

Remaking “Englishness” and Place: John Stapylton Grey Pemberton’s nineteenth century accounts of the Indian Rebellion sites at Kanpur and Lucknow

Introduction: Englishness, Colonialism and Place

On March 10 1887, from the steamer *Taisang* ‘off Penang’ (now in modern-day Malaysia), John Stapylton Grey Pemberton (1860-1940) wrote to his father Richard Lawrence Pemberton (1831-1901), who was living in Seaham Harbour, County Durham, and described his ‘final wanderings in India’.¹ Amongst other things, Pemberton recounted two trips he had made a month earlier on or about February 11th and 12th 1887, with his friend Harry Barton, to two major battle sites from the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (or what pejoratively became known as the “Indian mutiny”).² These sites were the Memorial Well Gardens, Kanpur, and the Residency ruins, Lucknow, only 48 miles apart, and it is on these accounts that this article focusses.

Both sites, despite being present in a foreign country, were reconstructed after the rebellion in acts of national remembrance ‘as the naturalized containers of an organic “Englishness”’.³ Both of Pemberton’s accounts at Kanpur and Lucknow highlight how this “Englishness” was invented, transformed, and recovered, in hugely complex spaces.⁴ The generative conditions of “Englishness” as a ‘world-historical identity’ against which other

¹ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, March 10, 1887 (Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear Archives (TWA), DF.PEM1/60/9/). This letter forms part of a larger collection of forty-nine letters, written by John Pemberton to his father Richard Pemberton, between 18 November 1886 and 12 May 1888, while on an 18-month world trip.

² The use of the term “mutiny” reduced the complexity and reaches of the rebellion to an insubordination of the lower ranks of the Indian army. Instead, it must be seen against a backdrop of huge social change in India after the 1820s coloured by complex causes including caste, class, and religion, rather than simple “labels” imply. For an overview of the “labels” applied to the rebellion, refer to Salahuddin Malik, ‘Nineteenth Century Approaches to the Indian “Mutiny,”’ *Journal of Asian History*, vol. 7, (1973): pp. 95-127. For a detailed case for the view that the uprising was a civil rebellion, refer to, Sashi Bhusan Chaudhuri, *Theories of the Indian Mutiny 1857-59* (Calcutta, 1965).

³ Manu Goswami, ‘Englishness on the Imperial Circuit: Mutiny Tours in Colonial South Asia’, *Journal of Historical Sociology*, vol. 9, part 1 (1996): pp. 58-84, p. 76.

⁴ Philip Dodd, ‘Englishness and the National Culture’, in *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, eds. Roberts Colls and Phillip Dodd, (London, 1986), pp. 25-52, p. 25. Certain studies have highlighted the historicity of notions of “Englishness”, and the late nineteenth century emergence of a “national culture”, including: Brian Doyle, *English and Englishness* (London, 1989); Alan Sinfield, *Literature, Politics and Culture in Post War Britain* (Berkeley, 1989); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging a Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven, 1993); Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York, 1996); Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge, 2003).

cultures and identities were measured was a historically specific structured product of imperial domination.⁵

Nineteenth century thinking about their colonial possessions distinguished between different territories of the nation – it's English "heart" and its British imperial outposts – and the different ways individuals or groups could be defined as British subjects.

The late nineteenth century historian John R. Seeley writing in *The Expansion of England* (1883) encouraged his readers to grasp a larger vision of national identity, a united empire or a 'Greater Britain'.⁶ According to Seeley 'When we have accustomed ourselves to contemplate the whole Empire together and call it all England, we shall see here too . . . a great homogenous people, one in blood, language, religion, and laws, but dispersed over a boundless space.'⁷ Of course, the phrase "Greater Britain" actually meant "Greater England" and was rooted in a sense of Englishness that excluded other parts of Britain. As Catherine Hall notes, 'Englishness marginalises other identities, those from the peripheries, the Welsh, the Scottish, and the Irish.'⁸ Such a discourse remade Britain (itself a falsely homogeneous whole) the origin of empire, rather than insisting on the independence, the 'uneven development' as Mrinalini Sinha calls it, of national and imperial formations in any given historical moment.⁹ Perhaps most significantly, it left untouched the Victorian conviction that 'England possesses an unbroken history of cultural homogeneity and territorial integrity'.¹⁰

'England', as Krishnan Kumar highlights, 'is a highly emotive word . . . It has served, in a way never attained by "Britain" or any of the British derivatives, to focus ideas and ideals'.¹¹ Of course, the common and pervasive confusion of "England" with "Britain" is more than simply about names. For Ian Baucom "'English" space

⁵ Stuart Hall, 'The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity', in *Culture, Globalization and the World System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity*, ed. Anthony D. King, (Binghamton, 1991), p. 20.

⁶ John R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England Two Courses of Lectures* (1883) (Cambridge, 2010).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

⁸ Catherine Hall, 'Missionary Stories: Gender and Ethnicity in the 1830s and 1840s', in *White Male and Middle Class Explorations in Feminism and History*, (Cambridge, 1992), pp.205-254 p. 206.

⁹ Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The "Manly Englishman" and the "effeminate Bengali" in the late Nineteenth century* (Manchester, 1995). Argument borrowed from Antoinette Burton, 'Who needs the Nation? Interrogating "British" History,' in *Cultures of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, a Reader*, ed. Catherine Hall (Manchester, 2000), pp.137-156, p. 140.

¹⁰ Ruth H. Lindeborg, 'The "Asiatic" and the Boundaries of Victorian Englishness', *Victorian Studies* vol. 37, no. 3, (Spring 1994): pp. 381-404. p. 401.

¹¹ Kumar, p. 7.

remained unique, local, differentiated', whereas "'British" space was read as homogenous, interchangeable, everywhere alike'.¹² This was 'a formula which permitted the empire to be that which was simultaneously within the boundaries of Britishness and outside the territory of Englishness, that which, relative to the sovereign nation, was at once identical and different'.¹³

For Baucom, 'Englishness has consistently been defined through appeals to the identity-endowing properties of place . . . [and] these material places have been understood to literally shape the identities of the subjects inhabiting or passing through them'.¹⁴ Baucom explains that 'local knowledge, local dialects, local traditions, and local memories . . . emerge from the locale . . .'.¹⁵ For Baucom, the locale serves 'a nostalgic discourse on English national identity by making the past visible, by rendering it present, by acting as what Pierre Nora calls a *lieu de memoire* that purports to testify to the nations essential continuity across time'.¹⁶ These are the places in which England can locate and secure its identity. However, these places must be secured not only in England, but also in the colonies, to secure the cultural identity of the colonists and Anglicize, reform, and civilize the colonized.

