

**CULTURAL HABITS : THE TRAVEL WRITING OF ISABELLA BIRD,  
MAX DAUTHENDEY AND AI WU, 1850 - 1930.**

by

MARIA NOELLE NG

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1978  
M.A., The University of British Columbia, 1982

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Department of COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada

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## ABSTRACT

Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) has generally been recognized as an influential study of western literary perceptions of the East, but numerous critics have also challenged his geographical parameters as too narrow and his conceptual framework as insufficiently complex. This thesis further expands the study of Orientalism (1) by focussing on a colonized area generally overlooked in this context, namely Southeast Asia; (2) by including a writer of German background, a nationality frequently omitted in the discussion of colonial history in general and of Orientalism in particular; and (3) perhaps most importantly, by juxtaposing the views of a Chinese author with those of western writers.

This thesis is the critical study of three authors about their travels in Southeast Asia: Isabella Bird (1831-1904), Max Dauthendey (1867-1918) and Ai Wu (1904-1992). Since postcolonial criticism does not generally concern itself with the cultural habits which are formed in a traveller's native society prior to his or her departure, this approach alone does not provide the tools for the differentiated kind of investigation I wish to conduct. I therefore draw on the cultural criticism of Pierre Bourdieu (1972, 1979, 1993), Johannes Fabian (1983, 1991), and Walter Benjamin (1969, 1974, 1985), to focus on a decisive moment in each traveller's background, which may be said to have shaped his or her perception of other cultures. In Bird's case, this event was the 1851 Exhibition which encapsulated the Victorian ideals of industrial progress, imperial expansion, and Christian philanthropy. By contrast, Dauthendey's responses were shaped by the Art Nouveau sensibilities he had acquired in

the German, French, and Scandinavian *bohème*. Finally, Ai Wu derived his outlook from the May Fourth Movement, a brief period when western ideas were welcomed into Chinese social and literary history.

Said's Orientalism posits the homogeneous cultural entity of an imperial West in contradistinction to a victimized East. This thesis does not reverse these categories, but it does provide the space for an equal discussion of Chinese and western writings within a differentiated historical context.

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## A PERSONAL PREFACE

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Because I am reluctant to take an unequivocal position against western colonial history and influence, some of my friends have seen me as a victim of wavering ideology. These are usually friends who are non-Chinese, interested in questions of postcolonialism, but individuals who have generally not lived under colonial rule themselves. However, I grew up in a colony, and my experience has taught me that one must first subscribe to the concept that a homogenized West exists in opposition to an undifferentiated East before one can take up a clear position in favour of either. I was born in Macau with Portuguese nationality, but my family was Han Chinese who did not speak English, although we lived in the British colony of Hong Kong. My education was primarily Anglo-American under the missionary system. Although there were many Chinese public and private schools, most Chinese parents preferred an English-speaking institution which provided their children with a western education, so that they could compete in the Anglo-centric world of Hong Kong. I lived in a kind of western culture from Monday to Saturday. We were taught English folk songs such as "Flow Gently Swift Afton" and learnt to make crumpets in Home Economics class. My evenings and Sunday were spent as a Chinese with regular visits to relatives in Macau, where the population spoke mostly Portuguese or Cantonese,<sup>1</sup> and where the military guards were Africans from Angola. Until I started reading about postcolonialism as a graduate student, I did not perceive a problem in being both a westerner and a Chinese. But my academic discussions with friends and fellow students quickly made me realise that cultural unities such as the West and the East can be evoked too easily, and the many confluences

which exist between cultures ignored. Yet a close examination of these connections will show us that, first, unicultural identities rarely occur in reality, and that second, a post-independent country's colonial history creates new kinds of knowledge, cultural habits and political practices. I wish to resist any simple categorization and, instead, offer a critical examination of the intricate and often contradictory processes of forming cultural identities and habits. Travel writing, a literary genre composed of cultural observations and personal impressions, is an excellent vehicle for such a study.

I was well-prepared by my multicultural background to become a comparatist, but was less prepared for the debates which currently dominate the discipline. In her essay entitled "Comparative Exile," Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism (1995), Emily Apter describes postcolonial literacy as "imbued . . . [with] amnesia of origins, fractured subjectivity, border trauma . . ." (90), and she sees the contest between different generations of comparatists as "a border war" (94). Although I agree that some of the problems Apter cites do exist, I do not believe that the field of comparative literature has been quite so disabled. Mary Louise Pratt suggests, less combatively than Apter, that comparative literature could be cultivated as "a site for powerful intellectual renewal in the study of literature and culture" ("Comparative Literature" 62). She proposes that the discipline should produce "*bilingual, bicultural* people (or multilingual, multicultural people)" instead of students who know several languages. It is possible that students who culturally and linguistically appreciate non-European countries, ethnic groups and so on will help to break down the Eurocentric tradition of comparative literature, but I think that a complex phenomenon such as a multicultural mindset cannot be



"produced" readily in a university environment which, though it draws on a multicultural clientele, exists largely within a Eurocentric tradition.

Any culture is a complex study. For instance, what does a Chinese cultural identity mean? It means more than speaking one or many of the dialects. It also involves more than an intellectual appreciation of the culture. To be Chinese is to have a "sense of belonging to a unified civilization that boasts several thousands of years of uninterrupted history," and though Chinese culture has been "amalgamating, restructuring, reinventing," most Chinese still believe in the superiority of the Han people as the race of China (Wu 160-2). Many Asian cultures share a similar racial and nationalistic consciousness, however mythical or invented it may be. Thus, to be Chinese, as is the case in all cultural identity-formation, means drawing upon historical and social processes which have changed and shaped daily lives over a long period of time. As a person brought up in several cultures, I have fostered a habit to view situations from various perspectives. This habit can lead to creative, interdisciplinary but, sometimes, paradoxical approaches to problems rather than dogmatic ones. Although I condemn the colonial ambitions of European countries, I cannot disavow the colonial elements which constitute my upbringing. On a larger scale, many post-independent Asian countries have to consider similar problems, and each has to find its own political and pragmatic solution: for instance, should Myanmar (Burma) totally reject its colonial past and become xenophobic in its exclusion of all other cultures, or should Singapore maintain English as one of its official languages in spite of the colonial implication of English? As I write this thesis, I realise that my interest in European culture forms a counterpoint to my disapprobation of European colonial history. I also realise that

travel writers are carriers of cultural habits, and that these habits vary from nation to nation, and change from one generation to another.

Therefore, I do not study European travellers only as agents of imperial ambition, nor can I valorize Chinese travellers as more tolerant of cultural differences than their European counterparts. Instead, I try to account for each writer's opinions and prejudices, but, again, my attempt to understand German and British Orientalism does not negate the reprehensible history of the European colonization of Asia. I find myself in a similar situation as Janice Brownfoot in her study of the memsahibs in colonial Malaya. Although she wants to "challenge the unbalanced images drawn by men and to enable the women [memsahibs] to tell their own story" (187), the non-Asian women still emerge from her article as bigoted and racist because of the colonial history which generally determined their actions. The travellers represent different cultures; however, the hostility and distrust between European and non-European people run through the entire narrative.

Since I cannot see myself siding exclusively with either the West or the East, both terms which designate homogeneity and deny cultural and historical uniqueness, I have refrained from capitalizing the adjectives 'eastern' and 'western', and name specific country and culture whenever possible. Asian countries do not conceptualize themselves in terms of the East, or the Orient. Each country is strongly aware of its own ethnic and historical identity instead of a general geographical identity. As an example, in a recent issue of *Asiaweek*, a Hong Kong publication, the word 'eastern' is never used and 'western' is mentioned only twice. Likewise, I prefer the term 'the others' to 'the Other' because people do not have a single reaction against an essentialized Other, but many and graduated

responses to cultures foreign to one's own. It is also important to remember that not only people of European descent see non-Europeans as 'the others', but to the many Asians, non-Asians are 'the others'. Within the European tradition of North American universities, a topic as well-intentioned as colonial study can easily re-establish the power relation of the non-Asian as the speaking subject and the Asians as the objectified others. In my world, there are many other cultures, some Asian and some non-Asian. One of the solutions to bridging differences is to recognize the social milieu which forms the cultural habits of the others. Sometimes, recognition can also bring about salutary change in our cultural perceptions.

### Note

<sup>1</sup> There is one written Chinese language but many spoken dialects. One cannot really use the term spoken Chinese, and colonial chroniclers such as J.H.M. Robson were careful to differentiate, for example, between the Cantonese-speaking and Hokien-speaking Chinese in Malaya. Colonial administrators recognised the ethnic prejudice which existed among the Chinese communities. This knowledge was essential to the colonizers, who manipulated inter-ethnic conflicts to their own advantage. See Records and Recollections.

## INTRODUCTION: EVERYDAY PRACTICE AND ORIENTALISM

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Travel narratives describe the presence of the others. In the classical world of Herodotus, the others were the non-Greeks, the barbarians. In Marco Polo's thirteenth-century Europe, the others were those who lived in non-Christian lands, while in China, the ancestors of Marco Polo's Great Khan were outsiders to the Chinese until the Mongols ruled China and adopted Chinese ways. Criteria defining otherness will change with history. In the nineteenth century, Europeans considered non-whites as a lower species in the hierarchy established by European religion and learning. This racist belief was used to justify nineteenth-century European colonial expansion as a civilizing project. What distinguishes nineteenth-century European colonial enterprises from the previous centuries "seems to be [their] overt, pervasive, and extraordinarily confident racism" (Thomas 77). It was a strand of racism motivated and institutionalised by an "occidental capitalism" which exploited the colonized countries by successful assumption of military force and administrative power structures (Rex 204-5). In western colonizing culture, the others could be Muslim infidels or African heathens, but they were all in need of administration and catechism by the Europeans.

While western travel writing reported on an increasingly number of countries as colonization expanded, traditional Chinese travel writing "was concerned with travel in China itself . . . " (Strassberg 4). Imperial China had an insular attitude towards non-Chinese different from the European attitude towards Asians. Trading with non-Asian foreigners was forbidden except for brief periods of changes in imperial rule, or until western

military actions enforced an open-door policy in mid-nineteenth century. Missionary efforts were restricted. Other Asian states, such as Siam and Burma, were subsumed into the tributary states system when outright conquests failed.<sup>1</sup> China, or Zhong-guo (literally middle-country), had always considered itself to be the kingdom at the centre of the world (Wu 161). Imperial China held the rest of the world in indifference, and its policy towards Europeans remained relatively unchanged until the latter half of the nineteenth century. When China decided to adopt western technology for industrial and military development, it still held onto the belief that Chinese moral and philosophical values were essentially superior to western culture (Spence 224-5). Eurocentrism was countered by Sinocentrism.

James Clifford asks in The Predicament of Culture, "Can one ultimately escape procedures of dichotomizing, restructuring, and textualizing in the making of interpretive statements about foreign cultures and traditions?" (261). This pervasive problem in perceiving and representing other cultures generally informs my analysis. Many critical studies have recently been written on the representation of the others: François Hartog's The Mirror of Herodotus (1988), Sara Suleri's The Rhetoric of English India (1992) and Mary Louise Pratt's Imperial Eyes : Travel Writing and Transculturation (1992), to name but a few. Most works, however, concentrate on the modes of representation and the literary product, that is, the textual strategies used by travel writers and their analyses. For instance, Pratt provides a penetrating discussion of Alexander von Humboldt's Ansichten der Natur (Views of Nature 1808) in Imperial Eyes. But her relatively brief section on Humboldt "[a]s a romantic, the German kind" (137) fails to contextualize Humboldt's

interpretation of nature within the specific tradition of German Romanticism, which includes such figures as Novalis, who speaks of nature as an occult cipher in Die Lehrlinge zu Sais (1797), an idea which Humboldt echoes in his South American narrative. The difference between Humboldt's and other eighteenth-century travellers' descriptions of landscape, such as Alexander Dalrymple's (Oriental Repertory 1791), can be better appreciated if one understands in some detail Humboldt's literary ties to German Romanticism.

Although I am interested in the travel accounts themselves, I am more concerned with the social-historical construction of the writers who posit the "interpretative statements about foreign cultures and traditions." What social process and historical circumstances formed the subjectivity of Isabella Bird (1831-1904), imperialist and mission-lady? Why would Max Dauthendey (1867-1918) see a New Guinean native as a mighty warrior and not as a degenerate savage? How did Ai Wu (1904-1992), descendant of a traditional Chinese family and schooled in the classics, acquire the rebellious attitude and political consciousness so prevalent in his travel sketches? These are some of the questions I hope to answer by conducting a kind of criticism at the "micro level" of travel literature.<sup>2</sup> My analysis is generated by the examination of everyday life and social experience of these writers *before* they embarked on their journeys. Most travellers journey with their consciousness already formed by their home-societies; therefore it becomes imperative that we should understand the travellers' social settings before we analyse their writings. If the practice of misrepresentation starts at home, then one's investigation should take into account the travellers' individual social-cultural background and their general ideologies. And instead of reading travel writing "from above," as

one historian describes the German tradition of studying history in large political and philosophical contexts (Evans 22-3), I intend to approach the narratives from a street-level, to look at the travellers' interactions with social space which influenced their daily lives at home. Thus I have focussed on some key moments in the modernization of nineteenth-century England and Germany, and in the modernization of China in the twentieth century, to represent the main currents of influence. These moments--the 1851 Exhibition, the Art Nouveau in Germany, the May Fourth Movement in China--were expressions of modernizing processes and counter-movement against modernization. It is my purpose to show that this network of influences is instrumental in forming the travellers' cultural identities and habits, which in turn conditioned their constructions of other cultures.

A work which offers an examination "from above" of the systematic construction and interpretation of others is Edward Said's Orientalism (1978). Since its publication, it has continued to stimulate discussions among literary critics interested in the vast body of writings on the Orient. The book was instrumental in providing "a shift in the interest of literary and cultural theoreticians from textuality to historicity," and it "has been a vital force in inaugurating a new phase of cultural and literary studies marked by a recognition of the complicity of European knowledge in the history of Western colonialism" (Behdad 10). In the reactionary, or as Nicholas Thomas more generously calls them, "hypercritical" discussions "on the part of defensive practitioners of Asian studies" (21), Said has been faulted for "three hundred pages of twisted, obscure, incoherent, ill-



informed, and badly written diatribe" (Ryckmans 20). But even more objective reviews tend to agree that Said's *Orientalism* is problematical.

The most obvious problem to East Asianists would be the exclusion of East Asian and Southeast Asian countries from Said's "Orient". As Said himself admits, "*Orientalism* did something fairly limited, although it covered a lot of ground . . . I limited myself to the period from about 1800 until the present, looking at the Islamic Arab world" (Pen 63). On the very first page of *Orientalism*, Said explains that he has decided to concentrate on the British and French "long tradition of . . . Orientalism, a way of coming to terms with the Orient that is based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience" (1). If one looks at the history of western colonization, the Portuguese and the Dutch empires had an arguably longer tradition than the French and the English in "coming to terms" with the Orient. The Portuguese established the first unofficial colony in East Asia when they "appointed officials . . . to govern" Macau in 1557 (Hsü 93), and they will have the dubious privilege to control the last European colony in Asia until 1999. Portugal was also the first European country to have a sizable literature on Asia (Lach 1:148-217). These facts cannot be ignored in a historicized study and critique of the tradition of western colonization. In concentrating on the French and British colonization of parts of Asia and the Middle-East, *Orientalism* tends to de-emphasize that part of European colonization which began in the sixteenth century and affected countries in Asia other than India.

Even if we confine ourselves to the colonial history of the nineteenth century, two colonial powers in Asia must be taken into account. Although The Netherlands could not continue to rival England as a European power in the nineteenth century, they remained a strong colonial presence in

Southeast Asia until the mid-twentieth century. A new entry in the race for colonial possessions, Germany claimed New Guinea, several island groups in the Pacific, Qingdao (Tsingtao), and the Shandong Peninsula in China as part of German territories. Although Germany, because it was a colonial power only for a short period, did not develop the rich tradition of colonial literature as the Dutch did in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was the centre of European Orientalist Study in the Romantic era. Friedrich Schlegel's writings and lectures on Sanskrit and Indic Studies inspired a great number of other German orientalists, including his brother, Wilhelm (Schwab 74). Said defends his exclusion of Germany in his study of Orientalism by claiming that

at no time in German scholarship during the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century could a close partnership have developed between Orientalists and a protracted, sustained *national* interest in the Orient. There was nothing in Germany to correspond to the Anglo-French presence in India, the Levant . . . . (Orientalism 18-9)

Said is right when he writes that "there is a possibly misleading aspect to my study" (18). In this instance, there was no corresponding German presence in the Orient because there was no Germany at that time.

Germany did not become a nation until 1871. Between then and the First World War, an aggressive colonial policy was pursued to much effect, a period in German history which will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

And although the "German Orient was almost exclusively a scholarly, or at least a classical Orient" (Orientalism 19), Germans were just as aware of the East as other Europeans were through inter-European commerce and travelling. As early as the sixteenth century, "[t]he close political ties of

the Hapsburgs to Spain and the Low Countries and the constant commercial intercourse between Antwerp . . . and the Hanseatic and south German mercantile centers brought Germany . . . into intimate touch with the discoveries and Asian trade" (Lach 2:22). Germans, although not active colonialists, were nonetheless developing stereotypical impressions of the East. In *Orientalism*, Said presents us with an exclusive picture of European orientalist practices based mainly on two colonial nations, a reification of a "Western totality . . . a discrete entity capable of generating knowledge and institutional power . . ." (Clifford 272). *Orientalism* and much writing on colonialism, as Thomas cautions, tend to conflate the colonizers into a global entity and ignore the questions of who was colonizing and where (97-8).

And if the Orient of the modern Orientalist "is not the Orient as it is, but the Orient as it has been Orientalized," as Said claims (*Orientalism* 104), then one must wonder if there ever was an essential Orient before it was orientalized. Or as Robert Young asks in *White Mythologies*, "[I]f Said denies that there is any actual Orient which could provide a true account of the Orient represented by Orientalism, how can he claim in any sense that the representation is false?" (130). It also raises the question of whether there is the possibility of true cultural representation, or whether cultural representation is always prey to stereotyping? And if one wants to speak of the "actual" Orient, or Asia and the Middle East, one must also include China, Japan, Korea, the Malayan Peninsula, Burma, the Dutch Indies and so on. In *Orientalism*, there are a French Europe and a British Europe, just as there is an Orient which Said defines, whether intentionally or not, as the Islamic Arab world. Perhaps all this criticism of *Orientalism* is mere cavilling, an approach which Rey Chow decries as "positivistic thinking,

derived from a literal understanding of the significance of geographical captivity" (7). But I think, to quote Said himself, Orientalism could indeed be misleading, especially now that it has reached "textbook status" (Thomas 8). Its sweep of vision and undifferentiated treatment (or simple neglect) of Asia do not equip the readers "for the singularity of representations of other regions [other than the Middle East]" (8).

In Orientalism, western views of the Orient are described as "an unstoppable European expansion," an "efficient engine" which could "capture [the Orient], treat it, describe it, improve it, radically alter it" (95). The Orient was totally suppressed and human interchange was non-existent. This image of a cowed and victimized Orient tends to confirm the colonial belief that the Orient was weak and submissive. In a collection of essays entitled Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia (1993),<sup>3</sup> various contributors try to show that "colonial discourses are not only interconnected but also *productive* discourses, which create new kinds of knowledge, expression, political practice, and subjectivity" (Breckenridge 6). One instance of this relation between the West and the East was the adoption of the "Madras" system, "also known as the 'monitorial' or 'mutual improvement' system" for a scheme for national education in eighteenth-century England (Richardson 91). The "Madras" system, initially designed to educate the "half-caste children" of British soldiers in India, became the educational system which facilitated "the internal colonization of [England's] unruly 'industrious classes'" (Richardson 96-7). The disciplinary and monitoring nature of the system eventually became part of the nineteenth-century philanthropic culture, much as precautionary measures taken against the spreading of the plague evolved into the panoptic power of the government in later centuries (Foucault,

Discipline 195-228). In the case of the 'Madras system', the power structure remained uneven in this transference of colonial administrative and pedagogic knowledge to the empire: colonial half-castes and metropolitan unruly social classes needed close supervision, and a system was devised for this enforcement, in India and in Great Britain. It also proves the point that the circulation of knowledge and the formation of social relations within the colonial system were more complex than Orientalism would lead one to presume.

Thus the postcolonial critic Homi Bhabha reiterates in his essays that colonial discourse is ambivalent and contested, and that in his "inadequate engagement with alterity and ambivalence," Said offers "a peremptory resolution to a problem posed with remarkable insight" by the introduction of "a binarism within the argument . . ." ("Other Question" 77). To Bhabha, "[h]ybridity is the sign of the productivity of colonial power, its shifting forces and fixities" ("Signs" 173). This reading, as does Lisa Lowe's in Critical Terrains: French and British Orientalisms (1991), considerably destabilizes Said's monumental Orientalism: "If the effect of colonial power is seen to be the *production* of hybridity . . . then an important change of perspective occurs. It reveals the ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority and enables a form of subversion . . ." (173). To Bhabha, colonial power is established not solely by colonial authority nor native silence. Colonial authority must necessarily face the challenge of "the uncanny forces of race, sexuality, violence, cultural and even climatic differences" (174). Other writers have also noted that colonial writing does not always record a total will to dominate, but that colonial encounters could occasion bewilderment and fear in the colonizing agent as well (Thomas 15, Herbert 167-9).

The differentiated approach which critics such as Bhabha offer in re-reading the colonial discourse contributes to my comparative study of western and eastern travel writings. But the cultural criticism of Pierre Bourdieu is also pertinent to my analysis of both the formation of cultural habits and the way these habits influenced the cultural encounters of the travellers. Although Bourdieu does not write on colonial topics, his ideas are useful in their analyses of social practices, practices which include travelling and writing. He analyses the social structure of Kabyle in Africa (Esquisse d'une Théorie de la Pratique 1972), Parisian society (La Distinction 1979), and the social relations within the cultural world (The Field of Cultural Production 1993)<sup>3</sup>, using the concept of the *habitus*. "L'*habitus*," Bourdieu writes in Esquisse d'une Théorie de la Pratique, is the "principe générateur" (generative principle) "[qui] produit des pratiques" (179). These practices, including social habits, in turn reproduce the regularities or rules inherent in the objective conditions of the production, objective conditions being the material conditions of existence, such as the place of dwelling or of work. In other words, our social habits are shaped by material conditions, which are in turn shaped by our social habits. In La Distinction, speaking of a more specific society, Bourdieu further explains *habitus* as "[n]écessité incorporée, convertie en disposition génératrice de pratiques sensées et de perceptions capables de donner sens aux pratiques ainsi engendrées . . . ." (necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions)<sup>5</sup> (La Distinction 190). These practices and perceptions are circulated within society through personal interaction or the media; as a result, cultural misrepresentations continue to thrive. Within the concept of *habitus*, the tendency of people in various

occupations--such as travelling--to misrepresent others, becomes a manifestation of internalized lessons which we have absorbed into our everyday life through the material conditions of our existence.

Because different material conditions of existence produce different forms of *habitus*, it follows logically that members of different societies and cultures will develop their own sets of dispositions, pre-conceptions and prejudices regarding other peoples and cultures. In Said's *Orientalism* and much of the critical writings on colonial discourse generated by it (one can even say that *Orientalism* and its discourse within the academic community form a kind of *habitus*), all Westerners are suspect of having racist attitudes towards people of non-European origins. But according to the logic of *habitus* and its flexible analysis of practices, I would rather say that the way we (Westerners or non-Westerners) perceive others will always be structured by our own social conditions, regardless of the racial or ethnic identity of the societies. Our misconceptions of the others will differ in gradation, but they will not be eradicated as long as the others remain 'not one of us'. Thus a multicultural society will likely be more tolerant of other cultural practices than a homogenous society; a liberal government will be less xenophobic than a totalitarian one. The concept of *habitus* allows for such conditions of restructuring by gradual changes in societies. Within this concept, one takes into account the "dynamics of colonialism" and does not assume "that some unitary representation is extended from the metropole and cast across passive spaces, unmediated by perceptions or encounters" (Thomas 60).

I have traced the dispositions, that is, the tendencies and responses, of the travellers when confronted by a foreign environment, to the objective conditions and everyday practices of their home societies. These

were conditions which formed their social identities: "l'identité sociale se définit et s'affirme dans [les] différence[s]" (social identities are defined and asserted through difference[s]) (*La Distinction* 191). Of all forms of material conditions, I have concentrated on the social settings, which include the built environment, and the travellers' interactions within them. The theme of the social settings facilitates a continuous discussion throughout the different stages in the travellers' journey, from the transit to the on-site stage. Because the *habitus* is not only a structuring structure ("structure structurante") but also a structured structure ("structure structurée") (*La Distinction* 191), it allows for the paradoxical conditions in which we will find the travellers, who could be restructured by their new environment and yet, in many ways, resisted change after their travels occurred. The internalization of various dispositions and conditions at home is not so easily erased by an encounter with a different culture; on the contrary, habits acquired at home are often further entrenched when confronted by a foreign culture. When the objective conditions of home were closely replicated abroad, such as in the British colonial settlements in Southeast Asia, there was even less disruption of the traveller's perceptions. Thus, Isabella Bird's reactions towards the Malays were closely linked to her disposition towards the poor in Edinburgh and London. When the material conditions were somewhat changed, because there was a difference in cultural practices, the traveller could continue to behave as he had at home, but would inevitably find that the conditions, restrained by political decisions or foreign languages, were not always congenial. This was the case with Dauthendey who found himself in a predominantly Dutch colonial community. Ai Wu experienced the same disjuncture in perception when he travelled to Burma and was confronted



directly by colonial rule. The latent hostility he felt towards foreigners in China was aggravated by life experience. Theory was then transformed into activism. Thus the responses of the travellers to alien cultural situations were governed by the degree of differences between their own and the others' cultural habits.

One can become reductionist in framing a discussion of English, German and Chinese travel narratives within the concept of *habitus* alone. In La Distinction and The Field of Cultural Production, Bourdieu focusses his analyses on the Parisian class system and on the relations of French cultural institutions, and these specific social structures cannot without qualifications be applied to travel texts produced by agents of three different cultures. In the study of travel writing, the social background of the traveller and the politics of literary production are pertinent topics for discussion, in which Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* becomes relevant, but I want to expand the notion of *habitus* to include literary study, a strategy already practiced to a degree by critics such as Rachel Bowlby in Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing and Zola (1985).

I read travel writing as a literary form with many functions. At its most ideological, travel writing "is essentially an instrument within colonial expansion and served to reinforce colonial rule once in place" (Sara Mills 2). Travel writing could also be used as an educational tool and has not always been considered a form of trivial literature. As Charles Batten reminds the reader, accounts of European travels in the eighteenth century were considered "as being of distinct literary merit" (24). It is both a social and historical record, and it interacts and intersects with forms of knowledge and expression throughout the world (Pratt Imperial Eyes 5). The continued popularity of travel writing gives the writer a

chance at gaining literary prestige and monetary rewards, and could guarantee an author a wide readership. These are historical and social conditions embedded in the genre which should be considered when one studies travel writing. Above all, travel writing is ambiguous. It is purportedly factual, but many travel narratives have proven to be fictional in parts; the example of The Travels of Sir John Mandeville (14th century), so often cited by earlier travellers, comes readily to mind. But like early novels, "the reportorial function" of travel writing has given the genre its "privileged position of observation and commentary" (Davis 212). Thus Joseph Conrad could vouchsafe the veracity of his Southeast Asian characters because he borrowed the descriptions from travel records (Sherry 139-41). Because of the perceived reportorial and the implicit political function, as well as the popularity of travel writing, the critical study of the genre is both necessary and instructive. It contributes to the discussions of such topics as the invention of tradition, or the truth value in writing.

There have been many recent academic studies on travel writing. Mary Campbell's The Witness and the Other World (1988) discusses travel literature from 400 to 1600 AD, while Tzvetan Todorov's La Conquête de l'Amérique (1982, The Discovery of America 1984) and Peter Hulme's Colonial Encounters (1986) provide critical insights into European writings on the history of Central America and the Caribbeans. Percy Adams (Travel Literature and the Evolution of the Novel 1983) and Charles Batten (Pleasurable Instruction: Form and Convention in 18th Century Travel Literature 1978) analyse the genre in the context of western literary tradition. With the recognition that the student population is increasingly multicultural and with the growing interest in other literary traditions,

travel writing becomes an ideal genre for the study of intercultural responses and history. Although travel writing has been acknowledged in traditional literary histories, it was not "until the advent of colonial discourse as a legitimate field of research in the 1970s" (2), as Sara Mills writes in Discourses of Difference, that travel writing was studied as colonial text.

As articles in Charles Bernheimer's Comparative Literature in the Age of Multiculturalism (1995) show, Comparative Literature is theoretically the best-suited discipline for the study of colonial discourse. My own colonial background largely influences my reading of travel writing as both a palimpsestic history of the metropole at a certain period, and a literary record of the countries which are visited. Therefore, I discuss some aspects of European and Chinese cultures in as much detail as the travellers' representations of Southeast Asia. Although the three travellers do not belong to the established roster of great writers such as Henry James, Thomas Mann or Lu Xun, they are recorders and eyewitnesses of encounters in which the cultural and power dynamics involved were always complex and layered. Bird, Dauthendey and Ai Wu represent specific cultural moments in nineteenth-century Europe and twentieth-century China which had an important impact on travel writing, and travel writing, as mentioned before, is a genre which can circulate cultural perceptions. The geographical and literary areas which are examined in the thesis have been overlooked in previous studies: the colonial cultures in Southeast Asia and popular German Orientalism have not generally been explored, and an extensive comparison of Chinese and European travel writings has not yet been conducted. The relation between factual reports and fiction is just as complex and layered, and I

use both travel narratives and fiction to show some of the connections between the two genres, such as the sharing of tropes. Analyses of travel narratives alongside colonial fiction clarify the motivations of fictional writers such as Orwell or Conrad and show the cultural context within which they worked. Travel writing by minor writers introduces fresh perspectives on literature as cultural history. This genre of writing also provides concrete information for our interpretations of canonical works, as, for instance, reading Bird's The Golden Chersonese can shed much light on Conrad's Southeast Asian tales.

I begin the chapter on Isabella Bird with a detailed discussion of the glass and steel structure which was generally called the Crystal Palace. Conceived as an idea in 1849 and opened in 1851, the huge domed structure was metonymic of the Victorian belief in progress and was "the start of the modern myth of the grail of 'growth'" (McKean 5). The innovative design and vastness of the structure, and the plenitude of objects on show instilled in the British the belief that "every future improvement in society will radiate in some unknown or known way from the Great Exhibition" (The Economist qtd. in Richards 29). The Crystal Palace symbolized two central ideas important to a middle-class Victorian like Isabella Bird: the power of the British Empire and the proper fashion for the colonizing agent to view and describe the colonized subjects as possessions.

A prodigious project undertaken and finished in an amazingly short span of time, from the tender deadline of July 10, 1850 to the opening date of May 1, 1851, the Crystal Palace was a concrete testimony to the industrial ingenuity of nineteenth-century Britain. This gargantuan

building situated in Hyde Park in the centre of London, an astonishing physical phenomenon in itself, was sold to the public through skillful commercial strategies as "the ideology of England, from the national identity embodied in the monarchy to the imperial expansion taking place in Africa . . . " (Richards 5). The project was strongly endorsed by the Prince Consort from early design stages. His support, together with the elaborate opening ceremony by the Queen in the presence of all the important personages of the realm, confirmed the royal patronage of the project and the building. The Crystal Palace was more than a building. It became one of those centres which Clifford Geertz calls "concentrated loci of serious acts," an arena in which leading institutions of a society converge to create ideas of lasting influence (Geertz 14). Britons like Isabella Bird would be justly proud of the Crystal Palace and what it housed and represented.

Inside the building were not only exhibits of manufactured objects and all forms of commodity, but also units of colonial displays. The rationale for imperial displays was "[t]o show the resources of the colony off . . . to encourage emulation and . . . [t]o enhance British trade" (Greenhalgh 55-6). Indians and Indian artifacts were displayed and catalogued in the same way as a lighthouse reflector or a giant telescope. Spectators were educated and encouraged to participate in the colonial adventure; other peoples and cultures were objectified as colonial lessons for the masses.

Embedded and implicated in the success of the construction of the Crystal Palace were the problems inimical to the industrial age. From an aesthetic point of view, critics like Ruskin objected to the architecture of steel and glass as a separation of "art from nature, labor from design, and

function from beauty"; to such critics it was a triumph of "engineering bravura" rather than beautiful design (Boyer 226). In more practical terms it was the prototype of the urban architecture of modern cities: the skyscrapers and the shopping malls. Corollary to the process of urban modernization was an influx of population looking for work, which "created an acute problem of overcrowding . . ." (Himmelfarb 55-6). It was about the middle of the century that the word 'slum', which originally signified a slumbering, unfrequented back alley, acquired its negative meaning today (207). The grid-formation of the interior of the exhibition site, the triumphal displays of technological inventions, the valorization of science and modern hygiene, all these contributed to the Victorians' increasing awareness of the seedy living conditions of the working classes. It was not mere coincidence that Henry Mayhew authored both a novel based on the Great Exhibition (1851) and an exhaustive study of the lives of the London poor.

Henry Mayhew's social writings, which are discussed in Chapter 1, could be read as blueprints to Victorian novels by Dickens or Wilkie Collins. One cannot fully appreciate a figure such as Silas Wegg or Mr. Boffin in Our Mutual Friend without reading Mayhew's descriptions of the costermonger or the dustman in London Labour and London Poor. His articles were avidly read by the public, partly because of the rising sentiment of philanthropy in the middle-class, but also because they provided a glimpse into a world which held all the fascination of a foreign country. Thomas Cook, the genius of modern mass tourism, "ran sightseeing tours to the East End of London," where Cook had its office amongst "a Dickensian rookery pullulating with life" (Brendon 153) and slumming became a fashionable pastime. The London of the social outcasts

was the equivalent of the criminal world of Balzac or the mysteries of Eugène Sue's Paris, a milieu which, as Benjamin tells us, contained all the poetic terror of Cooper's savage America (Baudelaire 543-44).

Thus I introduce Mayhew as a bridge-figure to Bird, who shared Mayhew's reforming zeal and anthropological curiosity. Mayhew's London and Bird's Edinburgh also provide the explanatory background to Bird's interest in the native built environment in The Golden Chersonese. In the Malay Peninsula, coddled by people of her own social class and gratified by the signs of prosperity of the colonial empire, Bird continued her mode of observation, treating the Malays very much as if they were the unemployed and the poor of Britain. The social power relations between the observer and the observed remained unchanged. Her access to places and peoples was a kind of "[c]ontrol over spatial organization" which is crucial "for the reproduction of social power relations" (Harvey 186-7). However, Bird's dispositions were challenged when she arrived in China, where, although western presence was *allowed*, the Westerners' movements were circumscribed.

To present two facets of imperial travel writing I compare Bird's account of Canton, China to another English traveller's. Laurence Oliphant was on a government mission and he encountered the Chinese in a military skirmish. His account of the Chinese was phrased in the rude terms of a conqueror. By contrast, Bird's sense of superiority was diminished by circumstance. Lacking the power to control the spatial organization of the city, she could not interrupt the everyday life of the Chinese as she could the Malays. Reduced to gazing at the shopfronts, Bird had to place the Chinese in a different category of otherness. Still in the "allochronistic" perceiving mode (Fabian, Time and the Other 31-2),<sup>6</sup> Bird saw the Chinese

as an ancient and corrupt people, moving down the slope of development. Bird treated the Malays, who were dependent subjects, with the indulgence reserved for ignorant children. In Canton, she was only once allowed to penetrate the "front region" of the city life, the "barriers to perception" of which Goffman speaks in the organization of social space (106). It was, in a perversely appropriate way, a place of violence and punishment. Bird's habit of entry and surveillance, themselves transgressive activities, was thus rewarded by the permission to observe violent acts.

The ultimate exercise of power for a traveller is to ignore the determination of frontiers which organize spatiality everywhere ("*il n'est pas de spatialité que n'organise la détermination de frontières*") (de Certeau 217). Travel guides, whether in person or in book form, are agents who set up boundaries for the travellers to observe: these guides suggest certain sights and advise avoidance of certain routes. They also function as etiquette handbooks. In the last part of Chapter 1, I examine how Bird's freedom from the interdiction of a Baedeker gives her the ultimate possessing gaze, the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" look (Pratt 201-5), thus restoring her to the position of colonial surveyor and shopper of cultures with which the chapter begins.

The thesis moves from the drama of the interior (Crystal Palace, slums) to the drama of the street in the chapter on Max Dauthendey. In the first part of Chapter 2, I explore Berlin in the 1890s, at the time when Max Dauthendey arrived from the provinces. In order to convey the depth of influence which this new imperial capital exerted on the perception of the young poet and artist, I include discussions of various aspects of Berlin's urban life: the Berlin Secession, the architecture and the city space,



the imperial culture of Wilhelm II. I see Dauthendey primarily as a *flâneur*, the social figure whose habitat is indexed by Baudelaire in 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne':

La foule est son domaine, comme l'air est celui de l'oiseau, comme l'eau celui du poisson. Sa passion et sa profession, c'est d'*épouser la foule*. Pour le parfait flâneur, pour l'observateur passionné, c'est une immense jouissance que d'élire domicile dans le nombre, dans l'ondoyant, dans le mouvement, dans le fugitif et l'infini. (691)

(The crowd is his domain, just as the air is the bird's, and water that of the fish. His passion and his profession is to merge with the crowd. For the perfect idler, for the passionate observer it becomes an immense source of enjoyment to establish his dwelling in the throng, in the ebb and flow, the bustle, the fleeting and the infinite.)<sup>7</sup>

The nineteenth-century *flâneur* could only exist within certain social and historical contexts. As Benjamin discusses the phenomenon, the *flâneur* culture needed the physical setting of a modern city. Before Haussmann's rebuilding of Paris, wide pavements were rare, and the narrow ones afforded little protection from vehicles. Strolling was made possible because of the construction of arcades (Baudelaire 36-7). The literary idler as a social type was already detectable in the London coffee-houses of Regency England, as exemplified by men of letters such as Joseph Addison (Brand 71-7), but Benjamin saw the *flâneur* as a stroller in the city in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Baudelaire's and Benjamin's *flâneur* flourished in the milieu of the 'capitalist city', which "is a place of mystery, the site of the unexpected, full of agitations and ferments, of multiple liberties, opportunities, and alienations . . . of violence, innovation, and reaction" (Harvey 229). Berlin of the 1890s was the supreme example of such a city.

Emperors of the newly united Germany undertook imperial building projects and transformed the city into a spectacle. Wilhelm II used it as the setting for his spectacular ceremonies. The architecture of glass and steel, the train stations, the arcades and the department stores rivaled each other in feats of engineering and design. It was a city which flourished under modern industrialization, and "[L]a société qui repose sur l'industrie moderne n'est pas fortuitement ou superficiellement spectaculaire, elle est fondamentalement *spectacliste*" ([t]he society which rests on modern industry is not accidentally or superficially spectacular, it is fundamentally *spectaclist*) (Debord 14).<sup>8</sup> The culminating effect of this cornucopia of spectacles is an urbanization process which took place in Dauthendey's creative consciousness, and

[t]o dissect the urban process . . . is to lay bare the roots of consciousness formation in the material realities of daily life. It is out of the complexities and perplexities of this experience that we build elementary understandings of the meaning of space and time; of social power and its legitimations; of forms of domination and social interaction . . . and of human nature, civil society and political life. (Harvey 230)

In Dauthendey's case, the "consciousness formation" was intensely visual, owing no doubt to his own background in photography and his training as an artist.

One might say that the existence of the nineteenth-century *flâneur* was based on the visual nexus, the exchange of the gaze. As Benjamin writes in "Charles Baudelaire. Ein Lyriker im Zeitalter des Hochkapitalismus" (Charles Baudelaire, a Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism), "[W]ie es um den Literaten in Wahrheit stand: als Flaneur

begibt er sich auf den Markt; wie er meint, um ihn anzusehen, und in Wahrheit doch schon, um einen Käufer zu finden" ([T]he true situation of the man of letters was: he goes to the marketplace as a *flâneur*, supposedly to take a look at it, but in reality to find a buyer) (536)).<sup>9</sup> The business of *flânerie* was intricately involved with the commodity culture, of which there was no better representative than the department store. During the 1851 Exhibition, the exhibition of goods was still rationalized by high-minded intentions such as mass education and nationalism. But following the establishment of the Bon Marché, the first building that "was formally conceived and systematically designed to house a *grand magasin*" in Paris (Miller 20), selling mass merchandise to the public became a way of life in modern European cities. Commercial architecture and streetscapes changed to accommodate the display of goods and the culture of shopping, inside and outside the stores, created the flow of visual exchanges so important for the *flâneur*. Intimately linked to *flânerie* was the artist, especially someone who was a follower of Art Nouveau.

