the forehead of Aswarak, she stepped out of the circle of serpents, singing:

Over! over!  
     Hie to the lake!  
 Sleep with the left eye,  
     Keep the right awake.

Then the serpents spread with a great whirr, and flew through the high window and the walls as they had come, and she said to the Vizier, "What now? Fearest thou? I have spared thee, thou that

madest me desolate! And thy slaves are a sacrifice for thee. Now this I ask: Where lies my beloved, the Prince, my husband? Speak nothing of him, save the place of his burial!”<sup>10</sup>

### Appendix IX: Extract from *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*.

‘So they drank, and wine got the mastery of Aswarak, so that he made no secret of his passion, and began to lean to her and verse extemporaneously in her ear; and she stinted not in her replies, answering to his urgency in girlish guise, sighing behind the veil, as if under love’s influence. And the Vizier pressed close, and sang:

’Tis said that love brings beauty to the cheeks  
     Of them that love and meet, but mine are pale;  
 For merciless disdain on me she wreaks,  
     And hides her visage from my passionate tale:  
 I have her only, only when she speaks.  
                                 Bhanavar, unveil!

I have thee, and I have thee not! Like one  
     Lifted by spirits to a shining dale  
 In Paradise, who seeks to leap and run  
     And clasp the beauty, but his foot doth fail,  
 For he is blind: ah! then more woful [sic] none!  
                                 Bhanavar, unveil!<sup>11</sup>

He thrust the wine-cup to her, and she lifted it under her veil, and then sang, in answer to him:

My beauty, for thy worth  
     Thank the Vizier!  
 He gives thee second birth:  
     Thank the Vizier!  
 His blooming form without a fault:  
     Thank the Vizier!  
 Is at thy foot in this blest vault:  
     Thank the Vizier!  
 He knoweth not he telleth such a truth,  
     Thank the Vizier!  
 That thou, thro’ him, spring’st fresh in blushing youth:

<sup>10</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 82-83.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*: 99.

Thank the Vizier!

This meeting bringeth bloom to cheeks and lips and eyes:

Thank the Vizier!

O my beloved in this blest vault, if I love thee for

Thank the Vizier!

Then am I, thine! And learns his soul what it has taught – to die,

Thank the Vizier!

Now, Aswarak divined not her meaning, and was enraptured with her, and cried, “Wullahy! So and such thy love! Thine<sup>12</sup> am I, thine! And what a music is thy voice, O my mistress! ’Twere a bliss to Eblis in his torment could he hear it. Life of my head! and is thy beauty increased by me? Nay, thou flatterer!” Then he said to her, “Away with these importunate dogs! ’tis the very hour of tenderness! Wullahy! they offend my nostril: stung am I at the sight of them.”

She rejoined:

O Aswarak! Star of the morn!

Thou that wakenest my beauty from night and scorn,

Thy time is near, and when ’tis come,

Long will a jackal howl that this thy request had been dumb,

O Aswarak! star of the morn!’<sup>13</sup>

## Appendix X: Extract from *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*.

‘So she drew the Jewel forth once more, and rubbed it ablaze, and the noise of the Serpents neared; and they streamed into the vault and under it in fiery jets, surrounding Bhanavar, and whizzing about her till<sup>14</sup> in their velocity they were indivisible; and she stood as a fountain of fire clothed in flashes of the underworld, the new loveliness of her face growing vivid violet like an incessant lightning above them. Then stretched she her two hands, and sang to the Serpents: –

Hither, hither, to the feast!

Hither to the sacrifice!

Virtue for my sake hath ceased:

Now to make an end of Vice!

Twisted-tail and treble-tongue,

Swelling length and greedy maw!

I have had a horrid wrong;

<sup>12</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 100.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*: 101.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*: 108.

Retribution is the law!

Ye that suck'd my youthful lord,  
 Now shall make another meal:  
 Seize the black Vizier abborr'd;  
 Seize him! Seize him throat and heel!

Set your serpent wits to find  
 Tortures of a new device:  
 Have him! Have him heart and mind!  
 Hither to the sacrifice!

Then she whirled with them round and round as a tempest whirls; and when she had wound them to a fury, lo, she burst from<sup>15</sup> the hissing circle and dragged Ukleet from the vault into the passage, and blocked the entrance to the vault. So was Queen Bhanavar avenged.<sup>16</sup>

### Appendix XI: Extract from *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*.

'The voice in her throat was like a drowning creature, and she rose up, and chanted wildly:

I weep again?

What play is this? For the thing is dead in me long since:

Will all the reviving rain  
 Of heaven bring me back my Prince?<sup>17</sup>

But I, when I weep, when I weep,  
 Blood will I weep!  
 And when I weep,  
 Sons for fathers shall weep;  
 Mothers for sons shall weep;  
 Wives for husbands shall weep! I  
 Earth shall complain of floods red and deep,  
 When I weep!

Upon that she ran up a secret passage to her chamber and rubbed the Jewel, and called the serpents, to delight her soul with the sight of her power, and rolled and sported madly among them, clutching them by the necks till their thin little red tongues hung out, and their eyes were as discoloured blisters of venom. Then she arose, and her arms and neck and lips were glazed with the slime of the serpents, and she flung off her robes to the close-fitting silken inner vest looped across her bosom with pearls, and whirled in a mazy dance-measure among them, and sang melancholy melodies, making them delirious, fascinating them; and they followed her round and

<sup>15</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 109.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*: 110.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 87.

round, in twines and twists and curves, with arched heads and stiffened tails; and the chamber swam like<sup>18</sup> an undulating sea of shifting sapphire lit by the moon of midnight. Not before the moon of midnight was in the sky ceased Bhanavar sporting with the serpents, and she sank to sleep exhausted in their midst.

Such was the occupation of the Queen of Mashalleed when he came not to her. The women and slaves of the palace dreaded her, and the King himself was her very slave.<sup>19</sup>

## Appendix XII: Haggard on Empire.

Haggard wrote a number of conflicting statements on Empire and colonialism. In 1913 Haggard wrote that 'since my time [in Africa over thirty years ago] civilization has been hard at work among these peoples. Thus the Zulus who fought us at Isandhlwana had their vices; bloodthirstiness, superstition, and cruelty in war, for instance. But they also had many virtues, such as courage, loyalty, and freedom from meanness of vulgarity. Again, in the seventies I never heard of an assault upon a white woman by a Kaffir. Now that tale is often told.' 'For good or ill civilization is sowing its seeds among these black races, and it must therefore be prepared to reap their harvest in due season. To my mind the great question of the future in Southern Africa is not, as so many suppose, that of the political dominance of Englishman or Boer, but of the inevitable though, let us hope, far-off struggle for practical supremacy between the white blood and the black.'<sup>20</sup> However in 1920, and perhaps with "rose tinted glasses", he stated that 'On the whole, the British Empire has done good in a disappointing world, and it will be sad if it is broken up or left desolate because of a lack of children to carry on its responsibilities and its glory.'<sup>21</sup> Despite this ambivalence Haggard did much work on behalf of the government in the area of Commonwealth settlement and was knighted twice (in 1912 and 1919) 'for his political, rather than literary, activities.'<sup>22</sup>

## Appendix XIII: Ustane's Song.<sup>23</sup>

*'Thou art my chosen – I have waited for thee from the beginning!  
Thou art very beautiful. Who hath hair like unto thee, or skin so white?  
Who hath so strong an arm, who is so much a man?  
Thine eyes are the sky, and the light in them is the stars.  
Thou art perfect and of a happy face, and my heart turned itself towards thee.  
Ay, when mine eyes fell on thee I did desire thee, –  
Then did I take thee to me – thou, my Beloved,  
And hold thee fast, lest harm should come unto thee.*

<sup>18</sup> Meredith, *The Story of Bhanavar the Beautiful*: 88.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*: 89.

<sup>20</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Umslopogaas and Makokel. Sir H. Rider Haggard on Zulu Types'. *The Times* (16 August 1913): 5.

<sup>21</sup> H. Rider Haggard. 'Imperial and Racial Aspects'. In *The Control of Parenthood*, ed. Sir James Marchant, 165-89. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons: 1920: 189.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, 'Beyond Colonialism: Death and the Body in H. Rider Haggard': 103.

<sup>23</sup> Haggard, *She*: 97-99.

*Ay, I did cover thine head with mine hair, lest the sun should strike it;  
 And altogether was I thine, and thou wast altogether mine.  
 And so it went for a little space, till Time was in labour with an evil Day;  
 And then what befell on that day? Alas! my Beloved, I know not!  
 But I, I saw thee no more – I, I was lost in the blackness.  
 And she who is stronger did take thee; ay, she who is fairer than Ustane.  
 Yet didst thou turn and call upon me, and let thine eyes wander in the darkness.  
 But, nevertheless, she prevailed by Beauty, and led thee down horrible places,  
 And then, ah! then my Beloved –'*

#### Appendix XIV: She's Song.<sup>24</sup>

*'Love is like a flower in the desert.  
 It is like the aloe of Arabia that blooms but once and dies; it blooms in the salt  
 emptiness of Life, and the brightness of its beauty is set upon the waste as a  
 star set upon a storm.  
 It hath the sun above that is the spirit, and above it blows the air of its divinity.  
 At the echoing of a step, Love blooms, I say; I say Love blooms, and bends her  
 beauty down to him who passeth by.  
 He plucketh it, yea, he plucketh the red cup that is full of honey, and beareth it  
 away away across the desert, away till the flower be withered, away  
 till the desert be done.  
 There is only one perfect flower in the wilderness of Life.  
 That flower is Love!  
 There is only one fixed star in the mists of our wandering.  
 That star is Love!  
 There is only one hope in our despairing night.  
 That hope is Love!  
 All else is false. All else is shadow moving upon water. All else is wind and  
 vanity.  
 Who shall say what is the weight or the measure of Love?  
 It is born of the flesh, it dwelleth in the spirit. From each doth it draw its  
 comfort.  
 For beauty it is as a star.  
 Many are its shapes, but all are beautiful, and none know where the star rose,  
 or the horizon where it shall set.*

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<sup>24</sup> Haggard, *She*: 231-33.

Then, turning to Leo, and laying her hand upon his shoulder, she went on in a fuller and more triumphant tone, speaking in balanced sentences that gradually grew and swelled from idealised prose into pure and majestic verse:-

*Long have I loved thee, oh, my love; yet has my love not lessened.  
 Long have I waited for thee, and behold my reward is at hand – is here!  
 Far away I saw thee once, and thou wast taken from me.  
 Then in a grave sowed I the seed of patience, and shone upon it with the sun of  
 hope, and watered it with tears of repentance, and breathed on it with  
 the breath of my knowledge. And now, lo! it has sprung up, and borne  
 fruit. Lo! out of the grave hath it sprung. Yea, from among the dry  
 bones and ashes of the dead.  
 I have waited and my reward is with me.  
 I have overcome Death, and Death brought back to me him that was dead.  
 Therefore do I rejoice, for fair is the future.  
 Green are the paths that we shall tread across the everlasting meadows.  
 The hour is at hand. Night hath fled away into the valleys.  
 The dawn kisseth the mountain tops.  
 Soft shall we lie, my love, and easy shall we go.  
 Crowned shall we be with the diadem of Kings.  
 Worshipping and wonder struck all peoples of the world,  
 Blinded shall fall before our beauty and our might.  
 From time unto times shall our greatness thunder on,  
 Rolling like a chariot through the dust of endless days.  
 Laughing shall we speed in our victory and pomp,  
 Laughing like the Daylight as he leaps along the hills.  
 Onward, still triumphant to a triumph ever new!  
 Onward, in our power to a power unattained!  
 Onward, never weary, clad with splendour for a robe!  
 Till accomplished be our fate, and the night is rushing down.*

She paused in her strange and most thrilling allegorical chant’.