However, Baucom also acknowledges that the locale, 'serves as the site in which the present re-creates the past, as a "contact zone" in which succeeding generations serially destabilize the nation's act of collective remembrance . . .'.¹⁷ Baucom's thinking on the nation as both 'synecdoche of the nation's space',¹⁸ and a space which 'reveals England as continually discontinuous with itself, as that which may repeat itself but always repeats with a difference',¹⁹ reflects the agonistic and ambivalent 'double narrative movement', described by Homi K. Bhabha as *writing the nation*.²⁰

¹² Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton, 1999), p. 10.

¹³ Baucom, p. 10.

¹⁴ Baucom, p. 4.

¹⁵ Baucom, p. 5.

¹⁶ Baucom, pp. 4,5.

¹⁷ On Cultural "contact zones" see Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York, 1992), especially pp. 1-15.

¹⁸ Baucom, p. 4.

¹⁹ Baucom, p. 5.

²⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 1994), p. 145.

If “Englishness”, as I will be arguing, should be understood as an on-going process, which is constructed, maintained, and disrupted ‘by certain auratic, identity-reforming places’,²¹ how could John Pemberton “be English”, in places like Kanpur and Lucknow? ‘Empire’, as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has pithily observed, ‘messes with identity’, a comment which is usually taken to mean that colonialism disrupts and distorts the identities of the colonized, but it can equally disrupt the cultural identity of colonial travellers like Pemberton as well.²² This essay attempts to unsettle the construction of imperial “English” identities as autonomous, settled and natural, which recreates an endless nostalgia for the authority of the traditional, and implies a hierarchical ordering and opposition between English identities and the rest. Instead, I highlight the insecurities of English identity, pollute its purity, compromise its autonomy, and begin to explain its displacing possibilities. My critical methods, and selection of the accounts of Pemberton in particular, are intended to explore how colonial spaces entered the discourse on “Englishness” in the modern period, and how British colonies functioned as indispensable ingredients in the institution of English identities in specific locales.

‘Mutiny tours’²³

Over the years preceding 1857, the sepoys, or Indian soldiers of the East India Company's Bengal Presidency Army had become increasingly troubled, feeling that their religion and customs were under threat from the evangelizing activities of the Company. The flashpoint of the rebellion was the introduction of the Enfield rifle. The cartridges for this weapon were believed to be greased with a mixture of beef and pork fat, which it was felt defiled both Hindu and Muslim Indian soldiers. On 2 May 1857, the 7th Oudh Irregular Infantry at Lucknow refused to bite the cartridge, and on 3 May they were disarmed by other regiments. Why the sepoys were ordered to bite the cartridge, when that practice had been officially stopped, has never been explained.²⁴ On 10 May, the Indian soldiers at Meerut broke into open rebellion killing several British officers and setting fire to the cantonment, before marching to Delhi and declaring the Mughal King, Bahadur Shah II, as the reinstated ruler of India.

²¹ Baucom, p. 5.

²² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (New York, 1993), p. 226.

²³ This term is borrowed from Manu Goswami, who understands ‘tours as a modern, embodied modality of shaping and organizing historical beliefs’. Goswami, p. 60.

²⁴ Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-Seven* (Calcutta, 1957), p. 180.

According to Thomas Metcalf, 'Within weeks the mutinous soldiery . . . were joined by disaffected groups in the countryside, landlords and peasant, princes and merchant, Hindus, and Muslims, each for their own reasons threw off the British yoke and sought their own independence'.²⁵ Large reaches of the country, above all in the Gangetic plain from Bihar to the Punjab remained out of British control for over a year. The uprising quickly overwhelmed the largely unprepared colonial garrisons in the central provinces, and in towns such as Kanpur, Lucknow, Agra, and Delhi, Europeans were forced to retreat into fortified buildings and entrenchments. In the recently annexed province of Oudh, where opposition to British rule was nearly universal, all classes fought on behalf of the sepoys and recently deposed king until the very end of 1858, when the uprising was brutally suppressed by more than 35,000 soldiers sent from Britain.²⁶

In the aftermath of the rebellion, race relations between Indians and British became more polarised. A year of racial warfare had permanently changed the relationship between coloniser and colonised. The British suspicious and alert, were now far more clearly an occupying power, garrisoning a hostile land. According to Metcalf, 'It opened up as well a gulf between Briton and Indian that could not easily be closed again after the restoration of order . . . From the rage, and fear, of 1857 emerged a new and enduring sense of the importance of bonds of race, in contrast to those of culture'.²⁷ While in India, Pemberton noticed this divide too, and what he referred to as a lack of 'native loyalty'.²⁸ On 15 February 1887, immediately after visiting the rebellion sites he arrived in Kolkata and took part in a week of social events celebrating Queen Victoria's Jubilee. In a letter to his father, he described the celebrations, reporting that,

'one old Anglo-Indian who went out in the crowds on the night of the illuminations said not one in 20 natives seemed to know what it was all about, & I know thro' has been the state of mind of several

²⁵ Thomas R. Metcalf, *The New Cambridge History of India Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 43.

²⁶ Kevin Hannam, 'Contested Representations of War and Heritage at the Residency, Lucknow', *International Journal of Tourism Research*, vol 8, no. 3 (2006): pp. 199-212, p. 203.

²⁷ Metcalf, p. 44.

²⁸ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, February 22, 1887, TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/9.

domestic servants. You can therefore judge for yourself how much loyalty i.e., demonstrative loyalty there is out there'.²⁹

The rebellion represented an unparalleled challenge to British colonial authority in India. In its hard-won suppression, the rebellion lent a new sense of legitimacy and entitlement to British rule in India, providing incontrovertible proof of the racial and technological superiority of the coloniser. However, simultaneously the rebellion also persisted in the colonial imagination as a terrifying example of betrayal, vulnerability, and fallible governance – an uneasy, irrepressible memory of British humiliation that exposed the colonisers' powerlessness against organised mass rebellion. Both these positions shaped a culture of 'continuous commemoration' and 'imperial thanksgiving', which preserved 1857 as 'a caesural moment in the history of Indian empire . . . when all was nearly lost only to be regained once more'.³⁰ This commemoration eventually encompassed a vast range of colonial texts and discourses, from memoirs and "Mutiny" fictions to official histories and photographic records.³¹ It also inscribed the subcontinent with a new geography of remembrance, preserving a public consciousness of 1857, in what Alan Tickell has argued was, 'a carefully maintained heritage-architecture of siege-sites, cemeteries and cenotaphs'.³²

From the colonialists perspective, the three major actions of the rebellion were: the siege of Delhi, occupied for four months by the insurrectionists, and eventually re-occupied by the colonists in mid-September 1857; the "relief" of the Residency at Lucknow, where for six months a large rebel force had laid siege; and, the recapture of Kanpur, a place rendered infamous as the site where the rebels killed several hundred English civilians, and cast the bodies of women and children into a well. According to Baucom, 'The triangular mapping of the Mutiny provided the blueprint for English histories of the events of 1857-58, histories that invented the Mutiny as, primarily, a narrative of these three places'.³³ Delhi, Kanpur, and Lucknow became the paradigmatic route for

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Gautam Chakravarty, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination* (Cambridge, 2005), p. 4.

³¹ For an overview of nineteenth century literature on the Indian Rebellion refer to: Malik, pp. 95-127; Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca, 1988), pp. 199-226.

³² Alex Tickell, 'Cawnpore, Kipling and Charivari: 1857 and the Politics of Commemoration', *Literature and History: A New Journal for the Humanities*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2009): pp. 1-19, p. 3.

³³ Baucom, p. 107.

“mutiny tours” in guidebooks, which appeared from the mid-1870s onwards. It is important to emphasise that the “history” described in these guidebooks was a colonial one, and largely ignored the story of the local indigenous population, continually re-enacting the exclusionary practices of the colonial state.³⁴ Such guidebooks served ‘to constrain the traveller’s experience and, more significant, the traveller’s memory of India’.³⁵ Travelling around central and north India on this tour helped increasing numbers of visitors to imagine their place as imperial rulers.

Victorian male elites

On 12 November 1886, four months before visiting the rebellion sites, John Pemberton met two friends, Thomas Brassey and Douglas McLean in Southampton, aboard the steamer *Assam* bound for Colombo, Sri Lanka. All three knew each other from Eton School and Oxford University.³⁶ Pemberton, aged 25, had left his training as a barrister in London to start his trip.³⁷ Brassey and McLean were both 23 at the time, and after graduating from Oxford in the summer of 1886, had travelled back from a hunting trip in the American Rockies.

It seems likely that Pemberton’s father was in part funding the trip, and it is clear from the letters that he did not fully approve of it, concerned whether it was advisable ‘from the Bar point of view of . . . being away so long’.³⁸ John Pemberton was having doubts about a career in law himself. He wrote to his father, ‘I realize very well that I must work at it & make something by it; but I only wish I felt more certain of doing so’.³⁹ Pemberton’s

³⁴ For an Indian perspective on the Rebellion refer to: Sen, *Eighteen Fifty Seven*; probably the most balanced, Sashi Bhusan Chaudhuri, *Theories of the Indian Mutiny (1857-59)* (Calcutta, 1968); Pratul Chandra Gupta, *Nana Sahib and the Rising at Cawnpore* (Oxford, 1963); V.D. Savarkar, *Indian War of Independence of 1857* (1909) (Bombay, 1947), was written to inspire Indians to rise up and wage a war to liberate the motherland.

³⁵ Baucom, p. 108. The extent to which travelogues of this period promoted imperialist ideology has been examined by Mary Louise Pratt, in *Imperial Eyes*. Other important studies on travel writing include: David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing and Imperial Administration* (Durham, 1993); Tim Youngs, *Travellers in Africa: British Travelogues 1850-1900* (Manchester, 1994); Tim Youngs, ed., *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling the Blank Spaces* (London, 2006).

³⁶ John Pemberton was educated at Eton (1874-1880) and New College, Oxford, from where he graduated in 1884.

³⁷ As well as Sri Lanka and India, the trip also took in South East Asia, Australia, Hong Kong, China, Japan, and Canada.

³⁸ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, January 5, 1887, TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/4.

³⁹ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, March 10, 1887, TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/12.

motivation for his journey may have been to escape the everyday routine of his life so that he could think about his professional future. Elsewhere I have written about the emotional and interior life that Pemberton inhabited shortly before leaving and the self-doubts he was having.⁴⁰ Many of these doubts hinged on his feelings for his cousin, Janet “Jeannie” Maude Marshall (1861-1892), who he would marry on his return.

At the beginning of December 1886, Pemberton, Brassey, and McLean arrived in Colombo, where they met three more friends from Eton - Harry Barton, Gerald Loder and John Baring. Pemberton was part of a Victorian travelling elite from the hermetic and masculine social world of the English public school. John Tosh states that by the 1880s, these schools ‘vigorously recruited boys for colonial careers, and they laid their claim to the role of educator for empire *par excellence*’.⁴¹ This was the realm from which Pemberton and his circle of bachelor friends emerged, a world where, according to Jonathan Rutherford, ‘the language of “pulling together” and the almost religious espousal of loyalty to house and school formed the micro-language of loyalty to race and nation’.⁴²

More than most areas of national life, empire was a projection of masculinity. As Joanna de Groot puts it, ‘manliness and empire confirmed one another, guaranteed one another, enhanced one another, whether in the practical disciplines of commerce and government or in the escape zones of writing, travel and art’.⁴³ Meaghan Morris highlights the way in which masculinist ways of knowing and patriarchal relations of power are complexly intertwined in the practice of travel and the writing of travel stories.⁴⁴ Nowhere was this masculinity demonstrated more so than in big game hunting. According to John M. Mackenzie ‘Hunting required all the most virile attributes of the imperial male; courage, endurance, individualism, sportsmanship (combining the

⁴⁰ Martin Beattie, ‘Lost on the Edges of Empire: John Stapsylton Grey Pemberton’s Expedition to Darjeeling and the “Snowy Ranges”’, in Martin Beattie, Christos Kakalis, Matthew Ozga-Lawn, eds., *Mountains and Megastructures Neo-Geologic Landscapes of Human Endeavour* (Singapore, 2021), pp. 149-168.

⁴¹ John Tosh, *Manliness and Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Britain: Essays on Gender, Family, and Empire* (Harlow, 2005), p. 196.

⁴² Jonathan Rutherford, *Forever England, Reflections on Race, Masculinity and Empire* (London, 1997), pp. 15, 16.

⁴³ Joanna de Groot, ‘“Sex” and “race”: the construction of language and image in the nineteenth century,’ in *Sexuality and Subordination: Interdisciplinary Studies of Gender in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Susan Mendus and Jane Rendall, (London, 1989) pp. 89-130 p. 122.

⁴⁴ Meaghan Morris, ‘At Henry Parkes Motel,’ *Cultural Studies* 2, 1 (1988): pp. 1-47. See also, Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose, ‘Women’s colonial and postcolonial geographies,’ in *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, eds. Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose, (New York, 1994) pp. 1-28.

moral etiquette of the sportsman with both horsemanship and marksmanship), resourcefulness, a mastery of environmental signs and a knowledge of natural history'.⁴⁵ While in India, Pemberton was invited by Brassey to join him on a tiger hunt near Karauli, Rajasthan in late February 1887, 10 days after he had visited the Residency ruins.⁴⁶ However, Pemberton decided the trip was not for him saying "I prefer to see more of the country rather than to shoot, so shall not trouble about keeping with them."⁴⁷

Is then the re-telling of a story of a masculine elite travelling through India in danger of reinforcing the same past colonial excesses and categorisations? Some would argue that the grand narratives of colonialism have been amply and excessively told. If one were to characterize what informs a critical approach to the colonial archives, it would be a commitment to the notion of reading them "against their grain". One fundamental premise of this article is a commitment to a less assured stance – to explore the grain with care and read along it first. As Ann Laura Stoler points out, 'Assuming we know those scripts rests too comfortably on predictable stories with familiar plots'.⁴⁸ Like Stoler, I am drawn to the 'messier, unsettling space that spans knowing and not knowing, good and bad faith, refusal and acceptance, allegiance to and belief in'.⁴⁹ Pemberton's letters to his father reveal often a more fragmented and complex psychic space, a colonial traveller full of self-doubt, with fine grained knowledge but equally unabashed ignorance, and as time went by a creeping uncertainty in the colonial project.

Pemberton was a conscientious letter writer averaging about one letter every two weeks to his father.⁵⁰

Writing regular and adequate letters was seen in Victorian society as a duty to family and a reflection on the

⁴⁵ John M. Mackenzie, 'The Imperial Hunter and the British Masculine Stereotype in Late Victorian and Edwardian Times', in J.A Mangan and James Walvin, eds., *Manliness and Morality Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America 1800-1940* (Manchester, 1987) pp.176-198, p. 178. See also Harriet Ritvo, *The Animal Estate The English and Other Creature in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge MA, 1987), in particular chapter 6 'The Thrill of the Chase', pp. 243-290.

⁴⁶ Thomas Allnutt Brassey, 'A Fortnight's Sport', in *Sixteen Months' Travel 1886-87* (London, 1888), pp. 72-82.

⁴⁷ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, January 5, 1887, TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/5.

⁴⁸ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, 2009), p. 50.

⁴⁹ Stoler, p. 249.

⁵⁰ While in India Pemberton wrote nine letters and two postcards to his father. He also wrote to other siblings and family friends. He mentions writing to his Sister Ellie, from Mt Abu in a letter from Delhi on 23 January 1887, and receiving a note from his brother Ralph written after St. Andrew's Day, in a letter from Bombay on 14 January 1887.

quality of one's relationship. By contrast, he refers in several letters to his father's 'dislike for foreign letter writing'.⁵¹ In a gender divided society, it was more usual for Victorian women – especially mothers, sisters, daughters, and in-laws – to take on this correspondence. For a son to write so much and so openly to his father suggests that they were close, perhaps because of the premature death of his own mother in the late 1860s. Rather touchingly, the salutation he used at the beginning of the letters was always 'My dear Daddie'. He closed his letters with minor variations of 'From your affectionate son John SG Pemberton'. Putting the writer's full name was normal.

The letter written from 'off Penang' was one of the longest Pemberton wrote about his experiences in India. Many of his letters seem to have been written at speed, just before the post was leaving, and portray an enthusiastic young man travelling through Sri Lanka and India, who seemed to largely ignore the conditions of colonialism around him. He had spent five days on board the steamer *Taisang* from Kolkata before writing the letter 'off Penang', which may have given him more time than usual to think. Given the vivid detail which he recorded and length of time that had elapsed since he visited these places, it seems likely that he kept a diary, which he used as the basis for constructing this letter to his father.

The Memorial Well Gardens, Kanpur

Situated on the banks of the Ganges, Kanpur had developed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century on the Grand Trunk Road between Delhi and Benares. Originally the town and surrounding district belonged to the King of Oud, but in 1801 it was ceded to the British. It was an important garrison for the East India Company, which had grown as a town to about 60,000 people. The rebellion started in Kanpur on 5 June 1857. After first seeming to offer his services to the British the rebellion was led by Dhondu Pant or "Nana Saheb", one of the adopted sons of the last Peshwa of Bithoor, Baji Rao II, a Mahratta monarch who had been dethroned by the British.⁵² Although contested, Tatya Tope, one of Nana Saheb's Generals, claimed that Nana was forced under

⁵¹ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, January 23, 1887 TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/6, and 7 February, 1887 TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/8.

⁵² Sen, p. 132.

duress to join the sepoy cause and assume their command.⁵³ Sen concluded that there was 'No evidence of any previous understanding between Nana and the sepoy leaders'.⁵⁴

Major-General Sir Hugh Wheeler, the commanding officer at Kanpur, had taken up position in a military entrenchment consisting of two barracks surrounded by a low mud wall to the east of the city. This position proved difficult to defend. Inside the entrenchment were about 200 European soldiers, many of them invalids, 100 European officers from Indian regiments, 100 civilians, a few Indian officers, sepoys, servants, and 400 women and children.⁵⁵ They were surrounded by 3000 rebels supported by most of the indigenous population.⁵⁶

The siege lasted until 25 June when Wheeler, who was running out of food, surrendered to Nana Saheb, with promises of safe passage. However, several British officers were subsequently executed, and over 200 Europeans were killed at the riverside Sati Chaura Ghat, as they boarded boats to take them down the Ganges to Allahabad, two days later.⁵⁷ The traumatised survivors, about 125 women and children, were recaptured and imprisoned in a house called the 'Bibighar' on the outskirts of Kanpur. On 15 July 1857, two days before the relief force led by Brigadier-General Henry Havelock re-took Kanpur, an execution squad entered the Bibighar and methodically hacked the women and children to death with their swords.⁵⁸ They then dumped the stripped and mutilated bodies in a nearby well. Details of who ordered the massacre are not clear.⁵⁹

The mass deaths of British women and children at Kanpur had an enormous impact on British views of the war.⁶⁰ In Kanpur, arriving contingents of British troops were taken to visit the well site. Many testified that this

⁵³ Sen, p. 137.

⁵⁴ Sen, p. 138.

⁵⁵ Christopher Hibbert, *The Great Mutiny, India 1857* (London, 1978), p. 177.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Rudrangshu Mukherjee, "'Satan let loose upon Earth": the Kanpur Massacres in India in the Revolt of 1857,' *Past and Present*, 128 (1990): pp. 92-116.

⁵⁸ Andrew Ward, *Our Bones are Scattered: The Cawnpore Massacres and the Indian Mutiny of 1857* (London, 2004), p. 415.

⁵⁹ Sen, pp. 159, 160.

⁶⁰ For early British responses to the events at Kanpur refer to: *Calcutta Review*, September 1859; George Otto Trevelyan, *Cawnpore*, (London, 1865); and, Jonah Shepherd, *A Personal Narrative of the Outbreak and Massacre*

experience seared into them a rage against their opponents. The British retaliated with atrocities of their own, hanging and shooting without trial, blowing prisoners from the mouths of cannons, looting, and massacring the Indian residents of recaptured towns.⁶¹ It is likely that British atrocities committed by Brigadier-General James Neill's men at Benares and Allahabad, early in June 1857, were known to Nana Sahib and the rebels at Kanpur, so that the massacre of British prisoners may itself have been retaliatory.⁶²

On or about 11 February 1887, Pemberton and Barton spent 'an hour or two' in Kanpur, visiting All Souls' Church, and the Memorial Well Gardens, the latter of which was built on the site of the original well. The Gardens was a project initiated by Lady Canning, the Indian Governor-General's wife, and then finished by Colonel Sir Henry Yule after Lady Canning's sudden death in 1861.⁶³ The memorial was consecrated on 11 February 1863.⁶⁴ Yule designed an octagonal gothic screen. Baron Carlo Marochetti was responsible for the central angel figure.⁶⁵ The placement of the angel in the setting of a tomb makes it clear that this is an angel of victory, the Christian victory over death.

The Gardens' landscape had the aspect of an English suburban cemetery with its clipped lawns and trim pathways (figs 1 & 2). Cypress trees associated with European symbols of death were planted near the memorial, while a border of taller trees obscured the view of the city beyond. Images of the Memorial Well Garden from the mid-1860s underscore the Englishness of the place, by carefully framing shots through foliage,

at Cawnpore During the Sepoy Revolt of 1857, 2nd ed. (Lucknow, 1879). Some studies have examined how gender issues coloured interpretations of this event, and the war in general. See Alison Blunt 'The Flight from Lucknow; British Women Travelling and Writing Home, 1857-8,' in *Writes of Passage: Reading Travel Writing* eds. James Duncan and Derek Gregory (London, 1999), pp. 92-113; Nancy L. Paxton, *Writing under the Raj: Gender, Race, and Rape in the British Colonial Imagination* (New Brunswick, 1999); Jane Robinson, *Angels of Albion, Women of the Indian Mutiny* (London, 1996); Jenny Sharpe, *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (Minneapolis, 1993); Penelope Tuson, 'Mutiny Narratives and the Imperial Feminine: European Women's Accounts of the Rebellion in India,' *Women's Studies International Forum* 21, no.3, (1998): pp. 291-303.

⁶¹ In *The Other Side of the Medal* (London, 1925), Edward John Thompson showed that throughout northern India, 'government by gallows . . . was supplemented by government by massacre', p. 74.

⁶² Refer to Sen, pp. 150-61; Gupta, p. 118; Thompson, p. 70; Savarkar, p. 205; Brantlinger, p. 201.

⁶³ Augustus Hare, *The Story of Two Noble Lives being Memorials of Charlotte, Countess Canning, and Louisa, Marchioness of Waterford*. In 2 vols (New York, 1893).

⁶⁴ 'Cawnpore Memorial Well,' *The Builder*, vol. XXI, no. 1053 (April 11, 1863): p. 267.

⁶⁵ Marochetti was a favourite of Queen Victoria and his works stands in St. Paul's Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey, London. He was also responsible for designing the Crimean war memorial at Scutari, Turkey.

viewed as a space whose only distant intrusion on the skyline is a church steeple. This does not appear to be India, except for the crouching figures of the 'native' gardeners who looked after the site. As Bhabha highlights, this is a landscape, which 'revives memories of its daemonic double: the heat and dust of India; . . . the tropical chaos that was deemed despotic and ungovernable and therefore worthy of the civilizing mission.'⁶⁶

Pemberton simply described the Memorial Well Garden thus: 'On the site of the well is a monumental enclosure & a figure of an angel in marble; I didn't much care for either – tho' I liked the style of the gardens very much'.⁶⁷

It is difficult to be certain why Pemberton 'didn't much care' for the monumental enclosure and angel (fig. 3).

Perhaps he was swayed by the scathing comments in Keene's, *A Handbook for Visitors to Lucknow* (1875), which says,

The statue is monotonous and unmeaning in design, rough and inartistic in execution. Nothing can well be conceived more commonplace than the Carpenter's gothic of the surrounding wall, with its frivolous crocketed battlements, purposeless finials, and tedious rows of lancet-windows with their dull trefoiled mullions. The ogee doorway and cast-iron doors are the only decent feature, and they were designed, it is believed, by Col. H. Yule of the Royal Engineers; but, seeing that the building is without a roof, there does not seem any purpose in a door. It is on a scroll over this portal that we read the touching inscription "these are they which came out of great tribulation".⁶⁸

Like Keene, Pemberton did not seem to be a fan of the gothic. He may have read critics like William Hodges, who writing in the late eighteenth century regarded the gothic as coming from the same family as that of Hindu architecture.⁶⁹ Pemberton had already professed an interest in the architecture of India. He published eight letters, possibly for the *Yorkshire Post*, covering his travels through Sri Lanka and southern India, a one-month

⁶⁶ Bhabha, p. 169.

⁶⁷ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, March 10, 1887, TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/12.

⁶⁸ H.G. Keene, *A Handbook for Visitors to Lucknow with Preliminary Notes on Allahabad and Cawnpore* (Calcutta, 1875), pp. 44, 45.

⁶⁹ For William Hodges views on Indian architecture see his *Travels in India during the years 1780, 1781, 1782 & 1783* (London, 1793), pp. 75-76.

period from the beginning of December 1886 until the beginning of January 1887.⁷⁰ Pemberton may well have read James Fergusson's *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (1876), in which Fergusson disparages medieval Hindu art and architecture, and in particular the Hindu architecture of South India's temples, which he saw as the product of an 'idolatrous and corrupt' society.⁷¹ Many of Pemberton's views on these temples, represented in his published letters, also echo Fergusson's. Instead, many colonial builders and classically trained Englishmen in the late nineteenth century looked towards ancient Rome and the classical style as an exemplar for empire, and it may have been this style which Pemberton preferred.⁷² Pemberton's brief comments on the monument at Kanpur highlight how nostalgic discourse on English national identity was projected through its architecture in India. Place here is something that contains and communicates a certain kind of tradition.

Fear of the "other"

Undermining this discourse on English identity at Kanpur was a fear of the "other". Pemberton claimed that 'No natives are allowed to enter [the gardens], except a few specific gardeners – certain native soldiers – as they deface – or allow to be defaced the monuments and the carving on them'.⁷³ Keene's *Handbook* (1875) qualifies this by stating that 'Native visitors, long excluded, are now admitted to the garden by passes readily given to men of known respectability'.⁷⁴ According to Eric Stokes, 'From the shrine itself all Indians (except Christians) were debarred down to the day of independence'.⁷⁵ Quite clearly access to the gardens was controlled and not open to all, highlighting the divided political reality of life under colonialism in Kanpur, 30 years after the Rebellion. For Jay Winter, writing about memorials from the First World War, 'commemoration was an act of

⁷⁰ Pemberton visited the Buddhist ruined city of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka, the great Temple of Rameswaram, on the island of Pamban in southern India, the Hindu temples on the island of Srirangam, near Tiruchirappalli, and in Thanjavur, and the domed tomb of Sultan Muhamad at Bijapur.

⁷¹ Thomas R. Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (Oxford, 1989), p. 33.

⁷² Metcalf, *An Imperial Vision*, pp. 2, 3.

⁷³ John Pemberton to Richard Pemberton, March 10, 1887, TWA, DF.PEM1/60/9/12.

⁷⁴ Keene, p. 45.

⁷⁵ Eric Stokes, *The Peasant and the Raj: Studies in Agrarian Society and the Peasant Rebellion in Colonial India*, (Cambridge, 1978), p. 3.

citizenship'.⁷⁶ Winter continues, 'To remember was to affirm community, to assert its moral character, and to exclude from it those values, groups, or individuals that placed it under threat'.⁷⁷

This racial policy of barring Indians from the Gardens expressed a deep anxiety about the effect of "foreign" contact on Christian subjectivity and English territory. This imperial confusion 'was to persist in misreading, enacting a narrative of the subcontinent's past and future that misrecognized a plot of oppression and resistance as a plot of loyalty and betrayal'.⁷⁸ This confusion was implicitly confirmed by the memorialization of the rebellion as a "mutiny." In the aftermath of the rebellion, it was rendered explicit with the Government of India Act (1858), where the Government of India was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown. The Act identified the Indian as a person of whom England demanded the obligations of citizenship, but from whom the nation withheld the full rights of an English subject. This anxiety at the heart of colonialism revealed a world, which was split between the frame of Englishness, and its loss. As Bhabha explains, 'anxiety is the affective address of a "world [that] reveals itself as caught up in the space between frames; a doubled frame or one that is split" . . .'⁷⁹

The Residency ruins, Lucknow

In February 1856, a year before the rebellion broke out, the state of Oudh, of which Lucknow was the capital, had been annexed by the British East India Company, and the Nawab, Wajid Ali Shah, was exiled to Kolkata. Despite the Nawab's lack of interest in public affairs, his exile and the annexation of Oudh was deeply resented by the local population. Sir Henry Lawrence was appointed as Chief Commissioner of Oudh partly to reconcile disaffected elements and resolve grievances. Lawrence however, had little time to build bridges, as he took up the Resident's appointment at Lucknow only six weeks before the rebellion broke out.

⁷⁶ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning, The Great War in European Cultural History*, (Cambridge, 1995), p. 80.

⁷⁷ Winter, p. 80.

⁷⁸ Baucom, p. 106.

⁷⁹ Bhabha, pp. 213, 214. S. Weber, *Return to Freud: Jacques Lacan's Dislocation of Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 161.

The Residency at Lucknow was an imposing three-storied building, which lay amid several palaces, mosques, and administrative buildings, on the banks of the River Gomti. On 30 May, most of the Oudh and Bengal troops at Lucknow broke into open rebellion. Lawrence spent most of June fortifying the Residency and laying in supplies for a siege. By the middle of June, British authority had collapsed throughout the state of Oudh.⁸⁰ However, the City of Lucknow remained open and many families from the outstations came to it and found shelter in the Residency.

After Kanpur, Lucknow became the next objective of the rebel forces. On 30 June, the siege began in earnest with about 8,000 sepoys and several hundred retainers of local landlords surrounding the Residency.⁸¹ The next day, Lawrence was fatally wounded by a shell, dying on 4 July, and Colonel Sir John Inglis took command. At the start of the siege the garrison included 1700 men, consisting of 780 British soldiers, 160 civilian volunteers, 720 sepoys, 500 women and children, 700 Indian servants, and 50 pupils from the Martinière School.⁸² According to Sen, amongst the besieged, 'were civil servants, clerks, merchants, and men of other professions'.⁸³

In July 1857, deaths averaged about 15 to 20 daily mostly caused by rifle and musket ball.⁸⁴ The besieged were worried constantly about how long provisions would last, whether rebel forces would break through defences, and whether relief would come. There were several determined attempts to storm the defences during the first weeks of the siege, but despite dwindling food supplies the garrison kept the rebels at a distance with sorties and counterattacks. On 20 July 1857, Havelock left Kanpur with a force of 1500 men attempting to relieve Lucknow. After winning battles at Unnao, and a few days later at Bashirat Ganj, casualties, disease, and heatstroke halved his force to 850 fighting men, and eventually he fell back to Kanpur on 13 August, conscious that Nana Sahib could cut off his return at any moment. According to Sen, 'In August the strength of the besieging force was variously estimated between twenty to forty thousand'.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ Sen, p. 190.

⁸¹ Hibbert, p. 237.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Sen, p. 195.

⁸⁴ Sen, p. 199.

⁸⁵ Sen, p. 211.

On 5 September, Major-General Sir James Outram arrived at Kanpur with reinforcements. On 19 September, Havelock and Outram left Kanpur with an army of just over 3000 men. Having driven the rebels from the Alambagh, a walled park four miles south of the Residency on 25 September, Havelock and Outram fought their way through Lucknow to the Residency building. Originally, they had intended to evacuate the building, but sustained heavy casualties during a final bloody advance made it impossible to remove all the sick and wounded.⁸⁶ For the next six weeks, the rebels reinforced by more insurgents from Delhi continued the siege, as well as reinforcing their defences around Lucknow. By September, the besieging force was reported to be about 100,000 men with Nana Sahib amongst them.⁸⁷

On 3 November, Sir Colin Campbell, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, arrived in Kanpur to lead a final relief force to Lucknow. Having reached the Alambagh and secured Dulkushna Park on the morning of 14 November, Campbell's army approached a large building known as Sikandar Bagh. After intense fighting his army managed to breach its defences, and 2000 Indian sepoy's trapped inside, were mostly bayoneted to death by Campbell's men (fig. 5). Eventually on 17 November 1857, after further brutal and bloody assaults on other rebel strongholds and fortified palaces, Campbell's relief force reached the Residency. Worried about the defence of Kanpur, defenders and civilians were quickly evacuated from Lucknow, and the Residency building was abandoned.

The siege at Lucknow quickly became marked in accounts written by British survivors as an epic event around which valiant and fearless deeds were associated. In particular, the Residency ruins became a rallying point for the construction of a heroic national history, and the focus of the "mutiny tour" in Lucknow. For Goswami, 'It was commemorated as a repository of the stoic resistance and fortitude – encoded as the stuff of British character and imperial virtue'.⁸⁸ Hannam states, 'The ruined landscape of the Residency was left as a monument to gaze upon, so that British soldiers would never forget the potential danger of the indigenous population. It served to reinforce existing stereotypes and further propagate the mythological atrocities'.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Over 500 were killed on the British side. Hibbert, p. 330.