Dauthendey kept company with representatives of literary *Jugendstil*. He was a friend of Richard Dehmel and Frank Wedekind, a contributor to *Pan* and *Blätter für die Kunst* and, later, met Strindberg in Paris through some of his Berlin friends. *Jugendstil*, or Art Nouveau, was a stylistic movement related to Arts and Crafts in architecture, and to Symbolist and Decadent movements in literature and the visual arts. In their book on the various art movements at the turn of the century, art historians Richard Hamann and Jost Hermand prefer the term 'Stilkunst um 1900' because it is more inclusive and at the same time expressive of a specific epoch. Born out of the Naturalist movement, Art Nouveau reacted against the attention to squalor which Zola's novels typify, but inherited

the naturalist's keen visual sense for details. Adherents of Art Nouveau valorized surface representation. The world of work ("Arbeitswelt") and social reality ("gesellschaftliche Wirklichkeit") were alien to them. Art Nouveau was anti-Realism and anti-Naturalism (Jost 15). The individualist nature of the artist, nurtured and matured through the Romantic Movement and the philosophy of *l'art pour l'art*, engendered the illusionary belief that the artist should be someone "radically independent of the economy and of politics," but

[t]he work of real emancipation, of which the 'post' of artist or poet is the culmination, can be performed and pursued only if the post encounters the appropriate dispositions, such as disinterestedness and daring, and the (external) conditions of these virtues, such as a private income. (Bourdieu, Field of Cultural Production 62-3)<sup>10</sup>

In this interpretation of the constraints which social reality places on the artist, Dauthendey confirms Bourdieu's description of the nineteenth-century writer: "the result of the meeting of two histories: the history of the positions [the artists] occupy and the history of their dispositions" (61).

At about the time when life in the modern city presented itself as a series of spectacles, when "visual codes replace[d] aural codes" (MacCannell, Tourist 64), the business of tourism began to mass market the concept of travelling by packaging cultures. The means by which the travel industry produced a reified image of a foreign culture were visual: advertisement in magazines, posters, brochures, and as provided in the Thomas Cook office in the 1870s, an array of guide-books, maps and commodities related to travelling (Brendon 104). In the 1900s, Cook's Traveller's Gazette was promoting "foreign destinations . . . in giving

spuriously romantic [and visual] titles to faraway places: Ceylon was 'the Garden of the World' . . ." (249). According to Benjamin, the *flâneur* lost his freedom when he joined the commodity market. Urban changes also restrained the practice of *flânerie*; the boulevards became inhospitable for strollers with the increase of traffic and the narrowing of sidewalks. Instead of the streets, the natural place for the stroller and observer of modern cultural scenes to go was abroad. The city *flâneur* who wanted to stay in the market place by writing transformed himself into the world-touring travel writer who 'strolled' according to a well-planned itinerary.

In my analysis of one of Dauthendey's exotic stories set in Asia, a product of his first world tour, I show that the motifs and images used are directly influenced by *Jugendstil*. In his exotic fantasy of the Orient, a different type of misrepresentation of the others takes place. It is more of 'an imaginary Orient'<sup>10</sup> in the artistic sense than Bird's ideologically inscribed representation. Dauthendey did not focus on imperial ambition and success in his travel writings. The German expressionist Emil Nolde, who was also travelling in Southeast Asia in 1914, showed a much stronger colonial streak. Though both were from the same national background, they established different social relations in Germany which in turn influenced their dispositions towards the German colonial possession of New Guinea.

In further discussions of the material conditions of Dauthendey's journeys and his stay in the East, I return to the importance of the built environment and of social space in a person's perception. By reconstituting the practices of specific social classes, the salon on an ocean liner and the resort-style sanatorium were two forms of social settings which helped to re-compose a familiar space in a foreign surrounding. These social settings

also marked out the boundaries to "delineate social groups" (well-off Europeans) and "to define entry or exclusion" (Rapoport, *Meaning* 170). Unlike Isabella Bird, Dauthendey had no opportunity to socialize with local non-Europeans. The boundaries which kept out the natives also confined the Europeans. The settings themselves contained ambiguity. A salon on an ocean liner tried to preserve all the intricate social rules and tastes of middle-class Europeans although it was en route to Asian destinations. As Dauthendey's experience in Java showed, a hill resort, a specifically colonial social setting, was patterned on the sanatorium model in late nineteenth-century Europe, which was "really more a spa than a hospital, laid out on extensive and well-manicured grounds, serv[ing] only the well-to-do" (Rothman 195). Dauthendey's experiences of the East, in my analysis, were spatially circumscribed with very little cultural permeation. This lack of opportunity to form a varied set of social relationships in effect preserved his European 'oriental' vision. His internment increased his longing for Europe and discouraged any enthusiasm he might have nurtured towards Javanese culture.

The itineraries of the travellers in this thesis follow the development of western colonial and capitalist endeavours in East and Southeast Asia from the mid-nineteenth century till the early decades of the twentieth. In The Golden Chersonese Isabella Bird traced the imperial progress of British success in the Malay Peninsula. Max Dauthendey was funded by publishers and the transportation business for his world travels, excursions which were customized adventures and part of the tourist economy. Ai Wu began his travelling in a period when western culture had achieved its maximum influence in China, a process which began in the nineteenth century. Ai Wu's freedom from the constraints of family

tradition and his political insight were fomented by ideas of the May Fourth Movement. His writing career reflects one of the ironies of history: some Chinese intellectuals liberated and educated by western thought eventually used their knowledge to turn against imperial influence and successfully ended western dominance in China.

This dominance began nine years before the opening of the 1851 Exhibition, when British gunboat diplomacy successfully coerced the opening of several Chinese ports to international trade and forced China to cede the island of Hong Kong in perpetuity to Queen Victoria. In the industrialized cities of nineteenth-century Britain, everyday life was changed by the introduction of railroads, the omnibus, in-house plumbing and other manifestations of technology. But China remained impervious to any material form of modernization in spite of the increasing western presence in China in the nineteenth century. In the mid-1890s, "China had only 370 miles of [railroad] tracks" compared to 21,000 miles in Britain (Spence 250-1), and both the imperial and the local governments strenuously opposed any kind of westernization. The areas most affected by modernization were "the treaty port cities and within them . . . the Western concession areas" (Spence 224). Thus arose the "curious, ambiguous position" where elements of tradition and change existed side by side (224), but in no way was the West integrated with the Chinese. Even when the Chinese government realised that the acquisition of western technology, especially in weaponry, would be advantageous to the Chinese, it only agreed to a reform movement which would borrow western technical knowledge for practical uses, holding on to the belief "that there was indeed a fundamental structure of Chinese moral and philosophical values" which was superior to any western system of thought

(Spence 225). Under such circumstances, two power centres were created within treaty port cities. In the concession areas, the western powers were granted extraterritorial rights, while outside the boundaries, the Chinese government wielded traditional jurisdiction.

Chapter 3 begins with an examination of Shanghai, which had the reputation of being the most westernized Chinese city in the early twentieth century. Within the concessions western nations contrived to practice a form of Orientalism which was humiliating to the Chinese, who had never been governed by non-Asians, and which was considerably more restrictive for both racial groups than an outright colonial Orientalism, such as the French in Indochina. Instead of overt domination, the two power groups practiced ongoing prejudiced treatment of each other. Two sets of legal and other "particularized notions as sovereignty, property, discipline, surveillance, and jurisdiction" (Soja 150) marked out the territorialities of the Chinese and western powers. Western concessions in China were concretized examples of the spaces of anxiety and ambivalence which frequently haunt colonial or semi-colonial rules, spaces in which the Westerners were "terrified by the obscurity of 'the native mentality' and overwhelmed by indigenous societies' apparent intractability" (Thomas 15).

But as Foucault points out in "Espace, savoir et pouvoir," there is no absolute system of domination, that ". . . quelle que soit la terreur que puisse inspirer un système donné, il existe toujours des possibilités de résistance, de désobéissance et de constitution de groupes d'opposition" (no matter how terrifying a given system may be, there always remain the possibilities of resistance, disobedience, and oppositional groupings) (*Dits et écrits* 4:275).<sup>12</sup> Concession areas, less absolute in their exercise of



power than the vast Chinese domain, ironically provided Chinese intellectual movement havens from traditional forces. The members of the May Fourth intellectual movement, in turn oppositional to the Chinese government and the western ones, were a 'restructuring' force rather than a purely resistant one in their relations with the traditional Chinese and the imperial western social structures. In their adaptation of western ideas, their admiration for western writers and their anti-western nationalism, May Fourth writers were involved in a process of restructuring which "conveys the notion of a 'brake', if not a break . . . and a shift towards a significantly different order and configuration of social, economic, and political life" (Soja 159). It was rooted

in crisis and in the competitive conflict between the old and the new, between an inherited and a projected order. Restructuring is not a mechanical or automatic process, nor are its potential results and possibilities pre-determined. In its hierarchy of manifestations, restructuring must be seen as originating in and responding to severe shocks in pre-existing social conditions and practices; and as triggering an intensification of competitive struggles to control the forces which shape material [and intellectual] life. It thus implies flux and transition, offensive and defensive postures, a complex and irresolute mix of continuity and change. (Soja 159)

The concession zones, a space of rented power, provided the Chinese intellectuals who enthusiastically accepted western knowledge and philosophy with the in-between territory necessary for their pursuit of forming a new Chinese society. These were areas where Chinese authority was curtailed but where the young intellectuals could minutely observe the humiliating process of diminished sovereignty, observations which provided fuel for their anti-western nationalism.

A similar process of restructuring can be perceived in Ai Wu's personal life, in his enthusiasm for the May Fourth Movement, his anti-Confucian attitude, his practical resistance to traditional familial customs, and his journey to a foreign country. Ai Wu left China as a reaction to "pre-existing social conditions and practices" (Soja 159). He continued to change and react to the condition and political situation in colonial Burma. His writings reflect this state of flux and transition, as do Bird's and Dauthendey's. I compare the writings of two Chinese travellers to show how degrees of dependence on and independence from cultural domination and market conditions could affect two Chinese representations of the others. Ai Wu, an outsider to the Chinese ruling elite and the colonial regimes, was predisposed to write negatively about racial and class suppression in Burma. But his knowledge of western literatures and Burmese dialects also provided him with more points of reference to other cultures than was available to a western traveller such as Somerset Maugham, whose cultural orientation was purely British and who could only communicate through interpreters. With no official or social position to maintain, Ai Wu shaped his reactions as befitted his political agenda. In contrast, the other Chinese traveller I discuss, Chiang Yee, was an ex-official and a political exile in England, and his sense of social status and his need for a refuge made him attend to specific demands which required a certain degree of acculturation.

One can read two sets of dispositions working in Chiang Yee's description and illustrations of the Lake District. His representation of the shrines of English poetry, the Grasmere and Ambleside of Wordsworth and the Coniston Water of Ruskin, is sinologized by his Chinese poetry, painting and calligraphy. He voices admiration for the poetic tradition, but he

writes indifferently of the landscape. He sees the Lake District as an outsider, not only nationally, but also culturally. Although Chiang Yee newly learnt to appreciate the aesthetics of English Romanticism and of English landscape, he nonetheless provides a nuanced response, if not preconditioned adulation, of these culture-laden places. Chiang Yee's representation of English culture is a gesture of textual resistance rather than an aesthetic colonization. In a process of cultural restructuring, when his own national and cultural identity was subsumed by the host country's, Chiang Yee inserts into the rhetorical tradition of English landscape description Chinese texts and Chinese paintings in order to assert his Chinese identity.

I end the chapter on Ai Wu on the theme of assertion and suppression of ethnic identities which are disruptive processes of constant jostling for enunciation in colonial cultures. In Ai Wu's few social interactions with non-Asians, a hostile reaction held in abeyance and a conditioned distrust were evident rather than an open and ready acceptance of other cultural beliefs or behaviour. In the earlier section on Chiang Yee, I have shown how Chiang Yee's apparent acculturation belies his bitterness at western arrogance towards the Chinese. But even within the monolithically constructed Orient, ethnic diversity and hostility existed. The Chinese Han group considered itself the representative ethnic group, and believed that "minority groups . . . had been assimilated into the Chinese culture because of the irresistibly superior Han civilization that had carried on unchanged for thousands of years" (Wu 162). The colonial government in Burma tried to manipulate ethnic tension amongst the Shans, the Karens, the Burmans and so on for political expediency. To provide a look at a focussed and 'westernized' problem of ethnicity, I use

examples from both non-fiction and fiction to illustrate the different treatments and social status accorded the Eurasians in the Anglo-colonial and the Dutch Indies societies. This exercise confirms that there are differences not only between the East and the West, but also distinctions between the western colonial powers.

Throughout the thesis I treat the travellers not primarily as literary figures. Publications which deal with literary travel writers are too numerous to list. My travellers were representatives, knowingly (Bird) or unknowingly (Ai Wu), of the dominant trends in their particular societies. They were variously shaped by certain social tendencies, such as evangelicalism, the culture of commodity and intellectual restructuring. In the English-reading world, Isabella Bird is the only known writer of the trio. She is generally seen as a member of that intrepid group of Victorian spinsters, flourishing between the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, who ventured beyond the boundary of home (Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad* 1989), or as an agent of imperial rhetoric (Kröller, "First Impressions" 1990). Given her popularity as a travel writer--most of her books are still in print--her writings need to be examined in the context of Victorian cultural habits. A recent article on Bird discusses her only as an example of the adventurous lady (Susan Armitage, "Another Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains" 1993). My choice to examine the origins of her imperial and missionary consciousness, which coincided with the emergence of the industrial society in mid-nineteenth century England, will treat Isabella Bird as a mainstream representative of Victorian imperial culture as well as highlight the philosophical conflicts between colonialism and philanthropy.

Thus my thesis starts in the 1840s, when western technology and imperial ambition not only changed the urban landscapes of the western world but also forced western attention and policies upon China. It was also in the mid-nineteenth century that the western "dream of travel" ended with the rise of modernism (Porter, "Modernism" 55), and travelling turned into serious business, either in the Thomas Cook way or as an imperial enterprise. I discuss modernism not primarily in conjunction with aestheticism, as Porter does in "Modernism and the Dream of Travel," but as a manifestation of change in the everyday life of the English, the German and the Chinese societies. For the two Europeans, modernism was the confrontation between the remains of the rural world and "new material world created by European industrial capitalism from the closing decades of the eighteenth century on . . ." (Porter, "Modernism" 58). Bird's response to modernism was to endorse it as a sign of social progress, but it was an endorsement mitigated by social concerns. Her travel narrative is an illustration of the ambivalent ethical role which evangelical imperialists played in colonialism, as "harbingers of industrial capitalism . . . [whose] civilizing mission was simultaneously symbolic and practical . . ." (Comaroff 8-9).

Max Dauthendey persisted in dreaming of travel, the fulfilment of which ended in his death in the tropics. The literary products and some paintings from his travelling are the only remains of his career still in circulation. His writings are not available in English, but paperback editions of his Asian short stories and his travel writings are still massmarketed in Germany, an indication of the popularity of exotic literature. A television programme based on his last years in the Dutch Indies was aired in Germany in 1993 and again in 1995.<sup>13</sup> But unlike

writers of the genre in English and French, such as Kipling and Loti, Dauthendey has so far not been studied within the context of colonial criticism in English. In the area of German Orientalism, there is a desire to isolate Orientalism as a discipline of scholarship grounded in the Sanskrit scholarship of Schlegel or the India of Schopenhauer, as Raymond Schwab's The Oriental Renaissance (1984) and Amos L. Willson's Mythical Image (1964) attest. Or one will find a descriptive history of writers who travelled to the Orient (Schuster, China und Japan 1977). An exception to this tendency is Andrea Fuchs-Sumiyoshi's Orientalismus in der deutschen Literatur (1984) which discusses the construction of the Orient in the great literary tradition from Goethe to Thomas Mann. However, critical attention seems to be lacking in the area of popular orientalist practice, which includes travelling to the Orient. Yet German literature, during Germany's short period as a colonial power, generated a great deal of exotic writing, of which Dauthendey is only one example. This is an area in which more scholarly work is needed. I mention Emil Nolde's autobiographies, but there are also other travel writings by Hermann Hesse, Stefan Zweig, Waldemar Bonsels, Hermann Graf von Keyserling and Richard Hülsenbeck, a pioneer dadaist. Together these texts constitute the field of German Orientalism. John Noyes's Colonial Space (1992) is a study of German Southwest African colonial literature which integrates present theoretical concerns with historicist and textual analyses. This is possible only if literary works, in the broadest interpretation, are studied in relation to their social conditions of production (Bourdieu, Field of Cultural Production 33), and not as some pure disinterested discipline.

Although Der Würzburger Dichter Max Dauthendey, a book published in 1992 on the occasion of the hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of

Dauthendey's birth, includes a short biography by Gabriele Geibig and some unpublished essays written by Dauthendey, it is not a critical analysis of Dauthendey's writings. The most recent study I can find which mentions Dauthendey is Hans Christoph Buch's Die Nähe und die Ferne (1991). Buch chooses to analyse exotic literature within the larger framework of German literature with foreign motifs, and interprets the dialectic of 'here' and 'there' as the psychological projection of an Eurocentric consciousness (12-3, 30-1). Distancing German colonial history from those of Spain, Portugal, England and France (and neglecting the Netherlands), Buch writes that, luckily, Germany today is spared the trouble of decolonization ("Mühsal der Entkolonialisierung") (13). I think that this restrictive reading of the responsibilities and implication of colonization is a rather self-congratulatory attitude. Racism, which engenders misrepresentation, cannot be contained within a historical event, such as a colonial past, and cannot be reserved only for specific countries. But racial prejudice may differ in its manifestations, closely dependent on social and cultural conditions. I hope to show in this thesis more distinct ways of reading colonial and travel writings than the ones provided by the broad context of European colonization.

In a discussion of social attitudes and practices within certain historical periods, the literary genres of the exotic tale and the personal memoir could provide indispensable information for analysis. I have also spent considerable attention on non-literary subjects such as architecture and specific social practices such as hotel living, because they provide the necessary material for my discussion of *habitus* and representation. As Bourdieu maintains in Field of Cultural Production, in order to understand any writer, it is necessary, first of all, to understand the social background

of the writer at the moment under consideration (163), since writers also have to work within the field of power relations in society.

I have tried to make provision for two neglected areas in Said's Orientalism by concentrating on travel writings about colonized areas in Southeast Asia, and by including the contribution of a non-western traveller. I can think of no interventionist tactic more concrete than to discuss European and non-European literatures as equal literary entities. A detailed discussion of an Asian writer provides a truly cross-cultural comparison, and not only an acknowledgement of multiculturalism. Asian literatures such as Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, are often treated as postscripts, if at all, in western critical writing which claims to be postcolonial and non-Eurocentric. The Empire Writes Back (1989) by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin is one such example. This process of marginalization within a discussion of marginal literatures is often a result of the critics' linguistic limitations. Or else, non-European and non-North American studies are perceived as 'exotic', an attitude which Françoise Lionnet claims is a deterrent to "a better understanding of the networks of influence and power, lure and seduction, freedom and liberation" which link various manifestations of interrelated cultures (171). Rey Chow also criticizes the exploitative element in the white intellectual project which "turns precisely the 'disdained' other into the object of his/her study, and in some cases, identification . . ." (13).

In my analysis of Ai Wu, I continue to use the theoretical framework of the earlier chapters, since I am not discussing Ai Wu as an essentialized Chinese writer, or comparing western and Asian literary stylistics. I am inclined to sympathize with Yuan Heh-hsiang who questions the efficacy of using interdisciplinary methodology "on the grounds that its involvement



of multiple disciplines renders the study of East-West relations so complex as to be impossible" (Yuan qtd. in Aldridge x). In my case, I have chosen to discuss Ai Wu's writings with western critical tools. Within the parameters of this thesis, I do not believe it possible to provide two sets (East and West) of theoretical discussions. In addition, there are ideological problems in the matter of Chinese publications: a writer such as Ai Wu, a prominent Communist in China, is not published nor discussed at all in Taiwan. Under such circumstances, there is little contribution from that island in my discussion of Ai Wu. The Chinese critical literature I find tends towards hagiography in the treatment of its subject and is therefore not particularly useful as a critical source, and discussions of certain western topics which impinge upon the cultural totalitarianism in China generally become propagandistic and defensive.

There are not enough critical studies of Chinese writers written in English, and those which are in print usually concentrate on the writers who have already been translated. There is a respectable collection of works on Lu Xun, and a growing number of studies on Ding Ling. But though Ai Wu was a prolific and a published writer both before and after the Communist regime, he was denigrated out of hand by dominant literary historians such as C.T. Hsia for his communist beliefs (A History of Modern Chinese Fiction 1961). In Hsia's influential book, many May Fourth writers are considered inferior to western writers of the same era. Hsia, in his tenacious pursuit in assigning western literary values to Chinese literature in the great *tradition* of Matthew Arnold and F.R. Leavis, seems to be continuing the Eurocentric tendency of only studying literature which is acceptable to established canons. This practice has

traditionally delegated non-English literatures to the margin of European-based curriculum, a situation which this thesis tries to address.

I am aware that there is the same danger of subsuming Chinese culture under western culture in this thesis, but I have kept the discussion within three considerations: the practice of representation in travel writing, the influence of social settings on this practice, and the socio-historical contexts of the human environment. I have paid close attention to "cultural assumptions and institutions and concrete extraliterary conditions" (Yu 161), to avoid the pitfall of generalization. Furthermore, the Chinese literature from the May Fourth Period can be said to be 'user-friendly' to non-Chinese scholars, since it was receptive both to non-traditional and western concepts, although it must be remembered that May Fourth writers adopted western literary models for very Chinese reasons (Yip 27, Chow 8-9).

In the preface to Penelope Voyages: Women and Travel in the British Literary Tradition (1994), Karen Lawrence admits that in formulating theories about travel "[o]ne senses what escapes, that is, what travels beyond the theoretical ground one has chosen to map" (xi). In endeavouring to keep this thesis focussed, I have to restrain my theoretical interests which seem to grow with every topic I research. There are issues which have been addressed by other writers. Sara Mills, Sara Suleri and Mary Louise Pratt, to name but a few, discuss the co-development of the politics of colonization and the feminization of the landscape, and in "The Imaginary Orient," Linda Nochlin traces the male objectifying gaze on the woman's body in paintings. The gendered gaze of the *flâneur* is discussed in Janet Wolff's "The Invisible *Flâneuse*" and in the more general context of the male looker in Laura Mulvey's Visual and

Other Pleasure (1989). The ethics of travel writing is also a subject I would like to explore further, although I cannot agree with Dennis Porter who believes that "we would all be better off, if the great majority of the world's travel books had never been written at all" (Haunted Journeys 304). Misrepresentations of the others, innocent or intentional, are produced not only by travel writing, but by the encompassing exchange of information available in the modern world. Misrepresentations are circulated even as I write. I think the problems originate in the travellers' societies, where the process of internalization occurs, and not at the moment of cultural encounter. An ethical and critical way of reading travel writing, taking into account the social context within which it is produced, will further our attempt to "[v]ivre la différence dans l'égalité" (experience difference in equality) (Todorov 253).

All translations from German and Chinese are mine unless otherwise indicated. Quoted passages of Chinese texts are placed in the footnotes because of the difference in script. I have also provided a glossary of Chinese terms used in the thesis. For romanized Chinese spelling, I have used the standard pinyin system unless I am quoting a specific text which uses some other spelling systems, (for example, Chow Tse-tsung's spelling of titles of Chinese journals). Throughout the thesis, I have avoided using the terms 'the West' and 'the East/Orient' whenever possible, and indicate the specific country or geographical area instead.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For further information on conquest-patterns in Chinese history, see Zhongguo tongshi (A Survey of Chinese History) by Wang Dashou in 2 volumes.

<sup>2</sup> I borrow the term from Barrie A. Wilson's article on "Metacriticism" in Irena Makaryk's Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms.

<sup>3</sup> In a recent article, "Orientalism, *an Afterword*," Said cites these essays as proof that the information and knowledge used by the colonial powers derived from Oriental scholarship, although I do not see that as the main focus of the study.

<sup>4</sup> The English translation is from Outline of a Theory of Practice (Cambridge UP, 1977), 78. Bourdieu also writes about the *habitus* in La Distinction and in The Field of Cultural Production. "The Field of Cultural Production," which is included in the collection of essays entitled The Field of Cultural Production, was published in English in Poetics (1983). There is no French version of The Field of Cultural Production as a book to date.

<sup>5</sup> The English translation is from Distinction (Harvard UP, 1984), 170. The translator is Richard Nice.

<sup>6</sup> In his discussion of the process of "time distancing" between the observer and the observed in anthropological discourse, Fabian differentiates anachronism and 'allochronism' as follows:

Anachronism signifies a fact, or a statement of fact, that is out of tune with a given time frame; it is a mistake, perhaps an accident. I am trying to show that we are facing, not mistakes, but *devices* (existential, rhetoric, political). To signal that difference I will refer to the denial of coevalness as the *allochronism* of anthropology. Time and the Other.

<sup>7</sup> The English translation is from Charles Baudelaire, Selected Writings on Art and Literature, 41-2. The translator is P.E. Charvet.

<sup>8</sup> The translator of the English version is not listed.

9 The quotation is from volume 1.2 of Gesammelten Schriften of Benjamin. The English translation is from the collection of essays entitled Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism, 34. The translator is Harry Zohn.

10 The quotation is from the article "The Field of Cultural Production," which was originally published in English.

11 A recent example of an 'imaginary Orient', a term I borrow from Linda Nochlin's article of the same title in The Politics of Vision, is an exhibition of Whistler's paintings in Washington called Whistler in Japan, although Whistler was never in Asia and, according to the curator of the exhibition, showed no interest in Japanese culture. I learnt of this news item on "Arts Report," Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio programme, June 22, 1995.

12 This quotation is from an English interview conducted by Paul Rabinow in 1982, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," Foucault Reader (Random, 1984), 245. The French translation, by F. Durand-Bogaert can be found in volume 4 of Dits et écrits 1954-1988 par Michel Foucault.

13 I have not personally seen this programme, but I have read the script for it, which Dr. Eva-Marie Kröller has very kindly obtained from Bayerischer Rundfunk for me. The script seems to concentrate on the picturesque elements of Dauthendey's travel, but it would be unfair to criticize it without seeing the visual presentation. There have been several dissertations on Dauthendey: Vridhagiri Ganeshan, "Das Indienbild deutscher Dichter um 1900," diss., Bonn, 1975; Shridhar B. Shrotri, "Max Dauthendey's auslandsbezogene Werke," diss., Poona, 1964. I have not been able to obtain them to date.

## CHAPTER 1 : ISABELLA BIRD : VISITATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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### 1851 : Celebration in a Glasshouse

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On May 1st, 1851, the first World Exhibition was inaugurated by Queen Victoria in the Crystal Palace: "By 8 am the great carpet, the dais and its chair of state draped in crimson and gold stands ready . . . " (McKean 28). The Crystal Palace was opened with great pomp and ceremony precisely on the morning the organizers had planned. It was designed by the gardener and estate-manager Joseph Paxton and became emblematic of all things perceived as Victorian--the marriage of industry and art, the glorification of technology, the success of the self-made man, the assertion of colonial conquests, the rise of commodity culture and the triumph of science over nature. However, a closer examination also reveals the conflicting trends, already inherent in Victorian culture, represented in this building's construction. It made visible the paradoxical role which Victorian mainstream beliefs played in society--the philanthropic belief in doing good countered by a staunch support for the status quo, philosophical liberalism challenged by industrial capitalism, the knowledge of social ills obfuscated by fear of change and national complacency. Isabella Bird was a quintessential Victorian with a religious upbringing; she practiced good work, believed in the Empire and supported Britain's mercantile and imperial ambitions. Before I begin my discussion of Isabella Bird's writings, I will take a tour around the site of the Crystal Palace and analyse it as a condensed site of imperial ideology and its social implications. This exercise will help define the parameters of Bird's attitude towards the poor and the non-Europeans she met in Asia.

A structure with the capacity of displaying ten miles of machinery and manufactured goods, the Crystal Palace was architecturally the prototype of the glass and metal construction which became that of the skyscrapers and department stores. Designed only as a temporary building, it was nonetheless massive in size (several times that of St. Paul's). The aesthetic principle of the design was to bring into the interior as much natural light as structurally possible and thereby create the illusion of open air. Paxton's winning design consisted mainly of iron and glass. The thin iron columns reduced the obstruction of supporting walls in the interior space; the "tablecloth" roofing, "made up of 300,000 panes, or 400 tons of 16 oz glass" (McKean 25), allowed a constant flooding of exterior light into the exhibition hall. Like the conservatories so popular as a building type in the nineteenth century, the Crystal Palace was a construction of "the dream of a garden under glass" (Kohlmaier 1), to provide a year-round spring, and the affirmation of man's ability to control and preserve nature.

Without the rapid growth of cities and all the resulting urban problems--the lack of greenery, polluted air, crowds and traffic, the idea of creating an environment in which people could enjoy nature within the city would not have flourished (Kohlmaier 9-10). But in the Crystal Palace, the charm of exotic plants was superceded by the novelty of exotic goods and peoples. Although trees from Hyde Park on the site were preserved and palm trees were used for decoration, the main attraction, apart from the building itself, was the things on display. Thirty-four nations, apart from the host country, participated in the exhibition, and this number did not include all the colonial possessions, such as India, which also occupied prominent space (Greenhalgh 12). The Crystal Palace had created under its

roof a continuous and controlled environment in which the spectator could escape from the urban environment outside and at the same time stroll amongst streets displaying the fruits of industrialization.

Even while under construction, the building site of Crystal Palace was a source of excitement: " . . . everyone wants to see the spectacle of industry . . . and crowds queue, with 200 visitors regularly each day" (McKean 25). Like the destruction and re-construction of Haussmann's Paris, the urban building site became a symbol of industrial renewal and growth (Kampmeyer-Käding 31). The constant flow of activities and materials under tight supervision had all the excitement of controlled chaos. Queen Victoria and Duke of Wellington were both avid visitors "addicted to the ever-changing scene" (McKean 25). This dramatization of the building process was extended to the inner structuration, and all the exposed girders, webs and columns were painted in different colours to create an interior perspective. In this, as well as in the choice of the building materials, we can trace the origins of the architecture of modernism.<sup>1</sup>

But in 1851, in spite of the success and popularity of the exhibition, there was a real debate on the status of the Crystal Palace as architecture. The professionals were quick to point out that Paxton was not an architect, nor a trained engineer. The structure was not designed for permanency. In its use of materials, it was related to industrial buildings such as train sheds; as an iron building, it was in stark contrast to the Victorian piles of stone and brick, with their decorative pilasters and marble interior. Ruskin opposed it because of its size: "Largeness of dimension does not necessarily invoke nobleness of design" (qtd. in McKean 41).<sup>2</sup> The confrontation between functional pragmatism and tradition is neatly



encapsulated in this debate. Yet despite the conservative criticism levelled against it, the Crystal Palace did not signify a movement towards political or social radicalism. Instead, it reinforced solid, middle-class and national values, such as the belief in commerce, prosperity and imperialism.

The Crystal Palace was a perfect venue for the display of British imperial power. In the 1851 Exhibition, "the only colony on show outside the British areas [that is, colonies] was Algiers" (Greenhalgh 56). But the 1851 Exhibition began the trend in subsequent world expositions to regularly feature displays from European colonial possessions. In an illustration of the Indian booth in the Crystal Palace, a life-size stuffed elephant is placed on a dais with a howdah on top of it. Standing to attention at the foot of the animal are Indians dressed in different costumes (McKean 34). This practice of showing non-European peoples was incorporated in later exhibitions into the entertainment programme. At the 1889 Exposition Universelle, "[t]he Senegal village had eight families," although the performing participants came from several distinct regions with no common language. The manager of the Javanese village saw the people in his village as "pleasant buffoons" (Greenhalgh 87-90). But these contrived ethnic performances were originally meant to be part of the overall educational process, although the "visual melange of the spectacular and the scientific . . . turned the industrial world into one immense picture show" (Boyer 257). In 1851, the exhibition of colonial goods, non-European peoples and artifacts was a concretization of the imperial idea, which decontextualized other cultures and turned them into frozen tableaux. The huge translucent space of the Crystal Palace in conjunction with the profusion of objects on display and the democratic

principle of granting admission to the general public, created an atmosphere for uninhibited and unlimited browsing.

For shopping before the 1851 Exhibition had been a limited experience. Both The Shopkeeper's World by Michael Winstanley (1983) and Shops and Shopping by Alison Adburgham (1989) attest that shops in Great Britain in the mid-nineteenth century were mostly small premises with poorly merchandised interiors, except for purveyors of exclusive goods such as 'India shawls', as cashmere shawls were called then. One of the best examples of seedy retailers in literature is Mr. Venus' shop in Dickens's Our Mutual Friend (1865): " . . . in a narrow and a dirty street . . . Mr. Wegg selects one dark shop-window with a tallow candle dimly burning in it, surrounded by a muddle of objects . . . " (87-8). Not till the establishment of department stores such as The Bon Marché in the 1860s were people able to find a plenitude of goods gathered under one massive building structure (Miller, The Bon Marché). The Crystal Palace provided the necessary spatial experience to bridge the ideal of imperialism and the reality of material objects of daily life for the multitude who entered it. Hitherto abstract notions such as the greatness of Britannia became concretized in the forms of goods and machinery.

The Crystal Palace was not restricted to the privileged few; therein lay the power of its social influence. The 1851 event was open to the paying public. Multitudes flocked to visit it and "[r]ailways issued concessionary fares and day-tripping became the rage" (Desmond 392). Thomas Cook, an acquaintance of Joseph Paxton, organized excursions to London to see the exhibition, and despite fears of "an inundation" of artisans and mechanics from the north, the Cook excursionists "behaved impeccably." This was attributed to "British stability . . . Mass mobility was

becoming acceptable" (Brendon 62), although one should bear in mind that the early Cook excursions were organized temperance outings.

This change in the public's perception and tolerance of travelling had two side-effects. Mass tourism was on the rise once tour operators such as Thomas Cook further exploited and refined the format of cheap excursions to sites and events such as the Crystal Palace and the exhibition. But this popularization of travelling also induced the upper-classes to discover routes and modes of travelling which would be barred to their social inferiors. Isabella Bird's itinerary in the Far East is an example of the search for the unbeaten tracks in travelling as an indication of class distinction. Using her social and official connections, Bird managed to venture into areas not open to packs of tourists. While ordinary customers of Thomas Cook desired the prosaic comfort of a well-run hotel and the assurance of an ever-present guide, those who "conceived themselves independent travelers and thus superior by reason of intellect, education, curiosity, and spirit" would search for the kind of travelling which separated them from the "droves" of common tourists (Fussell 40).

The Crystal Palace provided more than a destination for mass excursions. It also became the focus of the competitive market culture of industrialized Britain. People throughout the country came and saw the industrial displays in the exhibition as material proofs of the leading status of Great Britain in the industrial world. There was no building similar to the Crystal Palace before 1851, whose construction process itself was a testament to British organization prowess. The time it took from ground-breaking to occupancy was a bare nine months. When Charles Darwin and his family visited it in July, 1851, he was suitably impressed: "Only nature itself--an earthquake, a rain forest, a Fuegian savage--provoked greater

awe" (Desmond 395). The Crystal Palace represented a new age of "liberal, progressive reforms . . . [the] intellectual élite began recasting nature as a competitive market-place" (392). While Darwin wrote on the natural selection process in the plant and animal world, Victorian social forces were entrenching the divisions between the classes. Herbert Spencer's catch-phrase, "survival of the fittest," a distortion of Darwinian natural selection, dovetailed nicely with the ethos of the competitive market-place (Gould 36-8, 40).

This market culture presupposed social relations which were based on competition and attrition, and it did not favour the poor in society. The fiercer the competition, the faster the many problems facing the losing sectors grew, such as crowded living space, low wages, poor sanitation. Although there were differentiations in the standard of living between skilled workers and the very destitute, it remained a general fact that "Victorian slums were nasty" (F.M.L. Thompson 181). These living conditions were graphically described in Charles Kingsley's 1850 novel, Alton Locke. Kingsley derived much of his descriptions of the slum squalor from Henry Mayhew's reports on the poor "which startled the well-to-do classes out of their jubilant and scornful attitude" (Kingsley 1:5). In 1869, Isabella Bird wrote a pamphlet titled Notes on Old Edinburgh which decries the slum condition in the northern city. The pamphlet shares many of Kingsley and Mayhew's concerns. I will introduce Bird's writings by way of Mayhew's pioneering social study, London Labour and the London Poor, a kind of urbanized ethnographic and picturesque narrative, a style of writing so familiar in travel accounts, including Bird's The Golden Chersonese. Mayhew's social writings, which were published with the intention to attract public attention and sympathy towards the

impoverished class, were an ambivalent study of customs and habits which Mayhew did not always condone. Nonetheless, Mayhew's London poor emerged from the pages of his work "as variegated, cultivated, self-aware personalities" who garnered Mayhew's sympathy (Herbert 251). Bird's social pamphlet is similar to Mayhew's sprawling study in subject, but it combines social observation with Christian zeal, a combination which produces a stronger censoring effect on Bird's empathy for her subject matters. In The Golden Chersonese, Bird's observations of Malay and Chinese scenes are still motivated by social and religious concerns. However, her responses were by no means categorically negative. Through her few contacts with the natives, Bird became aware of evidence of superior elements in non-European culture, an awareness which undermined the colonial mission of nineteenth-century Britain. This ambiguous and contradictory response to the others is already discernible in Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor.

## Mayhew's Exotic Poor and Bird's "Loathsome Infectious Sore"

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Henry Mayhew's four-volume London Labour and the London Poor (1851-1862) <sup>3</sup> was not the first nineteenth-century sociological study. Previous studies include Friedrich Engels's The Condition of the Working Class in England (1844-5 Leipzig) and Edwin Chadwick's Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population (1842). Chadwick's report is perhaps most germane to my comparison of Mayhew's and Bird's attitudes towards cultural and social groups inferior to the English middle-class. In his 1842 statistical study for the government, Chadwick "repeatedly made the case that disease among the poor was a major cause of economic waste" (Christopher Lawrence 43). This and other similar commissioned studies focussed on improper sanitary conditions, such as drains, cesspools, refuse pits, as contributory causes of fever and cholera. Improvements in these and other sanitary conditions would reduce the numbers of the poor who, because of sickness or drunkenness, could not or would not work and had to resort to the workhouses (46-7). These scientifically compiled reports established a standard by which different social sectors could be measured and evaluated. It was "[a] gradual creation and application of a new, medical, concept of normality" (Christopher Lawrence 44). By achieving the standards of living approved by these reports, those who had the means also acquired both social and physical distance from those who did not. Furthermore, the establishment of a concept of normality was an example of an institutionalized discourse which directs the social hierarchization of different segments of society (Foucault, History of Sexuality 1:141). The destitute were viewed as a breed apart--wasteful, contaminating and dangerous. According to

Gertrude Himmelfarb, Mayhew equated the homeless to nomads and savages "who wandered the streets of London, scrounging and scavenging for a bare existence" (Himmelfarb 122). At about the same time, Baudelaire was using the human debris of modern society as subjects for his poems. But whether as subjects of romantic or social dissections, ragpickers and dustmen became the objects of scrutiny.

Mayhew's study is both like and different from Chadwick's type of statistical analyses. Mayhew's standard of respectability is still based on the concept of normality already established by government reports. In describing the dwelling places of the working children, Mayhew highlights the overcrowding: "Those who reside with their parents or employers sleep usually in the same room with them, and sometimes in the same bed . . . . It seems somewhat curious that, considering the filth and noisomeness of some of these lodging-houses, the children who are inmates suffer only the average extent of sickness . . . ." (Mayhew 177). Mayhew's study takes for granted that living arrangements below middle-class standard are signs of poverty; the anomaly in this case is the moral and physical health of the children in spite of their living environment. (Incest is a subject not openly mentioned until 1883 in a pamphlet titled The Bitter Cry of Outcast London) (Himmelfarb 62). In his investigation of low lodging-houses of London, Mayhew quotes one informant who "had slept in rooms so crammed with sleepers . . . that their breaths in the dead of night and in the unventilated chamber, rose . . . in one foul, choking steam of stench" (113-4). Mayhew hastens to assure the readers that this is no invention as "I use his own words." In its way, Mayhew's writing continues to confirm the overall picture Chadwick's and other reports had drawn of people of lower classes. Linked with such "degenerate" living conditions are equally

"degenerate" morals: "The indiscriminate admixture of the sexes among the adults . . . is another evil . . . Any remonstrance at some act of gross depravity, or impropriety on the part of a woman . . . is met with abuse and derision" (119). Like other mid-nineteenth-century reformers, Mayhew believed that social ills were caused by unhealthy living conditions, and once these conditions could be categorized and understood, physical and moral disorders could then be managed.

