
A Lady's Visit to Manilla and Japan:
Género, Viagem e Representações Interculturais



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A LADY'S VISIT
TO
MANILLA AND JAPAN.



A JAPANESE "TEA-HOUSE" GIRL

BY
ANNA D'A.

LONDON:
HURST AND BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1863.

The right of Translation is reserved

Anna D'Almeida OR Anna D'A

A Lady's Visit to Manilla and Japan

London: Hurst and Blacket, 1863. Red cloth, colored lithographic frontispiece (Nagasaki), vignette on title-page, 297 pp.

The D'Almeida family (Anna + husband William Barrington D'Almeida. + baby daughter Rose) toured the Far East in March-July of **1862**. Narrative starts in Singapore and ends in Hong Kong. Despite the title, calls included Hong Kong, Manila, Macao, Shanghai, Nagasaki, Yokohama, Amoy (Hokkien) and Canton, etc.

The Manila commentary is one of the few English accounts from this period.

The commentary on Japan presents a very early view of that country which was just opened to the West in the 1854-9 period.

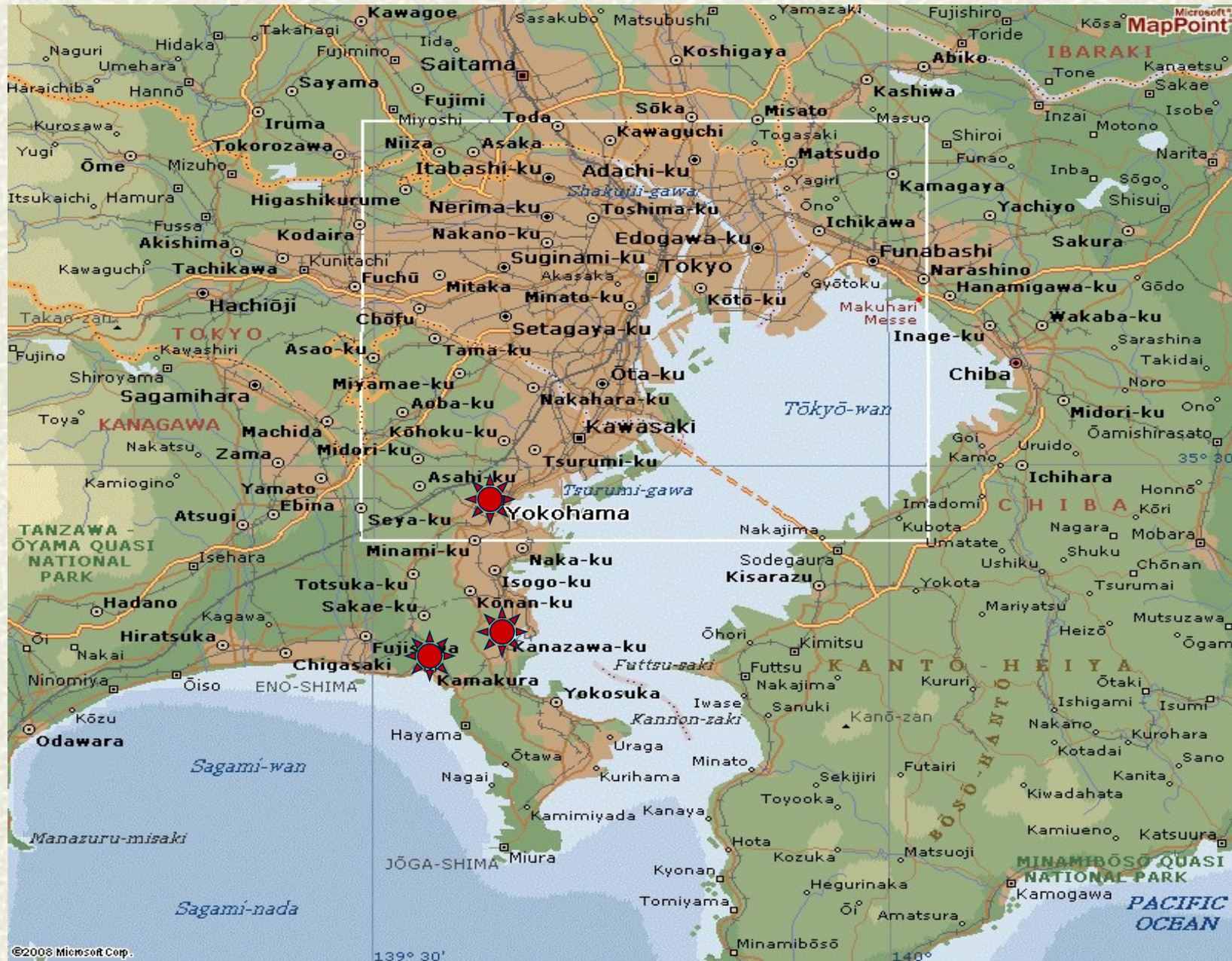


The bay and part of the town of Nagasaki.









Anna D'Almeida's Biography

- Many western visitors in Asia – especially women – were left in history as publishers of only one work, and it is extremely difficult to find biographic information. Even determining the sex of the author is sometimes difficult. Some writers used only the initial of their first name, and several of these turn out to be women.
- Anna Harriette Pennington (D'Almeida) – Born 1836, Whitehaven, Cumberland.
Landed gentry + Wealthy career military officer.
- William Barrington D'Almeida, Barrister – Born 1841, Singapore = British Citizen.
Joaquim + Rosa Maria Barrington D'Almeida, married in Calcutta.
Grandfather – A Portuguese gentleman from Viseu, who travelled to Macao & Singapore.
- Anna + William – Married 1860, Henley, Oxfordshire.
- Children:
 - Rose, 1861, Paris, France.
 - Lillian Augusta, 1863, Bath.
 - Marmion Barrington, 1865, Surrey..
 - Anna dies a few months later, 1866, aged 30.
 - William dies in 1897.

TO THEE,
WHO HAST AIDED ME IN MY TOILS,
AND SO KINDLY SMOOTHED EVERY DIFFICULT PATH AND RUGGED STEP,
IS DEDICATED
THIS LITTLE WORK
BY
THY LOVING AND FAITHFUL WIFE,
ANNA.

- Depreciation of the work;
- Properly dedicated to (i.e. approved by) the husband;
- Never states her full name;

Gender and Travel Narrative

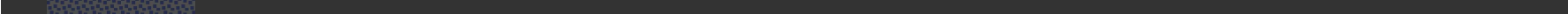

Preface

- **Simplicity of objectives.**

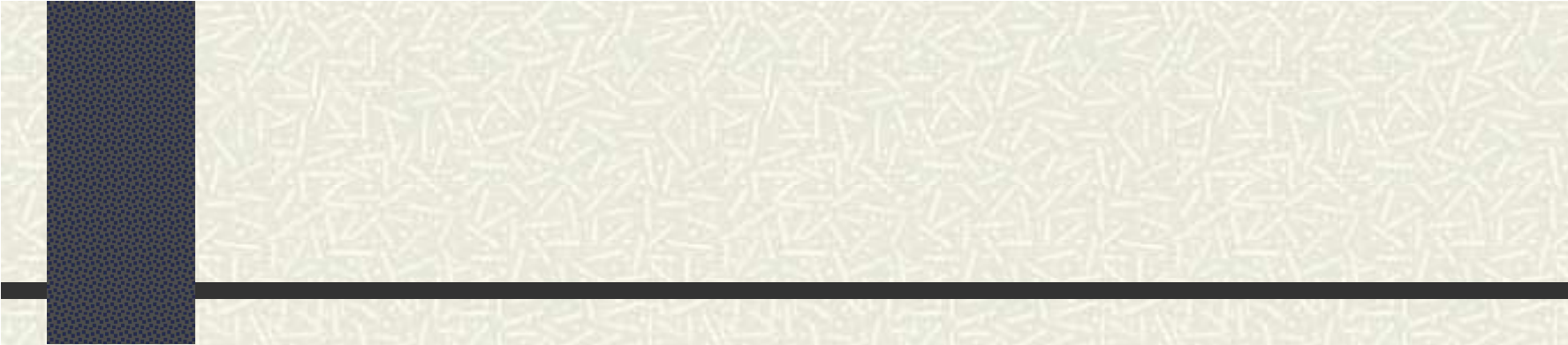

- “A little bark, adapted only for a summer sea (...) a pleasure sail”, without “the results of scientific research, or tedious disquisitions on the ethnology and early history of the country”.

- “Sketches”, “amusing anecdotes” of “the peculiar race inhabiting these distant islands”.

- Avoid allusions to political matters, “not having sufficient confidence in the correctness of my own judgement to justify me in assuming the office of a public instructor”. A woman (especially ‘a lady’) **never instructs the audience**, she only amuses a private circle that has tacitly accepted her limitations.

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- The Preface is a pro-forma, a captatio benevolentiae, a statement of intentions commonly considered as acceptable for a woman writer, especially after the “faithful” dedication to her husband. Therefore, the book becomes proper and suitable for a “lady”.
 - The proliferation of British travel and tourism narratives shows that tourism provided an arena where even the non-author would not hesitate to produce their travel diary: titles like Glimpses, Sketches, Impressions, Notes, Diaries, Wanderings and Travels suggest a tone of informality, which in the case of women authors may serve as a protection against comparisons with the great (male) writers.
 - But this might be in contradiction with the general content of the book...
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- The transition from grand to modern tourist admitted a new kind of visitor, the **Victorian upper and middle-class women** travelling not only with their families, but also often alone, or with female friends.
- Although their contribution has not been acknowledged until recently, many women wrote accounts of their journeys in the Far East, works published and read at the time of publication, but **never reprinted**. In their accounts, they represented themselves as travellers, as leaders sometimes, emphasising their **accomplishments and risk-taking**.
- **Risk-taking X privileged travellers**.

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- Manilla, e.g., is thoroughly described, with many objective and quantitative facts, monetary amounts, and historical, administrative and legendary details. Anna is very interested by economy and industry in general. As an **agent of civilization** and as a **representative of the home of industrial revolution**, she always compares and praises the advantages of the European industrial methods.
 - Strong ideas on politics, government, religion, and social justice. Criticism of Portuguese administration in Macao, as compared to Hong Kong.
 - Excursion in Luzon: careful notes and long quotations on nature, geography, volcanoes, history, etc. Shangai: *in-loco* description of a opium-smoking shop.
 - Her descriptions are indeed much more precise and documented (despite much "I heard say" and unREFERRED sources) than promised in the Preface.
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Travellers and Tourists

- Anna easily compares Hong Kong to Calcutta and Malta, proving that she is **widely travelled**, not only in Mediterranean Europe but also in Asia. Actually, she tends to make a lot of comparisons with India, especially at the beginning, perhaps recalling previous travels or recent experiences. When describing their “pleasant little excursion” to “the Peak” in Hong Kong, Anna compares this, with **irony**, to the **fashionable destinations** for European tourists: “the mountains of Switzerland or Savoy, the Montanvert in Chamouni, the Mer de Glace, or the Pyramid in Egypt” (9).
 - E.g. She had already descended into a volcano’s crater in Java (84), and visited the Alps and the Pyrenees (231). Considers Asia superior to Europe in natural beauty and landscape.
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- In Manila, observes without any surprise or criticism that many women wore the mantilla, but the majority went about “with neither bonnet nor hat for the evening promenade, but, like the Dutch ladies in Java, prefer thoroughly to enjoy the fresh air” (14). Anna already knows and accepts other cultural practices than hers.

The native women all smoke, and so do much of the mestizos openly, and I think I am right in saying many Spanish dames enjoy *quietly* their cigar or cigarretta. (97)

- Describes female dresses and accessories, praising difference and native adaptation to local weather conditions. But tolerance has its limits: predictably, nakedness is a sign of savagery (Igorroté Indians; steam-bath in Nagasaki: “men and women bathing in *puris naturalibus*”).
- Women’s clothing or issues of moral are **not** the main focus of her attention.

- By the end of the 18th century the focus of travel in Europe shifted from scholastic pursuits to **visual pleasure**, from the traveller's ear to **the traveller's eye**.
- The 1830's produced an **observing subject** who was both a product and at the same time constitutive of modernity in the 19th century.
- From then on, sight becomes highly significant in the ordering of tourist and travel discourse. In most such discourses, there is a particular emphasis upon the **seeing and collecting of sights**. Everyday expressions such as 'seeing the sights', 'capturing the view', 'eye-catching scenery', 'picturesque village', 'pretty as a postcard', illustrate the significance of the eye to the traveller. The narrative and practice of collecting sights can dominate the very pattern of travel, which is often organised to **facilitate views of spectacular scapes**.

ROJEK, Chris; URRY, John (eds.),
Touring Cultures: Transformations of Travel and Theory, 2002



The Praia Grande, Macao.

The Praia Grande, Macao.

Praia Grande, Macao.

THE LONDON ENGRAVER AND PUBLISHERS HENRY COLEMAN, LONDON.

Praia Grande, Macao (1840). By Thomas Allom (1804-1872).

- Macao – Camoens' Garden ("everything wears an air of waste and ruin") – Camoens' Grotto with carved names and abusive inscriptions.

Cf. Gustave Flaubert's 1849 episode of Pompeii's column in Alexandria: "Thompson of Sunderland" carved in gigantic characters.



- Anna composes a thorough tourist description of Macao, with a 'must-see' list, best sightseeing points, suggested excursions, and critical comments on the quality and state of attractions, complemented with historical notes, anecdotes and popular legends.



View of Mt. Fuji from the beaches along Kamakura.

- In a native's inn in the Philippines, Anna complains about the lack of privacy that prevents her from undressing at night. However: "We could not resist taking a peep into the adjoining apartment. The scene was truly an absurd one, and reminded me of a hospital, though wanting in the cleanliness and comfort of those excellent institutions" (68).
- A Buddhist temple in Shangai; funeral in Nagasaki = tourist attractions. No comments on their religious nature whatsoever. When she doesn't understand an object or practice, Anna assumes an explanation or compares to her own culture.
- On the boat to Kama-Kura, passengers throw bottles into the water "in order to see the boatmen plunging and diving for them in their almost nude state" (244). Cf. Oporto's Ribeira.

The history of 'leisured' travel has been inextricably bound up with the modes in which the visual has been given objectified form, first through painting and the development of the 'landscape'. This growth of '**scenic tourism**' was of course further developed through the desire to fix images permanently. The invention of the **photograph** in 1839 contributed to the transformation of nature into an object of the sightseer, into spectacle.

Chris Rojek & John Urry, *Touring Cultures*

- Large bronze figures in a temple near Kamakura:

A photograph of which was taken on the spot by an American gentleman...

My husband and myself mounted upon the wall which forms its pedestal, and from thence scrambled up the folds of the dress, and seated ourselves on the thumbs of the two hands. (245)

Gender in Intercultural Encounters

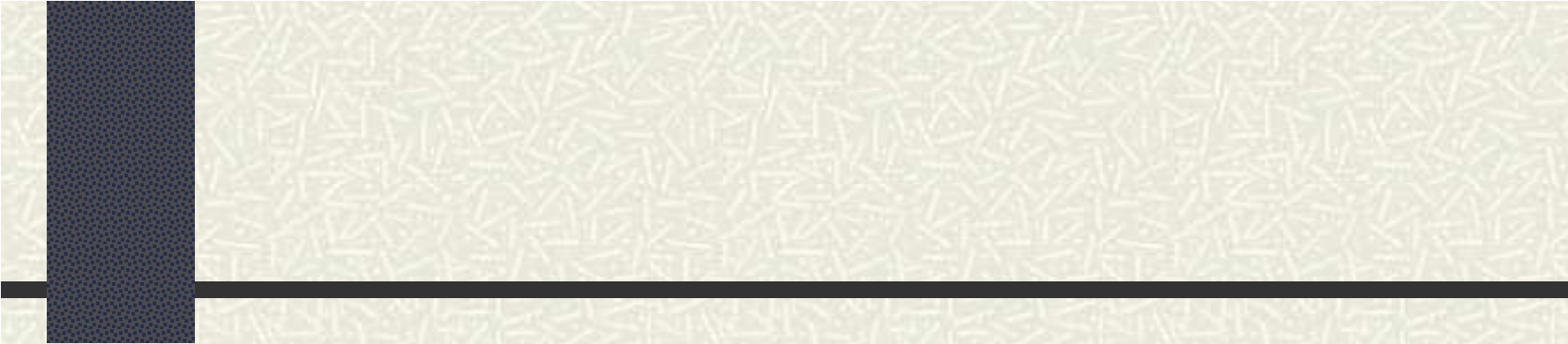
- Many references to her husband as a travel mate, a companion, not as an 'authority'. **Equality**.
 - Anna endures dangers, pain, and discomfort with courage and endurance, like a pilgrim or a missionary, in equality. She's proud to show that she's never a burden or gets any special treatment.
 - Native men seem to be intrinsically evil. There's an apparent **female sisterhood**, with Anna assuming a maternalist role towards 'other' women, victims of a (uncivilized) society that does not allow them the role of equals, of companions to their men.
 - As an interpreter of a different culture to an upper middle-class British audience, Anna felt privileged, well informed and resourceful, a position which separated her from her subjects, from Eastern women, stereotypically described as poor, confined and oppressed. This reveals how **the imperial project shaped gender ideology**.
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• **“cultural missionaries, maternal imperialists, feminist allies”.**

Barbara Ramusack (1992)

- The more distant a woman is from the European (i.e. British protestant) paradigm, the more pitied she is. The ‘other’ woman – as a daughter, spouse or mother – is always the victim, never an object of criticism or scandal.
- In Nagasaki, the D’Almeida visit a Japanese samurai officer. After the visit, D’Almeida is informed that the officer “had fallen in love with his wife at a **‘tea house’**, and purchased her from the proprietor of the establishment” (207). For Anna, it was out of economic necessity that parents would send away a daughter of 7 or 8 to a brothel:

These poor children are, for their owner’s own benefit, carefully tended, being kept in comparative seclusion until they attain the age of fourteen or fifteen, when they are compelled to commence an immoral course of life, the poor girls, like too many sad victims in our own land. (205)



- D'Almeida's tone is **not moralising**. She only pities women, including the women in her own country. D'Almeida considers prostitutes to be **victims**. This reflects a rather typical line of western (female) thinking that the prostitutes were '**fallen women**' who had been seduced to immorality by men. They were not seen as taking action in their own life to ease, for example, poverty, but rather as victims of their own innocence and ignorance.

- In the late 19th century, **philanthropy** was considered a duty of middle and upper-class ladies, and a suitable line of action outside the home sphere.

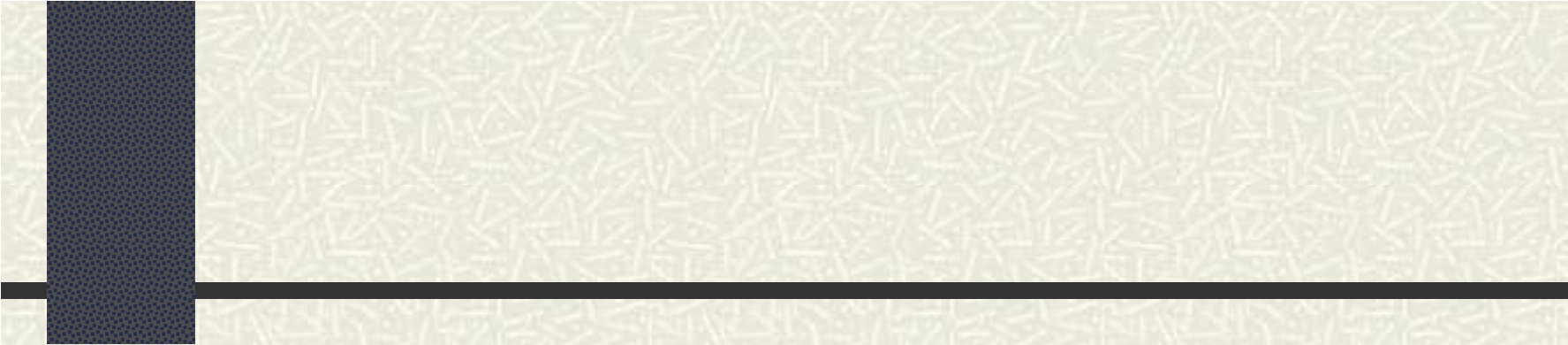


Religion and the Imperial Mind

- **Natives = Victims of conversion**. The conversion “of a superstitious people” is solely external and misled by the “numerous images and extravagantly gaudy processions (...) by which the Roman Catholics so powerfully impress the imagination of the ignorant; while our simpler and purer forms often fail, through that very simplicity which is their greatest beauty...” (17)
- However, Catholic practices (“a mockery of true religion”; “sincerity however mistaken”; “fanatical devotion”; “gaudy-looking images”) shouldn’t be openly confronted or offended with acts by good Protestants (126-7).

Tourist + Missionary = 19th British female travellers in Asia


- Despite the initial declaration of the simplicity and even futility of her narrative's objectives, Anna begins in Manilla a long denunciation of the 'evils' of Catholicism, which will last throughout the book. This is **another face of British colonialism**, much ignored by post-colonial critics that seem to forget what was happening at Anna's time in **Ireland**. Anna's fierce observations against Catholicism have been ignored by the rare studies on her work, which prefer to address more polemic issues of racism and transcontinental colonialism.
- The **"us" versus "them"** here is constructed over details of Christian faith, instead of racial or civilizational dichotomies. Anna's colonial prejudice is directed towards her European white catholic neighbours, the true "other" of this narrative, much more than towards other races, exotic practices, distant religions, issues of gender, etc.



When arriving at the harbour of Nagasaki, the beauty of the landscape is ruined by the “disgusting” sight of the skin of the boatmen (though “almost as fair of that of the Europeans”), “lending no additional charm to the surrounding scene, but rather forming an eyesore one would gladly dispense with” (185).

The native is but an **expendable element of the landscape** that should only exist for the delight of the European visitor.

≠ “Picturesque tableau” (e.g. 236) = Natives in everyday orderly life, with natural beauty as scenery. Search for the sublime in exotic landscapes.



- The opening of Japan facilitated its role to replace China and to be favourably perceived by the West: a charming, exotic, and relatively developed country. Japan seemed willing to emulate the West, which was very gratifying:

Industry = Civilization

- **Ethics = Aesthetics; Superior x Inferior; Animal-like collective:**

The people we have left behind [Chinese] are surly, impertinent, independent, self-sufficient, in their manner towards foreigners; whilst those among whom we now are [Japanese], poor and rich alike, have an innate politeness which is exceedingly pleasing, and address strangers in a respectful manner. (186-7)

Chinese Women in Shanghai ("superiority"; "clearer skin") X Chinese Women in Macao and Hong Kong ("filth"; "ruddy"; "flat").

Beauty, garments, hairstyles and smiles of Japanese women = Superiority and Status.

- The true **difference is deference (= submission)** towards the European civilizing agent:

The Japanese are really very strict in punishing those who behave ill to Europeans. (211)

Although such merciless severity cannot be commended, we hope it may prove a salutary lesson to his fellow-countrymen. (213)

In the Chinese [Opium] wars our Sikhs took [Canton] by storm, and slaughtered, without mercy, all found within the walls.(288)

Reciprocity?

Visit of Japanese **ladies** in Nagasaki (207) – Stress on the **differences**: sit on the floor; smoke small pipes; delight at Rose's blond hair; reject port wine; ignore piano.

Visit to a wealthy Japanese merchant in Nagasaki (271) – The hosts **adapt their house** to the European visitors (chairs, tables).

'Natural' and reassuring social/racial hierarchy.

Unknown foreign space ⇒ Orderly territory

The notion of 'contamination' and 'contagion' were the tropes through which 19th century city-life was apprehended. The wealthy oversee the masses from positions of relative isolation and distance. There seem to be two dichotomies here: gaze *versus* touch; desire *versus* contamination.

Global British empire = Global colonial empathy. 'The world is our home'.

Conclusion

- Grand Tour of the Far East, fashionable among British upper classes in the first decades of 19th century global tourism.
 - The critical analysis of the writings of lady-travellers such as Anna give us unique insights into social, cultural and daily events in a way that are unavailable through the more pedagogical and paternalistic limitations of official commentaries and formal histories.
 - Eurocentric, Protestant and upper-class bias.
 - Travelling = search for visual pleasure. The native is but an expendable element of the landscape that should only exist for the delight of the European visitor.
 - Partial impressions from live experience and selective memory of the 'oriental', with a particular emphasis on Anna's condition as a spectator.
 - Understanding of the author's position in her own culture and society.
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- Class, race, ethnicity, and religious criteria (and stereotypes) are much more relevant than issues of gender, in contradiction of the expectations created by *A Lady's Visit* title, dedication and preface.
- 'Civilized' countries: men and women = companions. The 'other' women are victims of the male elements of an 'uncivilized' society, who should be pitied within a spirit of universal philanthropy.
- Women and natives = victims of cultural habits and of wrongful methods of civilization and conversion. Requires the help and the understanding of a civilized and progressive (Protestant) imperial agent.
- 'Civilized' = Industry + abjure idols of paganism and Catholicism + deference to tourists (= temporary ambassadors of political and cultural imperialism).
- British Empire in the second half of the 19th century = Global colonial home ⇒ Tourism.

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