

Indian Literature in English: An Introduction

Lecture 2: Anglo-Indian Literature and Anglophone World Literature

1) Anglo-Indian Literature

a) Outsiders or Insiders?

b) Rudyard Kipling

c) E.M. Forster

2) Interlude:

English Literature and the Limits of Its Global Reach

3) Anglophone World Literature?

1) Anglo-Indian Literature

a) Outsiders or Insiders?

19th Century:

Consolidation of the British Empire in India

- administrators, merchants
- soldiers
- journalists
- + families

1830: c. 50 000

1911: c. 200 000

... (decreasing)

- the emergence of an Anglo-Indian society interested in literary engagements with the Anglo-Indian experience
- journals catering to these interests:
The Bengal Annual
The Madras Literary Gazette
The Bombay Miscellany

Rammohun Roy, *Letter on English Education* (1823)

[...]

[A]s the sum set apart for the instruction of the natives of India [annually 100 000 Rs according to the Charter Act of 1813] was intended by the Government of England for the improvements of its Indian subjects, I beg leave to state, with due reference to your Lordship's exalted situation, that if the plan now adopted [focussing on Sanskrit schools and colleges] be followed, it will completely defeat the object proposed, since no improvement can be expected from inducing young men to consume a dozen years of the most valuable period of their lives, in acquiring the niceties of Vyakaran or Sanscrit Grammar [...]

In order to enable your Lordship to appreciate the utility of encouraging such imaginary learning as above characterized, I beg your Lordship will be pleased to compare the state of science and literature in Europe before the time of Lord Bacon with the progress of knowledge made since he wrote.

If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the schoolmen which was best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanscrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences, which may be accomplished with the sums proposed by employing a few gentlemen of talent and learning educated in Europe and providing a College furnished with necessary books, instruments and other apparatus. [...]

(Stilz 1982, 50-52; Stilz/Dengel-Janic 2010, 89-92)

Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Minute on Education* (1835)

We have a fund to be employed as Government shall direct for the intellectual improvement of the people in this country. The simple question is, what is the most useful way of employing it?

All parties seem to be agreed on one point, that the dialects commonly spoken among the natives of this part of India contain neither literary nor scientific information, and are moreover so poor and rude that, until they are enriched from some other quarter, it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them. It seems to be admitted on all sides, that the intellectual improvement of those classes of the people who have the means of pursuing higher studies can at present be effected only by means of some language not vernacular amongst them.

What then shall that language be? One-half of the committee maintain that it should be English. The other half strongly recommended Arabic and Sanscrit. [...] I have no knowledge of either Sanscrit or Arabic. But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value [...] I have read translations [...] I have conversed [...] with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the oriental learning at the valuation of the orientalist themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is indeed fully admitted by those members of the committee who support the oriental plan for education. [...]

How then stands the case? We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue. We must teach them some foreign language. The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands preeminent even among the languages of the West. It abounds with works of the imagination not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us, - with models of every species of eloquence, - with historical compositions which, considered merely as narratives, have seldom been surpassed, and which, considered as vehicles of ethical and political instruction, have never been equalled, - with just and lively representations of human life and human nature, - with the most profound speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, trade, - with full and correct information respecting every experimental science which tends to preserve the health, to increase the comfort, or to expand the intellect of man. [...]

It may safely be said that the literature now extant in [English] is of greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together. Nor is this all. In India, English is the language of the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of Government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East. [...]

Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our literature, or at the particular situation of this country, we shall see the strongest reason to think that, of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our native subjects. [...]

We are not without experience to guide us. History furnishes several analogous cases, and they all teach the same lesson. There are, in modern times, to go no further, two memorable instances of a great impulse given to the mind of a whole society [...]

The first instance to which I refer is the great revival of letters among the Western nations at the close of the fifteenth and at the beginning of the sixteenth century [...]

What the Greek and Latin were to the contemporaries of More and Ascham, our tongue is to the people of India [...]

Another instance may be said to be still before our eyes [...] I speak of Russia [...] There is reason to hope that this vast empire which, in the time of our grand-fathers, was probably behind the Punjab, may in the time of our grand-children, be pressing close on France or Britain in the career of improvement. And how was this change effected? Not by flattering national prejudices [...] but by teaching [...] foreign languages [...]