When Mayhew's accounts first appeared, they were thought to be "stranger than fiction" (Humphreys, *Travels* 62). Indeed, his reports on the children street-sellers (161-89) or the boy crossing-sweepers (Mayhew 263-71) give credence to Dickens's portraits of the children in *Oliver Twist* (1838) or Jo in *Bleak House* (1853). Mayhew also introduced into his social observations a sense of discovery of an unknown physical world. Thus the middle-class reading public was guided through the "poor man's country" (Himmelfarb 58), and this exposure to the lower classes eventually gave rise to Cook's excursions to slum areas. In his venturing into the 'poor man's country', Mayhew used a host of informants and guides to take him through "these courts [which] have other courts branching off from them, so that the locality is a perfect labyrinth of 'blind alleys'; and when once in the heart of the maze it is difficult to find the path which leads to the main-road" (Mayhew 57). This description of the forking roads in a London slum aptly describes Mayhew's own prose which proliferates in digression on one topic, resulting in a "pervasive incoherence" which mirrors the rookeries featured in his study (Herbert 223). In his comparison of Mayhew's book with early Victorian missionary writings, Christopher Herbert observes correctly that Mayhew's exhaustive catalogue of the costermongers' wardrobe does not offer "a specific



exegesis of all this coded imagery . . . " (241). This abundance of detail does however offer to the readers who had never stepped beyond the boundaries of middle-class conventions vicarious glimpses of social problems normally invisible to them. In his "rhetorical heightening," both in his own prose and in the statements of his informants (Herbert 207), Mayhew creates a sense of theatre. Although the street folks or cross-sweepers are paraded through the pages in the spirit of objective empiricism, their autobiographical accounts are rendered often in their own dialects and lingo, in order to give a sense of drama: "The blessed crushers is everywhere . . . I wish I'd been there to have had a shy at the eslops" (Mayhew 26). This strategy further separates the readers from the subject, accentuating differences instead of eliciting a sense of commonality.

Isabella Bird begins her Notes on Old Edinburgh (1869) by calling the "loathsome infectious sore" of Edinburgh slum the worst amongst those she had visited, including London, Quebec and New York (3). Like Mayhew, she did her "*room-to-room* visitation" (8)--one of many occasions when Bird uses evangelical terms--with guides, in her case the company of two philanthropic gentlemen and one lieutenant of police (4). Again like Mayhew, Bird did not shrink from describing the absolute material filth in which the poor lived: "Opening a dilapidated door, we found ourselves in a recess . . . There was an earthen floor full of holes, in some of which water had collected. The walls were black and rotten, alive with woodlice" (11). Bird comments that this kind of dwelling, which she repeatedly calls "lair" or "den," is fit only for a dog to die in.

But unlike Mayhew, Bird did not share Mayhew's "acute disaffection from the respectable middle-class world of his origins" (Herbert 231). William Wilberforce, the abolitionist and social reformer, was Bird's distant relative. The Bishop of Winchester, Charles Sumner, and the Bishop of Chester, later Archbishop of Canterbury, John Bird Sumner, were her cousins (Stoddart 2-4). Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor grew out of his journalistic writing; it was a continuation of his investigative reportage. The subjects he chose for his book were not all suffering abject poverty, as for example the omnibus- and cab-drivers (358-68). And Herbert believes that "[i]n emphasizing [the street folk's] bitter hatred of the upper classes and their love of lawlessness and indecency," Mayhew was projecting his own personal hostility towards Victorian conventions (231). Bird's writing, by contrast, is grounded in respect for convention and belief in the Christian mission. In The Golden Chersonese, her social and religious allegiance would safeguard her from developing excessive sympathy towards the colonized people.

In the style of one of the evangelicals' favourite texts, the First Letter of the Apostle John (Bebbington 13), Bird's prose suggests a constant contrast of light and darkness. In a twelve-line description of an entrance to a tenement, the adjective "dark" appears four times (10). Light is not only a natural medium necessary for seeing, but the metaphorical light in which the converted and the loved one lives. Except for the prostitutes and the virtuous sewing women, Bird pays very little attention to the occupations of the lodgers. Her interest is primarily in their deplorable conditions of living. In the true spirit of evangelical activism and its philanthropic tradition (Bradley 119-20), Bird's pamphlet is a pious exhortation to the middle-class to act:

[t]he responsibility is on the gentlemen who cross the High Street daily to lounge in the Parliament House, on the *literati* who frequent one of the finest libraries in Britain, on the antiquarians who explore the wynds and closes in search of an ancient inscription . . . on the hundreds, both of ladies and gentlemen . . . all who see and all who hear. (Notes 29)

Thus, Bird did not socially alienate herself from the middle-class, although she distinguished herself from those who neglected to attend to the religious teaching of charity.

Bird also establishes a position of authority early in her pamphlet. She reminds the readers that she has travelled to North America and therefore can confirm, from real experience, that Edinburgh's slum was the worst. Her experience as traveller distinguishes her observations from parochial judgment. Her companions were two gentlemen "who did not hesitate to expose these social plague-spots" and a police official (Notes 4), while Mayhew's witnesses were chosen from the same low classes of his subjects. Bird's tour bore the condescending appearance and spirit of officialdom, and the wretched inhabitants of Edinburgh were defencelessly "exposed" to the visitors' critical gaze. Above all else, Bird's pamphlet is full of righteousness.

With industrialization changing the social structures of nineteenth-century Britain, the more progressive sector within the Church of England believed that the established Evangelical organizations were "inadequate to meet the challenge of the new urbanization" (Lewis 36). City missionaries were set up with "paid lay visitors" to carry out systematic visitations using careful procedural guidelines (Lewis 36, Bradley 45-7). The missions knew that their "evangelical troops marching as to war among the poor of

London" would not be welcomed with open arms, but that the fallen state of the poor would have to be reclaimed by persistent efforts (Lewis 119). Such earnestness could be socially disruptive, as we can see in the hostility of Barchester's church establishment towards Mr. Slope in Trollope's Barchester Towers (1857). Isabella Bird's own father, while a rector in Birmingham, was pelted with stones because of his strict sabbatarianism (Stoddart 20-1). More than anything else, as the commissioned statistical reports on the living conditions of the poor had done, the lower classes were singled out by the evangelicals for intensive scrutiny. E.P. Thompson believes that the evangelical philosophy of hard work, discipline and obedience was instrumental in de-radicalizing the working class (Making of the Working Class 390-1). This attitude of compassionate paternalism which treats the lower classes as objects of pity but also contempt is quite evident in Bird's Notes of Old Edinburgh.

Although "vital and earnest [Anglican] evangelicalism" in the second half of the nineteenth century "was a good deal more cant and a great deal less practical piety" (Bradley 195), the ideals of Victorian respectability and moral behaviour were already shaped by the social and political influences of religious reforms. It must be stressed that Anglican evangelicals, among them Wilberforce, the Trevelyan, the Earl of Shaftesbury, belonged to the privileged classes. Their belief, nationally and provincially, "was undoubtedly an important element in the mentality of the *haute bourgeoisie* that dominated British politics . . . a combination of *rentier* economic interests, office holding, and social notability" (Hilton 7). It was in this spirit of opportunistic pragmatism that the London missionaries deployed their forces to preach to mass gatherings during the 1851 Exhibition, taking advantage of the many provincial visitors. The

successful completion of the Crystal Palace, the discipline and professionalism of all those involved in making it possible--these were qualities evangelicals earnestly believed in. The exhibition was a symbol as well as material proof to the evangelicals that middle-class virtues such as industry and application would pay off in terms of progress and better standards of living. But these social missionaries also paid due attention to the victims of industrial progress, those without the benefit of social welfare, the unemployed and the unemployables, the Old Betty Higdens of nineteenth-century Britain. It was this combination of religious rigor, analytical curiosity, pride of heritage and paternalistic compassion which formed the disposition of Bird, the author of The Golden Chersonese.

## A Benevolent Lady of Leisure in Asia

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There are two recognizably evangelical elements in Bird's The Golden Chersonese (1883). The book reflects a strong concern for bodily health and welfare of the soul, in this instance those of the natives of Southeast Asia; and it is a relatively detailed report produced by personal *contact*, in the style of missionary visitation. These aspects are important to our understanding of Bird's attitude towards the indigenous peoples she met as well as of the kinds of subjects on which she dwelled in her book. The presence of these philanthropic elements in her travel narrative shows one way in which a dominant culture can misrepresent other cultures. Like Mayhew's investigative reports on the urban poor, Bird's social concerns caused her to categorize in her writing the Malays, Chinese and others into separate groups of people--unredeemed, unenlightened, superstitious. They become targets of the evangelical civilizing project.

In 1828 the District Visiting Society was established in London in order to "[mobilize] large numbers of laymen in a systematic approach to urban evangelism" (Lewis 35). The Society became the prototype of the many visiting agencies used by urban missions to dispense aid to the poor, and the "visitors were often women" (Prochaska 100). In order to organize and assign the visitors to separate areas, "[t]he central committee would . . . survey the proposed district or parish, . . . surveyors would gather information about the poor in this area : their names, occupations, size of family . . . the district would then be subdivided . . . " (Lewis 36). Visitors were required to keep detailed records of their visits and journals of their clients. Entries in a typical schedule would be, for instance, "number of families visited," "meetings held," "deaths of persons visited" (134). Under

such a well-organized system, the poor families selected for visitations had little chance to escape from strangers who turned the lives of the poor into statistics. In mid-nineteenth century, when charity organizations were so proliferous that a central controlling society had to be formed (Charity Organization Society), different charity authorities would rival each other for clients in the same areas, so that "[w]ith thousands of visitors entering hundreds of thousands of households each year in London, few poor families were free from their dutiful attentions" (Prochaska 106). Since these visitors were of superior social status to the visited poor, they often intruded without regard for the privacy of their targets.

In spite of the ostensible good intentions of these activities, their implications were nonetheless disturbing. The poor, often stereotyped as sinful and lazy because they were unemployed and negligent in church attendance, were treated as a class rather than as individuals within a social system. In Trollope's Barchester Towers, church politics evolve around the power and monetary rewards of the stewardship of the charity hospital while the inmates are seldom discussed. In their zealous attempts to reform prostitutes, "rescue workers" would often discuss tactics to gain entry to the prostitutes' dwellings (Prochaska 199), and visits were often done in cooperation with health and police officials (206-7). In Michel Foucault's terms, these rescue workers and government officials formed a network of mobilized observatories (Discipline and Punish 170-1).

Furthermore, the rigor with which the visitors, who usually came from respectable and religious middle-class background, preached what they considered normative values--diligence, temperance, humility--to the poor, ensured that their clients would remain in their inferior social positions. As an example of this relationship between proud benefactor

and disadvantaged client, Jane Eyre's aunt implores Mr. Brocklehurst: "I should wish her to be . . . made useful, to be kept humble . . . " (Brontë 34). Philanthropic impulses in nineteenth-century England were such that the poor might be relieved temporarily from physical wants, yet no constructive reforms were carried out to provide for long-term alleviation of their condition, which would involve changes to the class and economic structures of the society.

Isabella Bird was active in philanthropic organizations during her years in Scotland. Between 1862 and 1866, she organized several groups of impoverished crofters from the Hebrides to emigrate to Canada; she arranged for letters of introduction, raised money for passage and provision of clothing (Stoddart 51-3). In 1870, she was working on a scheme to provide wash houses for the slums in Edinburgh after London models (71-3). These concerns for social problems and duty are transposed in The Golden Chersonese to the peoples of Southeast Asia. At the time of her Southeast Asian tour, Bird was a published travel writer. Her three previous books, Six Months in the Sandwich Islands (1875), A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains (1879) and Unbeaten Tracks in Japan (1880) were well received. Her social and published status ensured that her opinions and observations would attract a general readership.

In a letter from Kwala Kangsa in February, 1879, Bird mentions her first elephant ride into the interior of a Pêrak district uninhabited by any Europeans. Her first impression of the elephant is unfavourable: "Before I came I dreamt of howdahs and cloth of gold trappings, but my elephant had neither" (298). Bird's reaction was typical of the false expectation raised by colonial spectacles such as the stuffed elephant with a



magnificent howdah exhibited in the Crystal Palace in 1851. In its natural environment and not on display, her real elephant was "ugly" and untrained. The pachyderm's periodical and unscheduled stops gave Bird the opportunity to explore various kampongs not on her itinerary. Her report on visiting these native dwellings is easily reminiscent of her pamphlet Notes on Old Edinburgh. Like a district visitor who was obliged to inspect every aspect of a household, she went into a series of houses and intruded into their back rooms as she had done in the Edinburgh slums:

I clambered into a Malay dwelling of the poorer class, and was courteously received . . . This house is composed of a front hut and a back hut for communication. Like all others it is raised to a good height on posts. The uprights are of palm, and the elastic, gridiron floor of split laths of the invaluable *nibong* palm (*oncosperma filamentosum*). . . I could not see that a single nail had been used in the house. The whole of it is lashed together with rattan . . . . In the back room, the province of the women and children, there were an iron pot, a cluster of bananas, and two calabashes. (*Golden* 209-300)

Bird generalizes, after some detailing of furniture and interior,

The open floor, while it gives air and ventilation, has also its disadvantages, for solid and liquid refuse is thrown through it so conveniently that the ground under the house is apt to contain stagnant pools and heaps of decomposing matter, and men lying asleep on mats on these gridirons have sometimes been stabbed with a *kris* inserted between the bars from below by an enemy seeking revenge.

I must not, however, give the impression that the Malays are a dirty people. They wash their clothes frequently, and bathe as often as possible. . . (301)

As can be seen from these excerpts, Bird is scrupulous in factual details, such as the building technique and materials used by the Malays.

Although she adds a gracious codicil in case her portrayal of the Malays is misunderstood, her British middle-class readers would likely have been reminded of descriptions of the refuse heaps or cesspools of urban slums in Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor, her own pamphlet, or social novels such as Alton Locke by Charles Kingsley, who borrowed from Mayhew a similar setting of unwholesome squalor for his novel. Nor would the reader readily identify the Malays as a civilized culture after Bird's reminder of their "tradition" of bloody revenge.

Almost all early literature on Malay culture mentions the tradition of amok. Alfred Russel Wallace's The Malay Archipelago (1868) has a section on it in the chapter on the customs and manners of the people of Lombock (174-5). To Wallace, to run amok was part of Malay nature, just as much as the people's hospitality or their eating rituals. Frank Swettenham's Malay Sketches (1895) has one chapter on "Amok," which is distinguished by its graphic detail. Using a real incident to illustrate amok, Swettenham recounts how a middle-aged Imam (a priest) on the 11th February, 1891, went on a murderous rampage, killing six people and wounding four, before he himself was fatally speared. Swettenham's emphasis on the murderer's social standing, the nature of the wounds and the weapons used, seems to imply that amok was a biological disorder which could happen in any Malay without cause, and that the brutality of the action was beyond the control of law and science. A post-mortem was performed on the attacker and his internal organs "were healthy except that the membranes of the right side of brain were more adherent than usual" (Swettenham 43). In the 1935 edition of Handbook to British Malaya, issued by the Malayan Civil Service, the subject is not mentioned, but on the Malay, the writer laconically comments: " . . . he has been called

. . . in character treacherous . . . ," a description which the writer qualifies as hasty and superficial (*Handbook* 31), but which he does not dispute. Swettenham uses nearly the same words in introducing the topic of 'âmok': "The Malay has often been called treacherous. I question whether he deserves the reproach . . ." (4). British observers could not resist the heightened exoticism of such savage and anti-social behaviour which seemed acceptable in the Malay culture; they were both fascinated and appalled by it. To portray native peoples as 'degenerate' types was a regular trope in colonial writing. Native degeneracy sanctioned European intrusion, as Said has pointed out in *Orientalism* (1-28). At the same time, the writers somehow had to minimize this extremely non-British behaviour in the Malays who were nominally their subjects.

Bird also writes on the topic of amok, in a chapter devoted to the superstitious and cruel practices of the Malays. Sandwiched between critical comments on spirit possession and slavery is a compilation of various accounts of amok, which Bird cites as observations made by reputable British officials such as Major McNair and Captain Shaw. She herself expresses no particular indignation at the occurrence of amok, but puts forward a rather relative view: "Considering how punctilious and courteous the Malays are, how rough many of the best of us are, how brutal in manner many of the worst of us are, and how inconsiderate our sailors are of the customs of foreign peoples . . . it is wonderful that bloody revenge is not more common than it is" (*Golden* 355-6). Instead, Bird was more concerned by the Malay practices of slavery and superstition.

Bird criticizes slavery at great length, calling it "a great curse" and "one cause of the decay of the native States" (358), the practice was evil and cruel, and together with polygamy "go far to account for the decay of

these States" (361). Although slave trading was abolished by the nineteenth century in Britain, it was still an accepted practice before 1807, and British slaves were not freed until the Emancipation Act in 1833 (Colley 323-4). Bird's relative, William Wilberforce, was instrumental and active in the campaign for abolition (Bradley 86-88). Thus Bird's abhorrence of slavery had an ancestral and evangelical origin, similar to her contempt for the Islamic religion.

When describing Malay believers, she repeatedly uses the term "bigoted Musselmen" (Golden 121, 138, 140). In a negative report on a Malay village in Malacca, Bird considers the people, who "have a complete civilisation of their own, and their legal system is derived from the Koran" as "decidedly ugly, and there is a coldness and aloofness of manner about them which chills one . . . " (138). Though the children "are very pretty" and the dwellings "picturesque," the people are said to "tell lies" (139), and "for the most part [are] ignorant and fanatical Mohammedans" (140). Bird expresses evangelical disapproval as she writes: "but we do not understand them, nor they us, and where they happen to be Mohammedans, there is a gulf of contempt and dislike on their part which is rarely bridged by amenities on ours . . . " (140). As she ends *The Golden Chersonese*, Bird regrets that the Christianization of "a people wholly given to idolatry" would prove to be a difficult task and that "missionary effort is now chiefly among the Chinese . . . " (362-3).

Although Bird was the official guest of the British colonial administration in the Straits Settlements and in Malay States, she often chose a hectic and almost gruelling itinerary instead of a leisurely and indulgent schedule. In a letter to her sister, Bird laments that seasickness prevented her from catching up with large arrears of writing and sewing,

and a week was "irrecoverably and shamefully lost" (Golden 29). Her strong Protestant work ethic guided her conscience, and she admired the Malays most when they were industrious and active. After spending some time in Pinang (sic) socializing with the Governor, police magistrate and Chief Justice, Bird writes that she longed for the wild (256), and the sophistication of Georgetown offered very little to see "in my line at least" (257). While not clambering into Malay houses or exploring in the wild, Bird enjoyed visiting jails and hospitals. In the philanthropic culture of nineteenth-century England, hospital and prison visits formed part of the routine of charity workers. But for women visitors to gain access to prisons and hospitals, they had to deploy either political or monetary power. Bird was well-connected enough to obtain permission to visit jails and hospitals in Southeast Asia and in Canton, China.

Of a jail she saw in Klang, Bird concedes that the building was tolerable, and the prisoners had "a liberal diet of rice and salt fish." Before the British colonial system instituted prisons, criminals were shot or killed with the kriss, a Malay weapon, on the spot (Golden 239). Thus, British rule had benefited even the criminals in the Malay States. In describing the appearance of one Chinese prisoner in Selângor, Bird is merciless in her contempt:

I wonder how many of the feelings which we call human exist in the lowest order of Orientals! It is certain that many of them only regard kindness as a confession of weakness . . . . This wretched criminal with his possible association with a brutal murder is a most piteous object on deck, and comes between me and the enjoyment of this entrancing evening (247).

Such callous remarks are hard to connect with the evangelical preaching of love and forgiveness. I think this contemptuous attitude towards indigenous peoples is motivated by several major evangelical tendencies--overseas missionary zeal, compassionate paternalism and social allegiance with the propertied, influential classes of society. These tendencies had early on established within Bird sets of cultural habits which became part of her disposition in interacting in social situations.

Although many religious denominations had established overseas missionaries, it was "the Anglican Evangelicals . . . which represented the largest single effort to convert the heathen in the nineteenth century" (Bradley 75). The propaganda machinery of the Church Missionary Society operated to touch every corner of British society, including hosting annual children's meetings in Exeter Hall, with as many as five to six thousand in attendance at each event (Prochaska 89). Tracts of missionary lives were distributed, hymns were composed especially with themes of converting the heathens, and fund-raising campaigns were devised around such causes as financing a ship, "the John Williams, named after a missionary who had been eaten by New Hebridean Islanders" (82). Such tactics, which highlighted the 'unChristian' behaviour of the heathens, would help to prejudice the general public against any people who were non-white and non-Christian and affirm the missionary cause.

Yet this essentially racist attitude which saw non-Europeans in caricatures and stereotypes did not stop the Victorians from joining or donating money to missionary organizations, in order to save the ungodly Indians, or Africans, from eternal damnation. Nor were all philanthropic efforts as superficial as Mrs. Jellyby's in Dickens's Bleak House. Philanthropic practices were perhaps an exercise in what Gertrude

Himmelfarb calls compassion in "its unsentimental mode, compassion [which] seeks above all to *do good* . . . " (5-6). This antipathy towards the very people one was supposedly helping was a common reaction amongst missionaries and anthropologists. In his journal and his letters, David Livingstone did not disguise the fact that he was disgusted at the African tribes he tried to convert, people who were still living in "the lowest forms of barbarism," who wore no clothes and practised blood revenge (Private Journals 253).

Bird belonged, as mentioned before, to the (upper) middle-class of Anglican evangelicals with connections to high places in society and in the church establishment. Victorian notables and policy-makers belonged to this social elite. Its sense of superiority was further confirmed by Darwin's theory of evolution, which portrayed a society with members who moved "along the ladder of civilization, propelled by natural selection, aided by use-inheritance, with selfish instinct giving way to reason, morality and English customs" (Desmond 579-80). It is evident from Anne Stoddart's biography and from her own writings that Bird subscribed to this interpretation of social stratifications.

Thus her sense of social and racial hierarchy was well-established. Not only was her impression of non-whites influenced by Anglican evangelicalism and middle-class social standards, but her attitude towards the colonialists could be equally censorious. Bird did not approve of the Resident of Klang, whom she describes as a vulgar man with "a florid complexion," whose wife had "a plaintive expression" (217-8) and whose daughter was afflicted with ill health. It was because of his ineffective administration, Bird implies, that the town had little commercial activity, the population was composed of "chiefly police constables" (221) and the

Residency had "much of the appearance of an armed post amidst a hostile population" (218). Bird's ideal colonial administrator would be someone like Paul Swinburne, "a tall, slender, aristocratic-looking man, who scarcely looks severable from the door-steps of a Pall Mall Club," who could talk brilliantly on art and literature, and "is much beloved by the Sikhs, to whom he is just," or a Mr. Maxwell, who was educated at Oxford and Lincoln's Inn (285). The appeal of good social connections still prevailed in the 1930s, when J.H.M. Robson recorded his experience of the colony and its administrators: "Educated at Eton and Oxford, the owner of a castle and possessed of considerable private means, Rodger was obviously above and beyond minor failings of humanity" (37). It is therefore natural that Bird, a conscientious and well-connected Victorian, showed such awareness of the political and religious aspects of Malay society. The well-being of the colony, which the colonizers were trying to mould into a lesser version of the empire, was directly linked to the prosperity of Great Britain.

But The Golden Chersonese is not entirely devoid of praise for the colonies and their people. Bird often describes her tropical experiences as dreamlike (126, 131, 143). In comparing Europeans to the natives, Bird has occasionally favoured the Malaysians. The Kling woman, Bird believes, is a figure of graceful perfection, and "[w]hat thinks she, I wonder, if she thinks at all, of the pale European, paler for want of exercise and engrossing occupation" (117). The ambiguity in Bird's admiration for the Kling woman illustrates my earlier contention that contacts unsettled some of Bird's cultural assumptions. The aside "if she thinks at all" could refer to either the Kling's lack of imagination, or it could mean if the Kling woman deigns to "think at all" of the European. Contradictory appraisal of the



Malays occurs again when Bird writes of the Malays who lived in *kampongs*, "Captain Shaw likes the Malays, and the verdict on them here is that they are chaste, gentle, honest, and hospitable, but they tell lies . . . " (139). Her profuse lists of flowers and fruits evoke not only the abundance and riches of the colonies, but are reminiscent of Mayhew's lists of characteristics which give order and definition to the tribes of costermongers and dustmen in urban London. In both instances, the need to reduce chaotic profusion into recognizable order exemplifies the European classificatory impulse to draw out "the tangled threads of . . . life surroundings" and to re-weave these threads "into European-based patterns of global unity and order" (Pratt 31). Bird's travel narrative paradoxically imparts the impression that she admires the colonies and the natives, not only as colonial possessions of Britain, but as places and people with their individual cultural heritage. Like Mayhew, Bird was to discover that cultural contacts required re-evaluations of one's own beliefs.

## The Hierarchy of Non-Europeans

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In his discussion of religious and secular colonization, Johannes Fabian suggests that "demonstrating ideological support and collaboration" of the role religion played in "formulating and sustaining colonialism" can no longer generate "interesting" questions. Instead, "accumulating . . . evidence of the complexity of relations between missionary and secular colonialism" will lead to "new synthesizing approaches" in the study of colonialism (*Time and the Work of Anthropology* 155). I want to take up his suggestion and examine Isabella Bird's complex response towards Hong Kong, a colony ceded to Britain for perpetuity by the Treaties of Chuenpi (A.D. 1841) and Nanking (A.D. 1842)<sup>4</sup>, and Canton, in which Britain had extraterritorial privileges but not direct jurisdiction. There are three overall groups of non-Europeans in Bird's narrative. These are the decayed Chinese, who could not be branded savages, the uncivilized Malays, and the Chinese under British rule, who were useful for their commercial abilities. Her perception and analyses of these people are greatly influenced by her religious upbringing and social connections, while the power Britain could wield over these peoples affected her imperial instinct at the same time. In the Malay Peninsula and Hong Kong, Bird was cheered by the effectiveness of colonial governments. In Canton, Bird was made unpleasantly aware of the restrictive role Britain could play in China.

When Bird was in the Malay States and the Straits Settlements, she was critical but tolerant of Malay habits: "The men are not inclined to much effort except in fishing or hunting . . . The women are very small, keep their dwellings very tidy . . . . They are not savages in the ordinary

sense, for they have a complete civilisation of their own, and their legal system is derived from the Koran" (Golden 138). We must remember that this is not high praise, for in his "Minute on Indian Education" (1835), Thomas Babington Macaulay states categorically that "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia" in spite of the heritage of Indian culture (Macaulay 182). A most poignant example of the racial discrimination Europeans practiced in colonial places is Bird's fondness for a menagerie of apes and a retriever which Hugh Low owned. These animals had dinner regularly with Bird at the table, while Chinamen, Sikhs and a Madrassee served. Bird, showing that she had read Darwin, calls the apes "[m]y 'next of kin' . . . ; they required no conversational efforts; they were most interesting companions" (Golden 307). Implied in this set of relationships is Darwin's observation in The Descent of Man: "For my own part, I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey, who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper . . . as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies" (619). To highlight Bird's preference for animals to non-white others, she mentions a very small incident during an adventurous boat ride, " . . . and the river swirled so rapidly and dizzily below that I was obliged ignominiously to hold on to a Chinaman . . ." (Golden 245-6), as if the physical contact with a non-European would contaminate her, while she allowed one of the apes to lie on her lap as she wrote, "with one long arm round my throat . . ." (308) without any such concern.

When the Chinese population in the Malay States and Straits Settlements is mentioned, it is most often in connection with the wealth of the merchants. In Singapore, the Chinese "are not only numerous enough,

but rich and important enough to give Singapore the air of a Chinese town with a foreign settlement" (115). In Malacca, "the Chinese may be said to be everywhere, and the Malays nowhere" (201). But if Bird tolerated the Chinese, it was in deference to their mercantile ability, a trait with which nineteenth-century English could well identify. In one passage where Bird gives a summary of the 'history' of the Malay Peninsula, she uses mercantile language to describe the process of European takeovers:

It is strange that I should have written thus far and have said nothing at all about the people from whom this Peninsula derives its name, who have cost us not a little blood and some treasure, with whom our relations are by no means well defined or satisfactory, and who, though not the actual aborigines of the country, have at least that claim to be considered its rightful owner which comes from long centuries of possession. In truth, between English rule, the solid tokens of Dutch possession, the quiet and indolent Portuguese, the splendid memories of Francis Xavier, and the numerical preponderance, success, and wealth of the Chinese, I had absolutely forgotten the Malays, even though a dark-skinned, military policeman, with a gliding, snake-like step, whom I know to be a Malay, brings my afternoon tea to the Stadthaus ! (137)

Great Britain's relation to the country is defined by 'cost', 'treasure', 'possession' and by contractual terms such as the 'claim' to 'rightful' ownership. The colonizers are graded by the evangelical and middle-class values of "professionalism, and financial rectitude" (Hilton 7). Thus the Dutch are 'solid', the Portuguese 'indolent', but Francis Xavier is singled out for approval as a missionary pioneer, and the Chinese, though non-European, for their wealth. The Malays, as a subject people, are relegated to the role of tea server in the uniform of a policeman, who walks stealthily and is without distinction. Towards the Chinese serving class, Bird showed general mistrust and opprobrium, especially towards the

Chinese addiction to gambling and opium-smoking. But about the flourishing opium trade which meant revenues to the British, Bird remained silent.

While in Hong Kong, Bird stayed at the Bishop's Palace. She thought the scenery beautiful, the palatial grounds magnificent, but the Chinese "indifferent, rough, and disagreeable, except the well-to-do merchants . . . ." She disliked their way of speaking English, and could not tolerate their "ugly habit of speaking of us as barbarians or foreign devils" (Golden 37). While Bird writes detailed accounts of Malay customs, housing, costumes, thereby acknowledging the existence of Malay history, she sees Hong Kong as a creation of Britain:

Moored to England by the electric cable, and replete with all the magnificent enterprises and luxuries of English civilisation . . . and possessing the most imposing city of the East on its shores, the colony is only forty years old, the island of Hong Kong having been ceded to England in 1841, while its charter only bears the date of 1843 . . . . [T]he magnificent city of Victoria extends for four miles along its southern shore, with its six thousand houses of stone and brick and the princely mansions and roomy bungalows of its merchants and officials scrambling up the steep sides of the Peak . . . .(Golden 39)

In Bird's version the history of Hong Kong--'only forty years old'--begins with British rule. The imperial message of the 1851 World Exhibition has been incorporated into the rewriting of colonial history. Hong Kong, though an island in the South China Sea, is not only linked, but "moored" to England by technology, while China, by implication, looks helplessly on in her decay. Although she presents a picture of prosperity, Bird does not indicate that the six thousand European-style bungalows and mansions in reality only housed the seven thousand Europeans, while the majority of

the remaining one hundred and fifty-three thousand Chinese lived in "houses . . . wanting in all sanitary principles . . . " (Eitel 561). This fact is mentioned in E.J. Eitel's Europe in China: the History of Hongkong From the Beginning to the Year 1882 (1895), not as a critique of the colonial administration or British Rule, but as a passing comment on the sanitation of Hong Kong during Sir John Pope Hennessy's tenure as governor. In Eitel's book on Hong Kong, the Chinese have been effectively written out of history, while all history-making actions--legislation, public works, education--have been undertaken totally by Britons. When Sir John tried to appoint a Portuguese clerk to the position of Acting Colonial Treasurer with a seat on the Council, the appointment was revoked because of the clerk's nationality, and Sir John's overtures to include Chinese in the administration were "interpreted by the English community as attempts to gain the favour of the . . . Chinese sections . . . , to create an anti-English feeling . . ." (530). Overall, John Pope Hennessy was seen as a failed governor partly because of his pro-Chinese stance, especially towards Chinese criminals, a sentiment Bird echoes in The Golden Chersonese: "It must be admitted that the criminal classes are very rampageous . . . from undue and unwise leniency in the treatment of crime . . . " (40).

Bird was also interested in the medical facility in Hong Kong, and was accompanied by the governor in visiting the Tung-Wah Hospital, "a purely Chinese institution, built some years ago by Chinese merchants . . ." (Golden 87). She gives a concise description of the layout of the wards and the arrangements of beds, writing approvingly of the ventilation system used in the building, the general cleanliness and the practice of temperance. But she castigates in no uncertain terms the Chinese medical procedure and treatment practiced by the doctors:

. . . but the system adopted is one of the most antiquated quackery, and when I think of the unspeakably horrible state of the wounds, the mortifying limbs, and the gangrened feet ready to drop off, I almost question Governor Hennessey's wisdom in stamping the hospital with his approval on his "State Visit." (91)

Bird thought it strange that the Chinese did not practice bleeding, or leeching, or blistering, but used instead "powdered rhinoceros' horns, sun-dried tiger's blood . . . and many other queer things . . ." (89). Although she had no sympathy for the medical quackery at the hospital, she was suitably impressed by the ceremonial reception the trustees gave her:

It was a charming Oriental sight, the grand, open-fronted room with its stone floor and many pillars, the superbly dressed directors and their blue-robed attendants, and the immense costumed crowd outside the gate in the sunshine, kept back by crimson-turbaned Sikh orderlies. (92)

As indicated by Bird's varied response to aspects of Chinese life in Hong Kong, Chinese culture and people had ceased to impress the Europeans in science and technology, but the Chinese spectacles continued to please, especially if they were in honour of the colonists. In the tableau quoted above, the honoured guests are the governor, his wife, and Isabella Bird. The thronging crowd outside are the Chinese, who are kept back by Sikh guards, another colonized race. Since the trade and military expeditions had successfully broken down Chinese insularity and dispelled the mystery surrounding the walled kingdom, Westerners generally believed that China's greatness was in her past. In The Descent of Man Darwin, in discussing development in civilized nations, mentions that the Orientals did not seem to entertain the idea of progress (132-3). It is assumed, by both

Bird the visitor and Eitel the administrator and historian, that without the influence of Britain, Hong Kong would have remained a place which, as one earlier visitor to Hong Kong dismissingly writes: "boasts of only two walks . . . [and is] entirely devoid of other charms" (Oliphant 57-8).

When Laurence Oliphant accompanied Lord Elgin, Britain's chief treaty negotiator, to China in 1857, China had already lost the first Opium War (1839-42) and the Treaty of Nanjing, signed on August 29, 1842, apart from ceding Hong Kong in perpetuity to "Victoria and her successors," also allowed British subjects and their families to set up residence in five Chinese cities--Canton, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo, and Shanghai (Spence 158-9). Western nations began to exert influence in China, and their dominance did not diminish until the early 1930s, when outright hostility broke out between Japan and China in 1931-32. But Europeans in Canton did not enjoy the same total power and freedom which Europeans in Hong Kong and the Malay Peninsula did. Instead of choosing the best sites to build their mansions, as they did in Hong Kong on the hillside, the Europeans "domiciled on Shameen, a reclaimed mud flat . . . This island, which has on one side the swift flowing Canton river . . . has on the other a canal, on which an enormous population lives in house boats . . . " (Golden 44). Although Bird claims that the settlement, "insular and exclusive, hears little and knows less of the crowded Chinese city at its gates" (45), this insularity also indicates that the foreigners were restrained, through internal as well as external factors, to conduct their lives within limited spaces.

Oliphant's impression of Canton is generally negative. As he watched the exodus of Chinese fleeing the foreign invasion, he muses:



It was singular to stand here and watch this exodus, to observe miscellaneous property which was being conveyed by patient coolies . . . and men transported articles which we should consider worthless, as carefully as their wives; nor considering the general aspect of the female part of the population, was this wonderful, when to their natural ugliness is added the deformity of feet . . . any thing more unprepossessing than the lady part of the community could not be well conceived . . . In fact, after the first novelty has worn off, there is nothing to make promenade in the streets of a Chinese town attractive. The foulest odour assail the olfactories. The most disgusting sights meet the eye--objects of disease, more loathsome than any thing to be seen in any part of the world, jostle against you . . . you suspect every man that touches you of a contagious disease . . . . (Oliphant 120)

Notice how Oliphant's view of the Chinese echoes that of an English person, who would also regard the paupers, the destitute, the foreigners in the English slums with a mixture of fascination and aversion. In London Labour and the London Poor, Mayhew describes one series of visits he made to homes in Shadwell, an area "infested with nests of brothels" (483), and one of the rooms "contained a Lascar . . . and his woman. There was a sickly smell in the chamber . . . . [The] woman's face was grimy and unwashed, and her hands so black and filthy that mustard-and-cress might have been sown successfully upon them . . . she appeared an animated bundle of rags" (485). Mayhew went on to conjecture that this woman probably had some form of disease "communicated by the Malays, Lascars, and Orientals generally, [which] is said to be the most frightful form of lues [syphilis] to be met with in Europe" (485). Contagious diseases, rags and dirt were the metonyms prejudiced Europeans devised for people from the lowest depth of the social strata, or for non-whites who did not have the benefit of wealth.

As we have seen, the evangelicals also thought of crowded living as immoral. Bird mentions in Notes on Old Edinburgh that one of the families she visited had two adults and five children, who all slept on the floor, and in order to preserve the only sets of clothing they had, slept naked "all of a heap" (18). Together with the need for individual privacy--indoor water closet and piped water for washing behind closed door--and gender segregation in order to maintain a proper standard of social morality, class differentiation became a factor also in the determination of living spaces in nineteenth-century England. Thus respectable middle-class households would have rooms for specific functions, and for male and female offspring, and "[r]elease from the necessity of doing one's dirty washing in public was literally the path to respectability" (F.M.L. Thompson 192-3). Consider also the fashion of respectable classes in the mid-nineteenth century in England. The crinoline, which "reached its apogee in 1859-64," could measure as wide as ten yards round the hem (Gernsheim 47). Even less extravagant models would require considerable space for women to maneuver in. Men and women wore gloves, and were covered from head to toe with fabric--neck-clothes, stiff collars, buttoned bodices. Physical contact was kept to a minimum and social intercourse conducted at a distance. Because of urban development and subsequent increase in population in industrial centres, etiquette in public places became one of the indicators of breeding and class distinction. One etiquette writer complains of the disorderly behaviour of the working class on the trains:

It is very trying to have all sorts and conditions pushing in with bundles, from which umbrellas protrude in every direction . . .  
Instead of being apologetic on being remonstrated with, they become

most aggressive, assured that those of their own class present will support them . . . (qtd. in Michael Curtin 162).

In a similar way, Oliphant the English gentleman was disgusted at the Chinese crowd thronging about, with their bedraggled belongings, brushing against the Europeans. Streets in Canton were not designed with the same principle and needs in mind as an English city street. The Chinese, though not intending to be overly familiar with the Westerners, nonetheless would not share the idea of required physical distance between people which the English cherished. Perhaps most galling of all would be the lack of respect and awe the Chinese population generally showed towards the Europeans.

When the European troops seized Canton in 1857-8 and captured the Chinese leader after some difficulty, Oliphant thought the prisoner was acting without due humility: "Yeh, seated in a large room . . . was answering in a loud, harsh voice . . . Though he endeavoured, by the assumption of a careless and insolent manner, to conceal his alarm, his glance was troubled . . . " (109). Oliphant, unfamiliar with Chinese language and culture, was interpreting Yeh's body language within the English context. The frustration occasioned by the foreign surrounding was converted into disdain for the defeated enemy. Bird had a similar cultural confrontation during an outing in Canton: "Two nice Chinese boys sat by us, and Mr. Smith practised Chinese upon them, till a man came out angrily and took them away, using many words of which we only understood 'Barbarian Devils'" (*Golden* 60). In this incident, we have a clearer example of reverse racial prejudice practiced by the despised Orientals, who found western presence contaminating. However, Bird treats it without rancour, for she adds immediately: "The Cantonese are not

rude however. A foreign lady can walk alone without being actually molested . . . " (Golden 60). The same could not be said for London, where a lady of any nationality would not be advised to walk alone in Whitechapel or Spitalfields.

