AWAY FROM HOME? DOMESTIC CONSTRUCTIONS OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN IMPERIAL INDIA

A Senior Honors Thesis

by

ERIN MICHELLE MILLER

Submitted to the Office of Honors Programs
& Academic Scholarships
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the

UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH FELLOWS

April 2004

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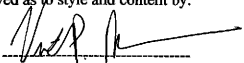

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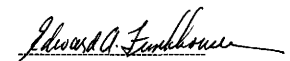

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ABSTRACT

Away From Home? Domestic Constructions of National Identity in Imperial India. (April 2004)

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My research looks at how the institution of the home shaped the British colonial project. Colonialism is rooted in the conflict of national identity. Colonial subjects in the presence of a politically threatening "Other" combatted opposition to their national identities in various ways – British citizens attempted to re-create England in India and Indian citizens attempted to defend their nationality against British invasion. Current research in postcolonial studies has focused on the symbolic value of the home within the colonial project. My thesis extends current research by exploring the tangible elements of domestic space and the material underpinnings of how the idea of "home" is tied to "nation."

This project is organized around four significant spaces in colonial homes: the courtyard, the drawing room, the verandah, and the zenana, all of which were culturally significant and powerful within the colonial context. Home management guides and

domestic manuals written for English settlers moving to India provide a wealth of knowledge about the expectations associated with establishing a home in India. Literary sources address these four spaces by depicting the lived experience and the individual response of colonial characters. Integrating these two bodies of resources, my research looks at how the physical elements of the home helped to determine colonial and national identity. Furthermore, my project looks at how colonial subjects used their homes in methodological ways to portray and reaffirm their national identities.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to Dr. Victoria Rosner for all of her patience and sensitivity in guiding me through this long process and for endlessly encouraging me to become more confident with public speaking. I would also like to thank the University Honors Program as well as the Melbern G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research for awarding me the research grants, which allowed me to enrich my research experience. Finally, I would like to thank God, my Mom, Dad, brother and all of my friends who truly sustain me on a daily basis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"The importance of the home, it is impossible to exaggerate.... The greatness of no nation can be secure that is not based upon a pure home life."

Arnold Toynbee, 19th century historian

The concept of "home" is inextricably tied with how we aim to identify ourselves. Whether individually, socially, or globally, the meaning of home is an integral part of identity formation. My project looks at the significance of domestic space in British India and how the home was an important factor in shaping the colonial project. Under the pressures and requirements of colonialism, every person and every aspect of society became deeply charged with preserving and projecting a unified sense of national identity. Drawing on Arnold Toynbee's statement, I am interested in how the home became a means of asserting nationality within the British colonial project. Specifically, my research addresses how the architecture and interior design elements of the home were crucial in supporting this unified sense of national identity. Furthermore, because women have so traditionally been tied to the home, I explore the ways women exercise agency in colonialism through their homes.

Historical Context

My project focuses on British colonialism in India between the years 1857 – 1947. England began colonizing India in the early 1600s when the British East India Company was given the right to monopolize trade with India. Under this colonizing

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This thesis follows the style and format of the *MLA Handbook*.

effort, many British citizens moved from England to India to begin the process of reestablishing their homes in another country. At the same time, the extant inhabitants of India had to adjust to the occupation. The year 1857 marks the year of the Sepoy Mutiny, an Indian outbreak of riot and rebellion against British rule in India (Wolpert 53). The Sepoy Rebellion forced the British to acknowledge the extreme negative sentiment surrounding their presence in India. Before the mutiny, although the act of colonizing was never received smoothly, the British were more able to ignore their wrongdoing and create moral justification for their actions (Sharpe 57). After the Sepoy Rebellion, the British could no longer ignore the effects their presence had on the Indian population. During this time, British and Indian colonial subjects began expressing a stronger, unified sense of nationality.

Even when reducing the concept of "home" to its most simple material level of architectural and design elements, there are complicated issues to debate. There is a marked difference and tension between homes endeavoring to appear more English in nature and those maintaining qualities consistent with the homes of people already living in India. The arrangement of rooms and spaces is different. The design elements, including the furniture and colors in the homes are different. These differences point towards something greater than mere architectural and interior design preferences at work in these colonial homes. Every aspect of "home building," from the rooms to the furniture to the floor coverings, relates to the problem of trying to sustain a stable national identity while living in a situation that is distinctly unstable. The act of colonizing only *begins* with the physical act of entering another country and establishing

rule. My project is rooted in the day-to-day assertions of nationalism and how colonial subjects perpetuated and fought colonialism through an active use of their domestic spaces. For people moving to a new country and for people whose national identity is being threatened by the presence of another nation, the home becomes the site where national pride is argued and defended.

In attempting to uncover how the home in British colonial India reflected precise impressions about national identity, my research primarily investigates the material elements of domestic spaces. In studying domestic space, I am looking at the principal elements of the home, including things like furniture and room design. In addition to the physical elements of the home, my research also expands on the abstract symbolic meanings of the "home." Looking at the specific concrete and abstract elements of the home prompts questions in two general areas. First, my research investigates how colonial subjects assert their national identity through the decisions made regarding the specific design components of their homes. In this way, colonial subjects, being charged by duty to their nation, act on the home in order to mold it into projecting a national identity consistent with that of their peers. Secondly, my research examines how the home itself is determining – how particular domestic spaces fix the position of their inhabitants by associating expectations about appropriate behavior for a lifestyle in the space. In addition to how and for what purposes people create their spaces during Colonialism, my research focuses on how a space can mold its inhabitants as well.

Theoretical Context

Initially I struggled with how to define the subjects of my research. Rosemary Marangoly George addresses one of the major concerns regarding defining and classifying subjects in postcolonial studies today. She outlines the critical pattern of discussing colonialism in terms of reductive binarisms. Specifically, she summarizes the tendency of researchers to discuss colonialism as categorized by binarisms, which she says weakens the outcome of fruitful research by limiting the scope of possible conclusions (3). Binarisms only allow for two options. Moreover, in order to "fit" into one single category, the subject is unnecessarily reduced to belonging to some supposed monolithic entity. Any individuality is hence ignored. In a field seeking to explore the nuances of the individual experience of colonialism, postcolonial studies is moving away from categorizing by binarisms. The deconstruction of the binarism most pertinent to this research is that of the "colonizer and the colonized." I will discuss an alternative to this binarism in the "Terminology" section of the Introduction.

After gaining a better grasp on how to define and discuss my subjects, my next question concerned how people involved in the colonial project defined themselves and others. Although postcolonial studies has now reached a consensus that it is most useful to avoid using destructive binarisms such as "colonizer and colonized," this does not preclude how *historically* people may have identified themselves - as citizens from different nations encountered each other for the first time. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak discusses in her article "Can the Subaltern Speak?" the nature of the word "subject" and

how colonial subjects might have preferred to see themselves in terms of the binarisms we now seek to avoid. She says:

> The clearest available example of such epistemic violence is the remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other. This project is also the asymmetrical obliteration of the trace of that Other in its precarious Subject-ivity. (Spivak 280)

Spivak complicates the term "subject" by using it to refer to both the people being colonized during imperialism and also when stated as "Subject" to reflect an awareness of oneself and one's autonomy. In discussing how to write history, Spivak questions, "how to keep an ethnocentric Subject from establishing itself by selectively defining an Other" (280). The selective definition of an Other results in the necessary selective definition of oneself. This process of defining and homogenizing oneself and one's notions about the Other forms the foundation of my research. My project looks at British colonialism in India and how British settlers defined *themselves* as British and in light of the changing social and political situations, how people native to India defined *themselves* as Indian.

The next broad question that directed my research concerns the issue of how national affiliation is constituted. Benedict Anderson discusses in his book Imagined Communities what it means to nation-build. He puts forth a less concrete idea of how people go about constructing nations. Anderson argues that a "nation" is in fact "an imagined community." How people *imagine* nations is based in the abstraction of cultural mores, the preservation of tradition, and the display of a public image consistent with the supposed nation. The geographic boundaries thought to contain nations actually mean nothing in and of themselves. Boundaries only make divisions because people

give them weight by reinforcing the idea that they (the people) are somehow different from the people on the other side of the border. The act of colonizing is made possible by ignoring borders. The colonizing nation blindly steps over this constructed divide and attempts to recreate a version of itself on top of an already existing nation. In this new colonial setting, colonial subjects on the side of the colonizer attempt to recreate their own nation and colonial subjects being colonized attempt to preserve their sense of nation. Because, during colonialism, people from at least two nationalities live within the same borders, the constructed geographic boundaries can no longer function as a divide between two nations. My research stems from the question of how nations are built and sustained if not solely by politically determined borders.

This thesis revolves around the idea that nations can be imagined and built outside of physical national boundaries. Within the context of colonialism, I believe this process begins with something Anne McClintock terms "commodity jingoism" (209). McClintock notes, "Victorian advertising took explicit shape around the reinvention of racial difference...and made possible the mass marketing of empire as an organized system of images and attitudes" (209). The reinvention of racial difference falls in line with what Spivak discusses as creating the Other and the assertion that creating the Other also results in the simultaneous creation of oneself. Commodity jingoism is a racist way of asserting national identity through invested pride in national commodity and the subsequent complete devaluation of commodity manufactured external to the nation. Whereas McClintock focuses her argument on commodities such as the British ideal of cleanliness – the bar of soap – I base my argument in the commodities found in

the home – the furniture, the carpeting, the draperies. This project looks at the ways the colonial subject imagines and creates nation by selectively defining Self and Other through a precise design and emphasis on commodity in the colonial home.

Terminology

From exploring some of the current leading theoretical issues in Postcolonial studies, I have developed a group of terms to be a part of the working terminology in this thesis. I will occasionally use the term "Anglo-Indian," to refer either to a person or as a description of a commodity. "Anglo-Indian" is a term used to describe settlers from England living in India. Living in India, in a sense, makes them "Indian," however coming from England necessitates the hyphenation with "Anglo." I do not use this term to categorize a supposed group of people except to reflect where the research points they, historically, categorized themselves.

I will also, from time to time, employ the word "native" in my discussion of people and things indigenous to India. Again, I do not use this word to classify or homogenize the entirety of the people in India. My usage is limited to describing the state of a person or object as having already lived or existed in India prior to colonialism. In addition, I will sometimes use this term as the British in India might have used it. In this way, "native" does not solely represent people *native* to India but takes on a negative and debasing connotation. The British used the term to imply inferiority and the "base" nature of people outside their supposed superior group.

Related to this issue is the term "Other." I briefly discussed this term in relation to Spivak's theory about how a "Subject" identifies itself by "selectively defining an

Other" (280). "Other" is used to define the collective entity outside of who or what one identifies as Self. In this context, I will use the term "Other" throughout this thesis to express the nature by which people seem to identify themselves and others as collective identities.

Finally, the term, which seems to bridge the divide between homogenous, collective classifications, is what I began discussing in terms of Rosemary's Marangoly George's theory about deconstructing binarisms. Moving away from classifying people as either "colonizer and colonized," "Anglo-Indian and native," George discusses the prospects of the term "colonial subject." In her book The Politics of Home, George says this phrase, "accounts for subjects who share a history of colonialism, without making the claim that all colonial subjects are identical" (4). In this way, the term "colonial subject" applies to every person living under colonialism. For this project, "colonial subject" thus applies to English settlers, Indian residents, English government officials, and Indian elders of the community, etc. Without resigning people to a particular status or grouping, the research field is more open to investigating important variation in the colonial experience and so I will use this term widely to incorporate the variety of subjects I discuss.

Structure

The framework for this research is organized by four significant spaces in colonial homes: the courtyard, the drawing room, the verandah, and the zenana. Each of these spaces is consistently mentioned as typical if not fundamental to homes found in colonial India. Each carries significant weight in maintaining tradition and culture

within the nation and there is evidence within each space of instances where commodity and the symbolic meaning of the space plays an important role in how people interact with each other and in relation to the space.

The courtyard, which was most often found in traditional Indian homes, interested me because of its central location within the home. It was an open outside space located at the center of the home, around which the different rooms of the extended family were situated. The structure of the courtyard set it up as a common area where members of the family could enjoy each other's company and communicated at leisure without being completely exposed to the outside world. It served as a place of maintaining consistency. Through reinforcing traditional family values by supporting the extended family, the courtyard was an area where traditional values commonly held by a nation were strengthened and portrayed.

The drawing room was heavily addressed as one of the most important rooms in a proper "English home" in the English domestic manuals written for settlers during colonialism. Because this room is often referred to as the "Ladies Room," I was particularly interested in what kinds of correlations I could determine regarding women's relationships to the home and to nation through the treatment and social emphasis placed on this room. In every detail I have encountered concerning the design of the drawing room, there seems to be one prevailing theme – to cover what looks "Indian" and to display (almost to excess) what was thought to be "proper English." The priority task upon moving into an Indian bungalow was to completely recreate an

"English" home as quickly as possible and this task seems to have been primarily accomplished in the drawing room.

The verandah seems to have appeared in both English settler and native homes in India. Because of the extreme heat in India, the verandah acted as a kind of buffer surrounding the house, bridging the gap between the confined and stuffy interior and the entirely exposed outdoors. I am interested in how the verandah acted as a divide between the safety and comfort of inside the home and whatever perceived dangers or differences existed outside the home.

Finally, the zenana was a fundamental space in the Indian home. It was a distinctly female space or area of the home where the women spent most of their time because of a social custom called Purdah. Purdah is the Hindu practice of the seclusion of high-caste women from the view of men. Because of the necessity to seclude women from sight, there was a special area of the home completely dedicated to women. The zenana was a collection of rooms or areas, which were sometimes separated by screens, and in some homes even contained extra women's gardens.

Sources

I will principally discuss the spaces with support from one core literary work per space, which describes in detail the lived experience within the room and the typical design of the room. The narratives told in the literary works used for this research are all situated during colonialism and tell the stories of colonial subjects and their daily reactions and experiences with the colonial project. These literary works thus provide a useful account of the individual response to colonialism. I supplement the core literary

texts with additional information regarding the spaces from home management guides and domestic manuals written for English settlers moving to India. These manuals serve as historical evidence of how people imagined their homes, how they decorated them, and how they imagined the homes of the Other to be. I was fortunate enough to be able to travel to the British Library in London and study an extensive collection of these domestic manuals. English citizens wrote these manuals for English settlers moving to India. They primarily focused on women and they instructed women on how to set up the "English" home in India. One such manual says, "It is the woman's work to make the house into a home… A woman's mission is a high one. On her, to a large extent, depended the good and the happiness of the family, and through the family, of the nation" (Barnett 2). All of these sources, although valuable to my project, created a challenge in my research. These sources, written by English men and women during colonialism do not present a trustworthy, unbiased view of colonial life and domestic spaces during colonialism. For English citizens these accounts presented an idealized exaggerated lifestyle, which was most often unattainable for the colonial settler. When Englishmen described Indian spaces in these manuals, it was not for the purpose of somehow benefiting the Indian citizen, but instead to bolster and uplift the English culture. It would be ideal to parallel the primary British sources with primary Indian sources about domestic space, except for a few barriers. First of all, the accessibility I have to Indian sources is low and second of all, in the chance that I did come across a primary Indian document, it was usually written in a different language that I could not understand. Thus in order to balance the primary British sources I collected from the

British Library, I have decided to incorporate secondary sources on Indian home life in my research. These sources, written by historical scholars, lack the obvious bias inherent in British historical documents, although they are not primary sources.

Although the sections of my thesis may seem fundamentally disparate in terms of the separate literary sources used to support each section, the chapters are methodologically united in the following ways. The different literary sources each provide an account of experience and testimony to the workings of the domestic spaces. Furthermore, through exploring the accounts of experience offered in these literary texts, some overarching trends unite the spaces, and thus the sections of this thesis. Consistent in every domestic space, colonial subjects use the design of the space, the commodities within the rooms, and the symbolic meaning of the areas in order to define themselves and their Other. It seems as though in addition to colonial subjects forming their domestic spaces, the rooms I am investigating also assert power over their inhabitants. Each space has a strong cultural significance and consequently, has significant meaning to the colonial inhabitants. In relating to the space, molding it and being molded by it, colonial subjects participate in the most imaginative and purposeful of processes – that of imagining a nation.

CHAPTER II

THE ZENANA: NATIONALISM AND GENDERED SPACE

The zenana in an Indian home was a space designed to reinforce the social custom of purdah. Purdah is the term used to describe the Hindu practice of the seclusion of high-caste women from the view of men. During the day, the men were not to see their wives unless by special arrangement. Purdah extended to such rituals as the ever-constant veil covering women's heads and faces, women not being allowed to eat dinner until after their husbands had finished their dinner, never seeing their husbands except during the sleeping hours of the night, etc. In order to enforce purdah, there existed a distinctly female space or area in the Indian home called the zenana where the women spent most of their time. This space was intended only for women and it is doubtful whether some husbands ever saw the inside of the woman's zenana. The zenana in an Indian home did not comprise merely one room. Rather, the zenana was a collection of rooms or areas separated by screens, and in some homes even contained separate women's gardens. A 1932 account documenting colonial life describes the verandah and "outer rooms" as being "men's rooms" and the closed territory and "inner rooms" as being "female rooms" (Hauswirth 94). A contemporary anthropological study on the variety of Indian home designs confirms this arrangement saying, "The structures nearest the outer door are the men's area, while the inner areas are the woman's domain. People rebuild these; women plaster over floors and walls and decorate these with vivid designs" (Henderson 82).

The interior of the zenana is described by a British colonial subject in 1904 as being, "Sumptuously furnished with the richest and costliest rugs and pillows; the divans were draped in different coloured silks to suit the season; the vessels for eating and drinking were of gold and silver, and the bathroom lined with full length mirrors" (Compton 76). The importance of the zenana in terms of representing Indian high culture is salient enough to reappear in various literary sources. Rabindranath Tagore's 1915 novel The Home and the World presents an interesting metaphor of Indian nationalism rooted in the complexities and ambiguities of the home and one woman's conflict between her duties to her home and the zenana and the nationalist movement at the forefront of her attention.

There are two narratives of independence struggles at work in Tagore's novel. The primary narrative tells the story of the Swadeshi nationalist movement in India. The purpose of the Swadeshi movement was to encourage Hindu self-sufficiency and reliance and to foster the conditions thought necessary to create a unified India. Tagore, a political activist himself, was involved in such a nationalist movement. In Engendering India Sangeeta Ray describes Tagore's opinions regarding nationalist movements in noting that Tagore realized, "that the political freedom offered by the nationalists failed to take into account the internal oppression in a society ridden by caste and religious hierarchies" (98). Tagore's initial fervor in the Swadeshi movement soon subsided when he realized that any movement, no matter how positively it invoked feelings of nationalism, could not succeed while continuing to oppress members *within* the nation. This includes members of lower classes, minority races and religions, and

women. In the introduction to The Home and The World, Anita Desai reinforces Tagore's concerns in referring to oppressive conditions existing within nationalist movements as being a part of "elitist movements...who had no connection with and little consideration for the labouring classes" (Tagore 9).

Considering Tagore's opinions regarding the necessity of freedom for oppressed classes within a nation in order to promote freedom for the entire nation, the second independence struggle at work in Tagore's The Home and The World is seen in the focus on the female character, Bimala's freedom. In the novel, Bimala is transposed onto the image of the Indian nation. The rhetoric surrounding Bimala and India is an ever-shifting, fluid interchange of definition. At times, Bimala is referred to in her natural human state and in accordance with her role as wife and host. At other times, Bimala takes on a huge fetish power and acts as the representative of the entire Indian nation and as impetus and justification for every nationalistic desire on the part of extremist Sandip. Her power grows in the telling of the story and is easily demonstrated in her changing names. Sandip first calls her "Queen Bee" as if she is the head of the entire beehive, or the resistance movement. He evolves and begins to simply refer to her as "Bee" and eventually ends with the symbolically loaded "Queen." At the climax of his (self-serving) obsession with Bimala, she has taken on the role of the Queen of her entire country, the utmost representative figure deserving the highest respect.

Lines are continuously blurred in the discussion of woman and nation as "Mother" bleeds into "Nation" and Bimala comes to represent both the mother and the nation and then referred to as the "mother nation" at some points. At the base of the

connection between woman and nation in Tagore's novel is what I briefly touched on earlier in mentioning Tagore's opinion that in order for a nationalist movement to be effective, all elements within the nation, including different races, sexes, and religions need to experience the same equality that the nation seeks with other nations. This idea is in line with Benedict Anderson's definition of a nation as an "imagined community," or one that is thought by its inhabitants to be homogenous and collective throughout. This idea is extended to equate women with nation in Sandip's pondering: "If only women could be set free from the artificial fetters put round them by men" (84). This is the "woman question" at work in the novel yet in this very question, something else is being asked. Sandip's pondering, in the midst of his nationalist struggle, also suggests "If only India could be set free from the artificial fetters put round it by the English." In light of Sandip's question, the zenana, a private space in the Indian home reserved for the seclusion of women from men, holds particular importance. The zenana seems to be the "artificial fetter" mentioned by Sandip as the thing that restrains women from being free.

A recurring point of discussion between Nikhil and his wife, Bimala are his desires to see her "set free" from the *zenana,* or rather from the custom of *purdah.* In addition to Nikhil's attempts at coaxing Bimala out of the seclusion of the zenana, Sandip also finds intrigue in planting seeds of individuality in Bimala so that she will leave the zenana. While Nikhil's motives are for the most part purely innocent and based out of a mutual respect and love for Bimala, Sandip's desires to "enlighten" Bimala prove to actually be part of his larger tyrannical self-love which he has

manifested into his extremist Swadeshi nationalism. The obvious conflict between the two men lies in their two entirely different approaches to and beliefs about the Swadeshi nationalist movement. For instance, Nikhil attacks Sandip's over-zealous approach in saying:

> What I really feel is this, that those who cannot find food for their enthusiasm in a knowledge of their country as it actually is, or those who cannot love men just because they are men – who needs must shout and deify their country in order to keep up their excitement – these love excitement more than their country. (42)

Although outwardly the struggle between the two men seems to rest sturdily on their differing strategic approaches in the nationalist movement, the manifestations of this conflict are rooted in a struggle to influence Bimala. What is interesting to note here is that the true point of adversity between these two men rests in their beliefs about nationalism but this conflict is entirely manifested, through Bimala, in the social custom of purdah, as exemplified by the zenana.

From the men's perspective, liberating Bimala and her leaving the zenana becomes a metaphor for an emerging sense of nationalism in India. The custom of purdah represents the formal structure of rules and tradition. Furthermore, in addition to rules and tradition, purdah implies the un-requested imposition of rules. Women are assumed to live in purdah. There is no choice regarding whether to live in seclusion or not, whether to spend the majority of one's day in the zenana. Seclusion within the zenana holds such strong traditional weight that as Bimala leaves the zenana more and more, her behavior is tacitly mocked and judged by her sister-in-law. On one occasion, as Bimala encounters her sister-in-law while she is leaving the zenana to join the men in the parlour she notices how her "sister-in-law, who happened to be passing by, stopped

dead before (her), surveyed (her) from head to foot and with compressed lips smiled a meaning smile" (33). Although the practices of purdah and the creation of the zenana was truly a Hindu event and the Swadeshi movement was, in fact, a Hindu nationalist movement, I believe that in this novel, the zenana, as the actual physical and architectural evidence of purdah, has come to represent the unwanted pressures felt by the colonized peoples during colonialism. The proponents of the Swadeshi nationalist movement were inclined to reject these feelings and pressures created by colonialism. The outcome was to look towards self-rule (Swaraj) and economic self-sufficiency. From the point of view of both Nikhil and Sandip, although on two different ends of the spectrum in terms of their approaches to furthering a nationalist movement, keeping women in purdah, always secluded in the zenana, did not agree with the ideals of this growing nationalism. As previously mentioned, in order to effectively further a nationalist movement and allow a nation to stand independently of outside nations, factors (such as men and women) within the nation need to exist on a similar equal status.

It would seem logical that in order to emancipate and equate all persons within a country, no individual should be party to any custom, no matter how heavily weighted in tradition, which would keep her secluded from the "outside world," keep her eating her meals late into the night after her husband had eaten first, and keep her face hidden from public view. With this, the idea of equality as a major component in the foundation for the Swadeshi movement and the social custom of purdah (demonstrated physically by the separation of men and women through the zenana) seem inconsistent. Therefore,

Nikhil and Sandip begin to try to emancipate Bimala, in line with their so-called equality manifesto as part of the Swadeshi movement and in turn, they measure her "freedom" (which must come first, before the successful freedom of their country) in terms of her leaving the zenana and the custom of purdah. Nikhil says, "I shall simply make Bimala one with my country. The turbulent west wind which has swept away the country's veil of conscience, will sweep away the veil of the wife from Bimala's face, and in that uncovering there will be no shame" (84). He emphasizes *unveiling* Bimala (the veil being representative of the oppression of the zenana) and he equates Bimala's unveiling with that of his country's. Additionally, in the midst of the conflict between the nationalist movement and her responsibility to her home, Bimala at times begins to link her leaving the zenana with her country's independence as well. "In that future I saw my country, a woman like myself, standing expectant. She has been drawn forth from her home corner by the sudden call of some Unknown.... She has left home, forgotten domestic duties; she has nothing but an unfathomable yearning which hurries her on – by what road, to what goal, she recks not" (94). By equating herself with her country, Bimala consequently reinforces the parallel between colonialism and oppression with the domestic arena with which she is most familiar, the zenana.

The ways the two men treat Bimala in coaxing her out of the zenana represent two different approaches to nationalism occurring in India. Nikhil generally represents a selfless, altruistic sense of nationalism in his way of encouraging Bimala to leave the zenana. As Bimala represents Bengal and more broadly, all of India, Nikhil's sense of nationalism is, on the surface, patient and optimistic in terms of planning for long-term

future success with the Swadeshi movement. Martha Nussbaum supports this view in saying, "What looked like passion in Sandip was ego-centric self-exaltation, what looked like lack of passion in Nikhil contained a truly loving perception of her (Bimala) as a person" (qtd. in Ray 124). I have to disagree with Nussbaum's summation of Nikhil. Admittedly, Nikhil wants freedom for Bimala from the zenana, however his desires for her are not without their own sense of selfishness, even though they indeed might be blind to their selfishness. Nikhil is described repeatedly as buying numerous fancy dresses and shoes for Bimala because they are of a modern style (which fit *his* preferences), even though the accoutrements make her extremely uncomfortable. He says of Bimala leaving the zenana, "One cannot realize one's own existence by remaining within oneself – it has to be sought outside" (Tagore 195). His concern for her actualizing herself and experiencing complete freedom does not entirely cover the underlying notion that ultimately, Nikhil assumes he knows what is best for Bimala. At the root of this assumption is the belief that she does not know what is best for herself. Nussbaum might be correct in saying that Nikhil possesses a truly loving perception of Bimala, however, I think his love for her is underscored by the love he has for the person he *imagines* she can become and not the person she actually is. This idea is heavily addressed in Gayatri Spivak's article "Can The Subaltern Speak?" Her argument points directly at the conflict being illustrated by both Nikhil and Sandip's treatment of Bimala. Spivak questions whether or not it is truly possible to give a person a voice (allow them the opportunity to speak) without unconsciously projecting one's own voice, opinions, and values through their previously voiceless mouth. As I will discuss later, Bimala is

reluctant to change her behavior in order to become more "modern" or "free." And although Nikhil's intents for Bimala are on the surface benevolent, it should be questioned how much prodding is altruistic for the other person's benefit and where the prodding becomes an imposition for the other person to become more like oneself.

On the other hand, Sandip's approach to persuading Bimala to leave the seclusion of the zenana is more desperate and extreme. His tactics are rash and not well planned. His focus is based in the present and often leaves much to be desired, with long-term effectiveness giving out to short-term brute force and chaos. No matter what their approach, both these men represent a sense of nationalism occurring in India. What is interesting about their respective fights for nationalism is that no matter how different their approaches both target the *zenana* as a point on which to base the status of their success. Most importantly, both men, to an extent, objectify both Bimala and the zenana by using Bimala's relationship to the zenana as a measure of their nationalistic success and secondly, by assuming they know what is best for Bimala and the zenana.

The perspectives I have presented thus far regarding nationalism and its relationship to the zenana are from the male perspectives of Nikhil and Sandip. The female perspective presented by Bimala shows an extreme struggle and discomfort at leaving the zenana. Sangeeta Ray says, "her reluctance is rooted in her traditional upbringing and beliefs, which do not allow her to cause unnecessary unhappiness to Nikhil's grandmother" (110). Ray's summation of the reasoning behind Bimala's reluctance to leave the zenana barely skims the surface of the myriad reasons Bimala wrestles with in her struggle to choose a course of action.

One of the primary reasons Bimala hesitates to leave the zenana and fully enter "the World" is because the zenana and her home offer her a sense of power. According to Indian custom, as the wife of the oldest living male in the home, Bimala, in turn, is the head of the household, even more so than her mother-and-sister-in-law. She speaks of her husband wanting her to move away with him to Calcutta and leave the house to his sister-in-law's keeping:

> My husband's idea was that this would be a good opportunity for leaving to my sister-in-law the consolation of ruling over the household, giving our life, at the same time, more room to branch out in Calcutta…And what of the day when we should have to come back here? Should I then get my seat back at the head?… Men never understand these things. They have their nests in the outside world; they little know the whole of what the household stands for. In these matters they ought to follow womanly guidance…I felt the real point was, that one ought to stand up for one's rights. To go away, and leave everything in the hands of the enemy, would be nothing short of owning defeat. (Tagore 25)

Bimala makes it very clear that within her realm of the home and the zenana, she is the "head" of something she values. In a 1904 account of Indian life during colonialism, one writer says, "The women themselves are said to take a pride in it…and where through a reverse of fortune, *zenana* ladies have been compelled to abandon the purdah to seek their livelihood, it has been a parting from respectability" (Compton 74). Although from outside her world, the men view her life as being powerless and without independence, Bimala seems to recognize those very things thriving in her life. In an obscure way, just as the men advocate self-sufficiency and independence in their world to support their nation, Bimala clings to the same things in her realm. It is when she leaves her world of the zenana that she is confronted by many other problems and

personal struggles about where she belongs and at times just wishes to be "in harmony with one's surroundings" (Tagore 75).

Part of the discomfort Bimala faces upon confusing the lines of her world of the zenana with the male-centered outside world is that a place for her does not exist in the outside world as it does in the zenana. Ultimately, the question must be asked: What happens to women who might have self-identified as having some level of power within purdah when the structure (zenana) designed to keep them there is no longer viable? In reading Tagore's depiction of a nationalist movement I perceive a double-edged sword at work. In order to truly pursue a nationalist policy, endeavors that mirror the nationalist struggle, should be made within the country as well. This includes advocating the equality of classes, sexes, and religions (which the Swadeshi movement failed to do entirely due to their exclusion of Muslims and their inconsideration for the negative economic consequences for the lower classes.) Advocates of the Swadeshi movement did however tend to advocate freedom for women. However, as I have mentioned, these attempts to "free" Bimala proved most often to be of selfish motivation – not out of true concern and empathy for her wishes but out of a self-promoting way to further the Swadeshi movement. Tagore shows the double-edged sword because in needing to "free" women and other oppressed classes as a part of achieving national independence, women and other oppressed classes are in reality actually *more* imprisoned because a safe space outside of the status they had inhabited is not yet realized and because someone entirely *not* themselves is *still* telling them what to do and is still speaking for them. Thus, I would like to argue that the zenana in Tagore's The

Home and The World functions in two different realms, depending on the perspective of the person who defines it. From outside the zenana (from the perspective of Nikhil and Sandip), purdah and the zenana symbolize the unwanted pressure felt by colonized peoples under the British Raj and therefore, the image of the zenana incites a great Indian nationalistic sentiment. However, from inside the zenana, to a woman like Bimala, the zenana might represent her own sense of nation – a place where she has control over a space. The zenana thus creates two nations within one household – outside the zenana representing a nation of men, inside a nation of women, both of which cannot truly be entered and understood by the other.

CHAPTER III

THE DRAWING ROOM: A NATION IN MINIATURE

The drawing room in an English home or an English settler's home served as the pinnacle of tradition and a sense of all that was "right" within the home. During the British Raj, home management guides and domestic manuals from England were written with the sole purpose of advising settlers on how to properly set up an "English home" in India. In a 1923 article of the home and health in India, one author acknowledges, "One of the characteristics of an Englishman is to make his surroundings, wherever he may be stationed, as like as possible to those of his own country" (Platt 16). This need to re-create one's home wherever one may be echoes the colonial sentiment loudly. Domestic manuals emphasized the drawing room as a space of particular social importance. The drawing room derives its name from the "custom of the ladies withdrawing after dinner…It was originally called the 'withdrawing' room" (Davidson 5). Thus historically, the drawing room's purposed revolved around female occupation and activity. Daily female activity in the drawing room included reading, painting, and primarily, entertaining guests. An 1876 manual says the drawing room, "should be enjoyed by the household…but every member should understand that no work that creates disorder should be performed there…the parlour or drawing room should be kept free from litter, and ready for the reception of visitors" (Stoker 25).

While some home management guides reiterated the purpose of the drawing room, other manuals focused more specifically on the design of the space. Upon arriving in India and moving into a home, the first thing to do was to "see

about…matting for the arches, windows, and floors…" (Indian Outfits and Establishments 59). In addition to technical instructions on how to prepare the home, including the drawing room, for English occupation, there were special instructions as to the kinds of things to put *in* the drawing room. In order to make sure the woman of the house established a "proper" drawing room, most manuals set guidelines to maintain consistency in different homes. One 1915 manual says:

> Usually a light wall paper, with harmonious paint, carpet, and curtains giving a general air of artistic comfort and cheerfulness, will be found successful. Since these are the rooms in which visitors are received, plenty of seating accommodation should be provided, and all chairs, sofas or settees, large or small, high or low, should be chosen with a view to comfort and strength. (Eckford 94)

Instructions of this type are typical throughout the domestic manuals I have encountered. Home management guides addressed the many aspects of home life for the new settler, from how to choose a home to how many servants to employ. However, the *abundance* of instruction concerning how to re-create an "English" drawing room positions the space as a critical element within the colonial context.

Domestic manuals were written with one overarching purpose – to prepare the English settler for life as an English colonizer. The colonizer role did not always involve participation in any direct act of colonization, as for someone in the military or politics. English settlers lived out the colonizer role day by day in less obvious ways. English settlers perpetuated colonialism through their daily assertions that their home life stood superior to anything they might have found in another country. The drawing room not only served as the site of comfort for the family, but also took on power in representing and projecting an illustration of the identity of the English nation.

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala's A Backward Place depicts a community of characters from mixed national descent living in the later years of the British Raj, the 1940s. Although this story takes place as much as 50 or 60 years after some of the domestic manuals I am using for support, the manuals still have pertinent sociological themes and implications regarding the importance of the drawing room because these domestic manuals set the historical precedent for behavior in colonial India. The story addresses many issues rooted in concerns about proper behavior as either "English" or "Indian" and many of these issues are played out within the drawing room. Linda Warley writes, "Home is invoked most immediately by the image of a house. In Jhabvala's novels, the manner in which her characters are housed – where they live, how they live, and how they feel about their homes – is integral to the construction of the fiction" (15). A Backward Place focuses on Etta, a stuffy Hungarian woman who has too enthusiastically embraced life as a "British woman" and her interaction with a married couple, Judy (an English woman) and Bal (an Indian man). The foundation of the interaction between these characters is based in the drawing room.

In the novel, Judy, a woman born in England and married to an Indian man, exists in a sort of liminal space in that she cannot identify herself solely in one world as either English (because of her birth) or Indian (because her marriage). Unmarried English women came to India with one purpose – to marry an Englishman and become a Memsahib, a glorified domestic goddess – perfecting the ideal English home and hosting charming guests. Judy's marriage to an Indian man does not match the Memsahib ideal. While Judy evaluates and compares her own and Etta's drawing rooms, the most

fundamental struggle with her identity emerges. The first description of a drawing room in the novel is of Etta's drawing room from Judy's perspective as Etta takes her leisurely morning bath:

> While Etta was in her bath, Judy wandered round the flat. She loved it here. Everything was so elegant, so continental, in such good taste: just like Etta herself. There was a white rug on the stone floor in the sitting-room, and a low divan done up in pearl grey and covered with an array of amusing cushions. The raw silk lampshades matched the curtains, and sophisticated black and white prints hung on the walls. There were two flowers each in two tiny delicate vases. Several gay record-sleeves were scattered on top of the radiogram; a French fashion magazine lay open on the divan. One might have been in Europe. (Jhabvala 6)

Taken in by the exactness of Etta's drawing room to the European standard, Judy feels as though she is in England. For her, Etta's drawing room *is* England, because of the artifacts in the room – the vases, the sofa, the rug on the floor. However, upon leaving the drawing room, stepping out onto the terrace, and looking over the balcony, it becomes very clear to Judy "that this was not Europe" (7). Only within the world Etta has created in her drawing room, does England visually exist.

Upon returning from her "toiletries," Etta begins her usual tirade about how favorably she views herself and her upper class European lifestyle. Her elitist rant soon targets Judy, as a woman who has married an Indian man and who mostly wears saris now. Etta says, "There is absolutely no reason when in Rome to do as Rome does. Or rather, but certainly, certainly none in Delhi. It's no use sinking down to anyone's level, Judy, we must always try to raise them up to ours. Oh God, how you're making me sound like something colonial, but it's true, it really is *true*" (8). Etta speaks collectively of her and Judy's "level" as though she and Judy come from the same background. The

background and the lifestyle Etta *chooses* to present is that of the upper-class English socialite. In actuality, Etta is Hungarian and as a European living in colonial India she has chosen to embrace an English identity and reside comfortably in her status within the power differential existing in colonial India. By saying it is necessary to raise people up to her level, Etta defines the difference between the life Judy used to live as a proper "English" woman and the life she currently lives as the wife of an Indian man. Judy's current lifestyle, as a woman who has to work in order to help support her family, does not equate with the ideal lifestyle that a Memsahib is supposed to experience.

Without a shadow of tact, Etta elevates her European lifestyle, everything which the drawing room is intended to represent, and demotes the Indian lifestyle Judy has adopted in her marriage. Her sentiment is echoed in a 1911 home design manual that says, "Is the liking for outside ornaments – for pictures, or statues, or furniture, or architecture – a moral quality? Yes, most surely, if a rightly set liking. Taste for any pictures or statues is not a moral quality, but taste for good ones is …To teach taste is inevitably to form character" (Chimna-Bai 48). There are two crucial elements involved in this statement. The first is the assumption that taste and preferences can be measured absolutely, in terms of "correctness." The absolute correct form of taste is implied to be English. Secondly, this domestic manual assumes that character can be formed by exposure to the aforementioned "correct" tastes and also that character did not exist prior to this exposure. In the colonial context, this statement implies a superiority and correctness in British taste and a complete inferiority and even lack of character in Indian tastes. As mentioned earlier, Anne McClintock's Imperial Leather terms this type

of racism "commodity jingoism." McClintock discusses the expansive nature of commodity and advertising in the Victorian age, which "made possible, as never before, the mass marketing of empire as an organized system of images and attitudes" (209). She adds, "commodity jingoism itself helped reinvent and maintain British national unity in the face of deepening imperial competition and colonial resistance." The images and attitudes consistent with this British national identity are maintained through different commodities – things like whitewashed walls, divans covered with pillows, and the silk lampshades like the ones strategically placed in Etta's drawing room. Etta has constructed her drawing room with a specific purpose in mind, that of projecting a flawless image of proper English nationality.

Judy's home is very different from Etta's home. Whereas Etta wears her drawing room as if it were one of her European silk dresses, Judy is in constant conflict with her drawing room. This conflict is always made worse after a visit to Etta's, where the cultural differences between the "English" girl she once was and the "Indian" wife she now endeavors to be, is exacerbated. Etta's imposition of cultural superiority on Judy and everyone she meets undoubtedly aggravates the natural conflict Judy already feels because she is married an Indian man and is living in an Indian household. With her marriage she has adopted a lifestyle distinctly different from the English lifestyle with which she was raised and because of the political situation in India, one that stands in direct opposition to the life she once knew.

After having been to Etta's flat, Judy always tries to "do something" with her drawing room to make it appear more "English" (10). She rearranges the furniture to

make a more suitable arrangement. "She was holding one of the two cane chairs and looking round for a suitable place to put it. She chose the first one, then another, but neither was to her satisfaction, so she finally put it back where it had been before…She realized it was not the position of the chairs that needed changing, but the chairs themselves" (10). For Judy, it is not enough to merely rearrange the furniture because she does not even *have* the correct elements to rearrange.

A suitable sofa was extremely important to the English drawing room namely because the drawing room was the social center of the home. In order to receive guests properly, the hostess should have be able to offer them adequate seating. An 1896 Anglo-Indian magazine distributed in colonial India includes a series entitled "Our Homes in India: How to Beautify Them." In this section, an Anglo-Indian woman describes her experiences decorating her drawing room in India. In terms of furnishing her drawing room she says:

> Economy was necessary in furnishing, but I felt that whatever else we did without, I must have a comfortable drawing-room sofa; and, after many weary days spent at sales, I discovered a sofa that, though utterly hideous, had great capabilities. It was broad and had a comfortable headpiece and good springs…I had the wood work well rubbed and polished…and hid the detestable cretonne for ever under a chestnut coloured art serge, on which I embroidered large suns in yellow silk. (Roche)

A comfortable sofa was necessary in the English drawing room. Regardless of financial situations or the accessibility to the "perfect" sofa, a *suitable* sofa was a priority, even if every inch of the fabric had to be covered. Colonial domestic accounts reflect the general English perception that the English placed more emphasis on furniture in their homes than traditionally found in Indian homes. These domestic accounts express

confusion as to why native Indians seemed to prefer what they called "open spaces." In a 1915 book on household management, an Englishman writes, "The silent influence of the furniture of the home upon the life of the family will be readily understood, and it will be admitted that it is highly important that children and young people during the period of character-forming should be provided with harmonious and restful surroundings" (Eckford 87). An 1865 domestic account says of Indian homes, "Even the wealthier classes indulge but sparingly their taste for furniture. On entering the house…you find the apartments bare and almost empty" (Kerr 167). "Bare and almost empty" is of course subjective to the author's English bias. This statement demonstrates how the author assumes English design, such as in the drawing room, to be the norm. Judy struggles with this sort of mentality in observing her own drawing room, especially her sofa. Now focused on the "divan," she strips the covering sheet and the mattress and underneath reveals the grandeur of her "proper" English sofa – the old, dusty trunks used to support the worn-down mattress. Much like the author who described her sofa, Judy tried covering what she had to make her sofa appear more inviting and respectable. However underneath, Judy did not even have a sofa. She had a shabby mattress supported by two old storage trunks. Judy's sofa hardly compares with the English standard of Etta's majestic pearl-colored sofa covered with pillows.

With no furniture left to rearrange, Judy turns her attention to the walls. They are appropriately whitewashed, however they still stand, blindingly white, with two framed certificates, marking Judy's husband's graduation from college. She questions the correctness of having certificates on the wall, and her sister-in-law responds, "Of course,

then everyone who comes knows at once what sort of person you are" (Jhabvala 11). Here we see a similarity between the two drawing rooms. Both rooms endeavor to present some understanding of the owner – Etta as the model of European social graces and Judy's family as the family of a hard-working, intelligent patriarch. In this very instant, we see a parallel between the unattainable and oppressive perfection presented by the proper "English" drawing room in Etta's home and how Judy views her drawing room to be "in progress" – a primitive form of Etta's drawing room, which reiterates the theory about character formation presented earlier. Until Judy creates her space to be a perfect English drawing room and until her tastes are in line with the "correct" tastes, she fights seeing herself as anything more than partially realized.

Not only does Judy try to ground her national and personal identity through "reworking" her drawing room but her drawing room also complicates her conflict. By carrying the weight of representing the English nation through the perfect inviting sofa, pillows, and wall coverings, the drawing room also dictates to Judy who *she* should be. According to the standard presented in the home-management guides, she *should be* the model English wife whose job it is to "make the house into a home" and on whom "depends the good and the happiness of the family, and through the family, of the nation" (Barnett 1). However, Judy does not fit this mold and cannot easily be *molded* by the requirements of the drawing room. She is bombarded by expectations – from her friends and her birth nation. Etta's voice is constantly in her ear, telling her she should divorce her husband, move out, construct a new space for herself, and reclaim herself as an English woman. However, Judy is bound by love and devotion to her new life with

Bal and their children. Although her life is not as easy as it might have been had she chosen to marry an English man and become the model Memsahib, Judy chooses to stay in her marriage and support her mostly out-of-work actor-husband. She speaks adoringly of the times she and Bal tuck their children into bed at night. Finally, with the annoyance and uncertainty about her husband's desires to move to Bombay in order to pursue his film career, Judy appears to cave under the pressure of Etta continuously voicing her opinions and that of her own inner turmoil regarding her exact identity.

Emotionally collapsing under pressure, Judy ends her struggle over her identity by falling back on the traditional English drawing room to which she is most accustomed. She begins to re-create an English drawing room in place of her Indian sitting room. This means drawing the line with her husband and welcoming notions about returning to the luxuries offered by Etta's drawing room. She demands that her husband not go to Bombay and she begins building an image for herself of a secure, comfortable future situated in a proper English drawing room. She imagines them one day having a "proper sitting-room, buying proper furniture, not only a sofa but arm-chairs too and a little table with a glass top" (Jhabvala 225). Even as Bal continues to plead with her to come with him, she continues redecorating their room in her mind, as if English vases like Etta's and an appropriate rug will finally nail down her life and disperse any sense of uncertainty and misplacement she may have. As Bal speaks to her she is "too taken up with her own feelings to pay much attention to his. She (is) flooded with love for the shabby little room in which they sat and which was theirs. She looked with sentimental eyes at his two framed certificates and his photograph at the airport,

and promised all three of them a grand future in silver frames" (225). It seems as if the only way Judy thinks she can truly find comfort is to place her drawing room as a priority over her husband.

Judy tries to put on and wear a proper drawing room just as Etta wears her drawing room and her silk dresses. But Judy's dress is ill fitting – an upper-class style perfected in unrealistic domestic manuals and magazines and unsuitable to her daily life.

> The things Etta spoke of were familiar to Judy only from the magazines and the pictures, and she had no hopes that they would ever enter into her own circumstances. Her Western world was only little semi-detacheds with smoking fires and frozen pipes and carefully drawn curtains bought at two and eleven a yard at the sales. (233)

The magazine image or Etta's image of how Judy's life should be is that of a supposedly superior Englishness and furthermore, that of an upper class Englishness – both of which are out of Judy's reach. However, Judy chooses not to reach for them. Finally she realizes that unlike Etta, trying to anchor herself firmly as English through the lifestyle and accoutrements of the drawing room is futile. The perfection depicted in domestic manuals is not only unrealistic but also unnecessary because even as Judy transforms the room in her mind, she finds no lasting improvement or comfort. No proper English sofa or silk lampshade can place her as solely "English:"

> Not even when, in her mind's eye, she transformed the old tins and trunks into sofa-sets with springs. These too seemed trivial cause to tie one down in a world, which was so wide, encompassed by a sky out of which perhaps someone spoke. Why would she be afraid to go out into that world? (241)

Judy departs from the domestic manual ideal and decides she cannot confine herself in the midst of such a "wide world" to the lonely Memsahib ideal. Judy ultimately finds herself apart from Etta's influence, outside of the ideal drawing room. She packs her

things and her children, and she moves to Bombay with her husband. In the house, she leaves behind all of her attempted pieces of English furniture. She embraces herself as an English-born woman, married to an Indian man, moving to Bombay, with only two items to start out her new drawing room – two framed certificates which once hung awkwardly in an attempted English drawing room, now the only artifacts worth saving.

CHAPTER IV

TRADITION AND NATION IN THE COLONIAL COURTYARD

The courtyard in an Indian home is an open space at the center of the home, around which the other rooms are located so that every room feeds into this center, open area. A contemporary anthology on Indian cultural patterns addresses some of the different house types and village settlement patterns of Indians throughout history. Social anthropologist, Asok Mitra says:

> The most important feature of the traditional Indian house, whether in village or in towns, is not the house itself, but the courtyard (*angan* or *uthan*), where most of a family's life is lived. The house is merely where property is secured and shelter sought from the rigors of weather. The courtyard is for living.... Domestic architecture...is mainly determined by the commanding position occupied by the courtyard or open quadrangle..." (105)

This cultural significance of the courtyard is reiterated and expanded in Santha Rama Rau's Remember The House as Baba explores the familiar space with which she has grown up and begins to define her own sense of nationality, in opposition to western influence, as supported by her life experiences growing up in the courtyard.

Santha Rama Rau's 1956 novel Remember The House tells the story a group of young people during the year just before Indian independence in 1947. As their country works through the intricacies of establishing its own identity minus British occupation, the characters in this work, especially Indira (or Baba as she is familiarly called), assert themselves and establish their own voices as well.

During this time of drastic change, the concepts of tradition, culture, and individualism are continuously blurred and brought into question, especially by Baba, as she attempts to piece together and make sense of her personal struggles between the

western voice she encounters through some American visitors and the traditional expectations with which she was raised. Throughout Baba's personal conflict, she seeks solace and wisdom through many different people in different locations but the one place, which seems to unfailingly stand as the foundation and center of an uncompromised sense of cultural and national identity and tradition is the courtyard in her family's home.

As Baba confronts issues dealing with her own conformity to tradition and what it means to be an Indian woman, she returns to the images she has of the courtyard as a child and the strong traditional family presence that occupied the courtyard. Her memories of the courtyard and what it represents begin to serve as a weight on one side of the controversy, with the courtyard bolstering everything representing family values, normalcy, and convention in the Indian nation. She describes a typical day of hers growing up and says, "I ran out to dry my hair in the sunny courtyard behind the house. There I saw my grandmother sitting, as usual, cross-legged on a bed – a wooden frame with tape webbing across it" (Rau 19). She describes the scene with such a sense of normalcy and expectation that we have to imagine she has run into the courtyard with wet hair to find her grandmother sitting on a home-made bed every day before in her life.

Baba describes her struggle early in the book as a feeling she always remembers having of wanting adventure and wanting to search for something other than what was usual and expected of her life. She talks about "longing for adventure" (48). This feeling manifests itself more openly in Baba upon her meeting of a western couple, Alix

and Nicky. Immediately there is a rift between the visitors and Baba's close friends who want no part in socializing with westerners, as a result of their experiences with the British. Baba is situated at the center of this conflict between her new western friends and her very traditional friend Pria who adheres to conventional manners of behavior in every aspect of her life, from getting married at a suitable age to choosing her company appropriately. Pria's opposition to the ideals and behavior of the western couple does not go unvoiced in the novel. Baba notes the more traditional standpoint as represented in Pria through her snide, disapproving comments made just out of earshot from Alix and Nicky. Her disapproval is not necessarily directed specifically at Alix and Nicky but at the ideals they represent and the influence those ideals have on Baba. Pria expresses her disapproval through criticism of Baba and Alix's more frequently occurring private lunches. Pria embraces the tradition and stability of the culture in which she was raised – all of the expectation, structure, and finality of the culture played out in the courtyard.

In contrast to Pria, Baba questions her expected pathway in life and her new western friend, Alix, supports her curiosity. Alix encourages her budding interest in finding romantic love in a marriage partner. She encourages Baba to embrace the wildness, which seems to be in opposition to the majority of the values with which she was raised. In a conversation about whom Baba shall marry, Alix exclaims over her practical choice, "But my God if you aren't in love –." Baba mechanically retorts, "It's not thought necessary if the match is suitable" (55). This sense of adventure that Baba seeks seems to oppose everything the courtyard represents. The courtyard is the gathering place and common area of the entire extended family – the families of

brothers, including the wives who have been adopted into the family through marriage. The courtyard displays the traditional family structure in Indian culture.

As a child, Baba recalls playing with her cousin Gita throughout the day. As night would fall, the entire family would gather in the courtyard and while they ate dinner, "the great, filmy cubes of mosquito nets would again appear in the courtyard enclosing the rows of beds" (48). Baba and her cousin Gita would climb the courtyard wall and stare out at the world beyond their enclosed home space. