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TRANSITS

# Brown Romantics Poetry and Nationalism in the Global Nineteenth Century

MANU SAMRITI CHANDER



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- D*      *Derozio, Poet of India: The Definitive Edition*. Edited by Roskinka Chaudhri. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- HLCP*    *Henry Lawson: Collected Prose*. 3 vols. Edited by Colin Roderick. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1972.
- HLCV*    *Henry Lawson: Collected Verse*. 3 vols. Edited by Colin Roderick. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1967–1969.
- KPP*      *Keats's Poetry and Prose*. Edited by Jeffrey Cox. New York: Norton, 2008.

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## INTRODUCTION

### World Literature and World Legislation

What is a Poet? to whom does he address himself? and what language is to be expected from him?—He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind.

—William Wordsworth<sup>1</sup>

What is poetry? is so nearly the same question with what is a poet? that the answer to the one is involved in the solution of the other. For it is a distinction resulting from the poetic genius itself, which sustains and modifies the images, thoughts and emotions of the poet's own mind. The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other according to their relative worth and dignity.

—Samuel Taylor Coleridge<sup>2</sup>

A Poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because he has no Identity—he is continually in for—and filling some other Body—The Sun, the Moon, the Sea and Men and Women who are creatures of impulse are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute—the poet has none; no identity—he is certainly the most unpoetical of all God's Creatures.

—John Keats<sup>3</sup>

Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

—Percy Bysshe Shelley<sup>4</sup>



ROMANTIC POETS PRIVILEGED, indeed romanticized, the figure of the Poet, whether they emphasized, like Wordsworth, his “greater knowledge of human nature” and “more comprehensive soul,” or what Coleridge regarded as his “poetic genius,” or, perversely, his lack of such identity and unique status, in Keats’s terms, as “the most unpoetical of all God’s Creatures.” Of the numerous, endlessly quoted, self-consecrating Romantic formulations, however, Shelley’s is perhaps most notable for casting the question of poetic privilege in the plural form: “poets,” he claims, “are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.” With this claim, Shelley brings the Poet down to earth, out of the realm of ideas and into the world, where he, where *they* function and operate among other men—not just world-legislators, but legislators *of the world*, born of it, living in it, and, crucially, spread across it.

The unacknowledged rival to the community imagined by the novel in this respect, the Romantic figure of the poet as legislator took root throughout the British Empire in the nineteenth century, in cultural arenas as diverse as Calcutta, Georgetown, and Sydney.<sup>5</sup> Well before the anticolonial movements of the twentieth century—movements documented and shaped largely by novelists—poets whose aesthetic, philosophical, and political commitments were informed by the British Romantics labored to organize local readers into a collective whole, anticipating the rise of a reading nation that would not be fully realized in these poets’ lifetimes.<sup>6</sup> Their unfulfilled nationalist aspirations reveal both the potential for change embodied in Shelley’s claim that “[t]he most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry,” and the ways pressures from the imperial center inhibited the “awakening” of colonial peoples.<sup>7</sup>

The pressure against the development of a national literature was sometimes direct, as evidenced by reviews that openly dismissed colonial poetry as underdeveloped, imitative, and culturally backward. A less obvious source of prejudice against colonial poets lay within the tradition of English Romanticism itself. Even the most cosmopolitan Romantics fetishized racial and cultural differences, at once reflecting and solidifying England’s place as the empire’s seat of cultural authority. In this way, English poets *qua* world-legislators were complicit with the project of imperialism.<sup>8</sup>

Those figures that I have dubbed “Brown Romantics”—the “Eurasian” or “East Indian” Henry Derozio (1809–1831), the Afro-Guianese “Creole” Egbert Martin (1861–1890), and the Australian Henry Lawson (1867–1922)—struggled to achieve the status of legislators in their own right in order to challenge the dominance of English poets, mobilizing Romanticism against Romanticism. To study these poets is thus to grasp the relation of the techniques that inhibited independent development as well as those that ask us to see British Romanticism as a socially progressive discourse. For this reason, I suggest, it is wrong to understand the ambivalence that these writers demonstrate in laying claim to European literary lineage within a psychological problematic, whether that defined by Frantz Fanon’s model of a split colonial subjectivity or that described by Harold Bloom’s “anxiety of influence.”<sup>9</sup> To the contrary, I will argue, the uneasy relationship of the peripheral Romantics to the colonizer’s literary language presents us with a literary field symptomatically responsive to the ineradicable antagonisms organizing the sociocultural field that British literature bequeathed to members of its empire. Brown Romantics are, in every way, “*unacknowledged* legislators,” figures competing for relative privilege within their particular cultural arenas but in terms of what Pascale Casanova has described as “the world republic of letters,” a field of “literary rivalries . . . and struggles, which are always international.”<sup>10</sup>

To describe the relation of colonial literatures to the imperial center, I have labeled the colonial poets “brown.” In so doing, I want to ironize what might, at face value, be taken as a rather crude descriptor of racial difference, and, by thus calling attention to racial identity, challenge that basis for considering their poetry as a simple expression of it. To put it another way, “Brown Romantics” are not marginalized because they are brown; on the contrary, they are “brown” because they are marginalized. Their capacity to participate as poets in the cultural field is restricted by their relationship to the colonizer prior to their participation in it, which in turn exposes the racial dimension of “the world republic of letters.” This relationship makes it impossible for the colonial writer to enter into the cultural field free of a stigmatizing mark of difference, a sign of inferiority that operates in exactly the way race operates in empire—namely, to justify a form of subjugation so natural, indeed so evident, to the colonizer that it hardly requires any justification at all.<sup>11</sup>

The marginalization of the Brown Romantic is of course the consequence of an asymmetrical balance of power between center and periphery. Nevertheless, I find it instructive to think of the relation between the Brown Romantic and his English counterpart—the White Romantic—as one of positional symmetry. I

understand this symmetry as a shared position of "exception," Giorgio Agamben's term both for the sovereign who is exempt from the law and for what he calls "*homo sacer*," the marginalized figure who belongs to political society only insofar as he represents the limit of its legal protection. In Agamben's words, "We shall give the name *relation of exception* to the extreme form of relation by which something is included solely through its exclusion."<sup>12</sup> I will ask my readers to think of the political symmetry of the sovereign exception and its abject counterpart as it might operate within the discourse of taste, in which, according to Wordsworth's "Essay Supplemental to the Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*, "every author, as far as he is great and at the same time *original*, has had the task of *creating* the taste by which he is to be enjoyed."<sup>13</sup> By positioning the English Romantic in the sovereign position within the discourse of taste, Wordsworth's declaration arguably collaborates with British imperialism to figure the colonial poet as the exclusive inclusion of that discourse.

Given that the English Romantics were in the position to declare the laws of taste across the British colonies, they established the norms of taste by which the Brown as well as White Romantics were "to be enjoyed." The White Romantic alone was above the laws of poetry that he established, having achieved sovereign status across the empire, where the very names "Wordsworth," "Byron" and "Keats" became synonymous with "taste." The Brown Romantic, conversely, was exceptional in that, to be recognized as a poet, he had to subject himself to laws that stripped the poetic traditions native to his readership of the value that would, as colonial subjects, accord to English "taste." In so doing, paradoxically, the Brown Romantic either had to place himself within an indigenous tradition peripheral to the dominant tradition and be read as a lesser poet who observed rather than laid down the laws of taste, or else he had to risk the charge of inauthenticity, mimicry, or fraud. This double bind defines his position as one "exclusive inclusion," which systemically relegates the colonial writer to outsider status no matter which option he chooses. At the same time, the parallel situations of colonizing and colonized poets suggest that the two are in some sense mutually dependent. If the colonized can never achieve a position fully within the Eurocentric republic of letters, then the White Romantic can retain his sovereignty only insofar as those poets considered "lesser" or "peripheral" endorse his poetic principles.

In subtle ways, Brown Romantics did challenge these principles and thereby challenged the sovereignty of English Romantics. Yet, I will argue that their efforts are not legible according to familiar understandings of literary resistance. They are not "writing back with a vengeance," as a previous generation of postcolonial

criticism might have seen it. Rather their struggle represents a desire to realize the promise of plurality in Shelley's formulation, that the peripheral poet might equally serve as what Immanuel Kant would call "*Mitgesetzgeber*" or "co-legislator." Kant uses the term in *Theory and Practice* as an epithet for "citizen" in order to suggest that all citizens have the right to participate in defining the laws to which they are subject.<sup>14</sup> Along these very lines, Brown Romantics appealed for full citizenship in the world republic of letters. In order to do so, they first had to establish the symbolic status of the emerging nation within the broader context of the globe.

#### National Poets

Over the course of the eighteenth century, as Suvir Kaul puts it, "the 'stuff of the nation' . . . is naturalized in and through the work of poets," such that the nation "pervades their sense of self and vocation . . . [and] becomes an inescapable part of the paraphernalia of their craft."<sup>15</sup> As a result of such politicization of poetry along nationalist lines, the Romantic era witnesses the rise of the figure of the national poet, a widespread effort to consolidate cultural identity through the institution of poetry. This is evident, but why poets in particular emerge as what Emerson would call "representative men" is not so easy to determine. Virgil Nemoianu suggests that, in Eastern Europe at least, we have Byron to thank for this development. His celebrity (and his heroic death) became the model for such poets as Adam Mickiewicz (Poland), Sándor Petőfi (Hungary), and Mihai Eminescu (Romania), as well as Dionysios Solomos in Greece, Alexander Pushkin in Russia, and Esteban Echeverría in Argentina, all national poets in their own right.<sup>16</sup>

Across the British colonies, we find poets more like Robert Burns and Thomas Moore providing a model that inspired what Katie Trumpener calls "bardic nationalism" and Mary Ellis Gibson applies to nineteenth-century Indian poetry. Trumpener writes:

Responding to Enlightenment dismissals of Gaelic oral traditions, Irish and Scottish antiquarians reconceive national history and literary history under the sign of the bard. According to their theories, bardic performance binds the nation together across time and across social divides; it reanimates a national landscape made desolate first by conquest and then by modernization, infusing it with historical memory.<sup>17</sup>

Bardic nationalism can thus be understood as an assertion of the essential connection between poetry and orality, as well as between orality and an authentic



national culture.<sup>18</sup> The Brown Romantics certainly call upon the same relationship between modern nationalism and indigenous tradition. Thus where Derozio invokes minstrel figures and Martin draws on the rhetoric of Christian sermons, Lawson relies on the ballad form to suggest the nativeness of what was, in fact, an imported poetic tradition. All three nationalist poets paid heed to the Romantic concept of the poet as the voice of the people he wishes to represent.

Derozio, Martin, and Lawson all coupled this form of poetic nationalism rooted in oral tradition with a tradition rooted in print culture. During the nineteenth century, bardic performances circulated across the colonies in the form of periodicals from the *India Gazette* to Sydney's *Bulletin* to Georgetown's *Argosy*. Compared to more expensive monographs, these journals enjoyed wide popularity with the result that a relatively large, heterogeneous, and far-flung readership could imagine belonging to a single nation. It should be noted that these "imagined communities" were far from peaceable. Much the way that England witnessed, as Jon Klancher argues, the rise of multiple, conflicting reading audiences in the Romantic era, so too were Indian, Guianese, and Australian readers sharply divided along lines of taste and political ideology (which, of course, went hand in hand).<sup>19</sup> The challenge for the would-be poet-legislator was how to unite these readers into a cohesive nation. As my readings will demonstrate, Brown Romanticism invariably stages a dialectical relationship between a national tradition rooted in the figure of the bard and one produced as well as disseminated by print culture.<sup>20</sup>

In their attempt to produce a unified sense of community, these poets confronted irreconcilable forms of diversity, and they used the climate of cultural divisions within their actual readership to argue for their qualifications as poets to serve as "representative men." Starting off on this conceptual ground, I see their respective developmental trajectories as Brown Romantics as a process defined by shifts in their strategies to deal with inherently divided readerships that pitted the value of indigenous tradition against that of the colonial power. Both Derozio and Martin produced second collections that differed rather substantially from their debut volumes, and both did so to appeal to what Martin called "public taste."<sup>21</sup> Lawson pursued another way of dealing with the same division within the national readership, as his poetry shifted from a rabidly anti-imperial rhetoric to one marked by imperial (and white) pride. In order to accommodate the heterogeneity of aesthetic temperaments characterizing their respective national readerships, these poets sought to create the very taste to which they appealed—one that

corresponded to neither the indigenous nor the print cultural standard, though it contained elements of each. This tactic had as much to do with gaining the attention of the imperial center as it did with bringing together the nation, a balancing act that proved impossible to maintain.

#### Native Informants

Colonial literatures obviously were not pure expressions of the cultures that produced them. They were, as Kwame Anthony Appiah writes of African novels, "written by readers of English, French, and American novels, raised with a colonial canon in which, to put it crudely, narrative is the short story or the novel and literariness is something you learn about in the Anglophone world, by reading English Romantic poetry."<sup>22</sup> "English Romantic poetry," in my own view, is not the synecdoche it becomes in Appiah's formulation. For writers across the empire, to the contrary, Wordsworth, Byron, and Shelley provided paradigms of literariness itself. True, there were other paradigms as well: Derozio admired Hafiz and Tasso; Martin drew inspiration from Poe and Emerson; and, establishing his relationship to the anti-imperial, populist, bardic tradition, Lawson wrote, "I'd sooner laugh with Bobbie Burns / Than sneer with titl'd Byron."<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, each of these poets felt compelled to define himself as such in relation to the tradition of English Romanticism. Each adopted its formal and thematic concerns in order to claim that he himself was the source of literary value and that his poetry, then, was worthy of representing the spirit of the nation.

London had its own sense of what colonial literatures should look like. A review of Derozio's first collection in London's *Oriental Herald* asserted that Derozio should stick to writing about "[t]he present condition and future prospects of India" rather than try to imitate Byron and Moore.<sup>24</sup> Taking up the same line of critique, the same English reviewers who lambasted Martin's first collection of poetry for its religiosity, welcomed the turn to tropical themes in his second collection. In similar fashion, we find Lawson praised in London's *Academy* for "giv[ing] us Australian life, whether of the station or the mines, of the bush or the city, from within," and with practically the same stroke attacked for his lack of sophistication. In the patronizing terms of the reviewer, "Manner will, of course, come later . . . just now Australia is still too young, too busy, to be bothered with it."<sup>25</sup> The rather consistent critical demand for auto-ethnography on the part of these poets gives voice to the European desire to see colonial culture as an object of knowledge, not as the site of serious literary production.

Brown Romantics, then, were expected to function as "native informants," not only in the anthropological sense of the term but also as Gayatri Spivak uses it, that is to say, as the "name for that mark of expulsion from the name of Man—a mark crossing out the impossibility of the ethical relation."<sup>26</sup> I do not mean by adopting this concept to suggest that the Brown Romantics were in any sense subaltern figures outside the "circuits of citizenship."<sup>27</sup> They had indeed been called—directly by reviewers and indirectly by the demand of the literary market—to represent those who would otherwise be without "speech": the Hindu widow, the "superstitious" Caribbean Negro, or the laborers of the Australian bush. Yet this very limitation on acceptable subject matter effectively denied Brown Romantics full citizenship in the republic of letters.

By way of example—and as a means of introducing one of the poets I discuss at great length below—I want to consider the following qualification to an otherwise positive review of Derozio's first collection in the *Quarterly Oriental Magazine*. Commenting on Derozio's use of imagery in the poem "Heaven," the reviewer dismisses the versification as "unexceptionable" but then goes on to wonder:

But where did our author learn, that "Heaven" was a fabulous land of bubbling fountains, perennial streams, and fields blooming with never-fading flower, that lend their perfume to the atmosphere, and trees perpetually loaded with luscious fruits? We may meet with such a description of "Heaven" in the pages of Arabian fiction; but we certainly do not expect to find it in the writings of Christians. It may be urged, that our author has availed himself of a poetical license, and that its use in the present instance ought to have silenced captiousness: but our objection is too weighty and important, to be so easily removed, and we maintain that the sacredness of the ground, which the author was treading, ought to have secured it from all trifling.<sup>28</sup>

The implications are clear: the heathen poet is not writing from his own experience but is under the spell of "Oriental" literature (Arabian, Indian, whatever), which leads him to "trifle" with Christian tradition. His failure to restrict the archive of sacred imagery marks Derozio's work as less than serious poetry. This portion of the review prompts a letter to the editor of the *India Gazette* from a reader who identifies himself as "Peter Plain," who roundly denounces this one critical remark by identifying the biblical source of Derozio's images chapter and verse. Rosinka Chaudhuri finds textual evidence to suggest that the letter was written by Derozio

himself: "It was obviously not possible for him to sign his own name . . . but it is doubtful any one else could have written such a letter in such detail or in such a manner."<sup>29</sup> To this I would add that the review had nevertheless achieved the objective of silencing Derozio in that it forced him into a position from which he could speak only through the voice of an alter ego.

This act of epistemic violence exposes the broader inequities of the cultural field by "crossing out the impossibility of the ethical relation," in Spivak's words. Derozio's reviewer grants colonial poets' status as "Man," therefore binding them to the English reader by an ethical tie. Yet, in one and the same gesture that reviewer excludes him to a subordinate position within that category where the Brown Romantic cannot challenge the aesthetic tradition of the colonial power. By talking back to empire in an anonymous letter to the editor, Derozio performs what I consider a paradigmatically Romantic gesture. In combating the reviewer's sense of appropriate imagery, he also creates a basis on which these antithetical interlocutors can come to agree. That is to say, Derozio's response asserts the right of a Brown poet to speak as a man within an imagined community founded on cosmopolitan ideals.

#### Cosmopolitans

Brown Romantics turned to poetry as the means by which a more hospitable cultural field might emerge, a republic of letters forged around the ideals of global participation. I locate the model for this kind of cosmopolitanism in Kant, not, as one might expect, in his later political writings but in the *Critique of Judgment*.<sup>30</sup> In the section on the Antinomy of Taste, Kant argues that, in matters of taste, there may be contention, but it must be coupled with a "hope of coming to terms."<sup>31</sup> Disagreement is understood in this context as the potential for agreement among a community of subjects, the possibility of peaceful accord. This proto-Romantic claim anticipates a kind of literary cosmopolitanism that we see operating in the Brown Romantics, whose struggle with the imperial center is coupled with a desire to establish a field in which the colonial poet could contest taste as part of a transnational dialogue among peers.

I would illustrate how the Brown Romantics work toward this end by returning to the case of Derozio's "Heaven" and focusing on the composition of the poem rather than its reception. The poem is written, according to its opening note, in "Imitation of Lord Byron's 'Know ye the land where the cypress and

myrtle.” Derozio is referring here to Byron’s Oriental tale, *The Bride of Abydos*, which begins:

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle  
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?  
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,  
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime!<sup>32</sup>

Derozio’s “Imitation” opens by mimicking the dactylic tetrameter, diction, and syntax of the English original:

Know ye the land where the fountain is springing,  
Whose waters give life, and whose flow never ends;  
Where Cherub and Seraph in concert are singing  
The hymn that in odour and incense ascends!<sup>33</sup>

While we could certainly read this echo as a form of flattery, the poem clearly does something quite different with the Orientalist landscape than Byron does. While Byron names the East “the land of the Sun” (line 16) and has its “beams ever shine” there (line 6), Derozio calls attention to the Orientalist epistemology that organizes what knowledge we can derive there (“Know ye”) along a set of geopolitical axes in relation to the sun.<sup>34</sup> In doing so, Derozio redraws these axes so that they define a space where God’s glory eclipses the light of the sun:

Know ye the land, where the sun cannot shine,  
Where his light would be darkened by glory divine;<sup>35</sup>

Where Byron’s poem refers to the Ottoman Empire, Derozio refers to the Christian Heaven, which he later names “love’s hallowed empire.”<sup>36</sup> The epithet suggests a revision of the imperialism undergirding Byron’s Orientalism. But even though one cannot fail to detect that Derozio has built his poem in contention with Byron’s, the poem cannot be dismissed as a simple act of resistance. Indeed, it seems to me, Derozio has entered into a contentious relationship with his famous predecessor in order to sustain the possibility of “coming to terms” with Byron’s Orientalism. To recast it in Kantian terms, Derozio has entered into an agreement to disagree, implicitly endorsing a heterogeneous cultural field as allowing for a more even distribution of literary authority than a field that aimed at unifying participants. His critique of Orientalism has a cosmopolitical end.

If this is indeed the case, then, in my view, it is of paramount importance to distinguish this kind of Kantian cosmopolitanism, which pursues the ends of univer-

sal hospitality by allowing for disagreement, from the other strains of Romantic cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitanism that English Romanticism espoused and that colonial Romantics would then rehearse served to exaggerate differences between cultural groups rather than to eradicate them. When Leigh Hunt advocates the “love of looking abroad upon men and things” in *The Examiner* or Shelley insists that the good poet “must put himself in the place of another and of many others,” both are proceeding to do so on the basis of what Spivak would consider a limited and homogeneous “name of Man.”<sup>37</sup> The same charge of bigotry can be leveled at the Brown Romantics: Derozio’s work features anti-Islamic sentiment, Martin figures all non-Christians as heathens in need of saving, and Lawson was a rabid white supremacist, thoroughly committed to the eradication of Asians in particular.<sup>38</sup> These incidents of religious and racial intolerance warn us not to idealize Brown Romantics as figures of resistance to the oppression of white Western imperialism, even as we locate within their appeals for citizenship the desire for a more hospitable republic of letters.

#### Brown Romanticism

My argument is consistent with the aims of the figures I consider in the chapters that follow, the purpose of which is to shift the field of Romantic scholarship and criticism toward the ideals of universal hospitality by calling attention to its genuinely unacknowledged legislators. The critical lineage for such a project traces back to the pioneering work on Romanticism and gender of the 1980s and 1990s. Projects such as Anne Mellor’s *Romanticism and Feminism* and *Romanticism and Gender* and Gary Kelly’s *Women, Writing, and Revolution, 1790–1827* not only worked to revise the canon but also to attend to the way women’s writing, in Mary Favret’s phrase, “interrupts canonization.”<sup>39</sup> The outcome of such “interruptions” was not just a broader collection of Romantic texts, but a new means of theorizing subjectivity and intersubjectivity in the Romantic era. The present book similarly aspires to do more than identify the absence of colonial writers from the Romantic canon. Instead, by reading Derozio, Martin, and Lawson as Romantics, I want to define as quintessentially Romantic a dialectic between dissent and agreement in which the conflict over taste proceeds in the name of peaceable reconciliation. If world literatures are, in Casanova’s phrase, “combative literatures,” Romantic world literature, I want to show, is distinguished by the fact that its struggles are governed by Kant’s “hope of coming to terms.”<sup>40</sup>

To develop this argument, I have chosen to focus on authors rather than cultures and on works rather than discourses. A glance at the excellent work on



nation and empire in relation to Romanticism should reveal even to the skeptic an unsurprising trend: the Romantic author is not “dead” in Roland Barthes’s sense of the word, but alive and well—provided that he’s “White.”<sup>41</sup> To organize my chapters around poets and how they sought to define themselves in this role strikes me as particularly appropriate in the case of poets who conscientiously adopted the Romantic figure of the poet as their prototype. The Romantic cult of the author, all too apparent in the epigraphs that open this introduction, is not only an obvious starting point for understanding how poets imagined literary communities in the nineteenth century but also an indicator of how perplexed, how fraught with contradictions, were the results. With this in mind, I hope to convince my readers that our understanding remains incomplete so long as we confine the influence of Romanticism to Europe and North America. The same can be said for periodization.

Romanticism is generally confined to a special cultural historical moment bookended by the revolution in France and either the First Reform Act or the coronation of Queen Victoria at the other end. William Galperin and Susan Wolfson’s notion of a “Romantic Century” that spans from 1750 to 1850 does little to challenge the terms by which we understand the Romantic era as just that, an era of European cultural history.<sup>42</sup> There have been useful attempts to think, in David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam’s titular phrase, “the age of revolutions in global context,” and they propose a span from 1760 to 1840, which begins well before the revolutions in North America and France.<sup>43</sup> Evan Gottlieb offers a similar perspective in *Romantic Globalism* (his dates are 1750–1830) and in *Global Romanticism* (1760–1820).<sup>44</sup> By contrast, I want to look at how Romanticism spreads with and in reaction to imperialism in Asia, the Caribbean, and Australia. I thus approach Romanticism as a nineteenth-century development but one that happens as dynamic public spheres emerge in other places and define themselves in a fraught relation to the English republic of letters. To include these non-contemporaneous developments under the umbrella of Romanticism, we cannot fall back on the conventional account of the emergence of the modern nation during the Romantic period, much less on most existing theoretical explanations of the part that poetry played in this process.

By relinquishing conventional literary historiography, I don’t claim to offer a complete account of Romanticism’s relationship to nationalism. My study necessarily overlooks the literature produced outside particular urban centers—Calcutta, Georgetown, Sydney, and London. Nor does it even gesture toward an explanation of non-Anglophone literatures. As I have suggested, it hopes to do some of the same

work for geographically peripheral Romantic poets that feminist scholarship and criticism has done for overlooked women writers. Here, especially, I see a possible convergence of my own project with that of other critics. The aspiring national poet, compulsory native informant, and conflicted cosmopolitan are arguably positions that authors such as Felicia Hemans and Anna Laetitia Barbauld assume, even though the role of the nation’s literary “ambassador” (Nemoianu’s epithet for the national poet) was almost invariably figured as that of a man. To offer but one example, in her poem, “A la patria” (1874), the Dominican poet and educator Salomé Ureña makes use of bardic tropes to proclaim a new day for her people:

*con santo regocijo descuelgo mi laúd,  
para decir al mundo, si te juzgó vencida,  
que, fénix, resucitas con nueva juventud;*

[with holiest joy I take up my lute,  
to tell the world, which deemed you dead,  
that you, Phoenix, are resurrected with youth anew;]<sup>45</sup>

Ureña serves as a synecdoche of all the poets necessarily excluded from this study, thus as the means of emphasizing its overarching purpose: to define a more global Romanticism—one that looks beyond the Anglophone world—as the horizon of my own project and, I hope, of scholarship in the field. Let me close this introduction with an expression of my hope that other scholars will see where and how to extend my engagement with a set of poets who laid out the stakes, limits, and risks of writing Romantic poetry in “other” parts of the British Empire. Through such an effort, I believe, it may just be possible to release the Brown Romantic from a position, to some degree shared with women and working-class writers of the nineteenth century, that endowed those poets who were not only white and male, but could also claim, by virtue of their privileged education, the authority of poet-legislators of the world. The only way I see to realize the perpetual dream of a public sphere founded on an agreement to disagree is to undo the logic of the exclusive inclusion, and to begin to acknowledge those participants within the republic of letters who have been excluded from the body of poetry that determines the laws of literature.

## Notes

1. William Wordsworth, “Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*,” in *Wordsworth’s Poetry and Prose*, ed. Nicholas Halmi (New York: Norton, 2014), 85.

2. Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, in *The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. James Engell and Walter Jackson Bate (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), vol. 7, II, 15–16.
3. John Keats, "To Richard Woodhouse [October 27th, 1818]," in *KPP*, 295.
4. Percy Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*, in *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Freistat (New York: Norton, 2002), 535.
5. Among the many works that have identified the centrality of the novel to the formation of the modern nation, see especially Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006). The development of a new understanding of and spread of nationalism according to what Walter Benjamin terms "homogeneous empty time" is, for Anderson, central to nineteenth-century nationalism and requires us to "consider . . . two forms of imagining which first flowered in Europe in the eighteenth century: the newspaper and the novel" (25).
6. Though the novel arguably has been central to postcolonial literature, poetry has also played a significant role in the development of new literary traditions. See, for instance, Jahan Ramazani, *The Hybrid Muse: Postcolonial Poetry in English* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001) and also his *A Transnational Poetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), especially chapter 7.
7. Shelley, *Defence of Poetry*, 535.
8. On the consonance of Shelley's seemingly progressive notion of "world-legislation" with the rhetoric of imperialism, see Suvir Kaul, *Poems of Nation, Anthems of Empire: English Verse in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 275.
9. See Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove, 2008); and Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).
10. Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M. B. DeBevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 36. According to Casanova's model of world literature, nations have continually struggled with (European) centers of literary dominance (especially, she argues, France) for the right to be acknowledged as literary centers in their own right. Beginning in the sixteenth century, "the countries of Europe gradually entered into competition on the strength of their own literary 'assets' and traditions" (11). In the nineteenth century, she continues, the Americas began to participate in the contest, and finally, the third world countries of Africa and Asia entered in the twentieth century. In each case, the republic's "geography is based on the opposition between a capital, on the one hand, and peripheral dependencies whose relationship to this center is defined by their aesthetic distance from it" (12). While my project questions Casanova's chronology—arguing centrally that Britain's territories were engaged in a struggle with the center well before decolonization—I share the notion that politically subordinate areas are bound to the center in a relationship of struggle. On the problems within Casanova's chronology, see Aamir Mufti, *Forgetting English! Orientalism and World Literatures* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 58.
11. The racialized logic of exclusion was not lost on the Brown Romantics. Henry Lawson, in a note to his 1892 poem, "The Southern Scout; or, The Natives of the Land," wrote of his title: "The writer wishes, to state, for the benefit of the majority of the English people, that Australians born of Europeans have been called 'natives' for many years. Also that Australians are not all black, or even brown, neither are they red. Likewise, that the progeny of Marster 'Jarge' or 'Willum' as went

- 'abrad' and came to Australia, are not necessarily little savages, unless, indeed, the Master Jarge or Willum aforesaid happens to live with a black gin" (HLCV I, 1, 443). All prose, poetry, and manuscript material by Henry Lawson is reprinted with the permission of HarperCollins Publishers.
12. Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 18.
13. Wordsworth, *Wordsworth's Poetry and Prose*, 522 (italics in original).
14. Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*, ed. Hans Reiss, trans. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 77. It should be noted, however, that Kant's democratic vision does not suggest a universal right to legislate: "The only qualification required by a citizen (apart, of course, from being an adult male, is that he must be his own master (*sui iuris*), and must have some property" (78, italics in original).
15. Kaul, *Poems of Nation*, 132.
16. Virgil Nemoianu, "National Poets' in the Romantic Age: Emergence and Importance," in *Romantic Poetry*, ed. Angela Esterhammer (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002), vol. 7, 249–55.
17. Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), xi; Mary Ellis Gibson, *Indian Angles: English Verse in Colonial India from Jones to Tagore* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011).
18. On the bardic association between voice and poetry in the imperial context, see also James Mulholland, *Sounding Imperial: Poetic Voice and the Politics of Empire, 1730–1820* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013). Mulholland demonstrates that, contrary to Trumpener's assertion, the English employment of bardic tropes was not a matter of appropriation but one of collaboration.
19. Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790–1832* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).
20. Julia M. Wright's twin notions of "antiquarian nationalism" and "inaugural nationalism" are also useful in the context. Where bardic performances would seem to suggest the sustenance of a native tradition, print nationalism can be read as the creation of a new culture of shared identity. Brown Romanticism, accordingly, can be understood as intersecting with both of these models, provided we emphasize that the "native" tradition was already thoroughly intertwined with nonnative, European cultures. See Julia M. Wright, *Ireland, India, and Nationalism in Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 31.
21. *LLL*, v.
22. Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Cosmopolitan Reading," in *Cosmopolitan Geographies: New Locations in Literature and Culture*, ed. Vinay Dharwadkar (New York: Routledge, 2001), 206.
23. Henry Lawson, "Laughing and Sneering," in *HLCV* I, 38; lines 3–4.
24. *D*, 422.
25. *HLCV* III, 68.
26. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 6.
27. *Ibid.*, 310.



# INTRODUCTION

28. *D*, 77.
29. *D*, 390.
30. I thus follow Hannah Arendt in reading Kant's third *Critique* as a necessary point of entry into his political thought. See Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 14: "The topics of the *Critique of Judgment*—the particular, whether a fact of nature or an event in history; the faculty of judgment as the faculty of man's mind to deal with it; sociability of men as the condition of the functioning of this faculty, that is, the insight that men are dependent on their fellow men not only because of their having a body but precisely for their mental faculties—these topics, all of them of eminent political significance—that is, important for the political—were concerns of Kant, long before he finally, after finishing the critical business (*das kritische Geschäft*), turned to them when he was old."
31. Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 205.
32. George Gordon, Lord Byron, *The Bride of Abydos*, in *Lord Byron: The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. Jerome McGann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980–1993), vol. 3, 107–47; lines 1–4.
33. Derozio, "Heaven," in *D*, 107–8; lines 1–4.
34. Byron, *The Bride of Abydos*, lines 16, 6.
35. Derozio, "Heaven," lines 5–6.
36. *Ibid.*, line 22.
37. Leigh Hunt, "Preface to *The Examiner* I, 1808," in *The Selected Works of Leigh Hunt*, vol. 1, *Periodical Essays, 1805–14*, ed. Gregory P. Kucich and Jeffrey N. Cox (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2003), 80; Shelley, *A Defence of Poetry*, 517.
38. On Derozio's "generally hostile depiction of Islam," see C. A. Bayly, *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 87.
39. Anne Mellor, ed. *Romanticism and Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); Anne Mellor, *Romanticism and Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Gary Kelly, *Women, Writing, and Revolution, 1790–1827* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Mary Favret, *Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 11.
40. Pascale Casanova, "Combative Literatures," trans. Nicholas Gray. *New Left Review* 72 (November–December 2011): 123–34.
41. Saree Makdisi's seminal *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) and Nigel Leask's *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)—to list but two influential examples—feature chapters on Wordsworth, Shelley, Byron, Blake, Scott, Coleridge, and De Quincey.
42. William Galperin and Susan Wolfson, "The Romantic Century," *Romantic Circles*, <https://www.rc.umd.edu/reference/misc/confarchive/crisis/crisisa.html>.
43. David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, eds., *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c.1760–1840* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).



HENRY DEROZIO AND THE BEGINNINGS  
OF INDIAN ROMANTICISM

I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanscrit works. I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the valuation of the Orientalists 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 of education.<sup>1</sup>

**T**HOMAS MACAULAY'S 1835 MINUTE on Indian education, with its now infamous characterization of Eastern literatures, was delivered six years after the Indian poet Henry Derozio's death, yet the central assumption from which it works—the superiority of European cultural achievement over that of Indians (and Arabs)—was already widespread during Derozio's lifetime. This assumption was not uncontested: the very Orientalists whom Macaulay recruits in support of his argument were among his chief opponents, advocates of a system of education that would cultivate natives of India by widening access to their own literary tradition. Still and all, even the most sincere proponents of Indian literary studies rely on a narrative of cultural development in which the West is not simply conceptually *above* the East—in other words, superior—but temporally *ahead of* it. For Orientalists and Anglicists alike, India was out of sync with literary modernity, at best quaint or wondrous, at worst barbaric or primitive.

This construction of India—which fits Johannes Fabian's description of "allochronism," or cultural phenomena belonging to another (*allos*) time (*chronos*)—remained relatively consistent throughout the Indian education debates of

the early nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Both sides agree that contemporary Indian literature does not contribute to a discussion of India's cultural achievements, a point that the seventeen-year-old Derozio, writing for the *India Gazette* under the name "Juvenis" in 1826, might seem to support:

Why is it that Literature does not flourish in this country—is the soil or the climate uncongenial to the culture of so delicate a flower—or is there a paucity of those talents which are necessary to accelerate its growth? [...] There is something that withers it in spite of every effort, and every care. What it is, I have never yet satisfactorily ascertained;

Having introduced this idea, however, Derozio proceeds to undermine it:

[A]nd to speculate upon the question here, is more than I can afford to do. Some have said that Colonization would effectually remove the evil complained of, but this remains to be shown, and when that is attempted, it will be found that there is more talk than [*sic*] truth in this round assertion.—Colonization is to benefit India beyond all cultivation—at least some sanguine spectators say so; and if it should really be the case, there appears to me another obstacle in the way, and that is, the practicability of Colonization. However, as I intend to take this subject of Colonization into consideration "some other day," it would be prudent to reserve my remarks till then.<sup>3</sup>

To explain the interaction of literature and colonization, Derozio uses an extended agricultural metaphor familiar to nineteenth-century audiences: literature as flower, rooted in the soil of the country, nourished by the poet. Yet it is the failure of this metaphor that most interests Derozio: no amount of cultivation will yield a native literature. Nor will "colonization," a term that carries its own horticultural connotations, "remove the evil" that stunts the growth of a national literary tradition. Why these two strategies are futile is left undetermined. Derozio resigns himself to the mystery of literature's inability to thrive on its own and sets aside his comments on colonialism for "some other day." Unfortunately, Derozio never did take up commentary on this subject again as promised. It would be interesting to hear how he understood his relationship to colonialism, which strikes me as more complicated than the opposition voiced in this passage would suggest.

Derozio's mother, Sophia Johnson, was an English settler in India (his father was Portuguese, and there is evidence of native Indian ancestry on his father's side as well), though his indebtedness to British colonialism goes beyond blood. The

poet was educated at Drummond's Academy in Calcutta, a school distinguished for educating Indians alongside European children, and he was exposed at an early age to the philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment and English Romantic poets. He embraced the secular, even atheistic philosophies of these groups, to the point where he was eventually ousted from a teaching position at the Hindu College. Indeed, Rosinka Chaudhuri detects a strong Shelleyan presence in Derozio's life and work, noting the "enabling radicalism of lifestyle and philosophy that Derozio introduced to Calcutta . . . [which] had a deeper impact on the evolving psyche of Bengali modernity than anticipated at the time."<sup>4</sup> Whatever his professed thoughts about the usefulness of colonialism to the development of Indian literature, Derozio's capacity to adapt the authors and ideas introduced to him through colonial education suggest a cultural hybridity that made him well suited to bring Romanticism to the task of formulating Indian nationalism.

That he is both indebted to and skeptical of the colonial mission does not seem to trouble Derozio. To circumvent the issue of poetic origins, he refuses the available narratives of literary development and turns away from the twin notions of cultivation and colonization. As he puts it, "Without being able to satisfy myself why Literature does not thrive in India, I have come to the determination of tearing out the leaves of my Scrap-book, and sending them for publication to one of the newspapers."<sup>5</sup> In doing so, Derozio also revises the horticultural metaphor: Indian literature will not develop organically because it must be pulled together from scraps, its "leaves" spread across in the pages of the local paper. Instead of a vertical model of literary production—in which literature springs up from the soil—Derozio offers a horizontal one, which emphasizes distribution and access: "there is no chance of anything being read," he declares, "unless in the columns of a Gazette."<sup>6</sup>

To translate this revision of the colonial model of literary production into historical terms, we might describe Derozio's model of literary production and reception as spatial rather than temporal. Against the allochronic assumptions of both Orientalists and the Anglicists with whom they argued, Derozio asserts India's coevalness and his position as poet within a present-day literary field that is competitive, dynamic, and, importantly, transnational. This desire for coevalness, according to John Grant, Derozio's friend and the chief editor at the *India Gazette*, was thoroughly self-conscious: "To bring out a book," Grant writes, "was to [Derozio] . . . a very serious undertaking, because one of the first considerations was, that the book should *sell*. To render this probable, he felt it necessary to give in to what he believed to be the general taste, and was therefore obliged to adopt

the popular and fashionable model.<sup>7</sup> Grant refers here specifically to Derozio's long poem *The Fakeer of Jungheera*, which was criticized for adopting the style of the Oriental tale popularized by Byron. As I will argue, however, Derozio's sense of current literary trends and the possibilities for poetic expression they offered was evident throughout his brief career as a poet.

In order to consider the strategies and stakes of Derozio's claim to modernity, this chapter focuses on the means by which the poet sets his work in conversation with that of his British contemporaries. He engages these contemporaries directly, through epigraphs or direct textual references, and indirectly by taking up tropes and themes common to the Romantics. This prompted any number of critics to consider him imitative and lacking in originality. For others, Derozio represented the promise of an India coming into its own (though not there quite yet) and thus a kind of innovator. While I understand full well what qualities of the person and poetry support such readings, the fact that his poetry seems to support both invites an alternative reading. Thus I prefer to see Derozio as an interlocutor, who defines himself through his poetic allegiances, as well as his subtle opposition to other possible affiliations, and the questions his poetry consequently raises about what it means to be a poet in a rapidly globalizing world.<sup>8</sup> When read in this way, Derozio's use of familiar tropes and established forms proclaims his identity as a modern poet, while his revisions of these tropes and forms distinguish him from other producers in a field that places supreme value on originality.

I begin by looking at Derozio's construction of the poet-figure in his 1827 *Poems*. Prior to the appearance of this volume, Derozio had published poems under such names as "Juvenis," "Leporello," and simply "East Indian." However, the 1827 volume marks the turning point in Derozio's career when he consolidates his identity as "Henry Derozio," *poet*. For Derozio, I demonstrate, the category of the poet represented a figure capable of transnational communication, one who transcended geographical and cultural boundaries by touching upon the universal. Derozio nevertheless couples his Romantic universalism with an Indian particularism, thus establishing his uniqueness among his contemporaries. This project is particularly visible in the title poem of his second collection, *The Fakeer of Jungheera*, which mobilizes the popular genre of the Oriental tale against Western constructions of India as either culturally backward or the site of wonder and mystery. By representing India as the site of real and relevant political struggle, Derozio ultimately defines his role as that of a Shelleyan "world-legislator," one whose responsibility lies in imaginatively reshaping the political realities of the time.

## Poetic Fame

The preface to the 1827 volume introduces Derozio as an Indian in pursuit of transnational recognition: "Born, and educated in India, and at the age of eighteen [the author] ventures to present himself as a candidate for poetic fame."<sup>9</sup> This "poetic fame" is a particular kind of distinction, one that is itself poeticized, romanticized. It does more than make the poet known; it makes the poet known *as a poet*, a figure possessed of a particular cultural privilege in the early nineteenth century. Rooted in anxiety over the devaluation of poetry brought on, perhaps, by the expansion and diversification of the reading public, poetic fame became a matter of legitimacy rather than popularity. In the particular context of Calcutta, it meant distinction within a burgeoning public sphere, one that existed "on a par with London as a center of publication through the 1860s."<sup>10</sup> To achieve poetic fame within such a context meant, according to the Romantic ideology of the period, to transcend that very context, to exist above and outside the cultural field.

This revised basis for authorizing one's place as poet is responsible for the Romantic representation of the poet as a solitary genius, one whose authority is bound up with his unsociability. Actual poets, however, were frequently sociable. Derozio, for instance, was well known and well liked among the Bengali literati, and he participated actively in the coterie culture of the educated elite. And yet his work frequently depicts the poet as a solitary and thus socially marginal figure, as we see in such poems as "Tasso," "The Poet's Habitation," and "The Poet's Grave."

In his poem to Torquato Tasso, he writes of the Italian poet, confined to a hospital for the insane:

Yet while thy spirit in a prison pined,  
And while thy grief almost to madness grew,  
Thy minstrelsy was wafted on each wind,  
On every breeze thy fame triumphant flew,  
And spake, through every land, of thy immortal mind.<sup>11</sup>

Poetic fame, Derozio suggests, crosses temporal and spatial boundaries, as it exceeds the boundaries of verse itself. Of the thirteen lines that comprise the poem, all are pentametric except for line 7 ("And spake . . ."), where the extent of Tasso's widespread fame seems to demand an extra foot.

Tasso's physical sequestration in St. Anne's hospital comes to signify the cultural alienation of the consecrated poet. From this position outside society, Derozio suggests, Tasso attains global poetic recognition. In fact, the same edition



of *Jerusalem Delivered* from which Derozio takes his epigraph notes that the poem "was translated into the Latin, French, Spanish, and even the Oriental languages, almost as soon as it appeared."<sup>12</sup> In Derozio's own time, Romantics such as Goethe and Byron had already begun to recognize the Italian poet for his genius and tragic life, a point to which Derozio alludes in the poem's penultimate line, "now . . . bards . . . worship at thy shrine."<sup>13</sup> This consecration of poets by poets is obviously a self-serving strategy. It reasserts the cultural value of poetry, which is as beneficial to the consecrator as to the consecrated. In this case, Tasso not only reaffirms the importance of poetry to society, but also calls attention to the translingual nature of poetic fame, which implies that greatness transcends any particular cultural identity.

This poetic project is visible as well in "The Poet's Grave," which draws its epigraph from Thomas Campbell's "Ode to the Memory of Burns":

O deem not, 'midst this worldly strife,  
An idle art the Poet brings:  
Let high Philosophy control,  
And sages calm the stream of life,  
'Tis he refines its fountain-springs,  
The nobler passions of the soul.<sup>14</sup>

Campbell's *in memoriam* is very much about a national Scottish tradition. Campbell credits Robert Burns with teaching "patriot-pride" to the "high-souled peasantry," providing the "Scottish exile" with the "memory of his native land" and recalling for the Scottish soldier "[t]he scenes that blessed him when a child."<sup>15</sup> Tellingly, the lines Derozio excerpts are among the only ones in Campbell's poem that reference neither Scotland nor identifiably Scottish tropes. In his selection, then, Derozio translates Campbell's nationalist iteration of Burns's poetic fame into a more generalized statement about the social function of the poet, whose craft is no "idle art."

Derozio establishes his poet-figure's position outside any recognizable national context, placing his grave "beside the ocean's foamy surge,/On an untrodden, solitary shore."<sup>16</sup> "There," he continues

let his ashes lie  
Cold and unmourned; save, when the seamew's cry  
Is wafted on the gale, as if 'twere given  
For him whose hand is cold, whose lyre is riven!  
There, all in silence, let him sleep his sleep;  
No dream shall flit into that slumber deep—

No wandering mortal thither once shall wend,  
There, nothing o'er him but the heavens shall weep,  
There, never pilgrim at his shrine shall bend,  
But holy stars alone their nightly vigils keep!<sup>17</sup>

Mourned only by "seamew's cry" and the heavens, the consecrated poet is decidedly unpopular, yet his poetic fame seems limited only by the cosmos.

A similar geography is described in "The Poet's Habitation: A Fragment," which begins by situating the poet in a specific locale, only to erase its specificity:

It should be an Aegean isle,  
Where heaven, and earth, and ocean smile,  
More like an island of the blest  
Than aught that e'er this world possessed;<sup>18</sup>

Both poems present the poet as a hermetic figure, and both describe the sounds of the wind and the waves so as to suggest a kinship between poetic voice and nature. Yet there are key differences between the poems. Most obviously, one is about death, and the other about life—the "Grave" on the one hand and the "Habitation" on the other. The latter poem also introduces a companion for the ideal poet, a "tender soul more soft and fair / Than all the gathered sweetness there," though the maiden seems more part of the landscape than a cohabitant, fairer perhaps than the rest of the scenery yet just as passive.<sup>19</sup> In any case, the poet and his love are cut off from the rest of society: "None should be near me there, and none / Should share my happiness—but one—."<sup>20</sup>

More telling than the "tender soul" in the poem is the presence of the first person here, which is absent from both "Tasso" and "The Poet's Grave": "And on this island I should live / Without the joys that man can give."<sup>21</sup> "The Poet's Habitation" features the speaker's self-reflexive identification as a poet. This self-awareness complicates the idealized construction of the poet as existing outside the social sphere. We might note the modal logic of the poem, which contrasts with the jussive logic of "The Poet's Grave." Where that poem is built around hortatory verbs—"Be it beside the ocean's foamy surge," "let his ashes lie," "let him sleep"—"The Poet's Habitation" confronts the impossibility of transcending the boundaries of geography.<sup>22</sup> Where the poem insists that the poet should dwell upon "an island of the blest," it also suggests that he cannot: "But . . . this / Is, ah! too like unearthly bliss—"; the poem concludes, "'Tis all a poet's dream—."<sup>23</sup> The fragmentary nature of this final line, which breaks from the established pattern of tetrametric couplets, acknowledges the trope of the transcendent poet as

an unrealizable ideal. In "The Poet's Habitation," Derozio confronts the problem of earthliness. His effort to place the poet imaginatively outside a geographically grounded social order proves illusory. This poem—the last in the volume—breaks off without describing the world to which the speaker, no longer lost in his reveries, must return.

"Tasso," "The Poet's Grave," and "The Poet's Habitation" thus reveal, to use Mary Ellis Gibson's phrase, Derozio's "complex poetic geography."<sup>24</sup> According to this geography, spaces outside the recognizable borders of society become the locus of poetry, the promised land of "poetic fame." However, Derozio's romanticization of poets and poetry is more than naïve universalism. For even as Derozio aspires to the status of such consecrated poets as Tasso or Burns, it is the transnational recognition of Campbell and Byron, consecrating poets, that he actively pursues in the 1827 volume. That is to say, by participating in a dialogue about poetic universality, which exceeds the boundaries of time as well as space, Derozio establishes his currency as a real-world poet, "born," as his preface states, "and educated in India." In doing so, he asserts his relevance to the early nineteenth-century world republic of letters.

#### Indocentric Universalism

Derozio's engagement with the Romantic themes of poetic greatness and the universality of poetry reflects a desire to converse in the terms of his contemporaries in Britain, but not surprisingly, reviewers desired something rather different of Derozio. Finding his poetry poor in the loco-descriptive details expected of an Indian poet, several of his earliest reviewers commented on the lack of Indian subject matter in the 1827 volume. The *India Gazette*, noting that Derozio's "actual local observation" was limited to Bengal, wished to see him "muse amidst the ruins of Delhi"; the *New Monthly Magazine* simply noted that his first volume "contains little Indian and less English materials in the way of sentiment or illustration."<sup>25</sup> Indeed, sixty years after Derozio's initial reception (and nearly thirty years after his death), Rudyard Kipling lamented, "Henry Derozio . . . was bitten with Keats and Scott and Shelley, and overlooked in his search for material things that lay nearest to him."<sup>26</sup> Derozio's essential failing as what Kipling calls "the poet of the race" is that, by imitating the Romanticism of Keats et al., he abandoned the local in favor of the universal.

But this opposition fails to hold up. For when Derozio gestures toward universal themes—as he frequently does—he does so in "Indian" terms. Thus, in his

*ars poetica*, "Poetry," Derozio offers up a transcultural vision of poetry's capacity to animate the soul that reveals itself as the product of an Indocentric imagination:

Sweet madness!—when the youthful brain is seized  
With that delicious phrenzy which it loves,  
It raving reels, to very rapture pleased,—  
And then through all creation wildly roves:  
Now in the deep recesses of the sea,  
And now to highest Himaloy it mounts;  
Now by the fragrant shores of Araby,  
Or classic Greece, or sweet Italia's founts,  
Or through her wilderness of ruins;—now  
Gazing on beauty's lip, or valour's brow;  
Or rivaling the nightingale and dove  
In pouring fourth its melody of love;  
Or giving to the gale, in strains of fire,  
Immortal harpings—like a seraph's lyre.—<sup>27</sup>

The poem is something of a formal anomaly. The first two quatrains are borrowed from the Shakespearean sonnet. But the ninth line shifts to rhyming couplets. The poem also lacks a strong volta, turning instead on the subtle transition from prepositional phrases to participial ones in line ten (again refusing the Shakespearean tradition of turning at thirteen and the Petrarchan tradition of turning at nine). As goes the sonnet form, so goes the sonnet's logic structure.

Rather than state, develop, and complicate a lyrical argument, Derozio offers a wandering logic, one that "wildly roves" rather than syllogistically progresses. The poem travels from East to West and from present to past. The journey back in time recalls the poet's journey in Shelley's *Alastor*, where the visionary sees in the ruins of the Near East the "thrilling secrets of the birth of time."<sup>28</sup> As Saree Makdisi notes, Shelley's time traveler presents a paradox: "If this *is* a move back in time, are these temples and palaces not alive, rather than being dead? And if this *is not* a move back in time, then where are the living people of the present?"<sup>29</sup> The same problem appears in Derozio's poem, as the "youthful brain" is transported to "classic Greece, or sweet Italia's . . . / . . . wilderness of ruins." In this case, it is the seat of Western civilization that is both glorified as the source of things and imaginatively evacuated of its present culture.

In this way, "Poetry" exemplifies what Makarand Paranjape identifies as Derozio's "systematic and structural hybridization."<sup>30</sup> For Paranjape, "it is not possible to



explain or understand a poet like Derozio merely by speaking of influence and imitation. In fact, whatever he borrowed, he superimposed in his local, Indian material, creating a new idiom in English poetry.<sup>31</sup> This "new idiom," I would add, is not a matter of radical innovation but a strategy for individuation, a way for Derozio to establish his position as a current and relevant cultural producer with a distinct cultural perspective. From the outset of the 1827 volume, Derozio works to define his role as an Indian poet who is part of a broader, transnational poetic project.

The collection opens with an epigraph from Thomas Moore's "To the Harp of Erin": "If the pulse of the patriot, soldier, or lover / Have throbb'd at our lay, 'twas thy glory alone; / I was but as the wind passing heedlessly over, / And all the wild sweetness I wak'd was thy own."<sup>32</sup> Derozio then mobilizes the trope of the harp toward his own nationalistic ends. The opening poem, "The Harp of India," echoes the sentiment voiced in his earlier comments on the absence of a vibrant, modern Indian literature: "Thy music once was sweet—who hears it now?"<sup>33</sup> As in the earlier essay, Derozio identifies himself as the source of a new literary tradition, concluding, "if thy notes divine / May be by mortal waken'd once again, / Harp of my country, let me strike the strain!"<sup>34</sup> Despite the absence of "local, Indian material," and despite the obvious indebtedness to Moore's Irish trope, Derozio makes clear that what is at stake in his poetry is the very notion of Indian national identity. If, as Kipling would have it, Derozio's Romanticism leads him away from "things that lay nearest to him," it nevertheless leads him toward an idea of Indianness that distinguishes him from other Romantics.

The harp of the opening poem, as Gibson argues, becomes an important symbol of Derozio's "bardic nationalism," his effort to define India through poetic performance. Yet it also raises a number of questions: "For whom," Gibson asks, "was the poet to play the harp? And why a harp rather than a traditional Indian instrument?"<sup>35</sup> While there are no easy answers to such questions, Derozio's employment of the trope does offer us a clue about the function of the poet in shaping the nation.

The harp reappears in "The Maniac Widow," a poem about a woman who waits for her husband to return from war. Knowing he is dead, she imagines his boat nearing shore and hears him calling her. She responds by throwing herself into the ocean in order to reunite with her beloved in death. "The Maniac Widow" features no identifiably "Indian" details, and in fact, the poem adopts the medieval Portuguese form of the *cantiga de amigo*, a genre in which the male poet takes on the persona of a woman who sings of love, often for a lover who has gone off to sea perhaps never to return. Through the medium of the woman's voice, the poet expresses *saudade*, "the bittersweet, nostalgic yearning that, in later centuries, will

retroactive critical analysis: "[t]he consolidation of empire in India . . . gave rise to the colonial-national discursive binary, which in turn later made it so attractive for us to see Derozio as a proto-modern, nationalist cultural hero."<sup>41</sup> To counter this anachronistic construction, Paranjape sees Derozio as trying to shape an "East Indian cosmopolitanism." The poet's identity as an East Indian made him think outside the box of identity politics at a time when the public sphere was especially open. In a sense, I would argue, both Gibson and Paranjape are correct in their assessments. Derozio's poetic persona exploits the bardic notion of the national poet in order to claim a cosmopolitan sensibility that promotes a transnational form of belonging. It is by serving as the voice of India that Derozio authorizes himself to participate in a cosmopolitan conversation with such men as Moore, Shelley, and Byron. Reciprocally, it is his ability to speak beyond the nation, to engage with the universal, that legitimizes his position as national poet.

The importance of the local and broader aspirations of the poet is visible in the uncollected "Sonnet: To the Rosigundha," which appeared in *The Kaleidoscope* in 1829:

The fragrance comes upon my heart as 'twere  
A love-breathed sigh from bashful maiden fair,  
So sweet, so soft. My inmost raptured sense  
Of bounteous Nature feels th' omnipotence.  
Thou art like Goodness,—by the cold world's eye  
Unseen, unfelt; while breezes pass thee by,  
Receiving a rich boon from thy sweet breast—  
An odour like the breath of angels blest:  
Thus, like petitioners they wake the sigh  
Of incense pure from gentle Charity,  
That from her home in shades unseen, unknown  
Bestows her bounties, blest by those alone  
Who feel their influence—the world ne'er knows  
Where and for whom that flower of sweetness blows!<sup>42</sup>

As Chaudhuri writes, "What is striking about this sonnet addressed to the *ra-janigandha* flower in its Bengali name is its very conception, which indicates at the same time an extremely individual mind as well as a strong and unashamed commitment to the local."<sup>43</sup> We might add that the poem recalls the horticultural metaphor voiced in the 1826 essay on Indian literature. Here the flower—the symbol of a native literary tradition—at once preserves its local identity while trav-

eling on the breeze. Notably this is not a poem about roots but about fragrance, essence, that which reaches up toward the world.

And it is a poem about acknowledgment, poetic fame, as it were: the sonnet reveals a tension between the felt and unfelt, between the seen and unseen. In raising this issue, Derozio suggests that the question of Indian literature is not simply a matter of production but reception. The responsibility for the development of a native literary tradition does not fall on the poet alone but on "the cold world's eye," which the poet might open.

#### *The Fakeer of Jungheera*

*The Fakeer of Jungheera*, Derozio's most ambitious poetic project, tells the story of Nuleeni, a widow who, as the tale begins, is preparing to sacrifice herself on the funeral pyre of her Hindu husband. Before she can do so, she is rescued by her true love, the titular "Fakeer," or Muslim cleric. In response, Nuleeni's father leads an army against the Fakeer, leading to a final battle in which the Hindu army is forced to retreat, but not before Nuleeni's love is slain. When, the following morning, a peasant comes across the Fakeer's corpse, he finds Nuleeni dead as well, holding her love in a final embrace. Her death, from either grief or suicide (the poem leaves it unclear), fulfills the destiny laid out in the poem's opening.

Derozio had experimented with the genre of the Oriental tale in "The Enchantress of the Cave" in the 1827 volume. The poem, which tells of a warrior reuniting on his way to battle with the wife he believes he has left behind, draws heavily on the conventions of Orientalist poetry developed by such poets as Byron and Moore, whose *The Giaour* and *Lalla Rookh*, respectively, provide the epigraphs for Derozio's poem. Such poems clearly inform *The Fakeer of Jungheera* as well. However, there are some important differences between the two poems, beginning with the fact that the later poem does not include the epigraphic nods to the poet's contemporaries that figure so prominently in the first collection. If "The Enchantress of the Cave" self-consciously situates itself beside the poems of Byron and Moore, *The Fakeer of Jungheera*—just as self-consciously—establishes its uniqueness even as it appropriates the genre of the Oriental tale.

One common device for nineteenth-century Orientalists was the use of extensive explanatory notes, which Chaudhuri identifies as a "Western convention [rooted in] anxiety about authenticity, as there was a fear of fakes flooding a receptive market."<sup>44</sup> Such notes attest to historical accuracy and work to establish the expertise of the Orientalist poet. The notes to *The Fakeer of Jungheera* also work



to authenticate the poem, but at the same time, they reposition the poem against certain Orientalist ideas. The poem's early description of Jungheera, according to Derozio's note, comes from a single visit to the site: "Although I once lived nearly three years in the vicinity of Jungheera, I had but one opportunity of seeing that beautiful and truly romantic spot. I had a view of the rocks from the opposite bank of the river, which was broad, and full, at the time I saw it, during the rainy season."<sup>45</sup> As if to verify his memory, Derozio then quotes from Charles Ramus Forrest's *A Picturesque Tour along the River Ganges and Jumna in India* (1824), an illustrated account of Forrest's travels in the region (see figure 1.1).

Forrest's description of the scenes he draws as "picturesque" situates him in a particular tradition of Orientalism popular during the early nineteenth century. As Romita Ray puts it, "Art-making in the colonial setting coincided with the development of theories of the picturesque in England. . . . Just as amateur artists armed with Claude glasses and sketch-books visited celebrated picturesque sites throughout the country, so too their counterparts in India found visually appealing locations to fill their sketch-pads."<sup>46</sup> According to Ray, the picturesque represented a means of coming to terms with the foreignness of India in British



Figure 1.1. Charles Ramus Forrest, *The Fakeer's Rock at Janguina, Near Sultanganj*, 1824. © The British Library Board, X 757.(10).

terms. Forrest's representation of Jungheera emphasizes the picturesque quality of the landscape: "The whole forms a pretty object as you run past in a boat; and the thick and luxuriant foliage which crowds the summit, adds much to the effect of the picture."<sup>47</sup>

Derozio's Jungheera, by contrast, while drawing on Forrest's description and drawing, employs the language of sublimity: "Jungheera's rocks are hoar and steep," he writes, and he goes on to describe the madrasa there in increasingly ecstatic language:

High on the hugest granite pile  
Of that grey barren craggy isle,  
A small rude hut unsheltered stands—  
Erected by no earthly hands.<sup>48</sup>

The Fakeer who dwells there takes on his own unearthly character, as Derozio continues:

And never earthly eye has seen  
His hallowed form, his saintly mien;  
Some say its holy heavenly light  
Would be for mortal view too bright;  
As never eye hath dared to gaze  
On Surya's everlasting blaze.<sup>49</sup>

The description that Derozio offers reminds one of Turner rather than Forrest, in that it is majestically romantic rather than quietly picturesque. Even as Derozio participates in the exoticization of his scene, turning the Indian vista into an unearthly tableau, he exposes the limitations of Forrest's picturesque construction. In this sense, he mobilizes one Orientalist strategy—representing the East as unrepresentable—against another that presents India as an extension of the picturesque landscapes of England.

Derozio's use of the sublime is bound up with his broader political critique of *sati* in *The Fakeer of Jungheera*. In the first canto, picturesque description gives way to sublime imagery as Derozio introduces Nuleen's impending fate. Thus he describes the crowd approaching to witness the ceremony:

Lo! something moving o'er the plain  
Like morning mist upon the main,  
But dimly may the gazer's eye  
Its indistinct advance descry;



Slowly it moves—thus slow we find  
 Truth dawn upon the doubting mind:  
 At first, a cloud its hues appear,  
 And then it rolling gathers near,  
 Just ray by ray, till robed in light,  
 It dazzling stands before the sight.  
 A glittering throng advanceth nigh  
 With drum, and gong, and soldiery;<sup>50</sup>

Shortly afterward, Derozio echoes this representational strategy in aural terms. Section VI presents a "Chorus of Women" singing of the glory that awaits the devoted wife after death: "Happy! thrice happy thus early to leave/Earth and its sorrows, for heaven and bliss! / . . . / Happy! thrice happy! thy lord shall there meet thee, / Twined round his heart shalt thou ever remain."<sup>51</sup> The bouncing dactylic lines of this section, however, disappear as, in the next section, the crowd grows louder:

The distant listener might have deemed  
 So sweet the choral voices seemed,  
 So like a soft ethereal hymn  
 Heard far and faint by twilight dim,  
 If half his griefs he might forget,  
 That earth and heaven had kissed and met.  
 Advancing toward the grass-grown bank,  
 In many a gaudy group and rank  
 The throng proceeds; the holy train  
 Wake into life the sleeping strain,  
 And loud and deep its numbers roll,  
 Like song mysterious o'er the soul.<sup>52</sup>

In each of these passages, Derozio challenges the capacity of the "gazer" or "distant listener" to frame the scene in picturesque terms: the "dazzling . . . glittering throng" with voices "loud and deep" overwhelms the imagined audience. In doing so, Derozio exposes the limitations of the Orientalist picturesque, its inability to capture the horror of social ills, particularly *sati*. As he later writes, "O! could you once gaze / On those whom martyrs now you fondly deem— / 'Twould break the magic of your golden dream!"<sup>53</sup>

Paranjape has noted that most critics agree that *The Fakeer of Jungheera* is not primarily concerned with the practice of *sati*. He argues that, in Derozio's

poem, "*sati* is merely an exotic episode, with the poet's treatment of it evidently romantic rather than serious."<sup>54</sup> That Derozio opted for Romanticism over political activism is echoed by several readers. Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, for example, writes that "Derozio is constructing a romantic tale, and it is the formal thrust of the genre that determines its message, rather than a social critique of women's oppression";<sup>55</sup> and Gibson suggests that "social commentary and romance are uneasy companions in 'The Fakeer.'"<sup>56</sup>

It is worth noting, however, that there is an important social commentary in Derozio's romantic tale, which takes to task the reception of *sati* in the West. That is to say, whether or not the poem unequivocally condemns *sati*, it does without hesitation condemn the romanticization of the ritual. Derozio works to reconfigure the Western gaze, the "mistaken opinion," as he calls it in his notes to the poem, "somewhat general in Europe . . . that the Hindu Widow's burning herself with the corpse of her husband, is an act of unparalleled magnanimity and devotion."<sup>57</sup> Among many examples of the Western reverence for the *sati* to which Derozio alludes, one that was certainly familiar to him was the "Indian Bride" section of Letitia Landon's *The Improvisatrice*. Landon's poem—which Derozio excerpts for his epigraph to "Love's First Feelings" in the 1827 volume—tells the tale of Zaide, a young maiden whose wedding day becomes her funeral day when she discovers her groom has died and throws herself on his funeral pyre.

Ay, is not this love?—  
 That one pure wild feeling all others above:  
 Vowed to the living, and kept to the tomb!  
 The same in its blight as it was in its bloom.  
 With no tear in her eye, and no change in her smile,  
 Young Zaide had come nigh to the funeral pile.  
 The bells of the dancing-girls ceased from their sound;  
 Silent they stood by that holiest mound.<sup>58</sup>

Here Landon capitalizes on public interest in widow-burning to describe it as a sign of supreme devotion. That Derozio uses, to recall Sunder Rajan's phrase, "the formal thrust of the genre" of the Oriental tale to undermine this sentiment suggests an alternate reading of the poem, one that emphasizes the political usefulness of the genre.

Paranjape writes that "Nuleeni tries to commit *sati* twice, first unsuccessfully beside her dead husband in the traditional manner, then in the more deadly if less fiery fashion sanctioned by the conventions of western romanticism"<sup>59</sup>; Sunder Rajan

before it was institutionalized in the home country. As early as the 1820s, when the classical curriculum still reigned supreme in England . . . English as the study of culture and not just language had already found a secure place in the British Indian curriculum."<sup>64</sup> Derozio would have been among the first generation—either in India or in England—to read the Elizabethans and the Augustans as part of a continuum of cultural development, the greatest authors from the greatest nation. Even as he seemed to subscribe to this model, placing supreme value on canonical English writers, he also questioned it, as I suggested at the outset of this chapter, interrogating the idea that literature was rooted in the nation's soil. Indeed, I would add, he offered up an alternative model of canonicity, one that placed the Romantics at the center. And, in doing so, offered one of the first versions of the Romantic canon.

It is a critical commonplace that, as Joel Faflak and Julia Wright put it, "the Victorians invented Romanticism, or at least began the process of its institutionalization as a given of literary history."<sup>65</sup> I would argue, however, that, by bringing together diverse sources—some of whom would come to represent the "spirit of the age" (e.g., Byron and Shelley), others who would be generally ignored in discussions of canonicity (e.g., Landon and Campbell)—Derozio defines the Romantics not from a future position but from a peripheral one. By establishing his own poetic practice in relation to a select body of British contemporaries, he consecrates those contemporaries, elevates them to the status we now ascribe to the Romantics. Decades before Victorian critics would identify connections between diverse early nineteenth-century poets, Derozio established a dialogue between the popular authors of the day, forging a relation between sometimes very different authors.

Despite his efforts to enter into this dialogue, he was barred by reviewers from entering into this emerging Romantic movement. Even those who emphasized his role as innovator over that of imitator would end up excluding him from the class of authors we now call "the Romantics." From the outset, enthusiastic reviewers acknowledged Derozio as the first "national poet" of India,<sup>66</sup> the "beginning of a literary era," as the reviewer for the *Quarterly Oriental Magazine* dubbed him.<sup>67</sup> But while this would imply that he is an original and positioned to carry the tradition of India into the modern era, the characterization does nothing to undermine the teleological understanding of cultural development that underlies much of Derozio's reception. In making progress toward a modernity that nineteenth-century critics code as Western, Derozio represents, according to his critics, an underdeveloped literary culture struggling to catch up. Whether Derozio stands for an India perpetually lagging behind the West or an India looking to the future, their Orientalism prompts his critics to understand him as a cultural anomaly outside of history.



Working against this tradition, reinserting the poet into his cultural moment allows us to see how, whether Derozio belonged or belongs in the Romantic canon, the Romantic canon, complete with its exclusions, inclusions, and disagreements, belonged to him.

## Notes

1. Thomas Babington Macaulay, "Minute on Education," in *Thomas Macaulay: Speeches, with His Minute on Indian Education*, ed. G. M. Young (New York: AMS, 1979), 349.
2. Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 32 and *passim*.
3. *D*, 82.
4. *Ibid.*, xxxix.
5. *Ibid.*, 82–83.
6. *Ibid.*, 83.
7. *Ibid.*, 423.
8. Such an approach is consonant with Daniel E. White's suggestion that Derozio's relationship to English Romanticism be read as a matter of "citation" rather than imitation. See Daniel E. White, *From Little London to Little Bengal: Religion, Print, and Modernity in Early British India, 1793–1835* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 120: "neither allusion, reflection, nor imitation, citation is a deliberate reference to a shared and mobile literary experience."
9. *D*, 96.
10. Henry Schwarz, "Aesthetic Imperialism: Literature and the Conquest of India," *Modern Language Quarterly* 61, no. 4 (2000): 563. For a fuller treatment of print culture in early nineteenth-century Calcutta, see also White, *From Little London*.
11. Henry Derozio, "Tasso," in *D*, 142–43; lines 3–7.
12. Torquato Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered: An Heroic Poem*, ed. John Hoole, 2nd ed. (London: R. and J. Dodsley et al., 1794), vol. 1, xxi.
13. Derozio, "Tasso," line 12.
14. Thomas Campbell, "Ode to the Memory of Robert Burns," in *Poems of Thomas Campbell*, ed. Lewis Campbell (London: Macmillan, 1904), 201–4; lines 55–60.
15. *Ibid.*, lines 27, 26, 43, 46, 52.
16. Henry Derozio, "The Poet's Grave," in *D*, 120–21; lines 1–2.
17. *Ibid.*, lines 5–14.
18. Henry Derozio, "The Poet's Habitation: A Fragment," in *D*, 168–70; lines 1–4.
19. *Ibid.*, lines 33–34.
20. *Ibid.*, lines 31–32.
21. *Ibid.*, lines 29–30.

22. Derozio, "The Poet's Grave," lines 1, 5, 9.
23. Derozio, "The Poet's Habitation: A Fragment," lines 69–71.
24. Mary Ellis Gibson, *Indian Angles: English Verse in Colonial India from Jones to Tagore* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011), 82.
25. *D*, 399, 395.
26. Rudyard Kipling, "City of Dreadful Night," in *The Writings in Prose and Verse of Rudyard Kipling*, ed. Charles Wolcott Balestier (New York: Scribner, 1925), vol. 14, 356.
27. Henry Derozio, "Poetry," in *D*, 105; lines 1–14.
28. Percy Shelley, *Alastor; or, The Spirit of Solitude*, in *Shelley's Poetry and Prose*, ed. Donald H. Reiman and Neil Freistat (New York: Norton, 2002), 71–90; line 128.
29. Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 140.
30. Makarand R. Paranjape, "'East Indian' Cosmopolitanism," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 13, no. 4 (2011): 561.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *D*, 95.
33. Henry Derozio, "The Harp of India," in *D*, 96–97; line 3.
34. *Ibid.*, lines 12–14.
35. Gibson, *Indian Angles*, 79.
36. Josiah Blackmore, "Melancholy, Passionate Love, and the Coita a'Amor," *PMLA* 124, no. 2 (2009): 641.
37. Henry Derozio, "The Maniac Widow," in *D*, 97–100; lines 143–44.
38. *Ibid.*, lines 111–18.
39. Gibson, *Indian Angles*, 78.
40. *Ibid.*, 79.
41. Paranjape, "'East Indian' Cosmopolitanism," 566.
42. Henry Derozio, "Sonnet: To the Rosigundha," in *D*, 293; lines 1–14.
43. *D*, 292.
44. Rosinka Chaudhuri, *Gentlemen Poets in Colonial Bengal: Emergent Nationalism and the Orientalist Project* (Calcutta: Seagull, 2002), 39. See also Nigel Leask, "'Wandering through Eblis': Absorption and Containment in Romantic Exoticism," in *Romanticism and Colonialism: Writing and Empire, 1780–1830*, ed. Tim Fulford and Peter J. Kitson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 165–88. Like Chaudhuri, Leask reads such footnotes as symptomatic of "the aesthetic of particularism which had become axiomatic to Romantic exotic . . . representations" (178).
45. *D*, 227.
46. Romita Ray, "The Memsahib's Brush: Anglo-Indian Women and the Art of the Picturesque, 1830–1880," in *Orientalism Transposed: The Impact of the Colonies on British Culture*, ed. Julie F. Codell and Dianne Sachko Macleod (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 89–90.

# CHAPTER 1

47. Charles Ramus Forrest, *A Picturesque Tour along the River Ganges and Jumna in India* (London: R. Ackermann, 1824), 146. On Derozio's incorporation of the picturesque, see *D*, lxxi, as well as Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Romantic Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 177–78.
48. Henry Derozio, *The Fakeer of Jungheera* in *D*, 172–237; I.III, lines 11–14.
49. *Ibid.*, I.III, lines 31–36.
50. *Ibid.*, I.V, lines 1–12.
51. *Ibid.*, I.VI, lines 29–34.
52. *Ibid.*, I.VII, lines 5–16.
53. *Ibid.*, I.X, lines 28–30. Rajeswari Sunder Rajan discusses “the positive view of sati” in the nineteenth century, when Europeans conceived of the ritual in terms of Christian martyrdom. See Rajeswari Sunder Rajan, *Real and Imagined Women: Gender, Culture, and Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1993), 43.
54. Paranjape, “‘East Indian’ Cosmopolitanism,” 561.
55. Sunder Rajan, *Real and Imagined Women*, 49.
56. Gibson, *Indian Angles*, 93. As Chaudhuri points out, despite Derozio's outspoken critique of *sati*, his zeal is tempered by his suggestion in the notes to Canto I that, before abolishing widow-burning, reformers “should first ensure the comfort of these unhappy women in their widowhood,—otherwise, instead of conferring a boon upon them, existence will be to many a drudge, and a load” (*D* 229). See also Chaudhuri's analysis of Derozio's attitudes toward *sati* in *D*, 284–86.
57. *D*, 229.
58. Letitia Elizabeth Landon, [L.E.L.], *The Improvisatrice*, in *The Improvisatrice; and Other Poems* (London: Hurst, Robinson and Co., 1824), 1–105; lines 862–69.
59. Paranjape, “‘East Indian’ Cosmopolitanism,” 559.
60. Sunder Rajan, *Real and Imagined Women*, 49.
61. *D*, 229.
62. Derozio, *The Fakeer of Jungheera*, II.XXIII, line 23.
63. *D*, 414.
64. Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3.
65. Joel Faflak and Julia M. Wright, *Nervous Reactions: Victorian Recollections of Romanticism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 3. David Perkins notes that Hippolyte Taine's 1863 *History of English Literature* featured the first use of “The Romantic School” as a descriptor for all the writers of the period. See David Perkins, “The Construction of ‘The Romantic Movement’ as a Literary Classification,” *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 45, no. 2 (September 1990): 136.
66. *D*, 339.
67. [Review of *Poems* by H. L. V. Derozio], *Quarterly Oriental Magazine* 7, nos. 3–4 (1827): 81.