In a colonial city, the European power could change the urban landscape to suit its own culture. In French Indochina, "[a] smug self-assurance prevailed among those late-nineteenth-century Frenchmen who, looking around at Saigon or Hanoi, could feel they had successfully replicated the urbane beauty of cities in their homeland" (Wright 161). In Joseph Conrad's short story, "The End of the Tether," Captain Whalley walks down "a recently opened and untidy thoroughfare . . . " as he tries to make a momentous decision (54). This "grandly planned street" is flanked by government buildings and European companies, but shunned by natives. As mentioned before, Europeans built their mansions on the hillside of Hong Kong because it was thought in the nineteenth century that the mountain air was salubrious for a European constitution. In discussing the choice of site in colonial settlements in response to nineteenth-century theories on contagious diseases, Anthony King writes: "This explanation of the causes of malaria, and the belief that they were considerably reduced by moving to higher elevation where cooler air temperatures prevailed, had profound effects on the settlement pattern of European army in India" (King 108). A similar pattern of civilian settlement occurred in Hong Kong, but not in Canton.

Nor should it be assumed that indigenous inhabitants of colonized places necessarily wanted to be in close proximity to the Europeans. The European esplanade is shunned by natives after business hours in Conrad's "The End of the Tether." In another work by Conrad, *Victory* (1914), Axel

Heyst's Chinese servant would not allow the white man to come near his cottage, and the natives blockade their part of the island from European encroachment. Bird mentions with irritation how the Chinese, even in colonized Hong Kong, called the Europeans "foreign devils," and her host and hostess used to be called by their servants "this very ugly name" before the Chinese found out that the English knew the language (Golden 37). And except for commercial transactions, Chinese believed in keeping all contacts with the "foreign devils" to a minimum.

It is possible that the festive season of Chinese New Year had given Bird a more favourable impression of Canton than Oliphant. Overall, she enjoyed the city, its teeming streets and its people. She was respectful of the antiquity of Canton, "which dates from the fourth century B.C." (Golden 50). The costumes and the shops excited her more than the quiet refinement of the foreign settlement. Always aware of material wealth, Bird was impressed by the elaborate architecture of residential houses, "with projecting upper stories, much carved and gilded" (61), or the silk-lined robe worn by the men, even the coolies, who had "over this a sleeveless jacket of rich dark blue or pure brocade . . . The stockings are white, and the shoes . . . are of black satin . . . The most splendid furs are worn . . . " (62). She was attracted to all unusual practices, such as visiting a "dog and cat restaurant" (63), although she did not mention whether she tried the food. But what seems to have fascinated her the most was the prison, which reminds us once again of her philanthropic background.

Bird did not visit the Naam-Hoi prison in Canton to save souls. Although she had as guide an American missionary who had "preached 190 times in Chinese" (Golden 73), her letter on this visit gave no

indication that they were allowed to preach to the prisoners. Instead of treating them as honoured guests, as the directors of the Hong Kong Chinese hospital had done, the officials in the Naam-Hoi prison paid absolutely no attention to Bird and her companion. According to a plan which Bird drew of the judgement hall, they stood between the entrance pillars and the prisoners undergoing torture. The judge, a young man "with fine features, a good complexion, and a high intellectual brow," never turned to look at anyone (75). As a matter of fact, Bird was placed so near to the tortured prisoners that "the dress of one touched my feet. I could hear their breathing . . . " (77). Altogether Bird devotes a lengthy seventeen pages on the prison in Canton and the execution ground, where she went shortly after some executions had taken place:

. . . we came to a great pool of blood and dust mingled, blackening in the sun, then another and another, till there were five of them almost close together, with splashes of blood upon the adjacent pots, and blood trodden into the thirsty ground. Against the wall opposite, a rudely constructed cross was resting, dark here and there with patches of blood. Among the rubbish at the base of the wall there were some human fragments partly covered with matting; a little further some jaw-bones with the teeth in them, then four more crosses, and some human heads lying at the foot of the wall, from which it was evident that dogs had partially gnawed off the matting in which they had been tied up. The dead stare of one human eye amidst the heap haunts me still. (Golden 83)

Bird goes on to describe with sangfroid how she picked up a "blood-splashed" wooden ticket which was hung from a prisoner's neck, and she intended to keep it as a memento, "as the stroke which had severed its string had also severed at the same time the culprit's neck" (84).

It would have been impossible for Bird to conduct herself the way she did, both at the prison and at the execution ground, without her evangelical background. As can be seen from her Notes on Old Edinburgh, she did not shrink from an environment of physical filth. Female charity workers were expected to plunge in where respectable middle-class women would fear to enter. Thus we would find Victorian "rescue workers" fearlessly walking the streets with the prostitutes they tried to rescue, suffering jeers and pelted with "[t]omatoes, rotten eggs, and dead fish . . . " (Prochaska 192-3). Nor was public demonstration and physical violence alien to Bird; her own father was attacked in the streets of Birmingham.

More noteworthy in the quoted passage is Bird's fixation on the gruesome details, which reminds the reader of the missionary tactic of highlighting pagan practices, or of Swettenham's report on amok. Blood is repeated four times, not to mention her descriptions of human remains. Christopher Herbert believes that the victims of the ghoulish spectacles of public hanging or physical discipline "were made to play the role of sacrificial scapegoats for the characteristic moral anxieties of Evangelical culture . . ." (Herbert 33). More than that, Bird's dwelling on the very non-English and therefore barbaric legal system as represented by Naam-Hoi prison, may be read as a strategy to affirm English ascendancy over the ancient culture of China. Unlike the colonized peoples of the Malay Peninsula and Hong Kong, the Chinese in Canton and Chinese history remained autonomous to English rule. Successful colonizers did not relish the secondary role Europeans were legislated to play within China. To maintain the position of an observer from a superior culture, Laurence Oliphant denigrates the ancient custom and history of China and equates

its antiquity with its military defeat, the cowardly lawless mob and the empty, untended Yamuns (offices of law) in Canton (Oliphant, Chapters 7-9). Similarly, Bird reports that the prisoners in the Cantonese prison chorused that they wished they were in the prison in Hongkong, where there were plenty of food, baths and beds to sleep on, and " . . . good, good is the prison of your Queen!" (Golden 71), a true validation of enlightened British rule over the colonized peoples. The recognition of an independent culture and a change in the political and physical environment have forced these writers to adopt discursive strategies which would, to use an Asian term, 'save face'. But as an evangelist, Bird also adds a Christian coda to the section on the execution ground, as the sight of the cross reminded her of the cross upon which Jesus was crucified. She warns the English readers against complacency regarding their national "administration of justice and the treatment of criminals . . . for the framers of the Litany were familiar with the dungeons perhaps worse than the prison of the Naam-Hoi magistrate" (Golden 84). Thus the English judicial system and Christian teaching are given dual prominence in the process of reforming the Orientals, and British superiority is reinstated in the narrative.



## In Southeast Asia and Canton With No Baedeker

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Guides have always played an important part in travel literature and in fiction on travellers, be it published travel guides which direct the travellers to specific sites, or the cicerone, who interprets and acts as go-between for the traveller in foreign surrounding. The Baedeker figures prominently in E.M. Forster's A Room With a View (1908). In Forster's novel, the guide acts as a metaphor of the conventional consciousness which struggles against instinctual feelings. In Henry James's novella, Daisy Miller's Italian cicerone is accused of indiscretion by the European expatriates, a reaction which James uses to highlight the gulf between Daisy's independent spirit and the expatriates' rarified social sense. In Journey Without Maps (1936), Graham Greene tries to convey the excitement--with a subtext of ennui--of a twentieth-century exploration in the footsteps of David Livingstone executed without the benefits of maps or able native guides:

Had we any idea of what we were up against? Had we any reliable maps? No, I said. There weren't any to be got. Had we any boys? No. Had we let the DCs up the line know of our coming and engaged rest-houses? No, I hadn't known it was necessary. When we crossed the border, how were we going to sleep? In native huts.

'You poor innocents,' he said. He nearly wept over the wheel. Had we ever considered what a native hut meant? The rats, the lice, the bugs . . . (Greene 49-50).

Greene's interlocutor, a European resident of Sierra Leone, points out some basic necessities of travelling in a foreign country--lodging, contacts, helpers (if travelling in rough terrain) and guides. This section will

examine the influence Bird's accommodation and guides might have had on her views of the Malay Peninsula, Hong Kong and Canton.

Bird went to considerable trouble to select her guides in an earlier visit to Japan. Her final choice was by no means totally satisfactory to her taste, and her writing reflects the complex relationship which existed between a native guide and a European traveller. It was a common situation in which the superior European resented being dependent on the lesser race, and felt unsettled when the Asian guide did not conform to stereotypical expectations (Kröller 91-2). Bird never mentioned the presence of an appointed native guide during her Southeast Asian and Cantonese travels. In the Malay Archipelago, Bird relied exclusively on Englishmen, all holding some official positions. In Singapore, Bird was looked after by the Colonial Secretary, Cecil Smith, whose resident was a place of "delightfully cultured and intellectual atmosphere" (Golden 109). In Malacca, Bird was lodged by the Lieutenant-Governor in the Stadthaus, "formerly the residence of the Dutch Governor" (128). In other words, Bird's hosts and guides were generally from the social class with a professional background, and their sons attended public schools and universities (Butcher 34-7). In this atmosphere of colonial culture, Bird's perception of British rule was always positive and assured, bolstered by the sad legacies of the former colonial powers. The morality of colonialism was never questioned and native cultural values were seldom acknowledged. When Bird writes of the Portuguese and the Dutch, she sees them as losers in a competitive race: "[their] rule have [sic] passed away, leaving, as their chief monuments--the first, a ruined cathedral, and a race of half-breeds; and the last, the Stadthaus and a flat-faced meeting-

house" (Golden 130). If she criticizes the English, as she does in the case of Bloomfield Douglas, the resident of Klang, it is with circumspection and always in the belief that good administration was paramount to a strong colonial presence. Even her adventures into the wild were managed by a police inspector or an assistant resident, sometimes accompanied by a valet. Small wonder then that Bird writes with smugness: "It is so strange to see that other European countries are almost nowhere in this strange Far East," and she adds "England . . . is represented by prosperous colonies, powerful protective forces, law, liberty and security" (255-6).

If Bird could efficiently minimize the presence of the Malay sultans and their nominal rule in some areas of the Peninsula, she could also very conveniently ignore the Chinese population in Hong Kong. Guest of the bishop and the governor, Bird saw Hong Kong as a eulogy to the prosperity, peace and growth the English had brought to this island. She was even delighted by the sight of Hong Kong on fire, which affected the Chinese population who lived in the crowded central district rather than the Europeans who lived on the hillside. In picturesque language Bird describes the scene:

But dense volumes of smoke rolling and eddying, and covering with their black folds the lower slopes and the town itself made a surprising spectacle . . . . I got into a bamboo chair, with two long poles which rested on the shoulders of two lean coolies, who carried me to my destination at a swinging pace through streets as steep as those of Varenna. Streets choked up with household goods and the costly contents of shops, treasured books and nick-nacks lying on the dusty pavements . . . Chinamen dragging their possessions to the hills; Chinawomen, some of them with hoofs rather than feet, carrying their children on their backs and under their arms . . . Mr. Pope Hennessy, the Governor, ubiquitous in a chair with four scarlet bearers; men belonging to the insurance companies running about

with drawn swords, the miscellaneous population running hither and thither; loud and frequent explosions, heavy crashes as of tottering walls . . . made a scene of intense excitement; while utterly unmoved, in grand Oriental calm (or apathy), with the waves of tumult breaking round their feet, stood Sikh sentries, majestic men, with swarthy faces and great crimson turban. (Golden 31-2)

This passage shows Bird's skill as a descriptive writer, but it also shows her looking at the Hong Kong populace through the eyes of the colonists. A disaster to numerous Chinese who lost their homes and goods, the conflagration was to Bird a spectacle of unparalleled excitement. The two Europeans, Bird and Pope Hennessy, are conveyed through the streets, amongst the stricken Chinese, on chairs carried by coolies and guards. Sikhs, impressive because of their crimson turbans and majestic build, stand apathetically immobile. The whole scene is written with a kind of breathless intensity, which makes it effective but ethically problematic. Later on in the passage, Bird calls the noisy panic of the Chinese a "Babel"; she describes the breaking out of fire afresh as "luridly grand in the twilight, the tongues of flame lapping up house after house" (33). Not a word is said about what happened to the Chinese after the fire, except that Sikhs are patrolling the city day and night to prevent looting. But Eitel's history of Hong Kong has even less to record on the disaster:

After the great fire of 25th and 26th December, 1878 . . . [which] in the opinion of the community demonstrated the absence of all system in the management of the Fire Brigade, Sir John promised (January 18, 1879) various reforms. But nothing of any moment ha[s] been done . . . . (Eitel 528)

Eitel capitalizes on the opportunity to criticize the government of Pope Hennessy rather than commenting on the aftermath of the fire. In the

index to his Europe in China, there are entries for "Chinese Hatred for Foreigners" and "Chinese Perfidy," but nothing on the Chinese of Hong Kong, although he ends his history by complaining that

[t]he persistent refusal to adopt European costume or English ways of living . . . . all these symptoms of Chinese clannish exclusivism . . . clearly indicate that on the Chinese side there is, as yet, no desire to see the chasm that still separates Chinese and European life in this Colony, bridged over. (574-5)

His advice is that ". . . secular education now tentatively pursued was likewise bound to fail so long as insufficient attention was bestowed on a general promotion of the English language. There was, during this period, hardly a thought of aiming at that regeneration of the Chinese community which would raise them to the level of the Europeans . . . ." (575). In Eitel's history, the Chinese in Hong Kong were accused of keeping their own cultural identity instead of adopting the British culture. But administrative policies and social relations also made it clear that the Chinese would never be accepted as equals of the British. Therefore, the concept of raising the Chinese "to the level of the Europeans" was largely a theoretical posturing, and implicit was the racial inequality which Europeans, in spite of philanthropic leaning, continued to exercise. This gulf between teaching and practice generally reflects the ambiguity Bird's writing shows.

Bird went to two countries in which Britain was not predominant in either colonial rule or in cultural influence--Canton, and Cochin-China for one day, on the way to Singapore. Bird's guide in Canton were missionaries who had studied the language, or her hostess, Mrs. H., presumably the wife

of the director of Jardine, Matheson, and Co. in Canton. Thus her itinerary was shared between sightseeing, in which she delighted, especially amongst the shops and fairs, and visits to places of worship and justice. Bird admired the intrepidity and tenacity shown by the American, German and English missionaries and her writing is interspersed with incidents of their efforts. She thought the Chinese temples ugly, and China "a nation of atheists or agnostics, or slaves of impious superstitions" (Golden 64-5).

In her book, the section on Canton seems to contain the most contradiction: she admired Chinese antiquity and the richness of Chinese culture, but she the abhorred Chinese legal system and forms of its religious worship. It was a conflicting perception which Bird never resolved. Bird's values and expectations were formed by the middle-class culture of Victorian England. Bird was a 'trained' Victorian: she was both religious and materialistic. She would not despise wealth and prestige, but she was mindful of the social responsibilities incumbent upon the upper- and middle-classes towards the poor.

Similarly, the colonizers were responsible for civilizing the natives, "to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue" (Macaulay 182). This noble purpose justified the violence implicit in all projects of colonization. Bird did not reproach the colonial government for superimposing its rule of law and its customs upon the Malays, and wished that the same civilizing process could be effected in China. The Chinese, in spite of their tradition, were seen by Oliphant and Bird as no better than the great unwashed mass in need of enlightened administration. As long as the British hierarchy of cultures held sway, colonization and missionary work could continue without contradiction. The efficiency of British colonization over the French, the Dutch and the

Portuguese in Southeast Asia also confirmed this hierarchical structure of nations, already evident in the Great Exhibition. Bird's short excursion into Cochin-China gave her the opportunity to compare English and French colonialism. In Saigon, Bird saw Frenchmen, Spaniards and Germans lounging in the shades of cafes, "with their feet upon tables" (Golden 95). She thought the colonial life in Saigon was made up of little other than tiffin and bath and siesta, and concludes, after visiting some villagers that

[t]he French don't appear to be successful colonists. This Cochin-Chinese colony of theirs . . . was ceded to France in 1874, but its European population is still under twelve thousand . . . [Her informants] believe that the colony, far from being a source of profit to France, is kept at a heavy annual loss. . . . (103-4)

In Bird's estimation, the French government, unlike the British, was running the colony at a loss instead of showing a profit. Thus, the complexity of Asian history and cultures was reduced to a competition between European powers aimed at making profits. The complexity of a society with several ethnic groups was simplified into employable stereotypes: the Chinese amah, Malay gardener, Tamil chauffeur and so on (Handbook to British Malaya 55).

Bird was sometimes aware that her observations were not empirical truths, as she writes in The Golden Chersonese:

I am painfully aware of the danger here, as everywhere, of forming hasty and inaccurate judgements, and of drawing general conclusions from partial premises, and on my present tour there is the added risk of seeing things through official spectacles; but still certain things lie on the surface, and a traveller must be very stupid indeed if he does not come to an approximately just conclusion concerning them. (324)

The specific instance which occasioned Bird's remark was her disapproval of a resident whose administration treated the Malays unjustly. Although her observation and the reason for it, "on the surface," are both laudable, the reader must remember that the just system of law and order which Bird wanted for the Malays was an English colonial system. If Bird experienced moments of contradictory consciousness, she relied on her evangelical training to restore her faith in her own culture and the righteousness of its path.

Bird gave an impression of earnest accounting in The Golden Chersonese, with her obsessive writing under the most inclement conditions and her shame at not doing something. She also ensured that she quoted indisputable sources, such as the government blue books and Wallace, to give her travel narrative the authenticity of scholarly investigation. If Bird travelled in Southeast Asia without a Baedeker, her book was providing the kind of information a guidebook might conceivably contain--geography, climate, flora and fauna, population, and culture, which is further discussed under headings of language, literature, religion, music, mathematics, medicine and so on (3-27). It is not merely entertaining, which would be sinful, but also informative.

The possession of power was an ever-present element in British travel writing about colonized countries. Even Leonard Woolf's Growing, in which he claims often that he despised the imperialist role he played, is not exempt from racial and cultural prejudices. In The Golden Chersonese, the overall imperial rhetoric is occasionally challenged by Bird's sympathy or admiration for the non-Europeans. The Chinese in Malaya are praised for their industry. The Klings are admired for their gracefulness. The tropical landscape is enchanting and dreamlike. The further Bird was from



the colonial settings of clubs and residency, the less dogmatic her judgment of the others became. In Canton, Bird is circumspect in her observations, but in Hong Kong, surrounded by colonial officials, she writes at her imperialistic 'best'. This conglomeration of imperial pride, ethical conscientiousness, professionalism, belief in progress and technology over nature, and a need to appear fair-minded, is detectable in much of British late colonial travel writing, as for example Greene's Journey Without Maps or Forster's reminiscences of his Indian travels, The Hill of Devi (1953). The Golden Chersonese, a forerunner of self-reflexive imperial writing, shows that prejudice and bigotry could be rationalized by altruism. Immersion in metropolitan beliefs helped to smooth away any experience of ethical contradiction. In Bird's writings, the awareness of other cultural identities was not distinct enough to break down Eurocentric complacency, which was preserved by rigorous adherence to British culture in the colonies. The specifically European consciousness of Max Dauthendey, as the next chapter shows, was shaped and preserved by different sets of cultural habits than Bird's, and this difference is very clearly reflected in his representation of Southeast Asia.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See McKean, Kohlmaier and von Sartory for discussion on the glass house building type as the origin of modern architecture.

<sup>2</sup> See Ruskin, The Seven Lamps of Architecture and Michael Bright on Pugin and the Gothic revival in Victorian architectural aesthetics.

<sup>3</sup> For the publication history of Mayhew's London Labour and the London Poor, see Humpherys' two books on Mayhew.

<sup>4</sup> E. J. Eitel was out by one year with the date of the Treaty of Nanking in Europe In China (1895), a history of Hong Kong which has recently been republished by Oxford University Press and probably accepted as a canonical work on Hong Kong. Both Spence and Hsü give 1842 as the year the treaty was signed.

## CHAPTER 2 : MAX DAUTHENDEY : SEDUCED BY THE EAST

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### Berlin and the Shaping of an Aesthete

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On January 19, 1893 Max Dauthendey wrote to some friends in Würzburg about a visit he paid to Edvard Munch's private exhibition in a luxurious building on the corner of Friedrichstrasse and Leipzigstrasse in Berlin:

The first impression. Colourful strokes--brushstrokes an inch long like commas, like colonies of bacilli . . .

Twice I encircled the paintings--passed back and forth in front of the wall; it was as if I wanted to drink some mulled wine, but it's too hot: one sips and sips, and keeps getting burnt . . . Suddenly I saw, felt and understood everything . . . There was a mixture of six or seven colour tones, where painters who use a broad brushstroke only obtain one tone; the shadows in iridescent gradations, as in nature, the lights flicker, and everything came alive. . . .

Der erste Eindruck. Bunte Striche--Kommas von einem Zoll Länge die Pinselstriche, wie bunte Bazillenkolonien . . .

Zweimal ging ich um die Bilder--an den Wänden hinauf, hinunter, es war mir, wie wenn man Glühwein trinken möchte, aber es ist zu heiss: man nippt, nippt, man verbrennt immer wieder . . . Plötzlich sah ich, empfand ich und begriff ich alles . . . es entstanden sechs-, siebenfache Tonschwingungen, wo sonst die Maler mit breitem Pinselstrich nur einen Ton bekommen; die Schatten schillerten in Stufungen, wie in der Natur, die Lichter flimmerten, und alles lebte. . . . (Sieben Meere nahmen mich auf 95)

There are three implications in this description which highlight the course of Dauthendey's development as an artist and writer, a process which will

be discussed in some detail in this section: the conservatism of the Berlin society, the way Edvard Munch turned potentially disastrous publicity to his own advantage, and Dauthendey's appreciation of Munch's avant-garde technique of painting. All three points concern a network of artistic and social influences which formed the cultural habits of Max Dauthendey. The confluence of aesthetic and social interests, which I have discussed in chapter 1 in relation to nineteenth-century Britain, will be examined in this chapter within the socio-political milieu of Wilhelminian Germany.

In 1892, the year before Dauthendey's visit to the private showing at this location, Edvard Munch was invited by the Berlin Artists Association (Verein Berliner Künstler) to mount an exhibition in the imperial capital. However, after seeing the paintings, which Munch carefully hung himself, the conservative members of the association petitioned Anton von Werner, friend of the emperor and president of the association, to close the show at once (Paret, *The Berlin Secession* 50).

Munch's reaction to this outright rejection by the establishment was not to return to Norway, nor to hold a private showing in the more bohemian district, but to set up his quarters right in the midst of the business and middle-class sector of Berlin, a crossroad often painted and used as setting in literature. Munch's choice of location is a gesture of shrewd calculation: the Berlin of Kaiser Wilhelm II was a city of spectacles, a city of "chauvinistic ostentation" (Cannadine 217), of "elaborate social performances" (Balfour 15). Nothing would have drawn the public's attention more than a renegade modern painter mounting an exhibition in the business core of the city.

The kinds of paintings which were accepted both by the conservative elite, including Kaiser Wilhelm II and the majority of middle-class

Germans, were genre paintings showing idyllic farm lives, or historical paintings of military and nationalist significance, of which Anton von Werner's The Proclamation of the German Empire (1871) is a peerless example. Munch's intensely subjective and erotic works were "new, foreign, disgusting, common" (Paret, BS 50). Werner was the court painter of Kaiser Wilhelm I and personal friend of both Friedrich III and Wilhelm II. In 1875 he was chosen as Director of the Academic Institute for the Fine Arts: "The appointment, which carried with it membership of various government commissions and seats on juries, gave Werner great influence in the Prussian cultural bureaucracy and among artists in Berlin" (Paret, Art as History 169).

Werner was hostile to impressionism, and his conservative taste in art echoed Wilhelm II's rigid preference for realistic representation in art with historical references. His power within the arts community also dictated to a certain extent the kinds of art which received imperial approval and funding. In 1901, when the erection of the statues along the Siegesallee (Victory Avenue) in Berlin's Tiergarten was completed, Wilhelm II compared them to the great sculptures of the Renaissance. German impressionist painter and one of the founders of the Berlin Secession, Max Liebermann, whose apartment overlooked the Siegesallee, quipped that the only thing he could do now was to wear tinted glasses (Kramer 206).

Like Liebermann and other members of the Berlin Secession, Dauthendey belonged to the middle-class in spite of his sympathy for modern artistic movements (Paret, BS). This conjunction of artistic radicalism and political conservatism--Dauthendey was to write approvingly of German colonization in New Guinea--is what I find specific

in German fin-de-siècle Orientalism, which is exemplified by Dauthendey's writings. His perception of the East is aesthetic and concerned mainly with exterior display. His understanding of colonial politics, as will be discussed later in this chapter, is naive. Unlike Bird, Dauthendey did not adopt the guise of educator and moralist and he seems to have had little to do with the missionary movements in Germany. Instead, his intense and worldly attention to the ornamental surface and to spectacles is very much a product of Dauthendey's experience of Berlin as a centre of imperial, artistic, and commercial activities in the last two decades of the nineteenth century.

In 1891, the year Dauthendey moved from Würzburg to Berlin, Germany was only twenty years old as a nation. The country was young and aggressively successful in the process of modern industrialisation, and fragmented by its different regional interests, religious groups, social classes and economic sectors.<sup>1</sup> The young emperor, twenty-nine years old when he came to the throne, was the embodiment of the conflicting values circulating in Wilhelminian society. Deeply aware of the military tradition of his Prussian ancestors, Wilhelm II indulged, some would say to a pathological degree, in military ceremonies, uniforms and other paraphernalia: "He constantly tinkered with the uniforms. He forced the entourage to wear them when 'we would have much preferred to wear suits'. He stipulated the speed at which cavalry was to move at parades" (Hull 41). He was also entrenched in Prussian social formality and caste system, so well depicted in many of Theodor Fontane's novels.

On the other hand, Wilhelm II delighted in technological inventions. He loved travelling by car or train. He was a strong supporter of the new

and non-aristocratic industrialists of the Reich, such as Alfred Krupp or Albert Ballin, the director of the Hamburg-Amerika line. Unlike other sovereigns of his time, Wilhelm II was appreciative of the power of public opinion and the necessity to manipulate the press (Kohut 136-40). In his plans for building up the imperial navy and to expand Germany's overseas territories, he was very much in line, if somewhat belatedly, with the dominant foreign policies of the other industrialized countries, principally England and France. This rivalry with other European powers was extended to imperial display in ceremonies and building programmes. As David Cannadine notes in his article on the spectacle of modern British royalty, "Splendor out of Court": "This growing international competitiveness was mirrored in the large-scale rebuilding of capital cities, as the great powers bolstered their self-esteem in the most visible, ostentatious manner" (217).

Kaiser Wilhelm II's simultaneous inclinations towards conservatism and modernism, his use of public displays, and the role he played in Wilhelminian society are important points to consider when analysing Dauthendey's representation of the East. In his otherwise informative book on Wilhelminian culture, From Naturalism to Expressionism, Roy Pascal dismisses Wilhelm II's "personal impact on politics" and social life as minimal (8). More recent studies and debates on the functioning and policy-making of the imperial court have shown that, on the contrary, Wilhelm II was a key factor in the preservation of outmoded social hierarchy and conservative artistic standards, in the increase in tension between Germany and England, in the occupation of Kiautschou (Jiaozhou), China in 1897, and in the creation of the imperial navy.<sup>2</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, Berlin had a population of two million people, ten times the number in the first decade of the century (Kramer 42). Berliners enjoyed technological inventions such as the telephone and streetcars before other German urban dwellers did. The imperial capital was also a centre of dramatic and literary activities, as well as the hub of modern artistic movements. Apart from the traditional theatres, Max Harden founded the Freie Bühne in 1889, which opened its season with Gerhart Hauptmann's Vor Sonnenaufgang and Ibsen's Ghosts. A year later Bruno Wille founded the socialist Freie Volksbühne. Its first play was Ibsen's Pillars of Society. Strindberg, Hamsun and Przybyszewski lived for a while in Berlin as friends of the writers' community, which consisted of Julius and Heinrich Hart, Ola Hansson and his dramatist-wife Laura Markholm, and Wilhelm Bölsche amongst others. The publishing house Ullstein, which owned the influential Berliner Zeitung, Illustrirte and Morgenpost, built its new and enlarged premises on Kochstrasse in 1886 (50 Jahre Ullstein, 2-4). But these writers were on the fringe of both the court and the middle-class societies. Kaiser Wilhelm was not a literary man, and during his close association with his friend, Philipp Count zu Eulenburg, he depended on his courtier to recommend books for him to read (Hull 73-4). Eulenburg's taste in literature was decidedly conservative, and Max Harden, during his attack on Eulenburg and his circle, went so far as to accuse the Count of ruining the Kaiser's "nascent modernism" (73).

As for the majority of the people, one of the most popular publications was the Gartenlaube, an illustrated journal which rejected the modern advance in the arts ("das moderne Richtungen in der Kunst ablehnte") and which would be ridiculed as "kitschig" today (Kramer 241).



An 1897 cover illustration of the journal shows the titular arbor in the background, with a young mother, parasol in hand, talking to a young child in the foreground. Within the shady and beflowered arbor sit the remaining members of the family: the husband, two other children in frock and sailor suit, and the parents of the couple, all enjoying a quiet repast. The editorial policy of the paper was to avoid any materials of an offensive or extreme nature.

In the visual arts, the *accepted* styles of painting in Germany, and especially in Berlin, were imitative and staid. The Berlin Salon exhibitions, funded by the Ministry of Culture, supported genre painters such as Wilhelm Leibl or Hans Thoma, or historical painters of allegorical themes such as Hans Makart (Paret The Berlin Secession). Kaiser Wilhelm himself, as could be seen from his official papers: "had categorical likes and dislikes, and he felt strongly that German art needed his leadership if it was to fulfill what he took to be its mission" (24). Judging from an exhibition of his personal collection of paintings at his court-in-exile in Doorn, Holland (Wilderotter, 129, 196, 226), the Kaiser's taste was close to the Victorian sentimental home-and-hearth genre, such as Landseer's works of domestic animals.

Dauthendey was introduced to the Munch exhibition in 1892 by his avant-garde literary friends. In the same year, the avant-garde painters in Berlin resigned in protest at the Berlin Artists Association's treatment of Munch. Some of these ex-establishment members formed the Berlin Secession in 1898.<sup>3</sup> Amongst the founding members of the movement were impressionists Max Lieberman and Walter Leistikow. The art dealers and publishers Bruno and Paul Cassirer supported the movement by

agreeing to become administrators of the exhibitions for the secessionists, and in May 1899, the Berlin Secession held their first showing as an independent group. The tame and uncontroversial nature of the paintings only highlights the extreme conservatism of the contemporary public taste.

From 1891 to 1893, Dauthendey spent a great deal of time in Berlin with the writers mentioned previously. In 1893, Dauthendey met Richard Dehmel and Stefan George through poems he had published in various journals. He became especially friendly with Dehmel, who described Dauthendey's poetry as expressive of an astonishing style (*erstaunliche Ausdrucksweise*) and as colourful (Dauthendey, *Gesammelte Werke* I 459). Dauthendey also frequented the secessionists' showings. In his diary entries and letters during this period, his impressions reflect the decadent indulgence in colours and textures so prevalent in the paintings of a Liebermann or a Lovis Corinth:

There was a big dinner party at Richard Dehmel's - . . . I wished you, my dear ones, had had the pleasure of seeing the table . . . the silver bowl sits in the middle, its swelling curve resembles a silver umbel upside down, surrounded by ruby red wineglasses and green Venetian glasses with dragon design, and in between are ripe, red oranges in crystal bowls on the damask tablecloth, and amongst the metal and glass are tall pale orchids in sheer mauve, melting in their succulence, proudly erect or drooping under their own heaviness.

Zum Abend war grosses Abendessen bei Richard Dehmel - . . . und Euch Lieben hätte ich gern das Vergnügen gegönnt, diese Tafel zu sehen . . . in der schwellenden Üppigkeit die strotzende silberne Bowle wie eine schwere Silberdolde in der Mitte, und die Rubin-gläser und die grünen venezianischen Drachengläser und dazwischen die satten, roten Orangen auf dem Kristall und dem Damast, und mit-ten zwischen dem Metall und Glas hohe bleiche Orchideen, blasslila und in feuchtem Schmelz und stolz aufgestiegen und schwer gebeugt. (*Sieben Meere nahmen mich auf* 100)

True to Dehmel's admiration for Dauthendey's sense of colours, this brief record of a dinner party is quintessentially aesthetic: the piling on of objects (bowls, glasses, oranges, orchids), the swirl of colours (silver, green, red), the connotation of exoticism (ruby, dragon) and the encapsulation of narrative temporality in a fleeting moment (the *ripe* oranges, the *drooping* orchids). The vocabulary is blatantly erotic, suggested by an orgy of ripened fruits and swollen lilies and erect glassware. Dauthendey presents a tableau of things without function, unlike the utilitarian manufactured goods displayed in the Crystal Palace. This composition of lovely objects is to be enjoyed for its sensuous quality, its merit is to be found in its visual beauty, criteria central to *Jugendstil* (Jost 15, 23).

The writers and painters at the turn of the century, according to Peter Paret on the secessionists and Hamann/Hermand on the literary and visual arts scene (*Impressionismus* 1972), were not politically committed: "Most of them originated in the naturalist camp and had become apolitical individualists after their estrangement from socialist issues" (Die meisten von ihnen kamen noch aus dem naturalistischen Lager und waren nach ihrer Entfremdung von Sozialismus zu unpolitischen Individualisten geworden . . . ) (17). The negative effect of this disengagement from political decisions was a lack of activism in the artistic circle. Some of the artists and writers worked in an exclusive environment and considered themselves above issues such as colonial politics or military expansion. Dauthendey certainly subscribed to this solipsistic ideal.

However apolitical these artists and writers might have been, they were still subjected to the spectacles mounted by the emperor for the public. On a very everyday level, the city-scape of late nineteenth-century

Berlin was dominated by the neo-classical blocks of the Stadtschloss (the emperor's official residence) at the east end of Unter den Linden and the Reichstagsgebäude (seat of parliament) further west, beyond the Brandenburger Tor. The palace itself originated from the Baroque period of the early eighteenth century, but many other surrounding monuments as well as the parliament building were built in the eclectic and derivative style of Wilhelminian architecture.

Judging from historical photographs of that period, these buildings were not sequestered from the public thoroughfare by strips of park and greenery. Their facades of articulated columns and heavy masonry punctuated by regular intervals of fenestration suggested not only a pretense to grandeur, but a reaching back to the times when this form of architecture represented laws and measures: "[T]he face which the Palace turned to the general public was harsh and severe, reflecting the royal view of Berliners" (Taylor 28). In the growing urban traffic of Berlin, with street cars and horse wagons, motor cars and pedestrians, not to mention the proliferation of industrial buildings, factories and apartment houses jostling for space, the solidity and impenetrability of these state buildings gave the city what Richard Sennett calls "clarity" in his discussion of spaces of authority in The Conscience of the Eye (31-40). The palace with its surrounding monuments, or the Reichstagsgebäude, sitting so near to street traffic and so overwhelming in scale, also suggested a mixture of urban and imperial drama, where the crudity of the plot is camouflaged by the seeming richness of the props. The exteriority of the object *is* the substance.

Nor was the imperial government the only patron of monumental architecture. On the Leipzigerstrasse Berliners could do their shopping at

the Wertheim department store, the architect Alfred Messel's "great cathedral to commerce" (Mallgrave 300). The store boasted a "decadent Roman anta, decorated with peacocks and pierced by a dwarf colonnade, supporting a huge coffered arch . . ." (Artley 39). The interior of the store resembled exhibition spaces in a world exposition, with glass cupola and hanging chandeliers. During the era of expositions, Germany was visibly lagging behind in imperial displays compared to other European countries except Spain, Russia and Austria (Greenhalgh 73). Although Germany failed to impress in world expositions, it recompensed its poor showing abroad by the extravagance of its civic buildings and commodity palaces at home.

Wilhelm II himself was certainly well aware of the currency of imperial spectacle. Numerous photographs and paintings of that period show the Kaiser in military uniforms, in parades, in memorial dedications. The epitome of this heroic posing can be seen in Max Kroner's portrait of the emperor in 1890, with the young Kaiser in the foreground, resplendent in white and gold, his many military decorations balanced by the elaborate drapery effect behind him, giving him the appearance of both a warrior and a classical god. The modern artists and writers might have scoffed at such pompous displays, as witnessed by Liebermann's remark on the Siegesallee. Nonetheless, such images were distributed regularly to the public through the illustrated journals and reaffirmed by the Kaiser's tireless travel around Germany for personal appearances. Although the symbolism of architecture, of paintings, of sculpture is generated through interpretation and is by no means stable, the symbolic meaning of Wilhelminian buildings, of the Kaiser's public appearances and other displays were in a sense determined from the top. The message of

imperial power was repeated around the landscape of the city like signposts. As Thomas Nipperdey writes in *Gesellschaft, Kultur, Theorie*, only those in power erect monuments, never the opposition (133).

But this display of wealth and power in the metropolis demanded a price. The corollary development of industrial and commercial expansion was urban squalor and social problems. Although Berlin could boast that "no other European city had grown so rapidly . . . in few cities did urban misery exceed that in the tenements of Berlin's northern and eastern districts" (Müller 38). Naturalist writers, as for instance Gerhart Hauptmann, showed his awareness of the conditions of the working people with his play, *Die Weber* (1892). Writers and artists who became identified with *Jugendstil* preferred to concentrate on the beautification of the urban and the modern elements of city life, thus ignoring social content and concentrating on formal expression. The beauty of *Jugendstil* is of selective seeing; the watcher's subjectivity is the locus. Dauthendey displays fully this aesthetic tendency in the writings discussed in this chapter. In both his fiction and his autobiographical writings, there is no other narrative perspective except the artist's eye, which only registers what he wants to see.

In spite of the high cost of living, Berlin dazzled Dauthendey with all its vitality, its modernity, its multifaceted social life. The young poet from Würzburg enjoyed the sights city life offered as a typical nineteenth-century *flâneur*, who poeticized about the "city of swarming, city full of dreams" (*Fourmillante cité, cité pleine de rêves*) (Baudelaire, "Les Sept Vieillards"). In a letter to his friends at home in 1893, Dauthendey gushes:

First I wrote, of course . . . then at four o'clock went strolling on Unter den Linden, *tout seul*. --No, not *tout seul*: with everyone.

A thick crowd pressed here and there all the way to the Brandenburger Tor, and the carriages flew by like silver shadows, and the fine horses' hoofs danced and clattered smartly on the asphalt . . . and on the velvet cushioned seats the ladies swayed (here and there some beautiful ones), with thin chic chiffon veils of lemon yellow, lilac and purple on their hats. . . .

Erst gedichtet, natürlich . . . dann um vier Uhr Linden gebummelt, *tout seul*. --Nein, nicht *tout seul*: mit allen Menschen.

Ein dichter Strom presste sich hinunter und hinauf bis zum Brandenburger Tor, und die Equipagen flirrten silbern vorbei, und die feinen Pferdefüße trippelten und klappten auf dem Asphalt . . . und in den grauen Samtpolstern . . . wiegen sich Frauen (hie und da sogar schöne Frauen), zitronengelbe und fliederfarbene und heliotropfarbene dünne, freche Seidenschleifen auf den Hüten. . . .  
(Sieben Meere nahmen mich auf 99)

This excerpt contains all the exciting elements of city life: crowd scene, traffic, colourful costumes. The Berlin of Wilhelminian Germany offered the necessary conditions for a *flâneur*-culture to flourish. In the footsteps of modernized cities such as Paris, with its boulevards and parks (Kampmeyer-Käding 38-9), and Milan, with its monumental arcade complex (Geist 74-5), the thoroughfares in Dauthendey's Berlin provided open space for the crowd to move through and resting places, such as the Kaisergalerie, for the lookers to station themselves. The proliferation of railway stations and department stores, architectural structures related to the arcade (Geist 4), also allowed a constant social interchange of the observer and the observed.

The figure of the *flâneur*, who spent his days looking at passers-by and shop windows, the evenings in the theatres, and the early hours drinking and smoking in pubs with fellow artists and writers, fits

Dauthendey's profile in Berlin. An anti-establishment social type, the bohemian artist claimed to scorn the materialistic ethos of late nineteenth-century industrialized society. He would not subscribe to a structured work schedule. Unlike the factory workers or office workers, he neither took the tram early in the morning to a work-place far from home, nor did he expect a pay package at the end of each month. Benjamin describes the Parisian man of letters as someone who displayed his idleness before people as part of his working hours: "He behaved as if he had learned from Marx that the value of a commodity is determined by the working time socially necessary to produce it" (Charles Baudelaire 29) (Er verhält sich als ob er von Marx gelernt hätte, dass der Wert jede Ware durch die zu ihrer Produktion gesellschaftlich notwendige Arbeitszeit bestimmt ist" (Gesammelte 1.2: 530). Benjamin further analyses the activity of the *flâneur* as a strategy to render the complexity and confusion experienced in urban big cities manageable and non-threatening, by ascribing stereotypical readings to passers-by. However, while the loiterer adopted an attitude of detached observation at the newsstand or in a coffee shop, he was at the same time offering himself as an object of observation. In any social situation involving "observation of behaviour--with the exception of behaviour observed through one-way screens--occurs in two-person or group situations" (Ruesch 46) and one can expect to be looked at in return. The attention to personal attire and the bohemian artist's preference for unconventional fashion, such as that of Whistler (Lochnan 21), was in a way using one's appearance as a calling card: the *flâneur* was waiting to be identified by fellow travellers.

But there was another side to this painterly Berlin which Dauthendey describes in his letters. A 1912 photograph of a working-class family



shows seven siblings of various ages, the youngest in a cot, posing in a narrow room with flaking wallpaper and crammed with all the furniture of the household. Lying next to the cot, in a single bed, is the mother looking sideways at her children, some of whom are smiling, but the elder two look uncomfortably sombre (Glaser 79).<sup>4</sup> Unlike the composition impressionist paintings present to the viewer, which suggests the elegiac poetry of a fleeting moment, the staring eyes and dour expressions of the 'sitters' confront the camera in this documentation of hard life. The photograph does not suggest that the condition of these people will be changed soon. This family would have been one of the many who had to live in the rental tenements ("Mietskasernen," literally 'rental barracks') scattered "to the north, to the east, and to the south and southeast of the city" (Czaplicka 33). Most of these places were unheated, badly designed and constructed, and without sanitation. Some families had to live on the roof or in the cellar. Some individuals could save money by renting only a bedspace, and often some units also served as brothels. The rooms were often damp. When previous renters had dried up the place by occupying it ("trocken wohnen"), the landlord would raise the rent for the next occupants (Kramer 160). Dauthendey did not write about this urban squalor in Berlin, unlike Bird who studied Edinburgh slum. It was also a milieu seldom painted by the German impressionists (Czaplicka 10-2).

In the case of the *flâneur* metamorphosing into the urban detective, such as Poe's "The Man in the Crowd," the narrator "domesticates the city by reducing its multiplicity to a finite set of readable types" (Brand 193). In the case of the artists and poets engaged in *flânerie*, they preoccupied themselves with the surface of experience, the seeable which could also be manipulated, as part of their aesthetic programme. There is no world of

work ("Arbeitswelt") in the German impressionist movement, its world is an idealized space, or an idealized surface ("idealer Fläche") (Jost 15). The working-class of Berlin lived in compartmentalized areas (Neukölln, Moabit); the *flâneur* as aesthete stayed outside of the invisible fences.

To position oneself outside the display window instead of venturing behind the doors of everyday life reminds one of the stage metaphor social scientist Erving Goffman uses in his book, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959). Goffman divides the space of activities in daily life into the front and the back stages, the first serving as an arena for our interaction with others and for public consumption; the second for moments of preparation for our daily performances. He gives as the most immediate example the living room of a house as the front (22). In the city life of Berlin at the turn of the century, social performances were frequently provided by imperial parades, shopwindows and shoppers at the department stores, or passengers disembarking at train stations--all on view for the *flâneur's* observing eyes. Life in public places was the front area where social performances were arranged for enjoyment.

Emile Zola's 1882 novel, Au Bonheur des Dames, illustrates this confluence of public spectacle, plentiful merchandise available for the looker, and the use of exotic display which together create a front stage. This commodity palace, the department store, is described by Zola alternately as a "chapel" or "a machine" (33), with huge glass windows which light up like beacons to the passers-by. Inside the entrance the store-owner, Mouret, has merchandised an oriental hall with displays of carpets from the Middle East and South Asia. Spectators who cross the threshold see "[des] visions d'Orient [qui] flottaient sous le luxe de cet art barbare . . ." (95). Starting with the first World Exposition, objects on

display had acquired centre stage in urban life, a development in people's consciousness which resulted in the valorization of the commodity in an increasingly consumerist culture. Like a shopper, Dauthendey's perception of Berlin, and later of the Asian countries he visited, would not penetrate beyond the front stages. The aesthetic habits he acquired as an artist and writer of German impressionism to a large extent dictated Dauthendey's way of seeing.

## The Orient in Nineteenth-Century Germany

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As Germany occupied Southwest Africa, East Africa, the Pacific Islands and Kiautschou, China towards the end of the nineteenth century, Germans became more and more exposed to forms of representation in non-European cultures, so that in novels and newspaper accounts the colonies were referred to as a matter of course, the way India was a pervasive trope in English literature. In Fontane's novel of Berlin life, *Effi Briest* (1895), Instetten unhappily considers joining the colonial service in Africa after his separation from Effi Briest. His friend laughs at the idea of the very proper Junker dressed up in a red fez or a tropical helmet (328). In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Germany discovered the colonial *race*, in both senses of the word.

Germany had not pursued a consistent colonial policy until after its unification in 1871, although there were German traders and missionaries in Africa as early as the seventeenth century (Henderson 9-10). By the time Germany established colonies in Africa in 1884, the European competition for overseas territories had reached its last lap. There are various theories regarding Germany's belated entry into the scramble,<sup>5</sup> but the main reasons could be summarized as follows. First, the successful lobbying of colonial enthusiasts, with the founding of the German Colonial Association (Deutscher Kolonialverein) in 1882, which later became the German Colonial Society (Deutsche Kolonialgesellschaft). "For the next three decades," Richard Pierard writes in "The German Colonial Society," "it functioned as the principal advocate for the overseas empire in that it lobbied the government on almost all matters relating to the colonies, sought to sell the public on their value as a national asset, and promoted

economic development and settlement there" (19). The society was very much an elite organization, with the majority of its membership drawn from the aristocratic, military-naval, governmental and commercial classes of Wilhelminian society (24-7). This high profile in membership and the members' proximity to power helped to a great extent to influence colonial policy-making.

Another reason for German overseas expansion could be attributed to Bismarck's change of attitude regarding German foreign policy, a subject of historical complexity which lies outside the parameters of this thesis. In a drastically simplified version, it might be said that Bismarck was pragmatic enough to recognize the theoretical advantages of possessing German colonies for economic reasons (Henderson 33-4) and that to pursue an aggressive expansionist policy overseas would detract attention from domestic problems during his tenure as the Imperial Chancellor (Knoll xiv, Blackbourn, Populists and Patricians 8-9).

After dismissing Bismarck in 1890, Wilhelm II became the most influential decision-maker regarding foreign policy in Germany. His interests in colonial possessions were fueled both by his penchant for visible manifestations of military power and his personal relationship with Britain. After Germany acquired her colonies in Africa and in the Pacific, an area of well over 900,000 square miles, more than four times the size of the Reich (Gann 1), world maps reflected these areas in Germany's colour, thus providing a visible counterpart to Britain's many colonial possessions. These overseas gains also reinforced the Kaiser's favourite programme of the construction of a strong imperial navy, as historians Harding Ganz and Thomas Kohut point out in their studies of the Wilhelminian era.

The success of the new German navy brought Germany into direct conflict with Great Britain, who was forced to institute fundamental changes in her naval strategy (Massie 185). Wilhelm II's relationship with England had always been problematic. His admiration for his grandmother, Queen Victoria, was constantly undermined by his antagonism towards his mother, the Empress (Kaiserin) Friedrich, who herself disliked German culture and felt an like exile. In later years, Wilhelm's personal competition with Edward VII (Kohut, 199-223) was complicated by the fact that Edward was his uncle and a senior member of the family. To try and rival England as a colonial power was one way, if not a totally realistic policy, to show that Germany and England were on equal footing in foreign affairs.

In spite of his colonial ambitions Wilhelm II himself seemed to possess little taste for things oriental, but their influences were nonetheless visible in various facets of Wilhelminian life. The term "oriental" in the nineteenth century meant anything of a non-European origin, as for instance, Egyptian culture.<sup>6</sup> There were oriental details in the interior designs of department stores such as Wertheim, or Tietz, in Berlin, with its huge oriental carpet hall (Artley, The Golden Age of Shop Design). World exhibitions had always reserved large spaces for imperial displays, with reproductions of colonial houses and interiors, art objects and sometimes displays of indigenous peoples (Greenhalgh 52-81). Botanical gardens with tropical, exotic plants were popular places for Germans to spend leisure time, and in an 1880 sketch for the staging of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth, the artists had designed a tropical garden scene with fronds of palms and rioting undergrowth (Glaser 273).

German painters were also drawing upon oriental themes, such as Ludwig von Hofmann's Exotischer Tanz (1906) or Lovis Corinth's Salome (1899). The Cassirers' galleries showed paintings by other contemporary artists influenced by oriental motifs, such as Whistler, Degas, and Gauguin, whose thick brushstrokes and use of colours were also discernible in Dauthendey's paintings of Southeast Asia. More than anything, these representations of foreign lands instilled in some Germans a travel-fever (Reiselust), and the modernization of forms of transportation, in steamships and overland train routes, facilitated overseas travels towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Kaiser Wilhelm II, the most visible person in Germany, was himself an indefatigable traveller. News reports and photographs of his trips around Germany, to England, to the Middle East, or his cruises to Scandinavia, could not but help to sell the glamour of travelling to the German people. Although Wilhelm II would not have agreed with the notion, the restlessness he exhibited could be considered a mutated form of chic bohemianism and fear of ennui:

Almost all writers and bohemians in this period moved houses constantly, in order not to fall under the deadly pall of mechanical sameness. Many went out of their ways to appear not as permanently resident at any address, but as a gentleman passing through. . . .

Fast alle Literaten und Bohemiens dieser Jahre wechselten ständig ihren Wohnort, um nicht in den "tödlichen" Mechanismus des Immergleichen zu geraten. Viele bemühten sich peinlich, nicht als Ortsansässiger zu gelten, sondern wie ein durchreisender Gentleman angesehen zu werden. . . . (Hamann, Impressionismus 57)

In spite of the general sweep of this statement, there are certainly enough famous examples, both in and outside of Germany, to illustrate Hamann's point. One only has to think of Baudelaire's fourteen known addresses in Paris between 1842 and 1858 (Benjamin, Charles Baudelaire 48), or Strindberg's constant and neurotic travelling around Europe, or Dauthendey's various journeys to Scandinavia, London, Mexico, Paris, Munich and to the Far East.

Popular print materials, such as pamphlets, illustrated journals and newspapers also played an important role in introducing foreign countries to the Germans. Newspapers in the Wilhelminian era began to feature travel reports from South America, Russia, Japan or China:

The expansionism in German politics in this period, with its territorial interests reaching as far as China and the Pacific Ocean, was matched culturally by an abrupt growth in the genre of travel literature, which exploited every corner of the world . . . In most newspapers, socialist articles were replaced by feuilletons on travelling.

Den weitausgreifenden Absichten der deutschen Politik dieser Jahre, deren Radius bis nach China und dem Stillen Ozean reichte, entspricht auf diesem Sektor des kulturellen Lebens eine schlagartig anwachsende Reiseliteratur, die kaum einen Bereich der Erdkugel "unerschlossen" lässt . . . So treten in den meisten Zeitschriften an die Stelle der sozialistischen Artikel jetzt feuilletonistische Reiseberichte. (Hamann, Impressionismus 27)

The publication which dealt with foreign countries and which had the most political agenda was the German Colonial News (Deutsche Kolonial-Zeitung). It was the print organ of the colonial society, and "was the principal means [the society] used to inform the public about matters pertaining to colonialism . . . " (Pierard 28). Apart from producing the newspaper, the



Berlin office also printed wall maps showing the German colonies to hang in railway stations and in schoolrooms. It sent weekly press releases to other newspapers, and organized slide shows and lectures for the general public (28). It even sponsored trips for parliamentary deputies to the German African colonies before the First World War, ostensibly on nonpartisan fact-finding missions, but with the implicit purpose of influencing policy direction regarding colonial matters (30). The more entertaining publication for mass consumption was Colony and Homeland (Kolonie und Heimat), which usually had photographs or illustrations of colonial life on the title page (Warmbold 91-2).

Inevitably, the propaganda of the colonial society would be mixed with the propaganda of the Kaiser, who exhorted his people at every opportune moment to show the German flag on foreign soil, such as the infamous speech he made to the soldiers dispatched to China in March, 1901 to occupy Kiautschou:

Soldiers! You are travelling to a foreign country, which has experienced in the last months what German discipline, German bravery, and German manliness mean. Those foreigners have experienced the consequence of insulting the German Emperor and his soldiers . . . May you ensure that the renown of the fatherland is made known throughout this world. . . .

Soldaten! Ihr fahrt hinüber in ein fremdes Land, welches durch die Ereignisse der letzten Monate erfahren hat, was deutsche Disziplin, deutsche Tapferkeit und deutsche Manneszucht bedeuten. Der Fremde hat erfahren, was es heisst, den deutschen Kaiser und seine Soldaten beleidigen . . . Möget ihr dafür sorgen, dass der Ruhm des Vaterlandes auf der ganzen Erde bekannt werde. . . . (Reden 14)

Kaiser Wilhelm's immoderate language exacerbated the tense international situation among the European powers who were vying with each other for concessions in China. The forcible occupation of the Shandong Peninsula was to be remembered in subsequent anti-western agitations in China. Back in Berlin, the exterior staging of the imperial power was superimposed onto the staging of colonial exploits overseas. If the Germans could not actually eye-witness the taking of Kiautschou, they could still imagine the German colonialists as modern, if less mythical, versions of the Prussian warriors lining up on the Siegesallee.

An apt illustration of the coinciding of Wilhelminian political drama with colonial adventures is a programme poster of two one-act plays, Die Manöverbraut and Kiao-Tschau, included in the exhibition catalogue of Kaiser Wilhelm II's memorabilia in exile (Wilderotter 322). The poster shows on the left side a pagoda on the edge of the shore, and in the centre a German warship steaming towards it. The characters in the plays have names such as Li-li-ku-ti-pi, played by von Leipziger, or Tschì-tschì-ti-ti-pu, played by Prinz Carolath. The top of the poster is ornamented by a dragon, and the right side decorated with what appears to be Chinese characters but is not. In a similar composition, a poster advertising the Hamburg steamship company, Deutsche Dampfschiffs-Rhederei (sic), which first took passengers to East Asia in 1872, shows the steamship Hertha dominating a peripheral collage of palm trees, Mt. Fuji and Chinese junks (Seiler, Einhundert Jahre Ostasienfahrt 30-1).

Thus, Wilhelminian Germans were seduced by visual displays of the East at many levels of social interactions. Politically, they were encouraged to take pride in German military power in its domination over Chinese and Pacific Islanders, and the emperor's military parades served as a colourful

reminder. Recreationally, newspapers and tourist agencies introduced them to exotic sights through articles and billboards. Equally colourful displays at expositions and palatial department stores lured the Germans to decorate their homes in the styles of the Orient. The East was represented as an acquirable object, either to be dominated militarily, or to be bought as a commodity, from a department store or from a tourist agent. Dauthendey, although he had grown up in the relatively provincial city of Würzburg, was not immune to this glamorous image of the Orient.

Dauthendey was first introduced to Asia when he attended an exhibition in Leipzig in the 1880s (Günther 23). At about the same time, his father's assistant at the photography studio told him about an acquaintance who had joined the Dutch colonial army in Java. Dauthendey was impressed with the tropical adventures related to him third or fourth hand. His life in Würzburg had been uneventful, punctuated with disputes with his father over his career. Dauthendey senior intended his son to take over the atelier, a future Max rejected. To him, a life in the Dutch Indies was infinitely preferable to living in the provincial town of Würzburg, and he suggested to his father the alternative of a career as an administrator or some kind of trader ("irgendein Händler") in Java on the strength of reading one book on the place (Sieben Meere 55-6). This enthusiasm is symptomatic of European ways of interpreting the East in that period. The political reality of Dutch recruitment of German mercenaries to become colonial soldiers is a very different story from what Dauthendey learnt from the atelier assistant.

From 1815 till 1909, a small city called Harderwijk in the Netherlands was the centre for recruitment for the Dutch colonial army ("Koloniale Werbedepot"), and because of the diverse human traffic which

passed through this city, it was nicknamed the sewer outlet of Europe ("Kloakenmündung von Europa") until the depot was closed (Bossenbroek 249). The numbers of foreign recruits needed depended on the political situation in the Dutch Indies. From 1856-1860, when there was considerable unrest in the Celebes and Borneo, not only was recruitment outside of the Netherlands active, but the monetary rewards were increased as well. Most of the German recruits had a military past. Those who did not were usually of the lower-middle or lower classes. Seldom did the German recruits return to Germany, nor did they establish a "little Germany" in the Dutch Indies (254). When Dauthendey dreamt of joining the Dutch colonial army, he was little aware of the political and social implications such voluntary exile entailed. Fortunately for Dauthendey, this dream evaporated fairly quickly. Instead, he turned his attention to becoming a poet and writer, and believed that the proper place to nurture such an ambition was Berlin.

Dauthendey's first experience of the Orient on a packaged tour to the Far East came in 1905-6, when he booked a six-month trip with Thomas Cook, which boasted in one of its many posters that a Cook's ticket would give the purchaser the world (Brendon 212-3). The party travelled by ship from Europe via the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to India. Apart from being an example of conspicuous consumption, the ultra-European atmosphere of shipboard culture betrayed the underlying anxiety the travellers felt when approaching the 'exotic' Orient. This kind of preservative atmosphere also ill-prepared the travellers for the foreign cultures they were shortly to encounter. In order to protect its customers against cultural shock, the tourist industry tried to replicate European environment in popular destinations as much as possible. As Dauthendey's

letters show, the tourist experienced a packaged Orient and a different Asian culture could only be glimpsed from time to time.

In 1825: "the first oceangoing steamboat" *Enterprize* (sic) left Southampton in August and reached India in December (Searight 24-8). With the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and improved designs and technology in the shipbuilding industry, ocean-crossing had become both speedier and more sophisticated by the turn of the century. The exorbitant cost of an overseas voyage ensured that it was perceived as the status mode of travelling, especially if one could afford to be a first-class passenger. There were plenty of deck games, such as cricket, tennis, curling, bowling, and meals were numerous and prodigious:

[T]ea and biscuits between six and seven a.m., breakfast . . . with porridge, chops, steaks, curries, fricassees, omelettes and jam, tiffin at noon with cold meats and garnishings, series of soups, fish, meat entrees, curries, puddings, pies and desserts, tea and toast around nine and finally 'grog' . . . . (Searight 128)

Steamers from North German Lloyd had oak-panelled smoking rooms for the gentlemen, a ladies' lounge featuring whiplash metal railing and coffered ceilings, plush velvet upholstery and ornate decorative details (Seiler, *Bridge Across the Atlantic* 17).

This shipboard luxury became a constructed replica of an upper middle-class sort of salon, where wealthy people could gather to show off their "pecuniary strength," (69) as Thorstein Veblen calls it in *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. It is a social setting in which people who were "exempt from industrial employments" could gather, an exemption which denoted the travellers' superior rank in society (Veblen 1) Towards the

turn of the century, Thomas Cook's magazine, The Excursionist, claimed that far from being a service used only by the middle class, it was now patronized by the royal family and the aristocratic class (Brendon 183). The truly rich could still enjoy the world of conspicuous consumption while the travellers indulging in social-climbing could experience the temporary upward mobility their pocketbook provided as they sailed across the oceans. The socializing of various classes in the salon by no means ensured that these interactions would continue once the travellers returned home.

Veblen wrote his book in 1899, and his idea of conspicuous consumption as an essential part of the culture of the moneyed class is beautifully illustrated by the gilded lifestyle on board the passenger liner. In his analysis of social relationships traversing different sectors, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu expands on Veblen's thesis that people's behaviour is directly related to the social milieu they spend their time in. In La Distinction, Bourdieu maintains that "[l]es styles de vie sont ainsi les produits systématiques" of the relation between people's internalized experiences and their social environment, which he calls the *habitus* (191-92). In the case of ocean-crossing salon at the turn of the century, Bourdieu's flexible and encompassing model of analysis also takes into account people who did not belong to the same social classes but were nonetheless confined for a fixed period of time in the same social space.

In his autobiography, Growing, Leonard Woolf records his voyage out to Ceylon in 1904 as a civil servant, and gives us a hint of what such an artificial social space could be like:

In those days it took, if I remember rightly, three weeks to sail from London to Colombo. By the time we reached Ceylon, we had developed from a fortuitous concourse of isolated human atoms

into a complex community with an elaborate system of castes and classes. (12)

And in a book of etiquette, Zu Hause in der Gesellschaft und bei Hofe (Social Etiquette at Home and at the Court) by Düring-Detken, published in Berlin in 1896, strict rules were outlined for middle-class conduct in society, to ensure that the system of caste and class was internalized and observed. For example, a social breakfast started at eleven and lasted till three; a formal lunch began at one and should be over by three. No polite society would entertain guests for a dinner dance before nine. One must never wear white gloves during the day, lest one should be mistaken for an undertaker or a servant. A guest must never address a servant directly. These niceties should be specially adhered to when one was on a trip, since amongst strangers, one must be even more vigilant to maintain one's social standing.

Dauthendey was mixing in a combination of situations not dissimilar to those described in Growing and Zu Hause and felt constrained by it, as can be gauged by his letter to his wife on January 1, 1905: "Yesterday I could not write to you at all, I was driven insane by all these English ceremonies. Each evening at six one must shave, comb one's hair, put on dinner jacket and fresh shirt and perform all sorts of nonsense while getting dressed . . . " (Gestern habe ich Dir gar nicht schreiben können, so verrückt war ich durch all die englischen Zeremonien. Jeden Abend um sechs Uhr Rasieren, Frisieren und Smoking und frische Wäsche und Blödsinn treiben mit der Ankleiderei) (Sieben Meere 221). Dauthendey might be feeling peevish because he was in an unfamiliar milieu, but he did eventually become accustomed to these elaborate rituals. His anti-

British comment is also symptomatic of international travelling before the First World War, when one nationality might take the opportunity to calumniate another, echoing the political jingoism and prejudices at home. Thus, when Pierre Loti visited British-dominated Egypt, he avenged the faded glory of France by sneering at the English tourists (Loti, *Egypt*), and as we have seen, Bird writes scathingly of French colonial rule in Saigon.

Dauthendey's and his fellow European passengers' first introduction to a non-European country was Cairo. This Egyptian city had become an obligatory port of call for travellers to Asia, specially since steam travel became popular in the mid-nineteenth century (Searight 74-7). In his letter, Dauthendey describes the hotels in Cairo as smarter and more splendid ("flotter und prächtiger") than the ones in Monte Carlo, and the Grand Continental, where the Cook party was staying, was the most luxurious ("das Prunkvollste") of them all. The European guests, dressed in Parisian fashion, enjoyed the "*Five o'clock tea*" on hotel terraces listening to gypsy music. As a casual aside, Dauthendey writes of the natives: "And the Arabs and hawkers plagued the terraces with ostrich feathers and pearls . . . ." (die Araber und Verkäufer belagern die Terrasse mit Straussenfedern und Perlen . . . ) (*Sieben Meere* 223). He intimated that the pearls were really baubles, leaving the impression that Egyptian culture was less authentic than the Grand Continental Hotel with its sophisticated rituals. The bazaars were like a fairytale out of *A Thousand and One Night*, and he thought the bellydancers in Cairo were less wild (zahmer) than the ones in Paris (224). In Dauthendey's letter, Cairo shimmers between reality and imitation.

This insistent comparison of Cairo with Paris and Monte Carlo is indicative perhaps of the orientation of the fin-de-siècle tourist from



Europe towards the East. Egypt was considered an oriental culture, but an oriental culture organized to suit European consumption. In Thomas Cook's tours: "passengers were almost entirely insulated from Egyptian life, which itself became little more than a picturesque backdrop to a smart social scene. . . . Little reality was permitted to intrude into this holiday fantasy" (Brendon 227). Egypt was also remembered for its colonial past with France, and perhaps the most notorious travel account of the country in the nineteenth century was Flaubert's pornographic record, which was first published in German in the late 1890s by friends of Dauthendey and was confiscated by the Berlin police.

So far, in their travel in the Orient, Dauthendey and his fellow travellers had had little experience of non-European cultures. Thomas Cook had seen to it that natives and native squalor would not impinge upon the tourists' enjoyment. Travel accounts of the places they were visiting would most likely be written from the European viewpoint, and most pleasure-seeking tourists were not in the habit of reading ethnographic studies to enlarge their cultural understanding. Small wonder that Dauthendey, intent on seeing things with an impressionist's sensibility, recorded his experience in a pastiche of word-pictures, using some oft-repeated tropes, which are commonly found in tales such as *A Thousand and One Night*.

Nor does this method of interpreting other cultures change with Bombay, or Hong Kong, or Japan. At each of these cities Dauthendey picks out a motif and embroiders around it to form a picture of the place. Bombay is a garden, in red and blue and purple, and the city lies between palm trees, with the ocean beyond. The women, draped in dazzling silks of indigo blue and orange red, remind him of a backdrop (Kulisse) from

Verdi's *Aida*. The city is full of cars and European millionaires, and if the native street performers were not scattered along the quay, one would think that this is Europe (*Sieben Meere* 225). It is a marketable picture, an exercise in impressionist writing, using Bombay or Hong Kong as the carrying motif. Dauthendey's Bombay seems superficial when compared to Aldous Huxley's brief portrayal in his 1928 novel, *Point Counter Point*. Huxley had spent some months with friends in India and offers a more realistic picture of Bombay. In the book, Philip and Elinor Quarles are driving home from dinner, and the city reflects the mood the couple is in, as "the sordid suburbs of Bombay slid past them--factories and little huts and huge tenements, ghastly and bone-white under the moon . . . "(80). In fact, Bombay outside the 'purlieu' of the hotels was like the working-class suburbs of Berlin, avoided by the middle-class and the tourists. A symbiotic relationship existed between the development of luxury trades, such as palatial department stores and exotic tours, and the Art Nouveau aesthetics of applying a gloss of glamour to experiences. But the experience of luxury accommodation and tours is based on an exchange of cash. It is not an experience available to someone who was destitute like Ai Wu. As Thomas Cook claimed in its poster, a ticket would bring the world to the traveller, whose own cultural well-being would not be disturbed. However, one has to buy the ticket first.

## The Blue Light of the Exotic East

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One of the material benefits Dauthendey reaped from his Asian trip was publication. In the years between 1909 and 1914, he published two collections of short stories with Asian themes: Lingam and Die Acht Gesichter am Biwasee, as well as a collection of poems based on his journey, "Die Geflügelte Erde." In a literary tradition of few exotic novels set *outside* of Europe, Dauthendey's stories can be considered a rarity, and critical reception was generally positive.<sup>7</sup> In the early decades of the nineteenth century, E.T.A. Hoffmann wrote some fantastic novella with oriental motifs, such as Der Goldne Topf (1819), but these stories were set in Europe. In this section, I have chosen to examine closely two short selections from Dauthendey's exotic writings. The images and tropes used in these selections best illustrate Dauthendey's type of Orientalism. The first is an eleven-page short story taken from the collection Lingam, which can also be found in a later edition of short stories under the title Die Schönsten Geschichten von Max Dauthendey (1949). The second is an unfinished sketch of Dauthendey's trip to New Guinea, then a German colony.

"Im Blauen Licht Von Penang" best typifies, in its richness of images and fairytale-like plot, the mixture of exoticism and eroticism for which Dauthendey was praised during his time. Apart from the names of the characters (Gabriela Tatoto, Holongku, Ling-Sung) and of the locations (Hong Kong, Penang), all literary motifs, tropes and references in "Im Blauen Licht Von Penang" (In the Blue Light of Penang) are traceable to German or other European influences. Gabriela Tatoto is a Malay prostitute who plies her trade in Hong Kong during the spring season and comes back

to her villa in Penang to rest in the summer months. One afternoon, she has invited the photographer Holongku to her house to have her picture taken. When he arrives, he finds her sleeping half-naked and alone. He takes her photo without her knowledge, and hides it in an inside pocket of his native costume. One day, when he is out on business in his European suit, his wife by mistake puts a needle through the pocket of the shirt while sewing on a button. It is learned later in the evening that the courtesan has died of a snake bite that very afternoon.

The focal point of the story is the seductive prostitute, whom Dauthendey portrays as a courtesan in the European tradition, a figure frequently seen in salon art and a social type who gained increasing visibility during the Second Empire in France (Brooks 137-8). Gabriela Tatoto never speaks. Like one of Gustave Klimt's reclining nudes in a fantasy landscape, she is ensconced in a white villa surrounded by giant blue porcelain vases and palm trees:

The garden in its riotous colours was a reflection of the soul of the courtesan. The artificiality of the porcelain vases, the melancholy of the travellers' palms, the reckless, lascivious red of the flame trees, all reminded one of the woman within.

Der Garten schien das Seelenleben der Kurtisane in seinen Farben zu spiegeln. Mit der Künstlichkeit der Porzellanvasen, mit der Düsterei der Wandererpalmen und mit der rücksichtslosen, lüsternen Röte der Elektrinenbäume erinnerte er an seine Besitzerin. (*Die Schönsten Geschichten* 101)

The availability of the woman as sexual object is symbolized by the verdant garden with its uninhibited disorder (riotous colours) and the brilliance of colours (reckless, lascivious red). Another traveller to the Orient, Flaubert, also sets his sexual encounters with a prostitute in the

lush Nile landscape, and Kuchuk Hanem's bejewelled dancing costumes were memorialized by Flaubert's friend, Louis Bouilhet, in poetry. Closer to the turn of the century and to Europe, Dauthendey's friend Frank Wedekind gained notoriety with *Lulu* in *Erdgeist* (1895) and Heinrich Mann created the archetypal cabaret siren in *Professor Unrat* (1905). In the Art Nouveau as in the Decadent movement, women were portrayed "as mothers of deceit and destruction as well as tantalizing and potentially unmaning ideals" (Reed 231). In German paintings in the late nineteenth-century, there is, for example, Max Slevogt's reclining *Kleopatra* (1908), the Egyptian queen as metonym of the dangerous erotic female. These representations, in which the stereotype of the foreign other is sometimes linked to the destructive female, both titillated and warned the audience of the potential destructive force in such blatant sexuality.

The sleeping nude has a long pedigree in visual art, with painters reworking the "Danae" theme in various guises. When Dauthendey designs his sleeping courtesan caught naked by the voyeuristic photographer, his "Danae" is not showered by gold, but captured in still image by photography. The photographer's stealth invokes not a mythical link, but the connotation of pornography--"Still photography may be the one exercise of vision in which the body can be held as a whole, because it is held motionless: which may suggest why photography, almost from the moment of its invention, has been a privileged medium for the pornographic image . . . " (Brooks 102). The suggestion of pornography and unusual sexual practice is made even stronger by Holongku's nightly dream of a *ménage à trois* situation, with his wife and Gabriela Tatoto in bed together.

Everything else in the story is ornamental. The "blueness" which bathes and illuminates all objects creates an evocative atmosphere. Like the silent courtesan, the city Penang has no real features. In describing two paintings by German impressionist Franz Skarbina, John Czaplicka writes that "distant and separated from the viewer, the object of contemplation assumes an aura . . . This auratic city is one of the imagination and for the imagination . . . Such evocative views are called *Stimmungsbilder* (mood pictures) in German . . ." (15). Dauthendey's Asian stories create such "*Stimmungsbilder*." They are like tableaux of colour compositions with blurred outlines. The snake motif, one of the dominant symbols in the Art Nouveau tradition (Reed 223), also plays an important role in the story. In "*Im Blauen Licht Von Penang*," Dauthendey continues the artistic tradition of connecting the snake with dangerous female sexuality. After all, one of the most famous paintings from the turn of the century is Franz von Stuck's *Die Sünde* (1893), in which a naked woman, draped by the spiral of a python, smiles seductively at the viewer.

Joseph Conrad, also a writer of Southeast Asian exotic tales, had a different approach to portraying his characters. Although, like Dauthendey, Conrad did not speak any of the non-European languages, he tried to create a level of verisimilitude in his stories. As he admitted to his publisher, he culled information for his characters and landscape from various travel narratives, which he called "undoubted sources--dull, wise books" (qtd. in Sherry 140).<sup>8</sup> Unlike Conrad, who put his faith in texts, Dauthendey used his own paintings, as well as postcards and souvenirs which he collected during his trip, as inspiration for his Asiatic novellas: "Dauthendey kept no diary [of his trip]" (*Tagebuch führte Dauthendey nicht*) (Schuster 69-70). What excited his imagination were the images,

the compositions, the colours and shapes of objects and people.

Dauthendey's choice of mnemonic device reminds us of the problematic nature of mechanical reproduction of images in photography, in magazines or in postcards. In his essay, "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit," Benjamin praises the democratizing impact of photography. But he also mentions the displacement of the cult value of art by its exhibition value (*Gesammelte* 1.2: 443-5). This paradoxical attitude towards mechanical reproduction becomes more apparent in another essay, where Benjamin criticizes photography: "[i]t can no longer depict a tenement block or a garbage heap without transfiguring it . . . For it has succeeded namely in making even misery, by recording it in a fashionably perfected manner, an object of enjoyment" (qtd. in Buck-Morss 417). On the one hand, images became available, like Cook tours, to anyone who can afford the price. On the other hand, objects are decontextualized for easy consumption. Thus, benefiting from technology, Dauthendey remembers Penang as images in coloured photographs rather than a city with its own vibrant ethnic population and colonial history.

Nothing illustrates this dominance of exhibition value more than the role advertisement played in the consolidation of commerce and industry in the nineteenth century (Richards, *Commodity*). In the tourist business, the billboards, magazines and posters helped Thomas Cook bring the world to people anywhere there was a Cook's bureau. To advertise a destination effectively, an image was used to symbolize the city or country. Thus, North Africa was represented by a camel caravan and Alaska, a camp of tepees (Brendon 212-3). Postcards have the same semiotic value; the cultural significance of a place becomes fixed and simplified. Since the

primary usage of postcards is brief communication from holiday-makers, as a substitute for letters, they become an excellent tool for circulating stereotypical ideas of cultures. In the case of Dauthendey, he reworks the stereotypical images into his text.

After the success of his exotic stories, Dauthendey could afford his second Asian journey in April, 1914, a trip jointly funded by his main publisher, Albert Langen, and the shipping company, Norddeutsche Lloyd (*Sieben Meere* 269). In early June, Dauthendey was still undecided about his excursion trip to German New Guinea, mainly because of the extra expense (*Mich ruft dein Bild* 239). If he had followed the plan he outlined to his wife then, he would have been returning to Europe at the end of June. Instead, in a letter to a Würzburg friend on June 12 (*Sieben Meere* 280), he indicated that he had changed his itinerary and for the month of July Dauthendey stayed in German New Guinea. When the war broke out in August, he was on a packet steamship returning to Java.

A newcomer to colonization, Germany did not annex part of New Guinea until 1884-85 (Knight 79-8). By the time Dauthendey travelled to the German colony, Germany's sizeable possessions in the Pacific encompassed, apart from German New Guinea, six groups of islands: the Bismarck Archipelago, the Marshall Archipelago, part of the Solomon Islands, part of the Samoa group, the Caroline Islands and part of the Marianne Islands (Colquhoun 404). As other colonizers had done, the German Foreign Office replaced some indigenous place names with German ones, such as Potsdamhafen, Alexishafen or Friedrich-Wilhelmshafen. As Dauthendey wrote to a friend from German New Guinea on 30 July, 1914: "But here it is definitely more romantic [than in Java], because this is



Germany, here in German New Guinea" (Aber hier ist es entschieden romantischer, weil es Deutschland ist, hier in Deutsch Neu-Guinea) (Sieben Meere 280-81).

A fellow German artist who travelled to New Guinea just before the outbreak of the war was the expressionist painter, Emil Nolde. Nolde had different social and political connections in Germany than Dauthendey. He and his wife went to the German Pacific colonies under the auspices of the Imperial Colonial Ministry (Reichskolonialamt). The aim of their medical and demographic expedition was to find out the causes for the decline in native birthrate (Nolde 14). As Nolde writes in the autobiography of his South Seas voyage, World and Homeland (Welt und Heimat), this was a serious problem for the success of the colonies, since the natives were the main source of labour for the planters and colonists (14). Unlike Nolde, who was on official business, Dauthendey wrote only an eleven-page record of his visit.

This brief sketch contains mainly his impression of Eitape, one of the headquarters of the three main administrative districts of German New Guinea (Allen 220), and of the natives he saw in this little settlement. When he first heard about New Guinea from the captain on his voyage out from Europe, Dauthendey rejoiced that he would be experiencing "a little bit of the primitive paradise without civilization" (ein wenig paradiesische Urwelt ohne Kultur) (Mich ruft dein Bild 217). But his first reaction to Eitape was one of dismay:

"This is Eitape," the captain said. I replied, "But where is the harbour, and the town?" -- And where are the people, the stone houses of a German harbour? I thought to myself.

"Das ist Eitape," sagte der Kapitän. Und ich: "Aber wo ist denn der Hafen, wo die Hafenstadt?" -- Wo sind die Menschen, die steinernen Häuser vom deutschen Hafen? Dachte ich für mich. (Gesammelte Werke 2:156)

After wandering in the settlement for a while, Dauthendey was so disenchanted by the lack of a European-style built environment, such as houses and streetscape, that he wanted to forgo the rest of the excursion, but found out that the steam packet had a set route which it could not change (Gesammelte Werke 2:164). Of the natives he saw, Dauthendey's description is at once seductive and hyperbolic:

They were so black and appeared so mighty that the luminous world darkened, and it struck one, as one saw them leaning against the iron-white railing in the morning light, surrounded by the glass-green, shimmering sea, and lit up by the radiant fire of the sparkling mirror of the water, -- that it struck one, as if the whole world must disappear before these brave and gorgeous human forms. They alone commanded the attention of the morning sun. The mighty European ship, and all the people . . . became nothing compared to these Herculean figures, whose broad shoulders could easily carry the earth as if it were a mere toy ball.

Sie waren so schwarz und wirkten so mächtig, die helle Morgenwelt verdunkelnd, dass es einem, wenn sie da im Morgenlicht am weissen Eisengeländer lehnten, umgeben vom glasgrünen, lichten Wassergrunde des Meeres und vom grellen Wasserspiegel wie von einem weissen Feuer umleuchtet, -- dass es einem so vorkam, als müsse alles vor diesen kühnen, prächtigen Menschengestalten verschwinden. Sie allein zogen die Aufmerksamkeit der Morgensonne auf sich. Das Schiff, das grosse europäische, und alle Menschen . . . wurden eine leere Null vor der Wirklichkeit dieser Hünengestalten, die breite Schultern hatten, auf denen sie die Erde hätten wiegen können wie ein Spielball. (Gesammelte Werke 2:158)

Dauthendey's portrait of the natives as godlike warriors represents an intersection of several dominant aesthetic tendencies in late

nineteenth-century. First and central to the descriptive passage is the admiration of the beautiful male body; second, the vocabulary of literary impressionism; and third, the exoticization of blacks in German art. I will discuss all three areas against the background of the literary and visual art scene in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and also compare Dauthendey's vision of the Pacific paradise and its inhabitants, brief though it is, to that of Emil Nolde.

Two main types of male figures prevail in late nineteenth-century writing and painting. The effete dandy of *Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde and the figures by Burne-Jones and other Pre-Raphaelite painters, with their hollow eyes and hollow chest, "languid but without repose" (Hollander 150), are one type. But within the meticulously dressed dandy lurks another type of male figure, just as the Arthurian knight or St. George is also a favourite motif in late nineteenth-century paintings. D'Annunzio's Andrea Sperelli, the young Roman nobleman in his 1889 novel *The Child of Pleasure* (*Il piacere*) is not only a connoisseur of fine objects and beautiful married women, but also an excellent horseman and swordsman who keeps himself fit at all times. In Thomas Mann's paean to the beautiful male, "Death in Venice" ("Der Tod in Venedig" 1912), the idol of Mann's Aschenbach is the image of the writhing and naked body of St. Sebastian painted by so many artists, as for example, Mantegna in the fifteenth century. While Art Nouveau modelled women in the guises of Salomé and bloodsucking vampires, it developed the homoerotic vision of athletic men as the ideal of beauty, expressing both physical perfection and intellectual superiority (Dijkstra 199-201).

This attention to the male body, in the broader, social scene, was encouraged by the popularity of various sports activities in the last

decades of the nineteenth century. The bicycle was invented by a German, a Freiherr Karl von Drais from Mannheim, before the 1870s (Kramer 175). Tennis, archery and golf were popular with the bourgeoisie. Isadora Duncan, the creator of modern dancing, was extremely well-received in Germany. Through her, "the ideas of eurhythmics . . . and 'aesthetic gymnastics' were popularized . . . . These developments corresponded with a new Leibeskultur, or 'body culture', which found its greatest social resonance in Germany . . . For the first time in a century trim bodies became fashionable . . . ." (Eksteins 37). When bathing was promoted in the 1880s and 90s both in the country and in urban settings, "the image of the strong male body was also commonly used to promote [the sport]" (Patricia G. Berman 77). While the woman's body was painted in suggestive sexual poses, the man's body was used to promote a health regime.

In the visual arts as much as in literature in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, the male body is represented alternately as delicate or virile. The desire for the decorative and the fragile is intertwined with the desire for the formal and the monumental, and the boundary between the two tendencies is not always readily definable. As Jost Hermand writes in *Stilkunst um 1900*: "Roughly speaking, one can observe a development from the ornamental to a more sculptural expression, which began in the 1890s and reached its apogee just before the First World War" (Grob gesehen, kann man dabei eine Entwicklung vom Ornamentalen zum blockhaft Ausdrucksvollen beobachten, die in den späten neunziger Jahren beginnt und kurz vor dem ersten Weltkrieg ihren Höhepunkt erlebt) (219). One can see both elements of style in the works of Ferdinand Hodler, who painted decorative subjects such as two naked

youths in a flowery meadow (Erühling 1901) as well as battle scenes with heavily armoured warriors (Rückzug bei Marignano 1900).

The *ideal* male figure represented in both literature and the visual arts can generally be described as 'godlike'. Since no one could claim to have set eyes on a god, the most logical reference for the late nineteenth-century artists would be the Greek models. The eighteenth-century German art critic and archaeologist, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, had already prepared the way for Greek idealization in his studies of the art of antiquity, Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst (Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture 1755) and Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums (History of Ancient Art 1763-4).<sup>9</sup> In his collection of essays, The Renaissance (1873), an influential work for the Pre-Raphaelites and for the Art Nouveau movement, Walter Pater devotes a whole chapter on Winckelmann and reaffirms the latter's preference for and assessment of Greek art.

The well-trained body of a Greek athlete, with "a wide and deeply arched chest" and [an] abdomen . . . without belly" (Leppmann ill.xxvi and xxviii) was the prototypical body used by artists, ranging from Max Klinger for his Philosoph (1910) to Munch for his male nudes. The preferred physical type at the turn of the century, for the visual arts and for the fashionable male, should be well-exercised (but not from labour), and men "were exhorted to tighten their belts, stick out their chests, and tuck in their bellies" (Perrot 664). Thus, we have a convergence of the modernization of the human body through exercise and by machines, such as the bicycle, with the ancient ideal of the Greek god.

The typical presentation of the godlike male figure is to frame him against nature, to accentuate the connection between virility and natural, organic beauty (Patricia Berman 71). In Mann's "Der Tod in Venedig," the last time Aschenbach sees the youth, Tadzio is framed against the horizon and the sea, a gender-reversed Venus-figure, but also a symbolic figure from Hades, beckoning Aschenbach to his death. Similarly, the native warriors, whose godlike stature reminds Dauthendey of mythological figures, form the focal point of his narrative, but in a *mise-en-scène* of the paradisiacal sea and sky of the Pacific. This removal of the gods from a European setting to the South Seas reifies the myth of the noble savage, a concept which suited the weary minds of late nineteenth-century city dwellers (Hermand, "Artificial Atavism" 72). The male god dominating an idyllic setting became a trope which impressionist artists exploited.

One of the most important characteristics of impressionism, both in visual arts and in literature, is the indulgence in colours. As Hamann writes: "One turns against ordinary and workaday matters with ideological purpose and indulges in the living palette, from the colourful cravat to the cult of the sun" (Man wendet sich daher mit ideologischer Bewusstheit gegen das Alltägliche und Arbeitsmässige und schwärmt für eine Buntheit des Lebens, die von der farbigen Krawatte bis zum Sonnenkult reicht) (*Impressionismus* 236). Epithets and neologisms of light and colour multiply in "Frühling" (1894), a lyrical essay by the dramatist Johannes Schlaf, such as "milk-white, light-flickering, blood-beclouded, pearl-clear, glimmering, radiating, flashing" (*milchweiss, lichtflinkernd, blütendurchwölkt, perlenklar, flimmernd, strahlend, blitzend . . .*) (*Impressionismus* 247). In his sketch of the so-called primitives, Dauthendey combines literary impressionism with the homoerotic visualization of the male

figure. Similar to his enthusiastic reception of Berlin streetlife, Dauthendey's description of the New Guinean warriors overflows with admiration. The subordinate clause of the sentence, "Sie waren so schwarz . . . " (They were so black . . . ), runs to several lines filled with adjectives. Dauthendey's positive reception of the New Guineans forms a stark contrast to German treatment of the natives.

Unlike Dauthendey, Emil Nolde, Dauthendey's contemporary and fellow Southeast Asian traveller, did not see the natives of German New Guinea as spectacular-looking warriors. As mentioned before, he believed that the natives' main function was to serve as slave labour for the German colonists. His description of the people of New Guinea, although stressing the exotic, is mingled with the Europeans' fear for what they considered an uncivilized culture:

They were much taller than the natives of the Yap Island and they were really savage, with their abundant hair, their ornaments made of shells and bones hanging on their arms, around the neck, or from the ear. Many had a white, curved bone pierced through the nose. They were cannibals, these people. For us Europeans a sinister notion. We stood close together and looked on with fascination.

Sie waren viel grösser als diejenigen der Insel Yap und sie waren wild, mit ihrem mächtigen Haar, mit ihrem Schmuck aus Muscheln und Bein an den Armen, um den Hals, oder in den Ohren hängend; manche hatten einen weissen, krummen Knochen durch die Nase gesteckt. Kannibalen waren es, diese Menschen. Für uns Europäer ein unheimlicher Begriff. Wir schauten gebannt und standen gedrängt. (*Welt und Heimat* 57)

Nolde's account is qualitative ("much taller"), judgemental ("they were cannibals") and ambiguous, expressing both disgust and attraction. When the expedition visited one of the smaller islands where no child had been born for over fifteen years, Nolde writes with rare sensitivity that the

native would rather die out (aussterben) than work for the colonists, who had taken away from them their way of living (99). But in his cultural hierarchy, the natives represented a stage of development which was fast becoming extinct, a process which Nolde felt was inevitable but he was there to record it. This is an example of social Darwinism in practice, specially as it was understood in Germany (Kelly 100-3). In a letter written from Kāwieng (Kavieng) in March 1914, Nolde boasts that his paintings of the primitives are so authentic and unrefined ("herb") that they would not be hung in the salons of polite society. But except for Gauguin, Nolde knows of no other painter who has found the primitive culture such fallow ground for artistic inspiration (88). As Russell Berman points out in his essay on Emil Nolde and German Primitivism, for artists like Nolde, colonial artifacts and primitive culture are transformed into "sources of artistic innovation" (117).

Nolde's desire to use the Oceanic cultures for his art has the same commodifying purpose as Dauthendey's plan to use Asian themes for his exotic tales. But Nolde's trip was also closely linked with Germany's colonial programme, which was not the case with Dauthendey. While discussing the negative effects colonization had on the native culture, including extermination of whole tribes in some places, Nolde offers this advice: "This must be avoided, certainly not only out of love for the people, but because they provide the labour force" (Das sollte vermieden werden, wohl nicht nur aus Liebe zum Volk, sondern weil es Arbeitskräfte stellen sollte) (94). In spite of having witnessed countless instances of misery inflicted on the natives, Nolde still considers the German colonies well-managed and humane (99). Both Dauthendey and Nolde neglected mentioning, in spite of their being guests of the German colonial officials,



that some of the natives they described in such detail, especially the warriors in Dauthendey's record, were part of the machinery of "sub-imperialism" in the German colonies (Hempenstall 96). In order to put down native revolts and exert fuller control, the German administration employed "auxiliaries, mercenaries, or allies who had their own reasons for punishing traditional foes or expanding territorial influence" (96). This humane and well-managed colonial administration which Nolde admired succeeded by such tactics as "punitive raids and conquest of new territory with a reeducation program for local recalcitrants" (Hempenstall 97).<sup>10</sup> For Nolde, his justification of the unjust treatment of the natives, although he had spent over six months in the Pacific with the German colonial administration, stems from his inherent belief in the superiority of German culture over the primitive culture. "Aggressively patriotic" as the most conservative Germans were (Paret, Berlin Secession 213-15), Nolde would approve of any colonial exploits undertaken by the government, and harshness towards non-Europeans formed part of the programme to achieve colonial goals. It is an ironical footnote to Nolde's career that he was listed and banned by the National Socialists as one of the degenerate artists who indulged in 'niggerization' (Hermant, "Artificial Atavism" 65-6).

Dauthendey's relative silence on German colonialism is more complex. His aesthetic philosophy was to see the beautiful in people and things. Therefore, he could overcome racial prejudice in his appreciation of physical perfection. But this philosophy did not develop into a deeper understanding of Asian cultures. His status as an individual traveller, as distinct from forming part of a group (Thomas Cook) or government tour, also kept him from information and knowledge he might otherwise have

obtained. His main concern was for his art, which could thrive only within the German culture. Of the three travellers under consideration, Dauthendey was the most isolated from any Asian society, and his writings betrayed the least development, although he worked in a foreign milieu. His isolation from native cultures, which created an artificially European condition, ostensibly allowed Dauthendey to continue practicing his cultural habits. But it was also an isolation which became more destructive as his internment in the Dutch Indies continued.

## "A Wanderer upon the Face of Public Resort"

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In Ford Madox Ford's pre-World War I novel, The Good Soldier, the cuckolded narrator John Dowell looks back on his itinerant life with his wife in European spas and laments,

[T]o be at Nauheim gave me a sense . . . a sense of almost nakedness . . . In one's own home, it is as if little, innate sympathies draw one to particular chairs that seem to enfold one in an embrace . . . And believe me, that feeling is a very important part of life. I . . . have been for so long a wanderer upon the face of public resorts. (21)

The sense of vulnerability and disorientation expressed in this passage is also deeply felt by Dauthendey from 1915 to 1918, when he stayed in East Java, near Surabaya, and in Central Java, in a health resort in Tosari, because of his recurrent malaria attacks. During this period, Dauthendey's link to Europe was heavily dependent on technological conveniences such as the telegraph. Despite his enforced separation from home, Dauthendey lived in a Europe of the mind reified by films and letters. In this concluding section, I will discuss the effects of hotel living on Dauthendey's perception of the Dutch Indies and his resistance to any degree of acculturation.

Prolonged stays in sanatorium-hotels can generate fascinating social relationships, as can be seen in Thomas Mann's Der Zauberberg (The Magic Mountain) and Ford's The Good Soldier, both of which were published in 1927 but deal with the period before the outbreak of the war. And living in the rented space of hotels accentuates social inequalities and national differences, a phenomenon well illustrated by E.M. Forster's A Room With a

View (1908), Katherine Mansfield's In a German Pension (1911) or Elizabeth Bowen's The Hotel (1927). All these social interactions and frictions, expressions of human disposition reacting within the spatial and ritualistic structures of hotel living, played an important role in Dauthendey's perception of the East during the last four years of his life.

During Dauthendey's internment in the Dutch Indies, he lived mainly within the boundaries of hotels and sanatoriums. It was a highly segregated social environment which communicated through "visible cues" (Rapoport, "Identity and Environment" 14), such as well-tended grounds in which only guests could stroll. These designed and visible environmental cues maintained the identity of the Europeans as distinct from the natives. Within such a system of settings--main complex, strolling park and so on--Dauthendey had very limited access to the cultures of the non-Europeans. In many ways, Dauthendey's experience during his last years in the Dutch Indies was a European rather than a cross-cultural one.

Hotel living lacks privacy. A hotel or a luxury sanatorium, designed for the rich, is structured like a set of Chinese boxes, where individuals live within limited spaces (a room or a suite), segregated first from the fellow guests, then from the visitors and the hotel management, and finally, from the outside world. Yet these separations--walls and doors--are insufficiently solid, so that the user also lives constantly in the public-eye. As on board an ocean-liner, social behaviour must be codified to ensure common understanding of hierarchical orders. An individual must behave according to the codes, in order to preserve self-esteem or to show that he belongs. In a hotel or on board ship, there is no place to escape scrutiny and social evaluation. Even a guest's room is open territory to hotel

servants, who often can make a survey of his portable identity--luggage, toiletries, wardrobe--while he is absent.

A letter to Dauthendey's wife in March 1917 describes the various features of hotel living outlined above. The sanatorium in Tosari charged its guest the costly tariff of nine guldens a day.

The houses are built of thin wood . . . The verandahs are glassed in. The water is so cold that one can hardly bathe. Around the hotel, there are about a dozen wood cottages in the rose gardens, and one can rent the whole cottage or a single room. The place is always full. The rich sugar planters come here with their families to relax. There are also quite a few beautiful Dutch women about. In the evenings in the clubhouse--the ladies dressed up and the gentlemen in black--one can imagine oneself back in Europe.

Die Häuser sind dünn aus Holz . . . Die Veranden sind verglast. Das Wasser ist so kalt, dass man kaum baden kann. Es liegen um das Hotel in den Rosengärten ungefähr zwölf hölzerne Landhäuser, die vermietet werden, ganz oder zimmerweise. Immer sind Gäste hier. Denn die reichen Zuckerpflanzer erholen sich hier mit ihren Familien. Es sind auch viele schöne Holländerinnen hier. Abends im Klubsaal - die Damen in grossen Toiletten und die Herren in Schwarz--glaubt man sich in Europa. (Gesammelte Werke 2:491)

The hotel layout, consisting of a main complex for social functions and individual dwelling units connected by a rose garden, marks out the hotel territory for the users. The spatial separation of the units is not solid as concrete or heavy timber wall structures would be in European architecture, and the open verandah indicates a life-style conducted in view of the public. Because of the high tariff of the sanatorium, only certain classes of Europeans can patronize it, which in turn requires a form of upper middle-class ritual, such as dressing for dinner.

As shown by his letter, Dauthendey's life in Java was really far more comfortable than the war experiences of Europeans at home. Since Holland

stayed neutral during the First World War, the Allies only blockaded the sea routes so that travelling from the Dutch Indies was restricted and monitored. But the country was never under danger of attack. The Germans on the islands formed a close network to give each other support when necessary. Before he was taken ill, he periodically stayed with German planters or expatriates, but mostly in well-managed hotels with his own personal servant. Food was plentiful and wine or champagne often accompanied the meals. The last years of Dauthendey's life were totally divorced from the historical realities of the European war, except for contacts made possible by modern technology.

In 1917, Europeans made up approximately 29% of the population of the Dutch Indies, with the majority residing in the larger cities, such as Batavia, Sourabaya, Bandung and Medan (*Handbook* 23). By the first decade in the twentieth century, most regions of what is now called the Republic of Indonesia had come under Dutch colonial administration, which had established in the 1830s that "profitability [was] the main principle of government" (Ricklefs 131). As Dutch Indies novels by P.A. Daum or Louis Couperus, as well as the writings of Conrad and Somerset Maugham show, the Europeans in colonial countries lived in "some sort of enclave in the midst of millions. They lived in their own closed community, which was vastly different from society in the mother country" (Nieuwenhuys, *Mirror of the Indies* 145). Within this closed community, the social caste system was doubly emphasized, so that "[i]n order to belong to society, one had to be 'something', an official, planter, officer . . ." (xxvi). Nieuwenhuys' comments on the Dutch colonial society illuminate the in-between nature of the colonial culture: the colonists tried to live as Europeans, but the

Europeans at home viewed their compatriots as different, and usually, inferior.

In his introduction to P.A. Daum's Ups and Downs of Life in the Indies (1987), E.M. Beekman writes: "Men were devoted to money, business, gambling, drinking, and male companionship . . . . the life of the mind could find little sympathetic response" (28). Leonard Woolf found himself in a similarly philistine society when he became a civil servant in Ceylon. His English compatriots looked upon his volumes of Voltaire with suspicion and thought nothing of his intellect (Growing 37-8). Dauthendey felt similarly neglected as a poet in the midst of a hedonistic social group whose only interests were daily banalities.

In Java and Sumatra, Dauthendey mixed almost exclusively with Germans living in the Indies, which was a sub-group within the European enclave. But the two social and national groups, the Dutch colonists and the German residents, shared comparable features. Both were caste- and class-conscious, both would communicate with the natives who were placed in a subordinate position, and both nationals would only move through very specific "systems of settings" (Rapoport, "Systems of activities" 9) within the country.

An example of a system of setting is the hospitality environment, consisting of hotels and rest-houses in resort areas. In The Urban Experience, David Harvey discusses the different factors which control or influence the patterns of access to resources within a society (117-124). One such factor is the neighbourhoods, which "provide distinctive milieus for social interaction from which individuals to a considerable degree derive their values, expectations, consumption habits, market capacities, and states of consciousness" (118). While Harvey deals mainly with class

structure and class relations within a capitalistic society, I will expand the term "neighbourhood" to mean, within the context of the Dutch Indies of Max Dauthendey's experience, the hospitality areas in which non-natives would perform their activities, such as taking their meals or socializing.

Money is crucial in all hotel experience, whether in a colonial or a European country. For Dauthendey, a white man travelling in a colonized Asian country, the problem of money was even more complicated. Not only did he not have access to ready cash, but his status as a European disallowed him to perform any kind of labour. Thus a Javanese servant cleaned his boots and ran his bath. When he needed writing paper, the servant would buy it for him. All services were rewarded by tipping, as Dauthendey complained in a letter to his wife in May, 1914:

The tipping on board is also astronomical. I had no idea that everything is fixed, and that one has to give between five, ten and twenty marks for music, for the steward who runs one's bath, for the head-steward, the deck-steward, the smoking-room attendant, the cabin-attendant, for the maitre d', the bootblack and the valet. Not to mention the frequent laundry and drinks since Naples.

Die Trinkgelder an Bord sind auch enorm. Ich hatte keine Ahnung, dass das alles festgesetzt ist, und dass Musik, Badesteward, Obersteward, Decksteward, Rauchzimmersteward, Kabinensteward, Tischsteward, Stiefelputzer und Packmeister alle zwischen fünf, zehn und zwanzig Mark bekommen müssen. Dann die Wäsche, oftmals, und die Getränke seit Neapel. (Mich ruft dein Bild 234)

In September, 1915, Dauthendey tried to justify the extra expense of attending a festival in Solo: "I am risking to be left without money after the trip. But I must have a bit of change. I have been sitting since February in Garut in the same spot" (Ich riskiere zwar, dass ich nachher kein Geld mehr habe. Aber ich muss diese Abwechslung haben. Ich sitze



nun schon seit Februar immer in Garoet am gleichen Fleck) (352). Living as he did among strangers, like someone in an "ethnically very mixed neighbourhood" (Rapoport, "Identity" 21), it was necessary for Dauthendey to maintain self-esteem, by dressing well, tipping servants, and in this particular incident, using his last mark to take an excursion trip to a festival with other Europeans. Indeed, Dauthendey was keenly aware of his poor credit situation, and often wrote defensively to his wife to account for the money he had spent on clothing and wine. Although Dauthendey considered himself a member of the more radical faction of the artistic circle, he was conditioned by middle-class pretensions and habits. In a rambling series of essays called Schule des Reisens: Gute Lehren des Globetrotters (School for Travelling: Sound Lectures from the Globetrotter) (1914), W. Fred gives practical advice to potential travellers, but never mentions the unavoidable problem of tipping, which was taken for granted. Fred's kind of world travellers were expected to have well-padded pocket-books. Though Dauthendey nominally belonged to this category, he never had the cash to make life away from home a comfort.

Apart from money problems, Dauthendey was plagued by the lack of privacy in the environment of a hotel and the necessity of socializing with other guests. Dauthendey could not acclimatize himself to the way people lived in the Dutch Indies. That Dauthendey shared no common interest with his fellow guests, German or Dutch, isolated him further. Most of his compatriots were businessmen stranded in the Dutch Indies, and Dauthendey felt that they ignored him as a noted man of letters, but treated him as if he were a commercial clerk ("Niemand kümmert sich anders um mich, als ob ich ein Handlungsgehilfe wäre") (Mich ruft dein Bild 300). There was no real camaraderie between the residents, who only

cared for themselves. The practical outcome of sharing systems of settings is that people would participate in communal activities, such as eating together or working together. For Dauthendey and his fellow guests, it would mean card playing, drinking or gossiping about the war. Since Dauthendey shrank from daily intercourse with them, his existence in these places, where only certain types of activities were facilitated, became one of isolation and eventual monotony.

Because of this 'open' kind of social space in a hotel, where one conducts one's life in an enclosed public, little incidents could cause disproportionate anguish. Such an incident occurred when on August 10th, 1915, Dauthendey complained childishly to his wife: "The mail came this morning and there was nothing for me. Others got their letters, but not me. That's the worst" (*Die Post hat mir nichts heute morgen gebracht. Die anderen bekamen ihre Briefe, ich nicht. Das ist das schlimmste*) (319-20). Dauthendey's personal disappointment was compounded by the possibility of losing status in front of other guests. A similar anxiety goaded him into the Solo excursion mentioned previously.

Moving within these restrictive settings, Dauthendey's contact with non-Europeans was limited to the servants in the hotels and resorts. On the rare occasions when he mentioned natives and native issues, Dauthendey showed himself as someone who had only acquired superficial knowledge of other cultures. Thus in a long letter home, he marvels at the rich array of the many courses at the hotel "Reistafel," served by as many silent, barefoot Malays in turbans. He fancies himself a Tsar in one of his own costume plays, and finds the scene comical (*Mich ruft dein Bild* 239-40).

If Dauthendey was aware of the injustice of the colonial system or the extent of poverty suffered by the natives under the Dutch colonial government, he made no mention of it in his writings. When he was in Garut, where he had more opportunities to observe the daily life experienced by the various ethnic groups in the Dutch Indies, Dauthendey's remarks echoed popular European beliefs that inferior races were evidence of a deficient civilizing process and therefore exhibited juvenile behaviour (Gould 214-9). Even Darwin, whose theory of natural selection was primarily concerned with plant and animal life (Kelly 116), believed in the unshakeable hierarchy of progressive civilization with the English gentleman at the top, as "[e]ach race moves along the ladder of civilization, propelled by natural selection, aided by use-inheritance . . . morality, and English customs" (Desmond 580). Thus, Dauthendey uses the standard adjectives to describe the Javanese and the Chinese (little, pallid), and attribute to them the stereotypical body language of crouching around the floor, which links them closer to the apes than to people who sit on furniture. In a letter written in March, 1915, Dauthendey mentioned that the natives died easily from diseases, as if life meant nothing important to them ("als ob ihnen das Leben gar nicht das Wichtigste wäre . . .") (269).

However, the social reality at that time was that although medical attention was readily available for the Europeans, like Dauthendey, it was not the case for the natives. Between 1900 and 1930, the Dutch colonial government "increased their expenditures on public health projects nearly tenfold" (Ricklefs 155), but the benefits were hardly felt because of the enormity of the poverty experienced by the natives. In 1930, over ten years after Dauthendey's stay, "there were only 1030 qualified doctors in Indonesia (667 of them in Java), representing one for every 62.5 thousand

inhabitants (of all races) in Java and one for every 52.4 thousand in the outer islands" (155-56). Even the government handbook issued in 1924 admitted that the deathrates for the natives were high, but that the situation was more favourable for the European population (*Handbook* 82).

Given that Dauthendey had the unique opportunity of a prolonged stay in the East, what could account for his disinterest in developing a deeper understanding of other cultures? His isolation from an organic daily life which could in some fashion replicate his European one, with friends, cultural events and so on, is one reason. The physiological reality of hotel living in a colonial place, which included enforced social interaction, expenditure of unusual sums of money and lack of individual privacy, is another. And finally, his formative education as an artist in his Berlin days must be considered here. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Dauthendey and his fellow impressionists believed that "the artist is the creator of beautiful things" (Wilde 21), and symptomatic of the refined and elitist aesthetics of the impressionists, the journal *Pan*, established in 1895, stated that its aim was not to cater to the taste of the wider public, but to cherish the exclusive character of art ("sich nicht nach den Wünschen des grossen Publikums zu richten, sondern den 'exklusiven Charakter der Kunst' zu pflegen . . .") (Hamann, *Impressionismus* 114). Or as the "Preface" to the first edition of Stefan George's *Blätter für die Kunst* (1892) states categorically: "The title of this publication speaks largely for its goal: to serve the Art, specially poetry and literature, all that which excludes the political and the social" (Der name dieser veröffentlichung sagt schon zum teil was sie soll: der kunst besonders der dichtung und dem schrifttum dienen, alles staatliche und gesellschaftliche ausscheidend) (1).

Dauthendey, himself a contributor to *Blätter*, believed in the special role of the artist as a romantic figure with superior sensitivity. His way of working was to visualize from his imagination, to put into text images stored from his travels or Berlin. As already mentioned, he worked not from factual notes, but from postcards and objects. When asked during his last years to write some Javanese stories for publication, he excused himself by blaming the tropical weather and also the intrusion of reality:

Things are in too much upheaval, I cannot imagine freely, the fantasies refuse to take hold in my mind. Reality is so captivating, the daily news from the war fronts, that I could only pay attention to them. . . .

Die Zeit ist nicht ruhig genug, die Phantasie kann sich nicht in Ruhe in mir spiegeln, ich kann deshalb nichts ausdenken. Die Wirklichkeit erzählt täglich so fesselnd von den Kriegsschauplätzen, dass ich immer zuhören muss. . . . (388)

For Dauthendey, the only way he could have written his exotic tales would be to practise a form of what Johannes Fabian calls the "denial of coevalness," in which the person, while representing the other cultures, "requires that [the] object . . . be removed from [the] subject not only in space but also in time" (*Time and the Work of Anthropology* 198). To live among Asians and to be in daily contact with them diminished the imaginative distance Dauthendey placed between himself and his objects of fantasy. During his four years in the East, when his dream became a prolonged reality, Dauthendey lost the incentive to exoticize the Orient. Europe, out of reach, was never more desirable.

At no time during Dauthendey's experience in the Dutch Indies from 1914 to 1918 did he consider an alternative to a European homeland.

Physically Dauthendey lived in Badung or Tosari, but his world was regulated by European time, European postal routes, European forms of image reproduction. Postal deliveries and their time-tables often caused Dauthendey a great deal of anxiety. He worried about war news from Europe, but he also fretted over the regularity of his mail. In a reply to his wife, Dauthendey traced the route her letter took with all the attention of a general tracing the army's advance:

The letter was from you, it left Strömstad on July 15, was registered in London July 19 . . . and arrived in Garut on August 19. You started writing it in Berlin on July 6 and finished it on July 12, when you were with Holm in Munich-Pasing. It was the first letter I received from you from Germany.

Der Brief war von Dir, kam vom 15. Juli aus Strömstad, war am 19. Juli in London, "registriert" worden . . . und kam am 19. August in Garoet an. Du hattest ihn am 6. Juli in Berlin begonnen und am 12. Juli in München-Pasing bei Holm beendet. Es war Dein erster Brief, den ich von Dir aus Deutschland erhielt. (Mich Ruft Dein Bild 323-324)

For Dauthendey, technological conveniences remained ways for the wanderer to connect with home, which he left temporarily for the purpose of some utopic dream.

One of these conveniences was the telegraph, which he used with great frequency at times of stress. From mid-March to mid-April, 1915, he telegraphed his wife six times, which cost him approximately 100 guildens. Considering that an expensive hotel charged 9 guildens a day, as the sanatorium in Tosari did, Dauthendey spent a good portion of his meagre funds on communication. As he remarked after recording these telegrams in his diary: "But how glad I am that this has been invented, this

telegraph" (Aber wie bin ich froh, dass man diese Erfindung hat, die Telegraphie) (Gesammelte Werke 2:299-300). He also recorded that he had been to the "Bioskop" twice in the Spring of 1915. In March, he went to see a double feature of war pictures of Europe and a play by Grillparzer. Although Dauthendey was not impressed by either showing, he found solace in seeing Europe in film:

But it did me a lot of good just now to see European dress and rooms, closed, and street lives again, if only in the cinema. And for an hour, I could believe that I was back on European soil and no longer in Asia.

Aber es tut mir wohl jetzt, europäische Kleidung und Zimmer, geschlossene, und Strassenleben wenigstens im Bioskop wiederzusehen. Und für eine Stunde, glaube ich dann, ich sei auf europäischer Erde und nicht mehr in Asien. (Mich Ruft Dein Bild 268)

At this point, we should recall that *one* of the tenets of the Art Nouveau, or *Jugendstil* philosophy, is to create beautiful things divorced from the mundane practice of daily life, including anything technological. This is a development from William Morris's utopic idea, where "a new social system resembling the pastoral communities of the past could replace the desert of modern industrialism" (Reed 232-3). As Benjamin writes in "Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit," with the advent of photography, simultaneously with the rise of socialism, art reacted with the doctrine of *l'art pour l'art*, which gave rise to the idea of 'pure' art:

With the advent of the first truly revolutionary means of reproduction, photography, simultaneously with the rise of socialism, art sensed the approaching crisis . . . [A]rt reacted with the doctrine

of *l'art pour l'art*, that is, with a theology of art. This gave rise to what might be called a negative theology in the form of the idea of "pure" art, which not only denied any social function of art but also any categorizing by subject matter. (*Illumination* 224).

Als nämlich mit dem Aufkommen des ersten wahrhaft revolutionären Reproduktionsmittels--der Photographie (gleichzeitig auch mit dem Anbruch des Sozialismus)--die Kunst das Nahen der Krise spürt . . . reagierte sie auf das Kommende mit der Lehre vom *l'art pour l'art*, die eine Theologie der Kunst ist. Aus ihr ist dann weiterhin geradezu eine negative Theologie der Kunst hervorgegangen, in Gestalt der Idee einer *reinen* Kunst, die nicht nur jede soziale Funktion sondern auch jede Bestimmung durch einen gegenständlichen Vorwurf ablehnt. (*Gesammelte* 1.2: 441)

Thus, some writers and artists at the turn of the nineteenth century escaped to exotic places in search of pre-industrial paradises, either in spirit or in actuality, to recapture a primitive world unsullied by electric tramcars and six-day work-week, time-clock and productivity charts. The desire to think oneself into another space by recreating a picture which corresponded less to reality than to the subject's ideal was a symptomatic strategy of these fin-de-siècle travellers (Bongie 4-5). However, this kind of escapism would work as long as the traveller was guaranteed a way home, such as modern packaged tours to "dangerous" vacation spots do.<sup>11</sup> For Dauthendey in Java, the exotic other place was Europe, and ironically, technology, in the form of the cinema, brought it closer to him.

Like most Europeans who lived in urbanized centres, Dauthendey was more dependent on technological inventions than his general writings would indicate. The Europe of the turn of the century was fully technologized. In his autobiography, Stefan Zweig mentions the excitement everyone felt when flying became a reality and a success: "We rejoiced in Vienna . . . out of pride for the hourly triumph of our technology . . . " (Wir



jauchzten in Wien . . . aus Stolz auf die sich stündlich überjagenden Triumphe unserer Technik) (Die Welt von Gestern 147). Zweig also remembers the great changes brought about by technology in everyday life during his adolescent years:

On the street the night glowed with electric lamps instead of murky lights, the shops on the main streets flaunted their new, seductive glamour all the way to the outskirts of the city, one could already speak to others on the telephone . . . Refined middle-class households boasted of creature-comfort, one no longer had to fetch water outside the house or from the well. . . .

Auf den Strassen flammten des Nachts statt der trüben Lichter elektrische Lampen, die Geschäfte trugen von den Hauptstrassen ihren verführerischen neuen Glanz bis in die Vorstädte, schon konnte dank des Telefons der Mensch zum Menschen in die Ferne sprechen . . . Der Komfort drang aus den vornehmen Häusern in die bürgerlichen, nicht mehr musste das Wasser vom Brunnen oder Gang geholt werden. . . . (Die Welt von Gestern 15)

The devotees of the principle of art untainted by social and political elements were also users of technology on a day-to-day basis. Theory was jettisoned when putting it into practice meant discomfit. And as Dauthendey's writing from the Dutch Indies shows, the European idea of an unspoilt East away from urbanization, fortunately for him, was basically inaccurate.

Adolf Bastian, the father of German ethnology, already warned in 1881 that "[a]t the very instance [primitive societies] become known to us they are doomed" (qtd. in Fabian, Time and the Work of Anthropology 194). Wherever industrialized people went, they brought with them the paraphernalia of industrialization, first to provide themselves with protection (arms) and all possible conveniences, and second to forge or

force commercial relationships with the host country. Even the "primitive paradise" of New Guinea could not escape the pavement of roads, building of harbours and erection of industrial sheds by the Germans (Allen 220-25). Because of this importation of western technology, Dauthendey was able to stay in colonial replicas of European cities and accommodations during his travel to the East. And if he could motor around Java comfortably, it was because of the oil deposits in Sumatra and Kalimantan (Ricklefs 152-53), which provided petrol for the many cars at which Dauthendey marvelled in the Dutch Indies cities (*Mich ruft dein Bild* 404).

Technology also dispelled to a certain extent the aura of exoticism surrounding nineteenth-century European fantasies of the Orient. Newspaper reports, photographs of Asians *not* living in fairytale-like surroundings, Japan's success as a military power and Asian nationalism and anti-western sentiments in the early twentieth century finally gave Asia and the many Asian ethnic groups more realistic identities in the European imagination. Technology also triumphed to destroy any kind of colonial Orientalism which might linger in German literature. For Germany, its eastern colonial empire ended simultaneously with the outbreak of the war. On September 11, 1914, the Australian army took Rabaul, the seat of German administration in New Guinea (Westphal 305) and in the early hours of November 7, 1914, Kiautschou fell to the Japanese (308). When Emil Nolde's paintings of the New Guineans, one-time colonized subjects of the German empire, were branded degenerate art by the National Socialist Party in 1937 (R.A. Berman 112), it was an indication of German disenchantment with the "oriental" element in art. For Dauthendey, the exotic East dissolved when he first learnt that he could not go home. The irony of his situation in comparison to Bird's or Ai Wu's is that the more

Europeanized his living conditions were, the less he could survive in an essentially foreign culture. The artificiality of colonial settings, divorced from the daily life of the host society, contributed to Dauthendey's cultural isolation. His literary legacy is a body of writings which feeds on the tradition of exotic literature and at the same time, documents the ultimate disillusionment with the East.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For detailed analyses of the differentiated segments of German society in the Wilhelminian era, see Blackbourn, Evans and Nipperdey.

<sup>2</sup> On the personal impact Kaiser Wilhelm II had on Wilhelminian politics, see Hull, Kohut, Blackbourn in Populists and Patricians, and Röhl.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Paret discusses in detail the history of the secessionist movements in various German cities, especially Berlin, in The Berlin Secession.

<sup>4</sup> The title of this photography is Berlin, Wittstockerstrasse, Eltern mit acht Kindern (1912) in Glaser, p.79. I can only count seven children. Perhaps the eighth has been cut out of the frame.

<sup>5</sup> On the history of German colonization as well as the Kaiser's role in it, see Henderson, Blackbourn in Populists and Patricians, Evans's introduction to Society and Politics in Wilhelminian Germany, and Moses and Kennedy.

<sup>6</sup> According to Woodruff D. Smith in his essay, 'Anthropology and German Colonialism', the University of Berlin founded its Oriental Languages Seminar in 1887; for some years, the seminar taught only Swahili.

<sup>7</sup> For details of reviews of Dauthendey's Asiatic tales, see Günther, pp. 265-66.

<sup>8</sup> See Norman Sherry, Lloyd Fernando's 'Literary English in the Southeast Asian Tradition', and Resink for discussions of Conrad's treatment of Malaya.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Leppmann's biography of Winckelmann provides a good introduction to the influence of the eighteenth-century art historian. On the subject of Winckelmann and Greece, see E.M. Butler's The Tyranny of Greece over Germany.

<sup>10</sup> For details of the German colonial administration in the Pacific, see Bade, "Colonial Missions and Imperialism"; Hempenstall, "The Neglected

Empire"; Ingrid Moses, "The Extension of Colonial Rule in Kaiser Wilhelmsland"; Sack, "Law, Politics and Native 'Crimes' in German New Guinea."

<sup>11</sup>Dean MacCannell's chapter on modern tourism, "Cannibalism today," in Empty Meeting Grounds illustrates my point on arranged tours to dangerous locations.

### CHAPTER 3: AI WU : LEARNING HOW TO CURSE

CALIBAN.            You taught me language; and my profit on't  
is, I know how to curse . . .

*The Tempest* (1.2.363-4)

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#### Chinese and Dogs Not Allowed

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In this chapter, I will discuss Ai Wu's travel writing within the context of western modernization in China in the early decades of the twentieth century. Modernization was a limited social process which affected mainly the areas where Westerners were allowed to live, unlike the revolutionary character it assumed in Europe in the nineteenth century. Ai Wu's travel sketches show that he was at the crossroads of political consciousness. He was stimulated by western ideas, but he was also angered by western colonialism. Like Bird's, his travel was a sort of fact-finding mission, except that his experience, instead of affirming the colonial enterprise, cemented his anti-imperialist position. While in Bird's *The Golden Chersonese*, observations are conveyed in a chronological pattern, tightly edited as a series of letters home, Ai Wu's sketches seem like a random collection of impressions. Like Dauthendey's records, Ai Wu's sketches cover a period of several years. But Dauthendey's diary and letters were unplanned for publication at the time of writing and they bear the mark of an unfinished project, not unlike Dauthendey's own life. In contrast, although Ai Wu's sketches of his journey to Burma are not specifically linked to each other, they nonetheless show an overall design.

A gradual change of political awareness takes place in the narrative. In spite of the discontinuous nature of the topics, such as a rainy night in Bhamo and a miserable stop in a Hong Kong prison, the tenet of his collection of sketches is to portray the unacceptable practice of western imperialism, which began in China with the "unequal treaties."

The first treaty was carefully studied by other western powers, and in 1844, the Americans signed a longer treaty with China, with additional articles which provided free access for American missionaries in China, and the rights for Americans to build hospitals and churches in the treaty ports. In Article 21, the American government inserted the jurisdictional stipulation "that any Americans committing crimes in China could be tried and punished only by the consuls or other duly empowered American officials . . ." (Spence 161, Fishel 5-6). By the 1920s, when China was experiencing great social unrest, with the Nationalist Guomindang, individual warlords and the Communist Party vying for control of the country, the extraterritorial privileges enjoyed by foreigners had grown far beyond those provided by the treaties of the nineteenth century.

The "unequal treaties," as China considered these humiliating terms of settlement imposed upon her by nations armed with gunboats and modern technology, were observed grudgingly by successive Chinese governments. Traditionally, "[t]he concept of foreign relations as dealings with foreign states based on sovereign equality did not exist [in China]. 'Foreign relations' existed only with tributary states or dependencies . . ." (Luke Lee 25). Some of the early European visitors to China--the Portuguese in the sixteenth century--found out gradually "that the Chinese system of international intercourse differed radically from that prevailing in Europe" (Lach 1:735). When the western powers enforced

extraterritoriality upon China in the nineteenth century, they were not only coercing China to conduct foreign affairs according to western tradition; they were also protecting their own nationals from Chinese laws, which they considered harsh and barbaric. As Wesley Fishel writes:

Extraterritoriality was established principally because of the vast difference between European and Oriental standards of justice and punishment. The system thus introduced proved to be of enormous value to foreigners, who found it not only a protection against what they considered insufferable laws and punishments, but also a ready vehicle for the expansion of their trade and influence. Under its cloak, they developed successful commercial enterprises and gradually secured control of a large portion of China's foreign commerce. Christian missionaries utilized it as a protective shield to facilitate the propagation of their faith. (217)

Isabella Bird was a beneficiary of extraterritorial rights granted to foreigners. When she became a missionary in China in the 1890s, she could travel into the interior of the country, areas historically forbidden to foreigners (Bird, Yangtze Valley). Instead of maintaining the position of superiority due to the people of an ancient culture, as had been the traditional Chinese expectation of foreigners, Chinese everywhere in China were recruited into all levels of service to provide creature comfort for people they called variously 'barbarians', 'red-hair devil' and other derogatory terms. This situation of mutual distrust precluded intercultural exchange on a large scale. In Somerset Maugham's sketch of an American missionary doctor and entrepreneur in some interior city, Dr. Macalister laments that though he "had been looking forward to a martyr's crown," he has been disappointed over and over again. In Shanghai, he lives in a fine house with fine servants; in the interior he lives in a missionary compound



with American furniture: "I thought I'd never eaten so much and so well in my life. You did nothing for yourself. If you wanted a glass of water you called a boy . . ." (On a China Screen 48-9). This is the kind of colonial setting which encouraged the practice of European cultural habits and prohibited any kind of cross-cultural communication. Maintenance of this type of milieu partially accounted for the continuance of mutual misrepresentations between cultures.

With the rise of nationalism in the post-Qing era, the desire to renegotiate for the abolishment of these treaties was part of the agenda of every government. Fishel, writing in 1951, in Los Angeles, calls the nationalist fervour "the virus of revolution" and "the development . . . of a national self-consciousness" very much responsible for the Chinese's desire to destroy all foreign privileges (72). To the Chinese, the movement to overturn western imperialism was the natural outcome of decades of tolerating unwanted foreign presence in China. New journals with titles such as Chiu-kuo (Save the Nation) or Tzu-chih (Self-government) are indicative of the patriotic sentiment felt by the new republic (Chow Tse-tsung, The May Fourth Movement 146, 179-80)). The tension and conflict which existed between the foreigners and the Chinese were most concentrated in treaty ports such as Guangzhou or Shanghai, where sizeable foreign settlements could be found. Of all cities, Shanghai in the 1920s was the symbol of both the western influence on Chinese society and Chinese hatred of the presence of foreign cultures.

Although the anti-foreigner movements were nationwide, western ideas, such as democracy and individualism, and western literature, were disseminated and accepted within the intellectual class. Works by Ibsen, Strindberg, Baudelaire, Zola, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky, to name only a few

examples, were translated by writers of the May Fourth Movement (Chow, May 4th 283-7). Apart from the capital city, Beijing, Shanghai was the centre of the new intellectual movement in China, where many of the influential journals, such as New Youth, or Creation Quarterly, were published. Because the International Settlement was administered by the European countries and America, the most vibrant and important parts of Shanghai were not under the jurisdiction of the Chinese. Ironically, this anomaly provided an ideal refuge for revolutionaries wanted by the government. The Chinese Communist Party was founded on rue Beyle in the French Concession, and Zhou Enlai, hiding in a friend's house on rue Lafayette from the Guomindang, "helped plan the great rising that almost delivered Shanghai into communist hands" (Nicholas R. Clifford 10).

A photograph of the 1920s will show neoclassical buildings along the Bund (now Zhongshan Road), the esplanade along the Huangpu River where all the commercial business was concentrated (Clifford 36, 164a). A Canadian visitor to Shanghai in the 1930s writes: ". . . the Bund was a hurly-burly of movement and bewildering noise. Cars tooted, street-cars clanged, bicycle bells shrilled continuously . . ." (Carney 7). A friend of this visitor explains to her the origin of the foreign settlements in terms of everyday irritants and prejudices, problems which could have occurred anywhere involving cohabitation between different cultures:

. . . the Chinese and the whites didn't like the way each other smelled. The Chinese said the white men reeked of whisky and tobacco smoke, and the whites couldn't stand the smell of Chinese cooking or the fact that all the household waste waters were thrown off the balconies into the narrow cobbled streets . . . So the British asked for a bit of land where they could build their own community and the Imperial Government of Peking contemptuously [sic] gave

them a no-good tract of swamp . . . and soon other nations followed with similar concessions. (14)

If one accepts this ahistorical and non-political explanation for the western dominating presence in Shanghai, a presence tantamount to a "kind of imperium in imperio" (Nicholas R. Clifford 17), then the anti-foreign agitation in the early decades of the twentieth century and the Chinese's continued wariness towards western nations after the Communist Party came to power would be totally incomprehensible. Chinese mistrust of western political motivations can be traced back to China's encounter with the West in the nineteenth century, and to ignore this facet of Sino-western relation seems a particularly Eurocentric reaction, which fails to encourage cross-cultural tolerance.

Chinese then (and some Chinese now still) resented this reversed segregation practiced by the arrogant foreigners. According to a writer in the 1990s, the occupation of parts of Shanghai by the imperialists was a betrayal of the city by weak Chinese government officials, who were taken advantage of by unscrupulous Westerners:

If one walked northward from the British consulate, there was a plot of green not far from the consulate, which had a few iron benches for people to rest. This piece of land belonged to China on paper, but in reality, Chinese had gradually been banned from loitering around it. The security guards usually harassed the Chinese, making them leave at once, so that their presence would not interfere with the promenade of the foreign gentlemen. At first, this only applied to Chinese in short jackets [labourers], but then the prohibition extended to the gentry as well. (Zhang Hong 48)<sup>1</sup>

Although Clifford maintains that there were two separate signs "beside the entrance to the Public Gardens, across from the British consulate," one

regulating against dogs and one against Chinese (26), popular saying has it that Chinese and dogs were coupled together on one sign. Foreigners would repeat this saying because it was, to some, humorous. Chinese would repeat it to indicate the foreigners' unwarranted arrogance and the shame extraterritoriality brought upon China.<sup>2</sup>

Yet no one could ever refute the fact that Shanghai was exciting and a centre of activities, political or otherwise, in the early years of the Chinese Republic. In Ding Ling's two-part short stories, "Yijiusanlingnian chun Shanghai" ("Shanghai, 1930 Spring"), the coming-of-age of the main characters happen in the treaty port, amidst political agitation and activities amongst the intellectuals and the workers. Ding Ling herself lived in Shanghai during the most productive years of her writing career (*Feuerwerker, Ding Ling's Fiction*). In Mao Dun's *Hong* (*Rainbow* 1930), the main character, Mei, has tried various occupations without finding any personal fulfilment, until she arrives in Shanghai in 1924 and becomes involved with the anti-imperialist movement: ". . . When I was in Sichuan, I didn't realize what a nation meant. But living here for a few months, I can gradually see the power wielded by the foreigners . . ." (Mao Dun 324). In a climactic scene at the end of the novel, set in the tumultuous days of Spring, 1925, Mei and a friend spend a day shopping at Wing On Department Store on Nanking Road in the International Settlement. Mao Dun manages to set the cosmopolitan atmosphere of westernized Shanghai against the palpable tension generated by the nationalistic Chinese inhabitants of the city. The complexity of the situation is further symbolized by Wing On, a department store built by capital from Hong Kong Chinese who had discovered western entrepreneurship (Nicholas R. Clifford 62). While Mei's friend, Xu, admires the delicate designs of some

clocks made in Germany in the store, Mei converses with a leader of the political underground and finds out that while she has been busy entertaining her friend, the concession guards have killed several of the demonstrators and her roommate has gone missing, possibly arrested (Mao Dun 358-60). The novel ends with Mei, a self-centred sensualist thus far, joining in with the demonstrators on the street of Shanghai facing the Sikh police (390-1).

Although Mao Dun does not actually give precise dates to the events described in his novel, they bear close resemblance to the May Thirtieth Incident in Shanghai. On May 30, 1925, near the Louza (Laozha) Police Station on Nanking Road, crowds gathered to listen to student speechmakers denouncing western imperialism and some students were arrested. Then events turned ugly, and

all traffic had now halted on Nanking and Thibet roads. The Sikh police, their black beards set off by the bright turbans they wore, charged the crowd . . . Some fifteen hundred or two thousand people had quickly gathered outside the station . . . . [A]t 3:37 Everson shouted a warning in both English and Chinese that he would shoot if the crowd did not fall back. Ten seconds later, he ordered his men to open fire. (Nicholas R. Clifford 104)

As a result, eleven demonstrators were killed and twenty wounded. "To Chinese of all persuasions and classes, the May Thirtieth affair was a brutal and unprovoked attack on a group of unarmed students . . ." (105). May Thirtieth did not end western domination of Shanghai; it was followed by other riots and strikes in the following years, and Shanghai was not liberated from the Japanese until the end of the Second World War. But the riots of 1925 in Shanghai and other parts of China marked the

galvanization of mere anti-western feeling into more cohesive political movements which resulted in the rise to power of the Communist Party in China.

These anti-western riots in the 1920s also show that while most European nations accepted the process of industrialization and the changes it caused in their societies, China in the early twentieth century related industrialization to western encroachment and dominance. Both Bird and Dauthendey believed in technological innovations, but for Ai Wu and other Chinese, the idea of technology and modernization was never integrated in their consciousness. Acceptance of and pride in technological progress made European travellers see China and Southeast Asia as backward, a perspective which would not occur to Ai Wu, as we shall see in this chapter.

## The Milk of the May Fourth Movement

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Ai Wu, born in Sichuan in 1904, in the last years of the Qing dynasty, came from an impoverished but educated family. Both his grandfather and father were teachers. Although he was educated mainly in village schools and did not study in the provincial capital, Chengdu, until he was seventeen, he was familiar both with classical Chinese literature and the writing of the May Fourth Movement. In Ai Wu Ping Zhuan (Critical Biography of Ai Wu), Zhang Xiaomin writes that the principal of the village school attended by Ai Wu in the late 1910s was an avid supporter of the new literary movement and subscribed to several newly published journals such as New Youth and New Tide (18). Once in Chengdu, Ai Wu became acquainted with western literature in translation, such as Dickens's David Copperfield and Ibsen's A Doll House. But most influential of all were Chinese writers such as Guo Moruo, Lu Xun and Yu Dafu, all representatives of the May Fourth Movement (Ai Wu, Selected Writings 268).<sup>3</sup> Although Ai Wu is not known outside the Chinese-reading public, his writing career spanned the twentieth century, witnessing the assumption of power of the Communist Party and the tumultuous Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. Thus his travel sketches serve as a good introduction to the development of a writer who matured in the years of China's great historical change in this century.

May Fourth was not only a literary, but a social, cultural and political movement. On May 4, 1919, students demonstrated in Beijing against both the corruption and ineffectiveness of the Chinese government and the failure of the Paris Conference to rectify conditions imposed by historical treaties on China by the western powers. Among the slogans "written in

Chinese, English and French" which the students carried were "Return our Tsingtao," "Boycott Japanese goods," "China belongs to the Chinese" (Chow, May Fourth 109). The demonstration ended with arrests and skirmishes between the students and soldiers. The event itself, an expression of the public's dissatisfaction with political events and of cultural and social changes which had been ongoing before 1919, became a marker in the history of modern China, indicating the growing nationalism of the Chinese, the power of the young intellectuals to organize and agitate for reform, and the growing acceptance of serious writing in vernacular Chinese, which was used for the widely-distributed manifesto for the demonstration. Although the event took place in Beijing, its effect was nationwide. In Mao Dun's Hong, Mei recalls the excitement among the students of Chengdu following the event: "The angry tide [of May fourth], this firing spark, reached Chengdu a month later . . ." (20). In the novel, students gather to demonstrate their nationalistic fervour, and merchants of Japanese products are branded traitors. May Fourth might have been dismissed as a mere incident, a defiant gesture on the part of the students "if there had been no developments . . . . But the students in Peking started immediately . . . to organize the new intellectuals of the nation" (Chow, May Fourth 115-6).

It is ironic that the new intellectuals of the nation were also the ones who were open to non-Chinese influences. Hu Shi, who was "generally regarded as the first poet to promote vigorously the vernacular literature" and who wrote in the vernacular himself, was educated at Cornell and Columbia Universities (Chow, May Fourth 26-7). Lu Xun, the most revered of all Chinese writers in the post-Qing era, was studying in Japan in the 1900s (Na Han 1-4). Popular writers such as Ba Jin studied overseas and



incorporated western terms and themes in his earlier writing, choosing titles for his short stories such as "Aliana" or "The Crucifixion of Love" (Collected Stories I). For the May Fourth intellectuals, the two key ideas were "democracy" and "science" (Chow, May Fourth 58-9). The new literary societies and their publications, such as Xinyue yuekan (Crescent Monthly), were often pro-western (McDougall 46-7).

Part of the programme of the May Fourth Movement encouraged its followers to be individualistic, to throw off the burden of thousands of years of tradition, to reject irrational superstitious practices and to advocate reforms for a democratic society. It was a revolutionary programme which was facilitated by the knowledge and acceptance of western ideas. These were all clearly in opposition to the Chinese tradition of feudalism, of the importance and sacredness of family relations, of the unchangeability of hierarchy in the society. In a survey conducted in 1921, among 184 married male students, only 5 had chosen their own wives; others had had their spouses chosen by their parents or elders (Chow, May Fourth 286). This adherence to the old way of conducting oneself, whether in matters of marriage or in choosing a profession, was very much in evidence even after the May Fourth Movement. Ba Jin's novel, Jia (Family 1931), traces the gradual break-up of a large, extended family through the 1920s. The eldest son and the most conventional one, obeys the dictates of the grandparents and parents and marries a stranger. His unhappy personal life becomes a constant rebuke to his lack of will to rebel. His one consolation is his assistance to his younger brothers who manage to escape the family home and lead an independent life in Shanghai. In Ai Wu's first volume of autobiography, he remembers how the youths in his small town were at odds with the older generation:

But even our immature minds were gradually inflamed by the words in the periodicals . . . . we believed those who still honoured Confucius and made offerings to him were stupid. We disliked classical Chinese . . . we venerated as gods and sages those who promoted new culture and writing in the vernacular . . . We agreed that there should be equality between men and women, freedom in marriage . . . . (Ai Wu, *Wen ji* 2 133-4)<sup>4</sup>

In the spirit of May Fourth, Ai Wu decided to rebel against the family tradition and the marriage arranged for him with some stranger. In 1925, one of his friends, He Bingyi, was killed in the May Thirtieth incident in Shanghai (Nicholas R. Clifford 105, Zhang 24). Under pressure from his father to return from Chengdu to marry, Ai Wu took the unconventional and individual route of leaving home, leaving the province of Sichuan, to "undertake the long road of a wandering life." The starting point of his journey, as he often mentions, is when he "drank the milk of May Fourth" (Zhang 25). This is a particularly evocative figure of speech to the Chinese, since Ai Wu was equating the effect of May Fourth to the importance of suckling at a mother's breast.

Ai Wu's first experience as a wanderer was in the province of Yunnan, in the most southern part of China. Without money or prospect of a job, Ai Wu was reduced to pawning his books and his personal effects. At last, he was hired as a janitor by a charity organization (ran by the Red Cross) in Kunming, the capital of Yunnan. He begins this account of his first years of adult independence with a brutally uncompromising description of the dismal accommodation he was given:

I lived in a room which had had no lodger for a long time. It had a smell of decay. One window faced the kitchen, and during the day

one could hardly see the objects inside the room. In the evening, the weak light filtered through the dust-covered bulb, giving everything a look of jaundice. There was only one small entry, but it had no door . . . . (*My Youth* 1)<sup>5</sup>

But Ai Wu was contented, for a moment, because he had a job, though the work involved dusting, cleaning the spittoon, delivering mail, work below his level of education and his status as gentry. This vacillation between temporary satisfaction in obtaining a means of livelihood and conscious shame at losing caste is to be a constant refrain in Ai Wu's early travel sketches as well.

Ai Wu is a harsh and observant critic of representatives of the employing class. Throughout the autobiographical narrative, Ai Wu paints small vignettes of the kind of feudalistic social milieu which was the target of reformist and revolutionary intellectual writings. The supervisor of the lower servants was a man enamoured with the little power he had over the others. Not only did he torture his staff with meaningless and humiliating tasks, he also often intruded into Ai Wu's doorless bedroom at night, to make sure Ai Wu did not run off with stolen properties of the association (*My Youth* 40-1). The head of the association was a wealthy landowner in his forties. He is described as "tall and lanky, sallow in complexion; any onlooker could tell that he was heavily addicted to opium" (46). This Ho, who was also the head of an extended family of uncles and brothers, led the typical life of the idle rich, a social class considered to be part of the problems plaguing China. He would lie in bed till noon, and not until he had had his fill of opium would he leave the house. Whenever he visited the association, "he was followed by a servant who carried all the paraphernalia for his opium smoking" (47). Even the educated class,

basically people of his own background, was not spared Ai Wu's critical pen. Through his occasional articles in the local newspaper, Ai Wu made friends with a few intellectuals in Kunming. One day, Ai Wu and one of the group met a young poet who was also a university student:

Zhou suddenly pointed at a young man a few yards away from us, he was dressed in western clothes . . . Zhou proceeded to introduce us. Perhaps the introduction was too casual, Mei showed no sign of friendliness. I also kept my pride as a worker and refused to approach him to shake hands. (28)<sup>6</sup>

With the sensitivity of someone who had fallen below his social status, Ai Wu was acutely and painfully aware of any slight directed towards him personally. This class self-consciousness in the young Ai Wu ironically marked him as an outsider to the lower classes, people he often portrays as peasants and labourers with a coarser and more earthy nature. Caught between different social classes, Ai Wu was comfortable with neither and this predicament encouraged his enthusiasm for the forging of a classless society.

Ai Wu's meticulous and critical attention to the social habits and relationships of the people in Kunming reminds the readers of Lu Xun's short stories of traditional villages in China. In "A Q Zhengzhuàn" ("The True Story of A Q" 1921), Lu Xun satirizes the village in which A Q lives as well as A Q himself. A Q's ignorance and constant dread of losing face are the running jokes of the short story. When beaten by his employers, he comforts himself by pretending that he is really beaten by his son, and he would ask rhetorically: "What is the world coming to?" Unhappy that he has lost face, he bullies a defenceless nun who is passing by. The more the

village crowd encourages him, the more lewd his taunts become. But A Q is a reflection of his environment. His social betters behave with hypocrisy and arrogance. They are shown to be greedy and equally ignorant. They discipline their servants by corporal punishment and dismiss them at the slightest mishap. In Lu Xun's despairing moments, he feels that Chinese society needs some earthshaking events to awaken it to change: "Unless some great whip lashes her on the back, China will never budge. Such a whip is bound to come . . . " (Lu Xun, Selected Writings 29-37, qtd. in Herdan 16). This view of China as backward and unchanging of course reinforces the western notion that Chinese civilization has had its days of glory. But the difference between these two views of a decayed China is insurmountable. Lu Xun was a revolutionary; he believed that China could be and should be reformed. He eventually joined the Chinese Communist Party, although Lu Xun was never a blind follower of party discipline and remained individualistic. The CCP advocated genuine and radical reforms of the society, while the Guomindang, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, "had feet of clay . . . its leaders appeared less interested in revolution than in power" (Harriet C. Mills 209). On the literary front, Lu Xun was active in the establishment of the League of Left-Wing Writers in 1930 (213). The western powers, on the other hand, encouraged by the lack of resistance shown by successive weak Chinese governments since the 1830s, believed that China was theirs for easy exploitation.

Lu Xun's influence on Ai Wu and the general respect he commanded are best illustrated in Lu Xun's response to a letter written by the younger writer searching for advice. Lu Xun believes that the role of the writer is that of a resistance fighter. He encourages Ai Wu and his friend to write, but says that they must choose their materials with careful consideration

and investigate the topics with depth (Ai Wu, Selected Writings 227-9; Anderson 43-4). As a footnote to Ai Wu's connection with Lu Xun, Ai Wu was arrested for political activities by Guomindang agents in 1933. Lu Xun donated funds for the hiring of a defence lawyer for Ai Wu's trial (Ai Wu, Selected Writings 272).

Ai Wu's criticism of Chinese society as exemplified by the city of Kunming has a didactic purpose. Like Lu Xun, he did not owe allegiance to the hierarchical orders of the past. By his action, he had shown that he wanted to practice what some of the new intellectuals preached. He could truly turn his back on the traditions of China and try to learn from life experience. But the autobiographical record of his first years of wandering also shows a China which was vastly different from the westernized Shanghai. Instead of art-deco buildings and neo-classical banks, Kunming had narrow lanes and courtyard houses. Instead of a mixture of nationalities, Kunming had one atheist school teacher, a Mr. Parker, who tried to impart to the Chinese in Yunnan the meaning of Shakespeare's Julius Caesar (My Youth 50-1). One of Ai Wu's favourite errands was to deliver letters to areas out of town:

Whenever I was sent off to some distant street outside the south gate, I would go happily to the noodle shops frequented by coolies. White towels always hung between the tables, because the used chopsticks were never washed, but were simply replaced in the bamboo container on the table. Customers were expected to wipe used chopsticks on these napkins before eating . . . I didn't mind [the lack of hygiene] . . . The fastidiousness regarding hygiene when I was a student, the aversion to anything filthy, these habits were all naturally a thing of the past. (39-40)<sup>7</sup>

For Ai Wu, Yunnan was the old China but he adapted to its customs easily. It was neither exotic nor repugnant. The lack of condescension towards a different and presumably worse milieu was an attitude which Westerners could seldom adopt. In Somerset Maugham's On a Chinese Screen (1922), non-Chinese stranded in outposts, either as missionaries or trade representatives, usually hate their surroundings and try to insulate themselves against the "lying people, untrustworthy, cruel, and dirty . . ." (27) by creating a make-believe world reminiscent of Cheltenham or Tunbridge Wells.

Ai Wu had no need of such fantasy. No doubt he would have liked to reform this feudalistic society, to see the fortune of landlords such as Ho more evenly distributed and to institute better systems of education and public health. But he never intimated that he would like to see China westernized. In this, Ai Wu was like other radical Chinese intellectuals who also received some form of western education--Zhou Enlai in Europe, Ba Jin and Wang Duqing in Paris, Mao Dun through his translation of western literature, to name just a few. Ai Wu turned his knowledge to practical use for a changing China.

## Life As a Sahib or a Dog in Burma

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In 1927, Ai Wu felt that he could learn nothing more from labouring in Kunming. He met a young man who had been to Annam, whose description of the tropical weather and landscape of Southeast Asia renewed Ai Wu's interest in travelling south (*My Youth* 67). Burma was directly south of Yunnan, and Ai Wu, in March, 1927, with a new straw hat, his books and a little money given to him by a friend, started his journey. His record of his three years in Southeast Asia is in the form of short essays which were published both as a collection (1935) and as articles for newspapers (Ai Wu, *Wandering Sketches* 1). Ai Wu travelled on foot, and since he had limited funds, he worked whenever he could on the way.

The district of Burmese Tenasserim was colonized by Britain in the 1820s. In the mid-1850s, the British annexed the province of Pegu under the "imperialistic policy of Dalhousie [whose] ambition was to create a larger and integrated Indian Empire for his nation. The possession of Lower Burma would link the whole British coast-line up to Singapore" (Desai 197). In 1885, the British army took Upper Burma and administered the unified colony as a province of British India. In the December 26, 1885 issue of *The London Illustrated News*, readers were reminded of "the material advantages which the possession of Upper Burmah and the Shan country may afford, by the extended cultivation of profitable crops, and by the opening of an inland traffic with the Indo-Chinese nations and the western provinces of China" (*London Illustrated News* 1885.2: 667-8).



One of the British civil servants working in Burma in the 1920s and 30s was Maurice Collis, an Anglo-Irish writer who wrote extensively about Burma after he left the Indian Civil Service. He was more sensitive than his fellow 'sahibs' to the ancient cultures of the various states which made up British Burma, and at the end of his tenure became an avid collector of artifacts from Burma and China. In his autobiography, he tries to give a fair assessment of the British administration in Burma, with its follies and foibles as well as its achievements. Collis was aware that the prevalent practice of racial prejudices was unfair. "In 1928," he writes in Into Hidden Burma: "[t]here was . . . a growing irritation at British exclusiveness. The Burmese were treated as an inferior race; though the law was supposed to be the same for all, it was interpreted to favour the British" (165). He came under severe criticism himself from the colonial community when in the chair of trial judge he reprimanded an Englishman for his actions "[which] showed an extraordinary insensibility to the proprieties of ordinary human intercourse" (177). The Englishman, suspecting his servant of stealing, persecuted the young man to such a degree that the Burmese jumped out of a high window and killed himself. But in spite of his sympathy with the Burmese culture and attempts at fair play, Collis shows that, intrinsically, he was an outsider passing judgement on an alien culture.

Posted briefly to Mandalay in 1920, Collis visited the Arakan pagoda which "houses the colossal image of Buddha which was carried away from Arakan in 1784" (Into Hidden Burma 55). This was sacred ground to the Burmese, and after the First World War, with rising anti-colonial sentiments:

pagoda trustees in the principal places had . . . begun to put up notices prohibiting shoes. It was foreseen that the British would refuse to take off their shoes . . . . The new rule caused some ill feeling in British circles because strolling on pagoda platforms . . . had always been a favourite pastime. (56)

When Collis visited the Arakan pagoda, there was a notice 'foot wearing prohibited' up at the entrance. Illogically, Collis thought that the interdiction did not apply to him. He was chastised by a monk, and was allowed to stay by virtue of his official position. In front of the shrine, the Burmese accompanying Collis fell to their knees in prayer:

I alone remained standing, a conspicuous figure with my shoes on. It suddenly struck me that I was committing a rudeness . . . I grew more uncomfortable and felt like an outsider, or worse, like an oppressor who was taking advantage of his office. (57)

An Englishman visiting the same pagoda in 1988, to show that he harboured none of the bias of the colonial period, remarked on Collis's reluctance to shed his footwear. This post-independence English traveller reassures his readers that "it was easy for me to kick off my Mandalay sandals . . ." (Abbott 73), thus employing a frequent tactic of contemporary travel writing to highlight the cultural flexibility of the narrator. The modern commentator derides previous travellers and participates in local customs.

Less interested in cultivating the people or the customs of Burma was Somerset Maugham, who visited Upper Burma in 1922. He travelled very much in the grand colonial style of Isabella Bird. In the village of Taunggyi, "the British Resident found him mules and ponies, a Gurkha boy, and an interpreter named Kyuzaw. [Maugham] set out . . . riding at the

head of his caravan like a minor Oriental potentate . . ." (Morgan 264). Maugham begins his travel narrative of this journey, *The Gentleman in the Parlour* (1930), with the disclaimer that it is not a book of information but one of diversion (8). Though he maintains that he is not writing a record of the Empire, he nonetheless parades the ghosts of Clive, Hastings and Raffles through the early pages, lest anyone should forget that "Burmah" belongs to Britain.

The daily routines of Maugham's journey were also evidence, more concrete than the ghosts of Hastings or Clive, of the colonial overlordship of Britain. Treated as if he were minor royalty, Maugham would wake each morning in some bungalow reserved exclusively for the whites who visited the interior. While his Yunnanese muleteers got the packing ready, the "Ghurka [sic] boy . . . brought me my tea and took down my mosquito curtains. I drank the tea and smoked the first delicious cigarette of the day" (*Gentleman* 58). Each evening, the headman and his attendants of the village Maugham was stopping at would wait to greet him: "When I approached they went down on their haunches" (48) and shikoe (a low bowing with hands on the floor). The villagers would offer the white man rice, or flowers, or whatever they could to show their respect. In the Shan State, the native nobleman (the Sawbwa) had ordered houses to be built for Maugham on the way: "I felt very grand to have a house built for me to spend a single night in" (89). However, this royal treatment inevitably provided the traveller the opportunity to abuse his power:

One day, the letter sent out ahead to arrange accommodation having been received but that morning, on arriving at the end of the stage I found the villagers . . . still busy with the construction of my house

. . . I was tired and hungry. I wanted a cook-house so that my dinner could be prepared, and I wanted a place for my bed so that I could lie down and rest. I lost my temper and my commonsense. I sent for the Sawbwa's official and abused him roundly for his slackness. I vowed I would send him back to his master and threatened him with every sort of punishment my angry imagination could devise . . . .  
(90)

Maugham laughs about this incident in his book. But one is left wondering how humiliated the Shan official must have felt and how he must have dreaded the reprimand waiting for him from his superior.

George Orwell was an official in the police force in Burma at the same time Collis was in the civil service. Orwell wrote a novel, Burmese Days (1934), which gives a fairly detailed account of the colonial life in the Burmese outpost. Like another colonialist, Leonard Woolf, Orwell did not enjoy the career of serving an imperialist government, and Burmese Days has its share of vitriolic comments and portrayals of the indolent, drunk, lewd and bigoted crowd of white people in the village of Kyauktada. In the late 1920s, when the events in this novel take place, Burmese nationalism was gaining momentum and a series of riots broke out in 1930, with "the sentiment of 'Burma for the Burmans' [becoming] more wide-spread . . ." (Desai 256-7). In Burmese Days, the crisis involves not the simmering unrest of the indigenous people, but the directive from above that the white-only club of Kyauktada has to nominally admit one non-white member. The Indian doctor Veraswami, in whose eyes the sahibs could do no wrong, wishes to become the token native member of the club. The corrupt and most wealthy Burmese of the village plots for the same end. In the meantime, invectives such as "greasy little sod of a nigger doctor" or "you beggars keep your place!" are interchanged with a

native woman's whining for money from her bored white lover or the mutterings of a lazy servant.

Though Burmese Days has the tone of anti-imperialism, it has little else which would give the reader an insight into the non-white Burmese society. It is against the British rule, but it speaks contemptuously of the Burmans, the Indians and the Chinese as well. Both Collis and Orwell worked in Burma, yet neither of them could penetrate or represent the Burmese world effectively, either because of a lack of communication or a lack of empathy. In Burmese Days, Orwell's main character Flory is despised as a Burmese-sympathiser, and Orwell writes: "He had forgotten that most people can be at ease in a foreign country only when they are disparaging the inhabitants" (121). But this need to disparage seems evident in the author's own characterizations of the natives as well.

So far in this study, the travellers I have studied in depth or mentioned in passing have been European and from the middle-class. Isabella Bird and Max Dauthendey were only passing through Southeast Asia, just as Maugham was. British expatriates such as Orwell and Collis should, one assumes, be ensured a wider knowledge of the country they lived and worked in. But the degree of understanding and the ability to empathize with other cultures are consistently uneven and at times contradictory in these writers. Except for Orwell, and Collis to a lesser extent, none of the Europeans could communicate directly with the Javanese, the Burmese, the Malays or the Chinese. None of these writers could read the literature, or even the newspapers of the Asian places they were visiting. As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, these Europeans evaluated Asian peoples usually through visual perceptions (appearance, body language, physical environment) and through other

sensory perceptions such as smell (cooking) and noise (incomprehensible languages, throat-clearing). The built environment of their western 'worlds' inside the various Asian societies acted as a screen through which the Europeans could obtain only glimpses of the people they colonized or exploited.

Ai Wu is the only traveller in this study who had recognized that cross-cultural communication involved some level of understanding of the other's language. Unlike the western nations, who legislated the languages which were officially used in the colonies, the Chinese and other Asian nationalities were placed in the inferior position of having to learn the colonizers' languages as a life skill. Although China was not colonized, Ai Wu realised that, at least in parts of the country, English was a language of power. He grew up away from the major Chinese cities where English was taught, but he tried to learn the language at night while working as a janitor in Kunming. In Burma, Ai Wu learnt enough Burmese to communicate adequately and to find work. His inferior social position meant that there was no question of hiring an interpreter, or a retinue of carriers and servants. Thus Ai Wu, travelling with a small knapsack of books and one change of clothing, saw a Burma which the Westerners ignored. He recorded the seedy local inns, the Yunnanese muleteers who were for hire for wealthy travellers, a nun who tried to convert him, an opium smuggler who operated from the border between China and Burma.

At an inn in the Kachin mountains straddling the China-Burma border, Ai Wu met people from the Kachin tribe for the first time. He admits that their blood-red mouths from betel-chewing unsettled him, but is nonetheless reassured by the innkeeper (*Wandering Sketches* 88). Later, Ai Wu had occasion to visit and eat with Kachins, and realised how

deceptive appearance could be: "After the other traveller explained to me, I used my fingers to scoop up [the food] . . . it was quite delicious. When we ate, there was no table, no chair. We sat on the floor like beggars" (93). But he thought the meal was memorable all the same. In the chapter, "The Home of Kachin People," Ai Wu describes the Kachins' preference for living in high altitudes and the simplicity of their huts. Visitors sat on the floor, as was the custom with most Burmese: "The floor was really made of bamboo poles held together. One could hear the noises of the fowls and the piglets, and smell the livestock coming through the cracks" (108-9). Ai Wu was not predisposed to think of such living arrangements in terms of Victorian sanitary standards and he was neither repelled nor concerned. In contrast, Isabella Bird regarded the Malay housing in The Golden Chersonese as deficient in hygiene. However, he adds in "Home of Kachin People," that next to the huts is a missionary school, from which emerges the voices of Kachin children reciting their catechism. He feels the incongruity of the mixing of the two cultures and drily observes that this school "was producing in quantity future *Soldier* and *Servant*" (Wandering 110), using the English words 'soldier' and 'servant' in the text, both showing his knowledge of English and emphasizing the power relation of missionary pedagogy .

After trying at several places to find employment in Upper Burma, including a missionary school, Ai Wu was hired by an innkeeper as an assistant. His work consisted of cleaning the floor of dirt, making the beds, pouring water for the guests, tidying the stable and changing the straw, getting water from the river for the inn; all these chores had to be performed before lunch (105-6). He was also responsible for waiting on tables at meal times, and for tutoring the innkeeper's children in the

afternoon. As one critic writes: ". . . Ai Wu's accounts of his Burmese journey do not give an aura of romantic exotica" (Leo Ou-fan Lee, "Solitary" 301). Other critics have stressed his sympathy for the working and oppressed classes (Zhang 62-70, Ai Wu, Selected Writings 246-8). C. T. Hsia in A History of Modern Chinese Fiction dismisses writers who had chosen the ideology of the CCP as gullible dupes of the Communist doctrine who betrayed "a want of intelligence, the kind of intelligence essential to the creation of a mature literature" (280). Of Ai Wu, "praised by Communist critics," Hsia is unconvinced that the writer has "any distinctive talent" (315). But it would be unfair to read these early essays of Ai Wu as proletarian literature which glorifies the workers in propagandistic clichés. Ai Wu is not an intellectual who writes without real experience about deplorable living condition and social oppression. Leo Ou-fan Lee, a critic who is partial to C. T. Hsia's history of modern Chinese literature, nonetheless defends Ai Wu's early writings: ". . . as [Ai Wu] looks for work from place to place he is also victimized by the small shop-owners, innkeepers . . . In addition, the Burmese people who take advantage of him are themselves dominated by their overlords . . ." ("Solitary" 300). In spite of the negative views of some literary critics, we can still appreciate that Ai Wu's sympathy for the people of lower classes was genuine, and that in contrast to the European travel writers, his writing provides a voice for the ethnic groups and classes of people who were not represented in western travel narrative.

Just as he did during his years in Kunming, Ai Wu met both callous and kind people in Burma, as he reminisces in an 1978 essay "My Years in Rangoon" (Ai Wu wen chi 421-39). He recalls how he arrived in Rangoon virtually penniless and very ill in 1927. The innkeeper sent him off to the



hospital, where he was swindled by a Chinese pretending to be a hospital employee: "I had never been inside a hospital, or even seen a hospital . . . so I gave him what money I had . . . After I was dismissed, the Chinese who took my money was nowhere to be seen" (421). When Ai Wu was taken back to the inn, the innkeeper had already put his pack of belongings on the curb. Too sick to protest, Ai Wu sat down on the doorsteps: "I didn't feel any sadness, nor pain. I only felt I was a piece of garbage . . ." (422). Eventually, Ai Wu was taken in and became a sort of domestic to a Chinese scholar-monk in Rangoon. Ai Wu also mentions this episode in Wandering Sketches, and there seems to be a lack of partisanship in his descriptions, in both the 1978 essay and his travel narratives written in the 1930s, towards the various ethnic groups--callous Burmese innkeeper, Indian rickshaw driver, kindly Burmese passerby, Chinese swindler and Chinese scholar.

Ai Wu was hardly ever in contact with people of the middle- or upper-classes, Asian or European; he writes of milieu and people he knew. Isabella Bird writes about ethnic scenes, but mainly from an observation point, as if from a pulpit, elevated by her social position and her evangelical highmindedness. Max Dauthendey sees ethnic groups in colourful impressions of shades and shapes, since he has neither occasion nor inclination to socialize with them. But Ai Wu, as an Asian and a member of the working class, takes his inspiration from interactions with other ethnic groups.

## Invocations of China Abroad

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In September, 1927, Ai Wu decided he would leave Bhamo, Burma and travel by boat down the Irrawaddy to Mandalay. His description of his last evening in Bhamo is lyrical and evocative, which belies C. T. Hsia's harsh criticism of Ai Wu's writing:

When I woke up in the early morning, the house was wet from autumn rain; I felt lethargic . . . I vaguely thought back to last evening, as I sat alone at a quiet coffee shop by the river. I leaned against the window, gazing at the water faintly illuminated by the moon. I sipped my tea with milk slowly, pretending I was enjoying a glass of port. Opposite the coffee shop lived a Burmese family; the light from the window shone red through the crimson curtains, amidst the dark deep shadows of the coconut trees, weaving a colourful brocade of roses. Someone inside was playing the *hujin* . . ."  
(*Wandering Sketches* 117)<sup>8</sup>

The passage is reminiscent of traditional Chinese landscape painting, which often depicts a lonely scholar composing poetry by a stream, with the reflection of the moon shimmering on the water. Ai Wu's quotation of a line from a classical Chinese poem by the Tang dynasty poet, Du Mu, confirms this interpretation.<sup>9</sup> This section will look at the presence of China in Ai Wu's travel sketches and compare it to the evocation of homeland in another Chinese traveller's writing. This comparison will show that a voluntary exile can write under less constraint than one who has to acculturate.

Travelling with other non-Europeans--Burmans, Indians, Thais, Kachins--Ai Wu sat opposite to an Indian who reminded him of David Copperfield's stepfather, Mr. Murdstone (119). Further on in the same

essay, Ai Wu describes how a tall and impressive looking Sikh teases a Yunnanese child, and is in turn amused by the child's expression of surprise. The whole passage is written with simplicity, vividness and a fine attention to detail. It has no overt message and makes no attempt to present an exotic picture of some foreign ethnic group. But at the end of the essay, as the boat berths in Katha, Ai Wu laments that all the porters who are vying for business on the quay are either Burmese or Chinese, a sign of the social condition of peoples dominated by stronger nations from the West. This is an instance when Ai Wu interjects social comments in even his most lyrical and objectively written narratives, but this strategy creates a stylistic tension which makes the reader aware of the social and racial tensions which have always existed in colonial societies.

Nor was Ai Wu unaware of the paradox inherent in a Burma efficiently modernized by the colonial power. He remembers a discussion with some other young men on the subject of colonization, and the others expressed their view that western colonization had improved Burma, although it was a humiliating experience for the people. "Seeing the cities and streets in Burma," Ai Wu admits reluctantly: "I have to agree with them" (*Wandering* 127). But Ai Wu immediately rescinds this grudging acceptance of colonization:

. . . the greatest goal of the capitalistic imperialists is to promote their goods and to collect raw materials. But when it comes to the improvement of agriculture, upon which twelve million people depend for their livelihood, [the government] pays little attention . . . (127)<sup>10</sup>

This summation echoes what W.S. Desai, a historian who is generally not too critical of British colonial history, has to say about the establishment of British rule in Burma:

Under the British the face of Burma began to change rapidly from what it had been under the kings. The British speedily began to build roads, bridges and railways. The River Irrawaddy began to develop into a greater highway than ever before. The British established the rule of law in the country . . . Hospitals and schools began to be established . . . But it should be remembered that foreign rule must necessarily mean exploitation of the resources of the country very much in favour of the ruler. Foreign rule also tends to create among the ruled a spirit of dependence, a slavish mentality, and an inferiority complex. The subject race is taught that it is an inferior race, wanting in initiative. The benefits conferred by foreign rule are considered by many to be hardly a compensation for this moral loss. (Desai 248)

Maurice Collis, magistrate and civil servant of the British government, offers a liberal point of view which is quite similar to Desai's on the rule of law in Burma: "The Burmese were treated as an inferior race; though the law was supposed to be the same for all, it was interpreted to favour the British" (165). All three are agreed on the inherent unjust condition of colonial governments.

The last essays in Wandering Sketches increase in political stridency, as Ai Wu became actively involved with the Communist Party in Rangoon, and published anti-colonial articles in a Rangoon newspaper for overseas Chinese, The Rangoon Daily, with slogans such as "Burmese, Chinese, let us join together and bring down the British imperialistic rule" (Zhang 36). On December 22, 1930, the Tharrawaddy Rebellion broke out, a rebellion involving not the intellectual class, but the farmers and the labourers of

Burma (Collis 192-5). Ai Wu and several other Chinese friends wrote sympathetically of the rebellion and were arrested by the government as agitators and deported from British Southeast Asia.

The last stop of Ai Wu's wandering in Southeast Asia was Hong Kong. A careful analysis of the brief sketch, "One Night in Hong Kong," will yield an instructive comparison with Bird's narrative of the island-colony. British and Chinese records represent two opposing impressions of the same island. The title of Ai Wu's essay is romantic, but it is also broadly ironic in Chinese, since the word *Hong* means 'fragrant' or 'perfumed',<sup>11</sup> and Ai Wu's experience was less than salubrious. The Chinese political prisoners were originally promised that their last stop before embarking on a ship for Xiamen, China would be spent in freedom. Instead, they were imprisoned overnight and never saw the city. Ai Wu writes joyfully of his expectation to see the colony, which he calls the little daughter of China (*Wandering* 165). His first sight of Hong Kong is generic of travel descriptions of the Peak: "As the ship neared . . . it was dusk and raining slightly. The hillside was all alight, just like a young girl bedecked with jewels . . ." (165). Ai Wu's metaphors for Hong Kong are disturbingly possessive; he speaks of a young bride, a lovely young girl, and a betrayed lover. They chime uncomfortably with the colonial rhetoric of possession, domination and submission. Nowhere in his narrative on Yunnan or Burma does Ai Wu employ such verbal flights of fancy, and this stylistic deviation highlights the political wrangle involved in the history of Hong Kong, from the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 to this day, when the island will once more be part of China in 1997. As his choice of metaphors indicates, in Ai Wu's sketch Hong Kong is seen not only as a British colony, as Burma was, but as property stolen from the Chinese.

Ai Wu and his fellow prisoners spent a night in gaol, a small space in which several other inmates were already incarcerated. There was no sanitary facility except a bucket for human waste, a feature to which Ai Wu refers specifically. The only perfume (the *hong* in Hong Kong) Ai Wu experienced was the non-perfume from the over-flowing waste bucket (*Wandering* 167). Ai Wu is explicitly crude in this sketch, a farewell essay to his journey in Southeast Asia, a written testimony to the imposition of colonial rule. After the initial description of the island, the essay is filled with jingoistic sentiments, a Chinese reverse copy of Bird's cliché-ridden paean to the enlightened governing of Hong Kong by the British (*The Golden Chersonese* 38-41). Unlike Bird, who dwells on the luxuries of English civilisation and princely mansions, Ai Wu writes only of the prison dungeon and the waste bucket. Instead of being waited on by Chinese domestic servants, Ai Wu and his inmates are guarded by Indians. Instead of rubbing shoulders with the wealthy foreign residents, Ai Wu calls them "foreign devils," or "red-haired devils" (*Wandering* 166), servants of imperialism, pigs and dogs without gratitude (167). The sketch does not provide an overall picture of Hong Kong as a city. Like other articles written about the colony by May Fourth writers, such as Lu Xun and Wang Duqing (Lu Xun, *Selected Writings* 411-18), it presents Hong Kong as a political pawn between China's struggle to reclaim sovereignty and Britain's colonial policy to safeguard Hong Kong as the "emporium of commerce" (Bird, *Golden* 40). "One Night in Hong Kong" contains coarse language which, given the provocation Ai Wu had to endure, is justified. It also shows that not only Europeans, but also Chinese, resort to political rhetoric and clichés in order to underscore issues of nationalistic identity and rights. Furthermore, this sketch reminds the readers that to date, the

problems involving the political ownership of Hong Kong is still very much under discussion.

Ai Wu's awareness of and indignation at racial discrimination during his travels are echoed in other Chinese writings of experience abroad, for example, in Wang Duqing's My Life in Europe. Living in France ostensibly as an exchange student, Wang worked most of the time as a cheap labourer; the hoped-for funding never materialized. His autobiography is also a social criticism of European treatment of the Chinese in the 1920s. In "Reminiscences of My Writing Life," Ba Jin recalls his two years in Paris as essentially lonely and the small room he rented as "tomb-like" (Selected Fiction 4). Although Ba Jin was receptive of western ideas, his circle of friends was mainly other Chinese students and political dissidents. But not all May Fourth Chinese writers view European societies critically. In Zhu Ziqing's sketches of Venice, Lucerne or Amsterdam, European cities are portrayed as delightful, picturesque and charming (Zhu, Selected Writings). However, the most instructive contrast to Ai Wu's Wandering Sketches can be found in Chiang Yee's travel book on the Lake District in England.

Chiang Yee came from a landowning family in the province of Jiangxi. He received a university education and later became a provincial governor in the late 1920s. A contemporary of Ai Wu, Chiang Yee enjoyed the privileges which were denied to the former writer--a secure childhood in the kind of family which Ai Wu worked for in Kunming, a university education, a career. In 1933, having fallen into disfavour with the nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Yee was advised by friends to leave China: "On the French liner I spent thirty-three days hardly uttering a word . . ." (Chiang, China Revisited 34). Not proficient in

English, Chiang Yee thought of the name "the silent traveller" when he was first approached to write a travel book, to indicate both his separation from the English people because of linguistic (and racial) difference and his own contemplative way of seeing. Ironically, the publisher initially objected to "the silent traveller" idea, "in case it might induce inquiries from Scotland Yard: Why does a Chinaman want to walk silently? Many English people at the time had not forgotten about Dr. Fu Man Chu," recalls Chiang Yee, who was aware of the crudely-drawn Chinese villain in popular literature (China Revisited 39-40). In spite of this bit of racial stereotyping, he went on to write in English a series of Silent Traveller books.

Chiang Yee's first book is The Silent Traveller: A Chinese Artist in Lakeland (1937). Ostensibly it is about his experience of the Lake District, but it becomes a vehicle for Chiang Yee's reminiscences of the beautiful scenery of the lakes and the famous Lu Mountain in his home province. Chiang Yee provides brush drawings of Wastwater, Wasdale Head and Derwentwater with accompanying poems written in beautiful Chinese calligraphy, in the style of traditional Chinese landscape paintings. It is a strangely effective co-production of western landscape and Chinese art. Although the book sold quite well, the publisher had serious misgivings at first printing, and (Sir) Herbert Read, the literary and art critic, writes with reservation in his "Preface": ". . . Mr. Chiang, who is a poet as well as a painter, has dared to enter our national shrine [of English landscape] and to worship there in his own way" (Chiang, Lake "Preface"). Unlike Ai Wu, who was ready to reform the country, Chiang Yee was an exile who did not feel optimistic about a China capable of reform at the time. His writing is a nostalgic reflection of a China he knew in the past; Ai Wu's is a critique of



a China and a colonized Burma of the present and a hope for the future. Unconcerned with diplomacy or courtesy, Ai Wu's Wandering Sketches are openly offensive about Westerners. Mindful of the host country and his own identity as a Chinese who might be seen as a "Dr. Fu Man Chu," Chiang Yee's critical comments of social prejudices are subtly disguised. This cautiousness is well illustrated by an incident in Derwentwater. Having met another Chinese there, Chiang Yee suggested that they should go "boating under the moon," a traditional Chinese pastime:

We naturally made friends on the spot, and it was an intense pleasure to have a real conversation with someone at last; since I had come to the Lakes I had lived almost dumbly . . . . When the friend and I had met at the landing-stage, we hired a boat and set out. My friend rowed first, but in the Chinese manner, which was the exact opposite of the Western way--forwards instead of backwards. The people on the lake side laughed derisively and shouted at him, and compelled us for our own peace to change the method. I myself had the impression that though the Western way may be speedier and more scientific, there is something poetic and appreciative in the Chinese one . . . . (Lake 43)

Chiang Yee is aware that the two Chinese are objects of curiosity and derision, but his only rebuttal is to suggest that the Chinese way of rowing, albeit different, also has its merits.

Chiang Yee's "daring" foray into what Herbert Read calls "the very holy of holies of our nature poets" (Lake "Preface") is a valiant attempt to introduce Chinese culture, poetry and art to a wide English reading public. But using the words of Linda Nochlin on paintings of "the Imaginary Orient" (Politics of Vision 35), there are absences in Chiang Yee's landscapes of the Lake District. There is overall a total absence of Englishness. Chiang Yee's drawings sinologize views of Grasmere, or

Crummockwater, by using large expanse of white space, denoting sky and water in Chinese landscape paintings, by using traditional brushwork for depicting pines, and by Chinese calligraphy. But Chiang Yee realizes that his method of representation would need explaining: "I treated [the painting] entirely in Chinese manner with our own media . . . Our style of painting inclines to bring out the subjective mood . . . but does not impose a stringent law on representation" (Lake 11). One concludes that apart from technique and media, it is Chiang Yee's interpretation, and specifically his *non-English* interpretation, of the Lake District scenery, which makes his records Chinese:

Keeping on my way, I came upon the double peak of Middle Fell; suddenly I felt a wave of familiarity--its form had great resemblance with the "Shuang-Chien Feng" (Double-Sword Peak) of Lu Mountain in my native city. For the moment I felt a little homesick. (11)

Or later in Rydal Water:

The hills round this piece of water were as beautiful as any to be found in the whole Lake District, but the lake itself was very small indeed . . . I wished there might have been large clumps of lotus or water-lily planted here, too . . . . (58)

And though Chiang Yee invokes Thomas de Quincey and Wordsworth in the introduction, one suspects the editor's decision to ease the reader into this Chinese narrative to play a role. Nowhere is there a whiff of English Romanticism, or Ruskinian aestheticism. Yet one can also read A Chinese Artist in Lakeland as a narrative which counteracts the overwhelmingly complacent and Eurocentric tradition which engulfed Chiang Yee. In China Revisited After Forty-Two Years, he recalls the day when the Chinese flag was raised for the first time in London:

China had long been looked down on by Western eyes and there were never good words for her in the newspapers. The raising of the Chinese flags was regarded as a most unusual event . . . I especially went down to London to walk about near the Chinese flag all morning and afternoon like a young child. (43)

There is, within this context, some validity in thinking of Chiang Yee's text as an "autoethnographic" text, constructed "in response to or in dialogue with those metropolitan representations" (Pratt 7). Unlike some western paintings of Asian subjects, for example the drawings of Auguste Borget, in which Chinese scenes are rendered in the style of Constable or Claude Lorrain as a matter of course, Chiang Yee's strategy, as his writing indicates, is intentional, as a counter-discourse against the dominant culture surrounding him. Like Ai Wu, he is raising the Chinese flag. But unlike Ai Wu, who could express himself as a Chinese subject in China, Chiang Yee had to be circumspect as a political exile in England. Similarly, European orientalist writing of China has its audience in Europe, which would not be the case inside China. The survival and circulation of certain types of representation obviously depend on a friendly social and political context.

## We Are Not One Big Happy Family

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Chiang Yee and all 'Chinamen' might remind the English of Dr. Fu Man Chu. However, contrary to this assumption, even among the Chinese there are differences, sometimes subtle, sometimes obvious, between people who speak mutually unintelligible dialects (Cantonese and Shanghainese) or who come from vastly contrasting places (Guangzhou and Haerbin). A Chinese traveller from Hong Kong in the 1950s was thought to be a foreigner in Haerbin because the people who grew up there after the Second World War had seldom seen a Chinese dressed in a pinstriped suit and an overcoat.<sup>12</sup> Chiang Yee recalls that his grandfather forbade anyone in the family to mention the Manchus who had overthrown the Ming dynasty in 1643 (*Chinese Childhood* 27), and always dressed his hair in a topknot instead of the braid decreed by the Manchu government. Among the ethnic groups in China, Han was and still is the predominant group. In the late 1950s, in the midst of reform fervour, Zhou Enlai had to warn against "great-Han chauvinism" regarding other ethnic Chinese (Han Suyin 269). Yet for hundreds of years, the common western image of Chinese people has been one of monolithic sameness.

To Ai Wu, the peoples in Burma were not all the same. He realized, from conversations with Yunnan Chinese who lived at the Burma-China border, that the Kachins had a separate identity from the Shans and the Burmans. But Ai Wu's non-Asian characterizations are sometimes less sympathetically drawn. In his collection of semi-autobiographical stories, *Nan xing ji* (*To the South* 1935), the non-Asians are mainly the British official-types who despised and dominated the Asians in Burma. They are

not individuals, but stereotypes of the vulgar and bullying white man, as exemplified by the customer at a Burmese inn looking for "a girl":

This English gentleman sniffed down his long and sharp nose. But in his drunken bleary eye, he could discern that [she] was not pretty enough. He snorted, "No," and looked up with disappointment. Then he hummed softly, "Where is she? My sweet girl . . . ."

. . . [He] grasped my shoulders and shook me, laughing coarsely, and I could smell his strong alcoholic breath. (*Nan xing ji* 84)<sup>13</sup>

But when Ai Wu writes as a less ideologically biased observer, he shows that his perception of non-Asians can be as differentiated as his treatment of the Asian ethnic groups.

In Rangoon, Ai Wu stayed for a while in a district inhabited mostly by Indians who either worked for the government or taught at schools (*Nan xing ji* 238). The monk for whom he was working was tutor to an Englishman, a lecturer at the Rangoon University. Ai Wu briefly mentions that he was married to a Burmese student and had a colonial lifestyle, but makes no critical comment on either the interracial marriage or the colonial origin of the Englishman. Ai Wu's other non-Asian social contacts were an Irishman and an American who lived in the neighbourhood. Of them he writes in some detail. The Irishman was unemployed and often drunk, but generally friendly. He would discuss with Ai Wu such issues as social injustice or the failure of his marriage. The Chinese writer admires the Irishman's lack of pretentiousness, although Ai Wu suspects that "when he talks like this, he has been drinking, and every word is laced with alcohol" (240).

But Ai Wu is more critical of the American. Instead of the comfortable shabbiness of the Irishman, the American was always tidy,

never drank, and was always alert, as if he were saying: "I know everything, you can't pull any wool over my eye" (240). Although he often visited the flat where Ai Wu was staying, he seldom conversed with the Chinese: "He likes to sit on the stoop of our door and smoke his cigar quietly . . . his little eyes looking keenly at the house across the street" (241). A Burmese father and daughter lived in this house on the second floor. She was about twenty-five years old and attractive. The American, in a rather obvious manner, used the doorstep of the Chinese as a lookout. Although the Burmese woman was aware of her admirer, she showed no interest and stopped stepping out onto the balcony. The American's behaviour became a matter of jokes and gossip, and Ai Wu felt compelled one day to confront him:

"Do you really like Asian women?"

This question really pleased him. His expression brightened and he smiled as he answered:

"Yes, very much! Asian women are very beautiful!"

Then he followed with a long piece which I did not understand . . .

Then I asked him why he did not marry one.

He looked at me with surprise and shook his head, smiling:

"I would have to be a Moslem to marry an Asian woman!"

I did not understand his meaning, and must have looked puzzled. He explained that a Moslem could have several wives while a Christian could only marry one. (*Nan xing ji* 242-3)<sup>14</sup>

In this dialogue, two recognizable cultural stereotypes are intertwined and misrepresented by the enamoured American--the exotic Oriental woman for sale, a stereotype used by Dauthendey in his short story, and the bigamous Moslem. Being a Christian, the American could not commit bigamy, and his solution was to have mistresses in all the Asian cities he visited. When Ai Wu accused him of already committing bigamy, he

claimed that these women were good for at most half a year. Deeply offended, Ai Wu told him that Asian women would not respect him for this attitude. The outcome of the story was that the Burmese family moved away because of this American's persistent pursuit, a social snub which satisfied all the Asians in the neighbourhood. This episode provides an Asian response to the Eurocentric trope of 'the oriental seductress' which is so popular in exotic literature. In both Conrad and Somerset Maugham, Asian women are portrayed as beauties when young and harridans when old. European men are advised to stay with women of their own races, while European men are considered a profitable 'catch' by the poor Asians. Ai Wu's sketch reverses the situation as imagined by popular European writing, including libretti for operas such as Madama Butterfly. The non-Asian was despised for his unmannerly advances and the Burmese family moved in order to avoid any unwanted attention. Although Ai Wu treats this episode satirically in his writing, his contempt and disapproval of the white man seem justified.

Ai Wu's lack of social contact with non-Asians during his three years in Burma confirms the kind of colonial social stratification so evident in both Bird's and Dauthendey's travel writings. But the tendency to generalize all colonial societies is easy in any analysis of colonial literature. This elision of differences is partially justified by the overall racial policy which pitted Europeans versus non-Europeans. However, this position could give rise to a general blurring of perception, as one critic admits: "The content of French colonial ideology may have been distinct from that of, say, the British or the Dutch, but its form and its consequences were not so clearly distinguishable" (Ross 4). I would suggest that one way of distinguishing the various colonial societies is to analyse the reactions of

the ruling members to their compatriots who have stepped out of line socially by, for instance, attempting to befriend or love a native. In this section, to further my contention that not only the Asian cultures, but the colonial cultures are not homogeneous, I look at both personal records and fictional writings to compare Anglo-Malayan, Anglo-Burman and Dutch Indian treatments of racially mixed relations. This investigation will also show that the colonial cultures inevitably underwent a process of acculturation which changed them from the home societies.

In Joseph Conrad's An Outcast of the Islands (1896), the Dutch clerk, Willems, belongs to the white marginal group, "the secondary traders," those who took up opportunities beneath the dignity of the dominant colonial class (Rex 208-9). His Eurasian wife is of Portuguese descent. He has married her as a social strategy, since a Portuguese in the Dutch Indies racial hierarchy was higher than a native. The Da Souzas depend upon him: "That family's admiration was the great luxury of his life. It rounded and completed his existence in a perpetual assurance of unquestionable superiority" (Outcast 13). Willems's union with a Eurasian is not uncommon in Dutch Indies fiction. In P. A. Daum's Ups and Downs of Life in the Indies (1890), Eurasian women form the matriarchy of the planters' world. The 'Indos', as Dutch Eurasians were called (Beekman 21), though not ostracized by colonial society, nonetheless "lived in an entirely different world" (21). Interracial relationships were not frowned upon, and legalized marriages were dictated by the religious belief of the non-Europeans rather than race (Hellwig 31, Wittermans 83). Therefore, for example, the servants of the Dutch East-India Company "were explicitly allowed to marry non-Europeans provided they were Christians" (Wittermans 82-3). In Conrad's Almayer's Folly, Almayer's Malay wife is a



converted Christian brought up in a convent. Although "real social equality" was out of the question between 'Indos' and the Dutch (Hellwig 26), "[t]he racial mixture, as such, was of less importance to the status, role, power, and life style of the individual Eurasian than the status of both his parents, and particularly his father, within the structure of the colonial society . . . " (Wittermans 80).

In the Anglo-Malayan and Anglo-Burmese societies, racial mixing of a friendly or a sexual nature was consistently forbidden implicitly. As the wife of a deputy commissioner warned an innocent Civilian who took tea with a subordinate: ". . . fraternizing with Indian officials was 'absolutely not done': it would get him a bad name" (Dewey 203). The Rules and Regulations for the Information and Guidance of the Principal Officers and Others in His Majesty's Colonial Possessions (1837) contains guidelines for every category of conduct except the sexual. One has to assume that the interdiction against intermingling with non-Europeans was a social, not a legal, one, which nonetheless exerted tremendous pressure upon those who desired not to conform. In Leonard Woolf's autobiography of his Ceylonese years, Growing, he records that the division of race and caste was strictly observed in spite of clandestine sexual encounters between colonial men and native women. As Orwell's miserable tree-planter, Flory, tries to explain his betrayal of the anglophiliac Indian in Burmese Days:

There's no law telling us to be beastly to Orientals--quite the contrary. But--it's just that one daren't be loyal to an Oriental when it means going against the others. It doesn't *do*. If I'd stuck out against signing the notice I'd have been in disgrace at the Club for a week or two. So I funk'd it, as usual. (151)

The European writers I have read also seem to "have funkyed it." In Conrad's An Outcast of the Islands, Willems dies at the end in front of his Arab mistress. Conrad's Jim, both a friend of a native and a lover of another, also pays with his life. Orwell's Flory kills himself when he is publicly disgraced by his Burmese mistress and rejected by his English lover. In Somerset Maugham's short story, "The Letter," Geoff Hammond is killed by his English mistress when he tries to desert her for a Chinese woman. And even as late as the 1950s, in post-independence Malaysia, the educator Crabbe, a compassionate and idealistic Englishman, is rewarded for all his tribulations by drowning (Burgess, The Long Day Wanes). The general pattern seems to be that the writer, having created someone who could function marginally in a non-European environment, cannot envision a viable life for him in a fully interracial society. And in the Anglo-colonial world, the Eurasians, products of interracial relationships, were treated differently than their counterparts in the Dutch Indies society.

In Louis Couperus's The Hidden Force (1900), the resident's first wife is a Eurasian, and nowhere in the book is it mentioned that this marriage is socially unacceptable. His daughter is described as a "young girl with a pale olive complexion that sometimes displayed a hint of a blush. She had beautiful black hair . . . " (Couperus 50). Compare this mild reference to her less-than-total European background to Orwell's unkind caricature of the two Portuguese Eurasians in Burmese Days:

[One] was a meagre, excitable man, and as brown as a cigar-leaf, being the son of a South Indian woman . . . Both were dressed in shabby drill suits, with vast topis beneath which their slender bodies looked like the stalks of toadstools. (123)

Unlike the semi-animal appearances of Orwell's Eurasians, both the Dutch resident's children are considered good-looking. Although the Dutch had a stereotypical image of Eurasians as immoral and indolent, Dutch Eurasians, as Wittermans points out in "The Eurasians of Indonesia," are still part of the racially mixed "Indisch" society (99). In a gradation of racial assumption, this Indisch society in turn "was considered passionate sensualists" by the *pure* Dutch (Beekman 20). When discussing the census data taken in Anglo-Malaya, John Butcher believes that the European entries were possibly inaccurate, since Eurasians might have denied their mixed racial background:

There is evidence that some Malayan Eurasians were included as Europeans because they were ashamed of stating their ethnic identity. The case of the 'Dutch' Eurasians was somewhat different. In the Netherlands Indies, the distinction between Europeans and Eurasians was not as clear as it was in the British colonial territories. (25)

Eurasians in British colonial writings seldom achieve any social standing, and are often portrayed as cowardly or laughable, as opposed to the pukka sahibs. When Macaulay first arrived in India, his servant was a half-caste whom Macaulay describes with condescending merriment as a Catholic who could "bully a negligent bearer, arrange a bed, and make a curry" (Trevelyan 372). "His name," Macaulay continues, "which I never hear without laughing, is Peter Prim." Conrad, whose Southeast Asian fiction contains a mixture of Dutch Indies and British colonial prejudices, describes Willems's Eurasian brother-in-law as a dark-skinned little man with little feet who is awe-struck by his white brother-in-law (*Outcaste* 13). In Maugham's short story "The Yellow Streak," the main character

Izzart lives in daily terror lest someone discovers that his mother is a "half-caste" (457). During an accident, instead of acting courageously like an honourable Englishman, he runs away and "behaved like a skunk" (475). The most disappointing portrayal I have come across, disappointing because the writer is J.I.M. Stewart, Reader in English Literature at Oxford, author of books on Conrad and Shakespeare, is Appleby on Ararat (1941), a book he wrote under the pseudonym of Michael Innes. In this detective story, the very pukka sahib sleuth partly solves the mystery by recognizing the villain as a Eurasian, and not an Englishman: "He never takes those blue glasses off . . . . There was a sort of betwixt-and-betweenness about him, if you know what I mean . . . [Then I] found an opium pipe and what was certainly a tin of opium. That settled it" (Innes 170-71). Innes's mysteries are invariably learned and well-crafted. Thus it seems a pity that someone as well-qualified as Dr. Stewart would in 1941 still resort to tired clichés such as *an opium pipe* or *a shifty look* to indicate that someone is not racially pure, and to cast him as an arch-villain.

Whether villain or coward, seductress or adulterer, Eurasians are seen as something more dangerous than the unmixed natives, because they have the potential of "seepage and infiltration" (Gist 51). It is a 'type' which recurs in European colonial writings, but I have not come across it in Chinese writing. Chinese in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries seldom had the opportunity to know non-Asians except in the treaty ports. In his memoirs, the last Qing emperor, Pu yi, remembers his impression of foreigners before he met his Scottish tutor: "I saw those foreign women . . . specially with their colourful eyes and hair, and found that they look frightening . . . " (Pu yi 118). Even when China began trading with western

nations, intermarriage was unusual and "inconceivable. It was considered shameful for the individual and for the country" (Dikötter 58). The same social taboo functioned in the Chinese and the Anglo-colonial cultures, and to a lesser extent, in the Dutch Indies, but as a literary type, Eurasian characters apparently only appear in western colonial literatures.

In Ai Wu, we find a more flexible attitude towards different cultures than the Westerners had towards Asian ones. That Ai Wu could communicate directly with other ethnic groups accounts for his cultural adaptability. The fact that he was not a subject of the English colonial system and was ideologically motivated towards greater Chinese sovereignty explains his independent and often politically charged observations. Unlike Bird and Dauthendey, Ai Wu lived with the ethnic groups during his travel, which gave him the opportunity to acquire more intimate knowledge of the people. Though he analyses the other Asians from a more level evaluative field, there is in Ai Wu's writings still the conscious pride that China was the oldest Asian culture. But unlike Bird, an arch-imperialist, Ai Wu's nationalistic pride was tempered by China's partial subjugation by the western nations. Ai Wu's impressionistic sketches are not as self-indulgent and ornamental as Dauthendey's diary entries or letters. For him, the struggle was not merely a personal experience; it also involved the national identity of China in the twentieth century. His observations of colonial behaviour provide a counterpoint to the Eurocentric perspective in western travel writings. His detachment from European culture allows him to be critical while his knowledge of western literature enables him to empathize with the Europeans on occasion. Ai Wu's travel writing is not totally objective, but it introduces to the readers Asian societies which are more complex than western writers

are prepared to comprehend. The Eurasian culture which I briefly discuss is metonymic of the Southeast Asia in this thesis and Asia in general. Southeast Asian societies today bear many signs of European cultures, in architecture, in languages, in literatures. Yet these cultural traces are not always accepted by the Asians, nor critically assessed by the Europeans. The 'Orient' covers many societies and cultures, which the Malaysian scholar and novelist Lloyd Fernando suggests we "must view with bafflement" (Cultures in Conflict 151). It is a bafflement which might encourage western scholars to view Asian societies and literatures as unique cultures with their own specific histories, instead of considering them as an afterword to serious literary and cultural discussions.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> from Zhang Hong, Great Shanghai.

向的可是人在人不初人到  
 方远桥上国、国、最国受  
 的不铁义中里中里、中也  
 馆馆强名上这逐这步的的  
 事事几方际在呵开散形坊  
 领领有地实留捕高的短打  
 国高、决、这巡快们着衫。  
 英在中这地能的尽士身长待  
 对、圃、官不视们绅着迹对  
 王走草憩的渐巡他就对来的  
 果北处休国渐用沙打是后样  
 如往一供中已同、要只、同

<sup>2</sup> It was one of the common sayings I learnt in my childhood and I always believed it to be true.

<sup>3</sup> For an overview on the May Fourth Movement, see Chow Tse-tsung, C. T. Hsia and Jaroslav Prusek.

4 from Ai Wu, Wen\_ji.

漸得些。作聖成  
漸弄那蠢。化至賢  
部、把愚的文神們  
、字、為常新至我主  
、腦文、視非偶在、自  
头的、、提放、姻  
的上来人文把、敬娘  
雅志起的言們人專、  
幼來奮孔文我的去等  
們刊光祭对、文位平  
我期常孔們、話地女  
但給弄尊我惡白的男

5 from Ai Wu, My Youth.

人一暗晚著態有  
誤。陰。蒙病沒  
久味天西過出、  
是氣白東通顯門  
、的、的、加小  
子要房放光更道  
屋發廚裏燈、一  
間着着屋電泡、  
一有對堵的燈、  
的、子不弱的色、  
住的窗看微塵黃扇  
我住扇得上灰的門



6 from Ai Wu, My Youth.

遠並以隨着、不  
丈、加、  
兩、都很都持份、  
三年名的睛保身手  
着青姓紅眼也傲握  
指的的介毛我驕援  
然服方約眉、的攀  
忽西兩大梅下人去  
先着把、一工過  
泳個即紹吧動個走  
同一立介便有一肯

7 from Ai Wu, My Youth.

些纔所麵着了、自我那就自的  
一我力些吊吃的、箇要但代潔經淨  
外、苦這是為洗竹得、時不己淨  
門時到。總因不的必、生麼、乾  
南信走去、來上、擦學什氣乾  
到迷、館中子彼桌候探、見睥得  
我去地麵當帕、楚時子、的丟  
遣道勃肉子布子插的拍惹生頭地  
派街勃牛桌白炭就吃着介衛眉然  
在的致的的張的羌去就不講敬然。  
只遠興到館一麵吃你行毫種要自了。

8 from Ai Wu, Wandering Sketches.

秋意獨啡那喝當、、森色般胡  
 上的夜班視、、煙人森啡魂着  
 屋走昨的睇水茶葡萄黑出玫瑰拉  
 、懶起寂、江奶葡緬在射幅人  
 來了思冷上森牛飲家、投一有  
 醒起地家窗浩的傾一慢、成面  
 上便糊一在的彌在住紅里紅里  
 早、模邊依朦一地面着影、  
 的璃、江、朦朧對懸樹光綴、  
 明淋、、在里色一醺的窗椰色彩、、  
 微雨思坐館月着作店樓的的的琴、、

## 9 A poem by Du Mu.

、、、  
 沙家恨花！  
 籠酒國庭  
 月近亡後  
 水堆知唱  
 堆寒素不猶  
 秦籠為女江  
 為煙夜商隔

Mooring At River Ch'in-Huai

Smoke shrouds cold water, moonlight shrouds sand.  
 Night-mooring at Ch'in-huai, close to wineshops.  
 Gay girls know no lost kingdom's sadness.  
 Still sing across the river "Jade Flowers in Rear Court."

The English translation is by Wai-lim Yip in Chinese Poetry, 331.

10 from Ai Wu, Wandering Sketches.

... 資本主義的統治者、  
 最大的目的、是在貨物  
 的推銷、原料的收集。至  
 于一千二百萬人口所賴  
 以生存的農業，尚无暇  
 加以改良和注意的。

11 When Hong Kong is returned to China, will the name of the island be changed to the pinyin system to replace the present westernized one, or will China keep the colonial name 'Hong Kong', so well-known to tourists?

12 This happened to my father who travelled to China in the late 1950s on business and was jeered at by the children in Haerbin as an imperialist foreigner.

13 from Ai Wu, Nan\_xing\_ji.

这位英国绅士便将又尖又长的鼻子、伸了下去。但在朦胧的醉眼中、也渐渐地鉴别出来这是不够美的。鼻子里哼出一声“no”（不是），又失望地扭起斗来。随即忧郁地低声唱着：

“Where is she? My sweet girl...”（她在哪里？我那可爱的姑娘...）

...随即抚着我的肩头乱摇、粗暴地笑着、强烈的酒气、直冲我的鼻子。

14 from Ai Wu, Nan\_xing\_ji.

"你是不是很喜欢东方的女人?"

这个問話很使他感到兴趣、脸上放出光彩、眉开眼笑地说:

"是的! 很喜欢、东方女人很美!"

接着他便說了一長串的話、我不大听得懂、我才問他既然、是如此、喜欢、为什么、不計一个东方女人做

太太。带着奇異的神情望着我、他然后搖着头的笑着說:

"討我做太太、那就只有叫我做回太太、" 說的話、疑惑、不解、我听了、不解、我的一太一个、他。他們。徒基。督。教。徒。只。能。討。一。个。

## CONCLUSION

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In "Orientalism, *an Afterword*," Said recounts a letter he received from the historian Albert Hourani, who regrets that owing to the force of argument in *Orientalism*, the book "had the unfortunate effect of making it almost impossible to use the term *Orientalism* in a neutral sense, so much had it become a term of abuse" (45-6). Hourani concludes that the word should be retained for use "in describing 'a limited, rather dull but valid discipline of scholarship'" (46). Said's response to the above is that

while I sympathise with Hourani's plea, I have serious doubts whether the notion of Orientalism properly understood can ever, in fact, be completely detached from its rather more complicated and not always flattering circumstances. I suppose that one can imagine at the limit that a specialist in Ottoman or Fatimid archives is an Orientalist in Hourani's sense, but we are still required to ask where, how, and with what supporting institutions and agencies such studies take place today? (46)

Implicit in Said's article is the caveat that one cannot divorce the pursuit of a "discipline of scholarship" from the pragmatic consideration of social practices and their relations of power, which, as Foucault maintains in "Pouvoirs et Stratégies," "sont intriquées dans d'autres types de relation (de production, d'alliance, de famille, de sexualité) où elles jouent un rôle à la fois conditionnant et conditionné" (are interwoven with other kinds of relations [production, kinship, family, sexuality] for which they play at once a conditioning and a conditioned role) (*Dits et écrits* 3: 425).<sup>1</sup>

I have tried to show throughout my thesis that the practice of representing the others is conditioned by the traveller's own social relations at home. Cultural habits are implicated in the everyday action

and values of society, and constant critical examination of our social practices in a historical context is necessary to evaluate our responses to other cultures and the reasons for these responses to emerge. My research has convinced me that most cultures in Asia have exchanged influences and ideas with the West, and that it is meaningless to take sides within an essentialized opposition of East against West, or Europeans against non-Europeans. The problem, it seems to me, is to find out *why* we misrepresent the others, the solution to which might mediate contentious situations between cultures, while to only speak of *how* we should not represent other cultures serves only a legislative function. To paraphrase Bourdieu's criticism of inverted ethnocentrism, a merely announced opposition to colonialism or imperialism is an intellectual response to only part of a problem, and this righteous indignation becomes a "spurious identification" which has the appearance of legitimacy (*Distinction* 374), while the distance between the abstract appreciation of and the experiencing of cross-cultural difficulties remains. It might also objectify an ethnic group, or a nation, as a study of victimization, a practice which Rey Chow criticizes in *Writing Diaspora*.

The proliferation of critical discussions of Orientalism has the potential effect of creating an anti-Orientalist discourse which is, in its extreme reflexivity, a discourse "of irony, of elitism, of solipsism, of putting the whole world in quotation marks" (James Clifford, *Writing Culture* 25). Scholars who research, and write about, Orientalism can easily forget about the geographical and political reality of Asia and the Middle East. The term Orient has changed because of political events and marketing strategies. The Orient today signifies the tourist-friendly Southeast Asia and Hong Kong, which are lavishly promoted by the tourist industry,

instead of the Islamic Middle East, once the haunts of popular travel writers such as Lady Hester Stanhope. Asia itself consists of many nations, with many ethnic groups, each with its own distinct political aspirations and inclinations. Except for Hong Kong and Macau, all of the countries have achieved some form of independence. Many, including China, Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan and Korea, do not tolerate total freedom of speech, and for most of them, it is paramount to achieve economic progress by incorporating aspects of western technology into their societies.

A recent article on the ethical problems which western architects face when building skyscrapers in Asian countries illustrate the dilemma I find implicit in the critique of Orientalism, namely, how to connect theoretical criticism to everyday practice. In the article, "Asia Bound," the well-meaning writer claims that American architects need to educate their client (Asian) countries who "are indifferent to their own traditions" (Langdon 88). Western architects working in Asian countries such as China and Malaysia often find themselves hired to design skyscrapers which are incompatible with the traditional landscape and aesthetics of these countries. Although problems such as decontextualized urban planning certainly exist, the writer provides essentially a western critique of Asian strategies to achieve modernization, disregarding the complex political, geographical and historical issues which confront each of these countries. Although he sees the domination of skyscrapers in an Asian landscape as aesthetically problematic, he does not discourage the practice of western technology, which provides much needed employment for American personnel, in these Asian countries. That China and a post-independent country such as Singapore will have very different responses to westernization is submerged in the writer's self-conscious awareness of



the role of the West as educator. The writer thus finds himself in the paradoxical situation of criticizing the ethical implications of modernization, and at the same time supporting the practice of western architecture. Similar to the concerned writer of "Asia Bound," postcolonial and cultural critics engage in criticism of western Orientalism in good faith. However, they are also in danger of continuing a tradition of reifying one facet of Asia for attention and reaffirming the role of the western writer as critic of other cultures. The perpetuation of the cycle of localization can be as counter-productive as Eurocentric condescension. James Clifford encapsulates the paradoxical position of cultural criticism when he says that he does not want to "reinscribe an ideology of absolute difference" but also wants to "hold onto the notion that there are different cultures" ("Traveling Cultures" 116).

This thesis has omitted some areas which can provide further comparative study in travel writing. The Chinese tradition of appreciating nature cannot be readily theorized in terms of the gendered landscape of western narrative. As a very superficial example of difference, the Chinese term for motherland or fatherland is the gender-neutral 'ancestroland'. It would be a fruitful study to investigate the relation between the feminization of nature and traditional aesthetics in Chinese, and compare the results to European ideology of the aesthetic. I also would have liked to include a detailed study of the concession areas and their influences on and importance to May Fourth literature, and compare my findings to the urban settings of Berlin and London and the effects these environments had on the production of orientalist literature in the nineteenth century. However, these inclusions would have taken my thesis into a different area. This thesis shares the same tendency most studies of travel writing

display: the analysis of causes and effects, of 'being there', either at home or abroad, replaces the interest in the process of travelling, the 'getting there'.<sup>2</sup> Although there are works on the history and development of modes of transportation, such as Sarah Searight's Steaming East (1991), they are usually separated from the study of travel narrative as literature.

My critical position has been grounded in an examination of the social practices of various societies which produced the interpretative gaze, and not only from the western perspective. I have looked at these practices with the knowledge that I have my own cultural habits. To quote Isabella Bird in The Golden Chersonese, in one of her rare reflexive moments: "I am painfully aware of the danger here, as everywhere, of forming hasty and inaccurate judgements, and of drawing general conclusions . . ." (324). I am also reminded of the Asianist Jonathan Spence who compared the study of China to the burrowing of a terrier for rabbits, an activity which creates its own chaos (Mirsky 51), but is nonetheless a worthwhile endeavour. Thus, this thesis contributes to an ongoing interpretive process and is not the final word in the cultural investigation of the East and the West.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The French text can be found in Dits et écrits 1954-1988 Par Michel Foucault, volume 3. In the same passage Foucault warns against the assumption of "a massive and primal condition of domination, a binary structure with 'dominators' on one side and 'dominated' on the other" ("qu'il ne faut donc pas se donner un fait premier et massif de domination [une structure binaire avec d'un côté les 'dominants' et de l'autre les 'dominés']"). The English translation is from Power/Knowledge (Random, 1980), 142.

<sup>2</sup> I am thinking of James Clifford's article "Traveling Cultures" in this instance, where he writes that the localizations of anthropological studies in terms of a 'field' tend to erase the technologies of travel which happen outside the 'field', that the discourse of ethnography ('being there') is too sharply separated from that of travel ('getting there').

## Glossary

Ai Wu Ping Zhuan	艾蕪評傳
"Aliana"	亞麗安娜
"A Q Zhengzhuan"	亞Q正傳
Ba Jin	巴金
Chengdu	成都
Chiu-kuo [Jiu Guo]	救國
Creation Quarterly	創造季刊
"Crucifixion of Love"	愛底十字架
Ding Ling	丁玲
Du Mu	杜牧
Guangzhou	廣州
Guo Moruo	郭沫若
Haerbin	哈爾濱
He Bingyi	何秉彝
Hu Shi	胡適
Hong	虹
huqin	胡琴
Jia	家
Jiangxi	江西
Kunming	昆明
Lu Xun	魯迅
Mao Dun	茅盾
Mei	梅
Na Han	呐喊
Nan xing ji	南行記

New Tide	新潮
New Youth	新青年
Pu yi	溥儀
Tzu-chih [Zizhi]	自治
Wang Dashou	黃大受
Wang Duqing	王獨清
Wen ji	文集
Xinyue yuekan	新月月刊
"Yijiusanlingnian chun Shanghai"	一九三零年春上海
Yu Dafu	郁達夫
Yunnan	雲南
Zhang Xiaomin	張效民
Zhang Hong	章紅
Zhongshan Road	中山路
Zhou Enlai	周恩來

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