## Appendix XV: Sorais’ Song.<sup>25</sup> [The only song in this romance]

### ‘SORAIS’ SONG

As a desolate bird that through darkness its lost way is winging,  
 As a hand that is helplessly raised when Death’s sickle is swinging,  
 So is life! ay, the life that lends passion and breath to my singing.

<sup>25</sup> Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*: 189-90.

As the nightingale's song that is full of a sweetness unspoken,  
 As a spirit unbarring the gates of the skies for a token,  
 So is love! ay, the love that shall fall when his pinion is broken.

As the tramp of the legions when trumpets their challenge are sending,  
 As the shout of the Storm-god when lightnings the black sky are rending,  
 So is power! ay, the power that shall lie in the dust at its ending.

So short is our life; yet with space for all things to forsake us,  
 A bitter delusion, a dream from which nought can wake us,  
 Till Death's dogging footsteps at morn or at eve shall o'ertake us.

## REFRAIN

*Oh, the world is fair at the dawning – dawning – dawning,  
 But the red sun sinks in blood – the red sun sinks in blood.*

I only wish that I could write down the music too.'

## Appendix XVI: Violent musical women in Haggard's romances.

The theme of violence, women and music arises in a number of Haggard works: In *Elissa* the 'beautiful' priestesses sing and dance around Elissa 'and as she listened and looked her eyes seemed to gain power to behold the spirits within them. Surely she could see these dark and hideous things, with shifting countenances, terrible to look on, and themselves wearing in their eyes of flame a stamp of eternal terror, while in her ears the music of their golden necklaces was changed to a clank as of fetters and of instruments of torment. Yes; and there before the dancers in the red clouds of dust which rose from their beating feet, floated the dim shape of that demon [Baaltis] of whom she had been chosen the high-priestess. Look at her mocking, inhuman countenance, and her bent brow of power! Look at her spread and flaming hair and her hundred hands outstretched to grasp the souls of men! Hark! the clamour of the cymbals and the cry of the dancers blended together and became her voice, a dreadful voice that gave greeting to her priestess, promising her pride of place and life-long power in payment for her service.'<sup>26</sup>

In *Ayesha*, She points 'through the window-places shattered by the hurricane, to the flaming town beneath, whence rose one continual wail of misery [...] "Look, Leo, on the smoke of the first sacrifice that I offer to thy royal state and listen to its music."<sup>27</sup> Here Ayesha (a warrior like Sorais) offers up death to Leo as a love-gift. In *Montezuma's Daughter* the women 'some of them bearing infants in their arms', come 'singing and leaping, many of them naked to the middle.' These 'howling troupes of women' are on their way to sacrifice themselves to the

<sup>26</sup> Haggard, 'Elissa': 162.

<sup>27</sup> Haggard, *Ayesha*: 360-61.



gods.<sup>28</sup> In *Nada the Lily* ‘a band of maidens arrayed in their beaded dancing-dresses’ sing ‘softly’: “‘We are the heralds of the king’s feast. Ai! / Vultures shall at it. Ah! Ah! / It is good – it is good to die for the king!’”<sup>29</sup> And in *Cleopatra* the Queen warns Harmachis, “‘Boast not, thou proud Egyptian [...] lest perchance thou dost tempt me to match my magic against thine. What woman can forgive that a man should push us by as things of no account? It is an insult to our sex which Nature’s self abhors,’” and she leaned back again and laughed most musically.<sup>30</sup> Here Cleopatra can be described as a ‘New Woman’ and one determined not to lose her freedom and power.

## Appendix XVII: Conflicting interpretations.

*She* has been alternatively interpreted as both anti- and pro-women; even amongst feminist critics there is disagreement and variety in interpretation. Sandra Gilbert wonders ‘What, after all, worried Rider Haggard so much that he was driven to create his extraordinary complex fantasy about Her and Her realm in just six volcanically energetic weeks?’<sup>31</sup> She believes its success has much to do with the romance’s focus on ‘the nineteenth-century interest in Egypt, the nineteenth-century fascination with spiritualism, and the nineteenth-century obsession with the so-called ‘New Woman.’’<sup>32</sup> Freudian critics are quick to point out Haggard’s childhood experiences when one of his nurses controlled him with ‘a “disreputable rag-doll” of “hideous aspect,” boot-button eyes and hair of black wool’ whom he called “She-Who-Must-Be-Obeyed”’.<sup>33</sup> Thus *She* has provoked many interpretations (it must be said primarily by feminist critics) suggesting that Haggard fears the advance and influence of the ‘New Woman’. Robert Fraser presents an alternative reading with Ayesha as ‘the most triumphantly conclusive embodiment’ of ‘cultural revivalism’, attributing to Haggard an almost proto-feminist stance with women as the true advancers of culture.<sup>34</sup> As Haggard created similar women in his romances over a period of forty years these were ideas that fascinated and appealed to him as much as frightening and repelling him.