(Stilz 1982, 52-56; Stilz/Dengel-Janic 2010, 92-94)

Evening on the Banks of the Ganges

I wandered thoughtfully by Gunga's shore,	a
While the broad sun upon the slumbering wave	b
Its last faint flush of golden radiance gave,	b
And tinged with tenderest hues some ruins hoar.	a
Methinks this earth had never know before	a
A calm so deep – 'twas silent as the grave.	b
The smallest bird its light wing could not lave	b
In the smooth flood, nor from the green-wood soar	a
(If but the tiniest branch its pinions stirred,	c
Or shook the dew-drops from the leaves,) unheard.	c
Like pictured shadows 'gainst the western beam	d
The dark boats slept, while each lone helmsman stood	e
Still as a statue! – the strange quietude	e
Entralld my soul like some mysterious dream!	d

(D.L. Richardson, 1830)

**William Wordsworth:
Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802**

Earth has not anything to show more fair:	a
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by	b
A sight so touching in its majesty:	(b)
This City now doth, like a garment, wear	a
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,	a
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie	b
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;	b
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.	a
Never did sun more beautifully steep	c
In his first splendour, valley, rock, or hill;	d
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!	c
The river glideth at his own sweet will:	d
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;	c
And all that mighty heart is lying still!	d

**The Last Sacrifice: A Legend of the Indrawutee by H. Palmer, Esq.
(*The Bengal Annual: A Literary Keepsake* vol. III, 1832)**

The sun was sinking below the horizon, and gilding with its last rays the summits of the chain of mountains that runs along the western bank of the Indrawutee and the Godawuree for several miles, when I took my seat, in the verandah of a thatched building, erected on the eastern side of the former of those rivers. The scenery around was wild and desolate; and yet not without beauty and magnificence.

I was for some time absorbed in contemplation, which was encouraged by the quietude of all around: at last the gentle breeze which had before swept over the country in mild currents gradually swelled into fitful gusts, and in a few minutes more a bright flame suddenly burst forth on the tops of the mountains. Though wondering at the cause of the flames, an irresistible inclination to sleep came upon me, and I retired to rest, but had scarcely closed my eyes, when my slumbers were broken by the shrieks, as I thought, of a woman suddenly precipitated into the river. I started from my couch, and ran to ascertain the fact; but saw nothing to confirm my fears. The fire on the mountain was gradually decaying, and all things seemed once more to be returning to their original darkness and repose.

I again laid myself down upon my couch; but again, my slumbers were disturbed with similar shrieks [...] Once more I returned to my rest, and once more it was interrupted. I passed the rest of the night in fruitless conjectures, agitation, and alarm. The sun had scarcely risen when I hastened to an old and intelligent Native, and made inquiries upon the subject. 'Sir,' replied he, 'I am perfectly acquainted with what you state. Such occurrences are not uncommon; and however marvellous they may be thought by you, they are familiarly known to every person here. The screams you heard were not imaginary but real; though, it is true, they did not proceed from any living being [...] The tradition connected with history of the ill-fated maiden is not uninteresting, and with your permission, I will relate the particulars of it. [...]

Other Examples (cf. Stilz 2004):

- Henry M. Parker, "A Tale of the Indian Ocean"
(*The Bengal Annual* 1832)
- W.C. Hollings, Esq., "The Broken Heart"
(*The Bengal Annual* 1833)
- Quintus Quicksilver, Esq., "The Thugs"
(*Madras Literary Gazette* 1835)
- F.J.S.A., "Strange Adventures in the Poona Graveyard"
- Anonymous, "Romance of Indian Bigaree Life"
- Anonymous, "Sheik Dala, the Pindaree Leader"
- Anonymous, "Mount Aboo"
(*The Bombay Miscellany* vol. I-III 1860-61/61/61-62)

b) Rudyard Kipling

- 'the Bard of the Empire'
- Nobel Prize for Literature 1907
- *1865 in Bombay
- 1871-1882 education in England
- 1882 return to India as a journalist
 - *The Civil and Military Gazette* (Lahore)
 - *The Pioneer* (Allahabad)
- 1889 departure for a literary life in London
 - *Departmental Ditties* (1886)
 - *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888)
 - *Life's Handicap* (1891)
 - *Barrack Room Ballads and Other Verses* (1892)
 - *Many Inventions* (1893)
 - *The Jungle Books* (1894/95)
 - *Kim* (1901)

Kim is Rudyard Kipling's most enduringly successful serious novel. It was published in 1901 and is the story of the orphaned son of a soldier in the Irish regiment. His full name is Kimball O'Hara, but he is known, as the title suggests, as Kim. The novel takes place in India, then a British colony, and Kim spends his childhood as a waif in Lahore where he meets a Tibetan 'lama' or holy man who is on a quest to find a mystical river. Kim joins him on his journey, but meets his father's old regiment. He is adopted by them and is sent to a school although in his holidays he continues with his wandering. Partly as a result of his spirited lifestyle, Kim is selected by Colonel Creighton of the Ethnological Survey who notices his promise as a secret agent for the British. Under the instruction of the Indian, Hurree Babu, he becomes a distinguished member of the secret service, getting hold of the papers of some Russian spies in the Himalayas. The novel is notable for its detailed portrait of Indian life, its religions and some of the humbler aspects of a land with a great population and associated problems. Some of Kipling's jingoism does show through in the latter stages of the novel, however, but this does not detract much from what is a highly successful study of life in India and of a boy who combines both Oriental and Irish and therefore East and West in his nature.

Chapter 1

He sat, in defiance of municipal orders, astride the gun Zam-Zammah on her brick platform opposite the old Ajaib-Gher - the Wonder House, as the natives call the Lahore Museum. Who hold Zam-Zammah, that 'fire-breathing dragon', hold the Punjab, for the great green-bronze piece is always first of the conqueror's loot.

There was some justification for Kim - he had kicked Lala Dinanath's boy off the trunnions - since the English held the Punjab and Kim was English. Though he was burned black as any native; though he spoke the vernacular by preference, and his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song; though he consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazar; Kim was white - a poor white of the very poorest. The half-caste woman who looked after him (she smoked opium, and pretended to keep a second-hand furniture shop by the square where the cheap cabs wait) told the missionaries that she was Kim's mother's sister; but his mother had been nursemaid in a Colonel's family and had married Kimball O'Hara, a young colour-sergeant of the Mavericks, an Irish regiment. He afterwards took a post on the Sind, Punjab, and Delhi Railway, and his Regiment went home without him. The wife died of cholera in Ferozepore, and O'Hara fell to drink and loafing up and down the line with the keen-eyed three-year-old baby.

Societies and chaplains, anxious for the child, tried to catch him, but O'Hara drifted away, till he came across the woman who took opium and learned the taste from her, and died as poor whites die in India. His estate at death consisted of three papers - one he called his 'ne varietur' because those words were written below his signature thereon, and another his 'clearance-certificate'. The third was Kim's birth-certificate. Those things, he was used to say, in his glorious opium-hours, would yet make little Kimball a man. On no account was Kim to part with them, for they belonged to a great piece of magic - such magic as men practised over yonder behind the Museum, in the big blue-and-white Jadoo-Gher - the Magic House, as we name the Masonic Lodge. It would, he said, all come right some day, and Kim's horn would be exalted between pillars - monstrous pillars - of beauty and strength.

The Colonel himself, riding on a horse, at the head of the finest Regiment in the world, would attend to Kim - little Kim that should have been better off than his father. Nine hundred first-class devils, whose God was a Red Bull on a green field, would attend to Kim, if they had not forgotten O'Hara - poor O'Hara that was gang-foreman on the Ferozepore line. Then he would weep bitterly in the broken rush chair on the veranda. So it came about after his death that the woman sewed parchment, paper, and birth-certificate into a leather amulet-case which she strung round Kim's neck.

'And some day,' she said, confusedly remembering O'Hara's prophecies, 'there will come for you a great Red Bull on a green field, and the Colonel riding on his tall horse, yes, and' dropping into English - 'nine hundred devils.'

'Ah,' said Kim, 'I shall remember. A Red Bull and a Colonel on a horse will come, but first, my father said, will come the two men making ready the ground for these matters. That is how my father said they always did; and it is always so when men work magic.'

If the woman had sent Kim up to the local Jadoo-Gher with those papers, he would, of course, have been taken over by the Provincial Lodge, and sent to the Masonic Orphanage in the Hills; but what she had heard of magic she distrusted. Kim, too, held views of his own. As he reached the years of indiscretion, he learned to avoid missionaries and white men of serious aspect who asked who he was, and what he did. For Kim did nothing with an immense success. True, he knew the wonderful walled city of Lahore from the Delhi Gate to the outer Fort Ditch; was hand in glove with men who led lives stranger than anything Haroun al Raschid dreamed of; and he lived in a life wild as that of the Arabian Nights, but missionaries and secretaries of charitable societies could not see the beauty of it. His nickname through the wards was 'Little Friend of all the World'; and very often, being lithe and inconspicuous, he executed commissions by night on the crowded housetops for sleek and shiny young men of fashion.

It was intrigue, - of course he knew that much, as he had known all evil since he could speak, - but what he loved was the game for its own sake - the stealthy prowling through the dark gullies and lanes, the crawl up a waterpipe, the sights and sounds of the women's world on the flat roofs, and the headlong flight from housetop to housetop under cover of the hot dark. [...]

Other Texts by Kipling (cf. Stilz 2004):

“Recessional” (1897)
“The White Man’s Burden” (1899)
“Pagett, M.P.”

“Beyond the Pale” (1888)
“City of Dreadful Night” (1891)
“Little Tobrah” (1891)

c) E.M. Forster

- *1879 London
- 1905 tutor and friend of Syed Ross Masood in Cambridge
- 1912 first visit to India
- 1921-22 second visit to India, private secretary of a maharajah
- 1924 *A Passage to India*

PART ONE: MOSQUE

- 1 Description of Chandrapore
- 2 Dr Aziz is called away from Hamidullah's house by Major Callendar; on arrival, he finds Callendar has left; Mrs Callendar and Mrs Lesley take his carriage; he walks to the mosque and meets Mrs Moore; they talk
- 3 Mrs Moore returns to the club and tells her son Ronny Heaslop and her travelling companion, Adela Quested, about her encounter; Ronny is bothered by it
- 4 The Collector invites Indians to a Bridge Party
- 5 The Bridge Party
- 6 Dr Panna Lal asks Dr Aziz why he didn't go
- 7 Mr Fielding; Dr Aziz invites Adela Quested and Mrs Moore to the Marabar Caves
- 8 Adela Quested and Ronny Heaslop
- 9 Mr Hamidullah, Dr Panna Lal, Fielding, Rafi Haq, Ram Chand, Syed Mohammed visit Dr Aziz at his home
- 10 The heat
- 11 Fielding visits Aziz at his house; they become friendly

PART TWO: CAVES

- 12 Description of caves
- 13 Fielding and Godbole miss the train
- 14 Mrs Moore and the caves
- 15 Dr Aziz and Miss Quested part ways
- 16 Loss of Miss Quested; arrest of Aziz
- 17 Fielding learns of this; he talks to Mr Turton
- 18 Fielding talks to Mr McBryde
- 19 Fielding talks to Hamidullah, Godbole, Aziz
- 20 The situation is discussed at the Club; Fielding resigns
- 21 Rest of the evening
- 22 Miss Quested starts to have doubts; Mrs Moore is dismissive
- 23 Mrs Moore leaves India
- 24 The trial; Quested withdraws her accusation
- 25 Dr Aziz and Dr Panna Lal
- 26 Fielding talks to Quested; they learn of Mrs Moore's death
- 27 Fielding talks to Aziz
- 28 Death of Mrs Moore; the cult of Esmoor
- 29 Last conversation between Fielding and Quested; she leaves India
- 30 Aziz talks to Das
- 31 Aziz no longer trusts Fielding
- 32 Fielding travels back to England

PART THREE: TEMPLE

- 33 Professor Godbole
- 34 Dr Aziz's life while Fielding is gone
- 35 Fielding returns; Aziz realizes he never married Adela Quested
- 36 Aziz meets Ralph Moore
- 37 Aziz and Fielding talk about politics and India's future as a nation

Chapter 37

Friends again, yet aware that they could meet no more, Aziz and Fielding went for their last ride in the Mau jungles [...] [Fielding] wanted to say something heavy on the subject of Native States, but the friendliness of Aziz distracted him. This reconciliation was a success, anyhow. After the funny shipwreck, there had been no more nonsense or bitterness, and they went back laughingly to their old relationship as if nothing had happened [...]

[Fielding] felt that this was their last free intercourse. All the stupid misunderstandings had been cleared up, but socially they had no meeting-place. He had thrown in his lot with Anglo-India by marrying a country-woman, and he was acquiring some of its limitations, and already felt surprise at some of his past heroism. Would he to-day defy all his own people for the sake of a stray Indian? Aziz was a memento, a trophy, they were proud of each other, yet they must inevitably part [...]

All the way back to Mau they wrangled about politics. Each had hardened since Chandrapore, and a good knock-about proved enjoyable. They trusted each other, although they were going to part, perhaps because they were going to part. Fielding had 'no further use for politeness;' meaning that the British Empire really can't be abolished because it's rude. Aziz retorted, 'Very well, and we have no use for you,' and glared at him with abstract hate. Fielding said: 'Away from us, Indians go to seed at once.' [...] Aziz grew more excited [...] He cried: 'Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons. We wanted to know you ten years back – now it's too late [...]

India a nation! What an apotheosis! Last comer to the drab nineteenth-century sisterhood! Waddling in at this hour of the world to take her seat! She, whose only peer was the Holy Roman Empire, she shall rank with Guatemala and Belgium perhaps! Fielding mocked again. And Aziz in an awful rage danced this way and that, not knowing what to do, and cried: 'Down with the English anyhow [...] If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty five-hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then' – he rode against him furiously – 'and then,' he concluded, half kissing him, 'you and I shall be friends.'

'Why can't we be friends now?' said the other, holding him affectionately. 'It's what I want. It's what you want.'

But the horses didn't want it – they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, 'No, not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there.'

2) Interlude: English Literature and the Limits of Its Global Reach

William Wordsworth:

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed - and gazed - but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

(1804; 1807)

[Wordsworth's 'Daffodils'] featured prominently in the school curriculum of British colonies or dominions, aimed at training native subjects, from New Zealand via India or Africa to Canada, in the idioms and icons of their so-called mother country. In a 1993 collection of contemporary women's memories of their late colonial education in the 1940s to '60's, the editors explain that "the narrative of Empire was constructed in terms of sameness" and specifically mention: "we could all recite Wordsworth's poem about daffodils, and most of us celebrated Empire Day in our schools."

But we need only ask what exactly Wordsworth's poem might have meant to school children, say, in India or Africa to understand where the fundamental problem lies with this imperial construction of 'sameness'. The Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (*1938) once remarked how a schoolboy in colonial Kenya, who could impeccably recite the poem, actually thought that daffodils were little yellow animals that live at English lakesides. Such misconception is entirely plausible, because the poem speaks of daffodils as if they were moving, dancing creatures. It is just our cultural knowledge telling us that daffodils are flowers, hence fixed in the ground, which transfers Wordsworth's description of them onto a metaphorical level. The central metaphor of 'dance' only works against a background of experience or knowledge, not necessarily shared in different cultural and natural settings where 'daffodils' are as exotic as, for us, baobabs – a signifier without a signified in sight.

(Döring 2008, 11)

3) Anglophone World Literature?

[Goethe]

Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters* [1999] (2005)

- the emergence of a global literary space from the 16th century onwards: Italy – France – Spain – England – other European countries – the Americas – Africa/Asia
- a global economy with universally acknowledged standards of literary value, but unequally distributed literary capital and resources
- centres and peripheries: the Greenwich meridian of modernity

Franco Moretti, "Conjectures on World Literature" (2004)

- literature as a 'planetary system'
- a unitary world system of literature which engages with difference
- modern fiction never results from autonomous developments, but marks a compromise between Western formal influences and local material

Fredric Jameson, “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism” (1986)

- ‘third-world texts’ appear anachronistic to Western readers
- they have to be read as ‘national allegories’ in which individual fate is inevitably linked to public/social/political/economic dimensions of third-world countries
- ‘third-world texts’ evoke a social world of collective cooperation which has been lost in the West

Amitava Kumar, ed., *World Bank Literature* (2002)

- literature is a commodity and thus dependent on market mechanisms
- Indian literature in English is neither a mere symptom nor necessarily a critique of neoliberal globalisation; its stories engage with globalisation from within

Globalisation (cf. Degele/Dries 2005, 180-205):

a historical transformation process with a tendency towards creating a single space/place (McLuhan: ‘global village’)

Phases of Globalisation:

1500-1750	expansion of trade, beginnings of colonisation, slave trade
1750-1880	colonialism into imperialism, increased dynamics fuelled by industrial revolution
1880-1945	stagnation of globalisation process in WW I and II
1945-	second wave of political globalisation (UN, NATO, USSR/Warsaw Pact) coinciding with de-colonisation movement, centre of globalisation shifts from politics to economy/communication

Problems:

- translation (Apter 2013)
- ‘glocalisation’: the making of global culture simultaneously promotes regional cultures
- hybridisation vs. homogenisation?
- clash of cultures (Huntington)?

> isolation models vs. visions of world society

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