⁸⁷ Sen, p. 222.

⁸⁸ Goswami, p. 73.

⁸⁹ Hannam, p. 206.

Photographic images of the Residency reinforced this message and often show an isolated and sovereign building seen as a symbol of civilisation in a blasted and unpeopled wilderness (fig. 4). However, it was impossible to see the building in its ruinous state as something separately English because it was a permanent reminder of the rebellious Indian population. Indeed, Pemberton's recollection of the ruins gave a more ambiguous sense of their autonomy than was popularly described in photographs and guides of the time, claiming: 'There seems to be *no marked distinction* between some of the Residency buildings on the city side & the part of the city adjoining it which was held in force by the mutineers'.

Englishness, Loss and Forgetting

At the beginning of Pemberton's account, he ambiguously stated that there was 'a fascination in the Residency grounds (that are of considerable extent & covered with ruins) *which makes one forget everything else in the place*' (emphasis added). Nowhere in the surrounding sentences is there any indication of what Pemberton might have forgotten. Equally, it is difficult to know what effect his visit to Kanpur the day before might have had on his mood in Lucknow. At the Gardens in Kanpur, Pemberton described 'a feeling of melancholy which seems to hang about them'. Perhaps the memorial at Kanpur and the Residency ruins simply reminded him of the horror of events that had happened in both places, indeed Pemberton seemed to be in a state of mourning. For Jay Winter, memorials are 'a means of forgetting, as much of commemoration'.⁹⁰ They are places for 'passing through mourning, of separating from the dead and beginning to live again'.⁹¹ Judith Butler in *Precarious Life* reminds us that grief 'challenges the very notion of ourselves as autonomous and in control'.⁹² However, we are also reminded of Renato Rosaldo's astute observation that imperialist mourning is contingent and concomitant with what colonialisms destroy.⁹³ Derek Walcott, writing about colonialism in the Caribbean, was impatient with the 'consoling pity' of travellers, who 'carried with them the infection of their own

⁹⁰ Winter, p. 114.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London, 2004), p. 23.

⁹³ Renato Rosaldo, 'Imperialist Nostalgia,' *Representations, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory*, No. 26, (Spring 1989): pp. 107-122.

malaise'.⁹⁴ Here, in Pemberton's narrative, we can start to theorise mourning as a process that preserves colonial sovereignty between what Butler describes as the 'grievable life', and 'the life that cannot be grieved'.⁹⁵

Was Pemberton's forgetting, simply another way of saying that for the colonial traveller at least, this was the most important site to visit in Lucknow? Certainly, echoes of this sentiment can be found in Keene's *Handbook* (1875), which pointed out that 'For the intelligent traveller . . . especially if of British blood – the main interest of Lucknow must ever be derived from the history of the heroes of Fifty-seven whose remains lie buried there, and of their no less gallant comrades'.⁹⁶ Like many tourist guides, the *Handbook* (1875) directed the colonial visitor to the rebellion sites and largely dismissed local indigenous sites. Keene divided Lucknow into three areas: the 'native' town; the court-suburbs; and, the European part.⁹⁷ He stated that 'the native commercial quarter, affords little temptation to the visitor'.⁹⁸ He compared the court-suburb unfavourably to Agra and Delhi, before restating a familiar contempt for Hindu architecture.⁹⁹ However, for Keene, 'of the European part nothing but praise is spoken'.¹⁰⁰

Pemberton walked all around the Residency walls and buildings and was 'absolutely astounded at their defence'. For him, this made 'it the most interesting piece of ground to go over of all I have visited in India'. He explains in more detail that, 'The whole of these ruins are riddled with shot holes and covered with bullet marks, and some of the places look as if it were absolutely impossible for a largish force even to hold there for long against a strong attacking body'. Baucom highlights how a 'narrative of betrayal' permeates tourist guidebooks of the time.¹⁰¹ He describes how 'An obsessive, almost hysterical quality haunts the construction and reconstruction of this narrative, a need to account for virtually each colonist's death, an Ancient Mariner's need to tell and retell'.¹⁰² Both of Pemberton's accounts at Kanpur and Lucknow portray clearly this 'narrative of betrayal', a story which simultaneously combines the contradictory poles of colonial life – a sovereign or

⁹⁴ Ann Laura Stoler (ed.), *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination* (Durham, 2013), p. 14.

⁹⁵ Butler, p. 22. Argument borrowed from Tickell, p. 4.

⁹⁶ Keene, p. 76.

⁹⁷ Keene, p. 75.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Keene, p. 76.

¹⁰¹ Baucom, p. 109.

¹⁰² Ibid.

autonomous sense of Englishness combined with its vulnerability and loss. It is a narrative which obsessively anticipates a return to a time of war.

Equally, was Pemberton's forgetting a form of colonial amnesia, and necessary part of maintaining his sovereign Englishness at these sites? His apparent selective 'fascination in the Residency grounds', and story of the British under siege, ignored the massacre of 2000 Indian sepoys at Sikandar Bagh by Campbell's troops, and further atrocities committed by British forces before and afterwards. If it was a moment of colonial amnesia, and a necessary part of maintaining his sovereign Englishness, knowledge production and its strategic absence – contrived ignorance – are prevailing themes in the making of empire. For Stoler, the 'ability to excuse oneself from wrought engagement, this refusal to witness and the almost legal legitimacy it confers, [led to] the well-tended conditions of disregard'.¹⁰³ This disposition of disregard required sanctioned ignorance, self-deception, 'cognitive dissonance', and the securely unflinching constraints of habit.¹⁰⁴ In this context, memorials like the Residency ruins are supportive of the project of empire and lead to the silencing of memories.

Conclusion: Remaking Englishness and Place

As I have argued, the history of English imperialism and of the imperial determinations of English identity can be read as a history of contested spaces, of locations in which the English colonist at once attempted to manifest their cultural identities, and to discipline the identities of their subordinates. English colonialists hoped that these places in Kanpur and Lucknow might function 'as a disciplinary metonym of Englishness . . . as an imperial translation of English space and English time'.¹⁰⁵ However simultaneously in doing so '[t]hey invoked an absent England and expressed their belief that in re-presenting that England, both they and their subjects would be remade in the image of the relocated past'.¹⁰⁶ Kanpur and Lucknow were sites where England's narrative of belonging was de-stabilized and recreated, altered by colonial subjects like Pemberton, who came into contact

¹⁰³ Stoler, p. 256.

¹⁰⁴ Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford, 1957). Human beings shape their perceptions according to their beliefs. Cognitive dissonance occurs when perceptions and beliefs are at odds with each other. In order to escape psychological stress, human beings blank out, or reinterpret disturbing facts. Although Festinger never claimed it to be a universal law he thought it was a deep-seated human trait.