## Appendix XVIII: The witch-hunters’ song.<sup>35</sup>

The witch-hunters ‘walked in silence till they came in front of the *Intunkulu*, the royal house; then they stopped and sang this song for the king to hear:

“We have come, O king, we have come from the caves and the rocks and the swamps,

To wash in the blood of the slain;

We have gathered our host from the air as vultures are gathered in war

<sup>28</sup> Haggard, *Montezuma’s Daughter*: 287.

<sup>29</sup> Haggard, *Nada the Lily*: 75-76.

<sup>30</sup> Haggard, *Cleopatra*: 97-98.

<sup>31</sup> Sandra M. Gilbert. ‘Rider Haggard’s Heart of Darkness’. [1983] In *Reading Fin de Siècle Fictions*, ed. Lyn Pykett, 39-46. London: Longman, 1996: 43.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*: 44.

<sup>33</sup> McClintock, *Imperial Leather*: 235-36.

<sup>34</sup> Fraser, *Victorian Quest Romance*: 45.

<sup>35</sup> Haggard, *Nada the Lily*: 74.

When they scent the blood of the slain.

“We come not alone, O king: with each Wise One there passes a ghost,  
Who hisses the name of the doomed.

“Red rises the moon o’er the plain, red sinks the sun in the west,  
Look, wizards, and bid them farewell!  
We count you by hundreds, you who cried for a curse on the king.  
Ha! soon shall we bid *you* farewell!”

Then they were silent, and went in silence to the place appointed for them, there to pass the night in mutterings and magic.’

### Appendix XIX: African cruelty.

At the Royal Palace in Uganda on 4 April 1862 the famous explorer John Speke wrote of a corrupt trial where the defendants’ ‘voices in defence were never heard, for the king instantly sentenced both to death, to prevent the occurrence of such impropriety again; and, to make the example more severe, decreed that their lives should not be taken at once, but, being fed to preserve life as long as possible, they were to be dismembered bit by bit, as rations for the vultures, every day, until life was extinct. The dismayed criminals, struggling to be heard, in utter despair, were dragged away boisterously in the most barbarous manner, to the drowning music of the milélé and drums. The king, in total unconcern about the tragedy he had thus enacted, immediately on their departure said, “Now, then, for shooting”’.<sup>36</sup>

### Appendix XX: The *Ingoma*.<sup>37</sup>

‘Again Maputa [chief of the Amawombe, King Panda’s royal guard] raised his spear, and all the four thousand voices broke out into the *Ingoma*, or national chant, to which deep, awe-inspiring music we began our march. As I do not think it has ever been written down, I will quote the words. They ran thus:

“*Ba ya m’zonda,*  
*Ba ya m’loyisa,*  
*Izizwe zonke,*  
*Ba zond’, Inkoosi!*”\*

The *spirit* of this fierce *Ingoma*, conveyed by sound, gesture and inflexion of voice, not the exact words, remember, which are very rude and simple, leaving much to the imagination, may perhaps

<sup>36</sup> Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*: 375.

<sup>37</sup> Haggard, *Child of Storm*: 224-25.

be rendered somewhat as follows. An exact translation into English verse is almost impossible – at any rate, to me.

*“Loud on their lips is lying,  
Red are their eyes with hate;  
Rebels their King defying.  
Lo! where our impiis wait  
There shall be dead and dying,  
Vengeance insatiate!”*

Footnote \* Literally translated, this famous chant, now, I think, published for the first time, which, I suppose, will never again pass the lips of a Zulu *impi*, means:

“They [*i.e.* the enemy] bear him [*i.e.* the king] hatred,  
They call down curses on his head,  
All of them throughout this land  
Abhor our king.”

The *Ingoma* when sung by twenty or thirty thousand men rushing down to battle must, indeed, have been a song to hear – EDITOR.’

## Appendix XXI: A Zulu War-Dance.

‘But it is not our eyes only that are astonished, for from each of those five hundred throats there swells a chant never to be forgotten. From company to company it passes, that wild, characteristic song, so touching in its simple grandeur, so expressive in its deep, pathetic volume. The white men who listened had heard the song of choirs ringing down resounding aisles, they had been thrilled by the roll of oratorios pealing in melody, beautiful and complex, through the grandest of man’s theatres, but never till now had they heard music of voices so weird, so soft and yet so savage, so simple and yet so all-expressive of the fiercest passions known to the human heart. Hark! now it dies; lower and lower it sinks, it grows faint, despairing: “Why does he not come, our chief our lord? why does he not welcome his singers? Ah! see, they come, the heralds of our lord! our chief is coming to cheer his praisers, our chief is coming to lead his warriors.” Again it rises and swells louder and louder, a song of victory and triumph. It rolls against the mountains, it beats against the ground: “He is coming, he is here, attended by his chosen. Now shall we go forth to slay; now shall we taste of the battle.” Higher yet and higher, till at length the chief, Pagadi, swathed in war-garments of splendid furs, preceded by runners and accompanied by picked warriors, creeps slowly up.’<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Haggard, ‘A Zulu War-Dance’: 103.

‘And as he comes the chant grows yet louder, the time yet faster, till it rises, and rings, and rolls, no longer a chant, but a war-cry, a pæan of power. Pagadi stops and raises his hand, and the place is filled with a silence that may be felt.’<sup>39</sup>

## Appendix XXII: M’hlopekazi.

‘The *Natal Witness* of 26 October 1897, said that he was the son of Mswazi, king of Swaziland, who in his youth had belonged to the Nyati Regiment, the crack corps of the country. He had come to the British in Natal as an ambassador from his father’s court about 1850 and had stayed there, becoming a special aide to Shepstone. [...] Rider observed:

He was a tall, thin, fierce-faced fellow with a great hole above his left temple over which the skin pulsated, that he had come by in some battle. He said that he had killed ten men in single combat, of whom the first was a chief called Shive, always making use of a battle-axe. However this may be, he was an interesting old fellow from whom I heard many stories that Fynney used to interpret.’<sup>40</sup>

## Appendix XXIII: Makedama’s Song.<sup>41</sup>

‘Then standing far beneath, he lifted up his voice, and it reached the thousands of those who clustered upon the slopes. It seemed still and small, yet it came to them faintly like the voice of one speaking from a mountain-top in a time of snow:

*“Mourn, children of Makedama!”*

And all the thousands of the people – men, women, and children – echoed his words in a  
thunder of sound, crying:

*“Mourn, children of Makedama!”*

Again he cried:

*“Mourn, people of the Langeni, mourn with the whole world!”*

And the thousands answered:

*“Mourn, people of the Langeni, mourn with the whole world!”*

A third time came the voice:

*“Mourn, children of Makedama, mourn people of the Langeni, mourn with the whole world!”*

*“Howl, ye warriors; weep, ye women; beat your breasts, ye maidens; sob, ye little children!”*

*“Drink of the water of tears, cover yourselves with the dust of affliction.*

*“Mourn, O tribe of the Langeni, because the Mother of the Heavens is no more.*

*“Mourn, children of Makedama, because the Spirit of Fruitfulness is no more.*

<sup>39</sup> Haggard, ‘A Zulu War-Dance’: 104.

<sup>40</sup> Ellis, *H. Rider Haggard*: 44.

<sup>41</sup> Haggard, *Nada the Lily*: 169-70.

*"Mourn, O ye people, because the Lion of the Zulu is left desolate.*

*"Let your tears fall as the rain falls, let your cries be as the cries of women who bring forth.*

*"For sorrow is fallen like the rain, the world has conceived and brought forth death.*

*"Great darkness is upon us, darkness and the shadow of death.*

*"The Lion of the Zulu wanders and wanders in desolation, because the Mother of the Heavens is no more.*

*"Who shall bring him comfort? There is comfort in the crying of his children.*

*"Mourn, people of the Langeni, let the voice of your mourning beat against the skies and rend them.*

*"Ou-ai! Ou-ai! Ou-ai!*

Thus sang the old man, my father Makedama, far down in the depths of the cleft. He sang it in a still, small voice, but, line after line, his song was caught up by the thousands who stood on the slopes above, and thundered to the heavens till the mountains shook with its sound. [...] Chaka listened, and large tears coursed down his cheeks, whose heart was easily stirred by the sound of song.'

#### Appendix XXIV: Ward and 'Home, Sweet Home'.

'In order to divert the attention of the boisterous multitude, I ordered Alakai, one of my Houssa soldiers, to turn the handle of the little musical box that I invariably carried with me. It was advertised to play one tune, "Home, Sweet Home;" but, in consequence of hard knocks and the damp and enervating influence of the African climate, the beautiful air was rendered almost indistinguishable. The savages, however, listened with delight to the tinkling of the little instrument, nudging one another, and gazed at the wonder-working instrument with widely opened eyes, as, in astonishment and delight, they covered their open mouths with their hands. The innate love of music was aroused within them, and their bodies swayed, serpent-like, in cadence with the tune.'<sup>42</sup>

#### Appendix XXV: Jeekie.

'It was that of Jeekie, and he did not speak; he chanted in English to a melody which Alan at once recognized as a Gregorian tone, apparently from the second litter.

"Oh, Major," he sang, "have you yet awoke from refre-e-eshing sleep? If so, please sing answer as when in church cho-o-ir, for remember that you de-e-evil of a swell, Lord of the Little Bonsa, and must not speak like co-o-ommon cad."

Feeble as he felt, Alan nearly burst out laughing; then, remembering that probably he was expected not to laugh, chanted his reply as directed, which, having a good tenor voice, he did with some effect, to the evident awe and delight of all the escort within hearing.

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<sup>42</sup> Ward, *Five Years with the Congo Cannibals*: 151-52.

“I am awake, most excellent Jee-e-kie, and feel the need of food, if you have such a thing abou-ou-out you and it is lawful for the Lord of Little Bonsa to take nu-tri-ment.”

Instantly Jeekie’s deep voice rose in response.

“That good tidings upon the mountain tops, Ma-ajor. Can’t come out to bring you chop because too i-i-infra dig, for now I also biggish bug, the little bird what sit upon the rose, as poet sa-a-ays. I tell these Johnnies bring you grub, which you eat without qualm, for Asiki A1 coo-o-ook.”<sup>43</sup>

## Appendix XXVI: Ahmed’s Song.

‘And as they sat silent, her thoughts far away in the desert, and his full in vain longings and regrets, a man’s low voice rose in the stillness of the night. “*Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar. Where are you now? Who lies beneath your spell?*” he sang in a passionate, vibrating baritone. He was singing in English, and yet the almost indefinite slurring from note to note was strangely un-English. Diana Mayo leaned forward, her head raised, listening intently with shining eyes. The voice seemed to come from the dark shadows at the end of the garden, or it might have been further away out in the road beyond the cactus hedge. The singer sang slowly, his voice lingering caressingly on the words; the last verse dying away softly and clearly, almost imperceptibly fading into silence.

For a moment there was utter stillness, then Diana lay back with a little sigh. “The Kashmiri Song. It makes me think of India. I heard a man sing it in Kashmere last year, but not like that. What a wonderful voice! I wonder who it is?”

Arbuthnot looked at her curiously, surprised at the sudden ring of interest in her tone, and the sudden animation of her face.

“You say you have no emotion in your nature, and yet that unknown man’s singing has stirred you deeply. How do you reconcile the two?” he asked, almost angrily.

“Is an appreciation of the beautiful emotion?” she challenged, with uplifted eyes. “Surely not. Music, art, nature, everything beautiful appeals to me. But there is nothing emotional in that. It is only that I prefer beautiful things to ugly ones. For that reason even pretty clothes appeal to me,” she added, laughing.<sup>44</sup>

## Appendix XXVII: Amy Woodforde-Finden’s ‘Kashmiri Song’.<sup>45</sup>

‘Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar ...

Where are you now? Who lies beneath your spell?

Whom do you lead on Rapture’s roadway, far,

Before you agonise them in farewell?

Before you agonise them in farewell?

Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar ...

<sup>43</sup> Haggard, *The Yellow God*: 147-48.

<sup>44</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 15-16.

<sup>45</sup> Woodforde-Finden, ‘Kashmiri Song’: 21.

Where are you now? Where are you now?

Pale hands, pink tipped, like Lotus buds that float ...  
 On those cool waters where we used to dwell,  
 I would have rather felt you at my throat...  
 Crushing out life, than waving me farewell!  
 Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar ...  
 Where are you now? Where are you now?'

### Appendix XXVIII: Ahmed's Reprise.<sup>46</sup>

'The words that he had once used remained continually in her mind: "If you loved me you would bore me, and I should have to let you go." And she hid her love closely in her heart. It was difficult, and it hurt her to hide it from him and to assume indifference. It was difficult to remember that she must make a show of reluctance when she was longing to give unreservedly. She dropped the end of the cigarette hissing into the dregs of the coffee and turned a page, and, as she did so, she looked up suddenly, the magazine dropping unheeded on the floor. Close outside the tent the same low, vibrating baritone was singing the Kashmiri love song that she had heard that last night before she left Biskra. She sat tense, her eyes growing puzzled.

*"Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar. Where are you now? Who lies beneath your spell?"*

The voice came nearer and he swept in, still singing, and came to her. *"Pale hands, pink-tipped,"* he sang, stopping in front of her and catching her fingers in his up to his lips, but she tore them away before he kissed them.

"You do know English" she cried sharply, her eyes searching his.

He flung himself on the divan beside her with a laugh. "Because I sing an English song?" he replied in French. *"La! la!* I heard a Spanish boy singing in *Carmen* once in Paris who did not know a word of French beside the score. He learned it parrot-like, as I learn your English songs," he added, smiling.

She watched him light a cigarette, and her forehead wrinkled thoughtfully. "It was you who sang outside the hotel in Biskra that night?" she asked at last, more statement than question.

"One is mad sometimes, especially when the moon is high," he replied teasingly.'

"And was it you who came into my bedroom and put the blank cartridges in my revolver?"

His arm stole round her, drawing her to him, and he tilted her head up so that he could look into her eyes. "Do you think that I would have allowed anybody else to go to your room at night? – I, an Arab, when I meant you for myself?"<sup>47</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 126.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*: 127.

'She complied with a little laugh. "You haven't answered my question."

He polished the gleaming little weapon in his hand for some time without speaking. "*Ma petite* Diane, your lips are of an adorable redness and your voice is music in my ears, but – I detest questions. They bore me to a point of exasperation," he said at last lightly, and started humming the Kashmiri song again.

She knew him well enough to know that all questions did not bore him, but that she must have touched some point connected with the past of which she was ignorant that affected him, and to prove her knowledge she asked another question. "Why do you sing? You have never sung before."

He looked at her with a smile of amusement at her pertinacity. "Inquisitive one! I sing because I am glad. Because my friend is coming."<sup>48</sup>

## Appendix XXIX: Greenmantle's Song.<sup>49</sup>

The Englishman Sandy Arbuthnot (also known as Greenmantle) is dressed as a Turk and acting as the dancing group's leader. His disguise as an 'Oriental' Other is so convincing that he even fools his friends. An othered musicality is an important aspect of this disguise: he and his Turkish followers as the Companions of the Rosy Hours produce music 'so exquisite and perfect that no mortal words could have been fitted to them. That was the music, I expect, that the morning stars made when they sang together.' However the music develops from this perfection to 'a fierce, restless harmony' instilling 'fear': 'All the daintiness and youth had fled, and passion was beating the air – terrible, savage passion, which belonged neither to day nor night, life nor death, but to the half-world between them. I suddenly felt the dancers as monstrous, inhuman, devilish.' [...] 'In a twinkling the pavilion changed from a common saloon, which might have been in Chicago or Paris, to a place of mystery – yes, and of beauty. It became the Garden-House of Suliman the Red, whoever that sportsman may have been. Sandy had said that the ends of the earth converged there, and he had been right. I lost all consciousness of my neighbours – stout German, frock-coated Turk, frowsy Jewess – and saw only strange figures leaping in a circle of light, figures that came out of the deepest darkness to make big magic.

The leader flung some stuff into the brazier and a great fan of blue light flared up. He was weaving circles, and he was singing something shrill and high, whilst his companions made a chorus with their deep monotone. I can't tell you what the dance was. I had seen the Russian ballet just before the war, and one of the men in it reminded me of this man. But the dancing was the least part of it. It was neither sound nor movement nor scent that wrought the spell, but something far more potent. In an instant I found myself reft away from the present with its dull dangers, and looking at a world all young and fresh and beautiful. [...] I was gazing at the finest landscape on earth, lit by the pure clean light of morning.' [...] 'I had no longer any fear of these magic-makers. They were kindly wizards, who had brought me into fairyland.

<sup>48</sup> Hull, *The Sheik*: 129.

<sup>49</sup> John Buchan. *Greenmantle*. Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1993 [1916]: 136-38.



Then slowly from the silence there distilled drops of music. They came like water falling a long way into a cup, each the essential quality of pure sound. We, with our elaborate harmony, have forgotten the charm of single notes. The African natives know it, and I remember a learned man once telling me that the Greeks had the same art. Those silver bells broke out of infinite space, so exquisite and perfect that no mortal words could have been fitted to them. That was the music, I expect, that the morning stars made when they sang together.

Slowly, very slowly, it changed. The glow passed from blue to purple, and then to an angry red. Bit by bit the notes spun together till they had made a harmony – a fierce, restless harmony. And I was conscious again of the skin-clad dancers beckoning out of their circle.

There was no mistake about the meaning now. All the daintiness and youth had fled, and passion was beating the air – terrible, savage passion, which belonged neither to day nor night, life nor death, but to the half-world between them. I suddenly felt the dancers as monstrous, inhuman, devilish. The thick scents that floated from the brazier seemed to have a tang of new-shed blood. Cries broke from the hearers – cries of anger and lust and terror. I heard a woman sob, and Peter, who is as tough as any mortal, took tight hold of my arm.

I now realised that these Companions of the Rosy Hours were the only thing in the world to fear.'

### Appendix XXX: Ovid on Pan.

'According to Ovid's account, Pan chases [the Arcadian nymph] Syrinx to the banks of a river that impedes her escape from what is, after all, an intended rape. Syrinx successfully pleads for deliverance and, just as Pan grabs for her, she is transformed into a bunch of reeds. Hearing the sounds made by wind blowing across the open ends of the plants' hollow stems, Pan fashions from them/her the first panpipes. Music is thereby accounted for as the twin result of violence against a woman and *as* woman in another, dismembered form. To avoid a sexual assault, she becomes music, though at the expense of her body.' [...] 'He makes good use of his pipes: They provide him with the means not for rape but for further seductions.' [...] 'Pan's success depends upon a woman, transformed. By himself he is not up to the task. Still, the price paid by a woman to make a man a man – his sexual performance – is supreme: She ceases to be.'<sup>50</sup>

### Appendix XXXI: on Cleopatra.

Plutarch: 'at last, as if in mockery of them, she came sailing up the river Cydnus, in a barge with gilded stern and outspread sails of purple, while oars of silver beat time to the music of flutes and fifes and harps. She herself lay all along under a canopy of cloth of gold, dressed as Venus in a picture, and beautiful young boys, like painted Cupids, stood on each side to fan her. Her maids

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<sup>50</sup> Leppert, *Art and the Committed Eye*: 224-25.

were dressed like sea nymphs and graces, some steering at the rudder, some working at the ropes. The perfumes diffused themselves from the vessel to the shore'.<sup>51</sup>

Shakespeare (highly influenced by Plutarch): 'she did lie

In her pavilion – cloth of gold, of tissue –

O'erpicturing that Venus where we see

The fancy outwork nature'.<sup>52</sup>

## Appendix XXXII: Addendum – Images of Rider Haggard's *She* at the theatre and cinema

Since the later 1990s the concepts of orientalism and post-colonial critique have become more prominent in analyses of the films and theatrical productions at the close of the nineteenth century in Britain, carrying out Said's hope that his theories as expressed in *Orientalism* (1978) would be augmented and applied in the wider field of cultural production.<sup>53</sup> However in film studies the theoreticians and critics have only more recently begun to investigate gender issues within this orientalist context.<sup>54</sup> Just as in musicology there is a concern for analytical balance, there is likewise a similar pressure in film and theatre studies; however much one contextualises or historically and socially situates a piece of music, theatre or film it still also requires specialist-knowledge-based internal analysis and interpretation,<sup>55</sup> with an awareness that the work remains a piece of art (in the broadest sense). One must look inside an artwork to see the structural workings as well as exploring its external, wider significance.

The end of the long nineteenth century in Britain witnessed the continuation of the fashion for spectacular theatre as well as the rising recognition of the film (with the first public film viewing in 1895).<sup>56</sup> This was a time when interest in the Other, whether imperial or 'Oriental', was at its zenith, something that inevitably influenced theatrical and film productions. Theatre and early fictional films were very much considered "sister disciplines" by the production teams at this time, with directors assuming that the

poetics of the film were similar to those of the stage. Stage acting, stage movement, stage stories, stage players, and stage perspectives dominated early story films. The camera was assumed to be a passive spectator in a

<sup>51</sup> Mestrius Plutarch. 'Antony'. In *Lives*. Translated by John Dryden, 1683 [75 A.C.E.] *The Internet Classics Archive*, ed. Daniel C. Stevenson. See the website <http://classics.mit.edu/Plutarch/antony.html> (Accessed 12 June 2005).

<sup>52</sup> William Shakespeare. *Antony and Cleopatra*. Ed. David Bevington. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990 [c.1608]: ACT II, Scene 2, lines 208-211.

<sup>53</sup> Matthew Bernstein. 'Introduction'. In *Visions of the East: Orientalism in Film*, ed. Matthew Bernstein, 1-18. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1997: 4-5.

<sup>54</sup> Shohat, 'Gender and Culture of Empire': 19.

<sup>55</sup> David Bordwell and Kristen Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. Second Edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986: 33.

<sup>56</sup> Gerald Mast. *A Short History of the Movies*. Rev. Bruce F. Kawin. Seventh Edition. London: Allyn & Bacon, 2000: 1.

theatre audience, and just as the spectator has only one seat, the camera had only one position from which to shoot a scene.<sup>57</sup>

In this sense these early works particularly conform to Roger Scruton's assertion that film can only be considered as 'a photograph of a dramatic representation'<sup>58</sup> and not a photographic representation itself. These early filmmakers inherited 'the narrative and visual traditions, as well as the cultural assumptions' of the orientalist theatre,<sup>59</sup> and the two fields were highly influential upon one another.

On 6 September 1888 *She* premiered at the Gaiety Theatre, London. Haggard was in the audience and addressed them from the proscenium box following the performance, stating his belief in the 'certainty that the play would be considered an excellent dramatic work'.<sup>60</sup> Despite the commercial success of the novel the dramatic adaptation was not without its critics, partly owing to the smallness of the stage which proved inadequate for the dramatisation of such a spectacle,<sup>61</sup> and the review in *The Illustrated London News* was less than favourable: their writer felt that this adaptation failed in the 'arduous undertaking' of adapting *She*, as it lacked the necessary 'wealth of imagination and poetic sentiment', the 'seductive accompaniments of sensuous music', 'artistic acting' and a 'perfection of scenic illusion'. Despite the 'undoubted power' of the veil-sporting Miss Sophie Eyre's 'commanding' performance as Ayesha (the 'impassioned lover' or the 'arch enchantress' 'soft-voiced and honeyed') he believes that the play lacks the 'embellishments' necessary to 'possibly make "She" an exceedingly attractive play'.<sup>62</sup> There seem to be no photographs of this production, but Dudley Hardy provided black and white illustrations of the principal characters for a full page of *The Illustrated London News*.<sup>63</sup> Hardy's depiction of Miss Eyre as Ayesha (with long dark hair free, clinging diaphanous robes, a veil and a large snake girdle) indicates that the dramatisers strictly conformed to Haggard's descriptions of *She* and indeed Greiffenhagen's original illustrations for the first edition of the romance.<sup>64</sup> The operetta composer Edward Solomon<sup>65</sup> provided both the music and musical direction for this production<sup>66</sup> and the criticism at the lack of the 'seductive accompaniments of sensuous music'<sup>67</sup> must be laid at his door. This author has been unable to find even an extant script for *She*, let alone any musical material,<sup>68</sup> but if Solomon's music for *She* conformed to his usual output it would have been in a light Gilbert-and-Sullivan-esque style, highly incongruous with Haggard's dramatic presentation of *She*. Interestingly *The Illustrated London News* selected sensuous

<sup>57</sup> Mast, *A Short History of the Movies*: 1.

<sup>58</sup> Scruton, *The Aesthetic Understanding*: 102.

<sup>59</sup> Bernstein, 'Introduction': 3.

<sup>60</sup> Philip Leibfried. *Rudyard Kipling and Sir Henry Rider Haggard on Screen, Stage, Radio and Television*. London: McFarland & Company Inc., Publishers, 2000: 198.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Anon. 'The Playhouses'. *The Illustrated London News*, 93/2578 (15 September 1888): 306.

<sup>63</sup> Dudley Hardy. "She," at the Gaiety Theatre. In *The Illustrated London News*, 93/2578 (15 September 1888): 318.

<sup>64</sup> See *Visual Culture: Chapter 13, footnotes 58-79*.

<sup>65</sup> See *The Musical Stage: Chapter 2, footnote 58*.

<sup>66</sup> Anon. Theatre Programme for *She*, Gaiety Theatre (1888). City of Westminster Archives Centre.

<sup>67</sup> Anon. 'The Playhouses': 306.

<sup>68</sup> The Gaiety was demolished and rebuilt in 1903, and then closed in 1939 before final destruction in 1956. Any records referring to *She* may have been disposed of or destroyed during one of these events.

musicality as an essential component towards the effective dramatisation of *She*, aligning with Haggard's depiction of a dark sensuous othered musicality in the romance, and the ideas explored in Chapter 7.

Nearly thirty years later (on 14 March 1916) Barker Motion Picture Photography released Will Barker and H. Lisle Lucoque's film version of Rider Haggard's *She* with the former Moulin Rouge review star Alice Delysia in the title role.<sup>69</sup> *The Bioscope*'s reviewer believed that success 'cannot fail to be secured by this fine work' because of the 'British' 'Imagination and perfect technical skill'<sup>70</sup> utilised. Apart from a set of character images and two stills in Philip Leibfried's book *Rudyard Kipling and Sir Henry Rider Haggard on Screen, Stage, Radio and Television*,<sup>71</sup> the only images of the film that this author has been able to find are three Lucoque publicity postcards held at The Bill Douglas Centre for the History of Cinema and Popular Culture;<sup>72</sup> sadly none of these photographs or stills depict Ayesha's or Ustane's songs. This author had wished to use the film as a case study of Haggard's work translated onto the "silver screen", however despite Philip Leibfried's recommendation that the British Film Institute may hold a copy<sup>73</sup> they were unable to locate the film.<sup>74</sup>

Due to the lack of basic primary material about these two versions of *She*, the author's plan to devote a chapter to their exploration has had to be abandoned.

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<sup>69</sup> Leibfried, *Rudyard Kipling and Sir Henry Rider Haggard on Screen, Stage, Radio and Television*: 163.

<sup>70</sup> Anon. 'A Great British Production. "She," Featuring Mdlle. Alice Delysia'. *The Bioscope*, 30/492 (16 March 1916): 1215.

<sup>71</sup> Leibfried, *Rudyard Kipling and Sir Henry Rider Haggard on Screen, Stage, Radio and Television*: 164-65.

<sup>72</sup> Located at the University of Exeter.

<sup>73</sup> Private Communication, 13 March 2005, from Philip Leibfried to Claire Mabilat (then Walsh).

<sup>74</sup> Private communication, 11 May 2005, from John Oliver (Curatorial Unit, National Film and Television Archive) to Claire Mabilat (then Walsh).

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