¹⁰⁵ Baucom, p. 39.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

with them. Pemberton's 'split' accounts simultaneously evoked a discourse on English national identity, but also highlighted its loss. Pemberton's mourning was the catalyst for these split accounts. For Bhabha the splitting of the colonial subject was a necessary state of being. As Bhabha reminds us, following Frederic Jameson, 'it is only through a structure of splitting and displacement – "the fragmented and schizophrenic decentring of the self" – that the architecture of the new historical subject emerges at the limits of representation itself . . .'¹⁰⁷ For Bhabha, out of the splitting of the colonial subject emerges minority discourse and the heterogenous histories of contending people.¹⁰⁸

Benita Parry asserts that the British 'were displaced persons in India, victims of their destiny which influential and articulate elements in their nation exhorted them to obey'.¹⁰⁹ Ian Baucom highlights 'that we should read imperialism not simply as the history of England's expansion and contraction but as the history of cultivated confusion'.¹¹⁰ There is little doubt that Pemberton's accounts, particularly at Lucknow, highlight his own bewilderment with the colonial project. Elsewhere I have written about Pemberton's bewilderment and the dissolution of his colonial identity when he became lost on an expedition to Darjeeling and the Himalayas.¹¹¹ Bewilderment takes place when one realizes that our rational faculties are not enough to understand what is happening. Indeed, bewilderment throws into question the interpretive constructs one ordinarily takes for granted as our way of knowing the world. For the American poet Fanny Howe, bewilderment 'breaks open the lock of dualism (it's this or that) and peers out into space (not this not that)'¹¹²; '[a]ll intention then is reversed into attention'.¹¹³ Echoing this sense of bewilderment, Bhabha describes a discourse of 'living perplexity'. For Bhabha, 'From the margins of modernity, at the insurmountable extremes of storytelling, we encounter the question of cultural difference as the perplexity of living and writing the nation'.¹¹⁴ Ian Almond writing about 'The Honesty of the Perplexed,' argues that 'When we are confused . . . We see the difference of difference.'¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Bhabha, p. 217. Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, 1991), p. 51.

¹⁰⁸ Bhabha, p. 148.

¹⁰⁹ Benita Parry, *Delusions and Discoveries: India in the British Imagination 1880-1930* (London, 1998), p. 29, 30.

¹¹⁰ Baucom, p. 3.

¹¹¹ Beattie, pp. 149-168.

¹¹² Fanny Howe, *The Wedding Dress Meditations on Word and Life* (Berkeley, 2003), p.15.

¹¹³ Howe, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ Bhabha, p. 161.

¹¹⁵ Ian Almond, 'The Honesty of the Perplexed: Derrida and Ibn 'Arabi on bewilderment,' *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, vol. 70, no. 3 (September 2002): pp. 515-537, p. 535.

For Almond, 'bewilderment takes place because of our rationality, because we insist on clinging to something that is blinding us to the "actual situation."' ¹¹⁶ For Bhabha, Howe and Almond, bewilderment or confusion is a difficult, but courageous and desirable state, which offers a more honest possibility of truth.

According to Baucom, 'the task of "locating" English identity became ever more complex as England struggled to define the relationship between the national "here", and the imperial "there."' ¹¹⁷ Burton states that 'empire was . . . not just a phenomenon "out there", but a fundamental part of English culture and national identity at home, where the fact of empire was registered not only in political debate . . . but entered the social fabric, the intellectual discourse and the life of the imagination.' ¹¹⁸ By deciding to multiply its locations of identity beyond its own shores, the British Empire ensured that England would lose sovereign command of its "own" spaces of identity. In creating an empire whose commercial, political, and cultural economies depended on continuous traffic between the English "here" and the imperial "there", England rendered its spaces of belonging susceptible to a global series of renegotiations. For Baucom, the empire was,

the place where Englishness would be reformed, a place crowded with "other spaces", other cultural locales, other local knowledges and local memories that must begin, sooner or later, to enter the canon, to expand the catalogue of Englishness, and a place filled with "other races", who, having been forced to enter England's expanded "within", must begin to alter its locations of belonging. ¹¹⁹

The idea of a local, autonomous, and independent history, which denies that the imperial "beyond" was a part of the English "within" is to suggest that England was uninvolved, untroubled, and unaffected by "its" empire, and that the history of Englishness, consequently, is an entirely local affair. To suggest the opposite is not

¹¹⁶ Almond, pp. 515, 516.

¹¹⁷ Baucom, p. 37.

¹¹⁸ Burton, p. 139. See also John M. Mackenzie 'Empire and Metropolitan Cultures' in *The Nineteenth Century, The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. III, ed. Andrew Porter, (Oxford, 1999), pp. 270-93; and 'The Popular Culture of Empire in Britain,' in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Twentieth Century*, eds. Judith M. Brown and Wm. Roger Louis, (Oxford, 1999), pp. 212-31; Catherine Hall, 'British Cultural Identities and the Legacy of the Empire', in *British Cultural Studies: Geography, Nationality and Identity*, eds. David Morley and Kevin Robins, (Oxford, 2001), pp. 27-39.

¹¹⁹ Baucom, p. 6.

however, to deny that local histories exist but to deny that they are perfectly self-enclosed, to insist that history is no respecter of the nation or the locale. It is to affirm that the beyond is also the within, that Englishness like Britishness has been and continues to be subject to a global reformation. Quite clearly “English histories” are interpenetrated by “Indian” histories in places like Kanpur and Lucknow.

If, as Bhabha claims, ‘the Western metropole must confront its postcolonial history . . . as an indigenous or native narrative internal to its national identity,’ then this kind of refiguration requires us to ask how – that is, through what kinds of practices – is it possible to practice “British” history so that it does not continue to act as a colonial form of knowledge?¹²⁰ Like Kathleen Wilson, I argue that Englishness should be understood as ‘a set of relations that are constantly being made and remade, contested and refigured, [and] that nonetheless produce among their contemporaneous witnesses the conviction of *historical difference*.’¹²¹ Clearly the idea of a separate and autonomous space for the English colonizer, from that of the colonised, needs to be replaced with a more fluid and mobile English subject. For Burton, such a notion of history, ‘strikes at the heart of Britain’s long ideological attachment to the narratives of the Island Story, of splendid isolation, and of European exceptionalism’.¹²²

¹²⁰ Homi K. Bhabha, ‘Life at the Border: Hybrid Identities of the Present,’ *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 14, 1 (Winter 1997): pp. 30-1.

¹²¹ Kathleen Wilson, ‘Citizenship, Empire and Modernity in the English Provinces, c.1720-90,’ *Eighteenth Century Studies*, vol 29, no. 1, (Autumn 1995): pp. 69-96. Argument borrowed from Burton, p. 140.

¹²² Burton, p. 140.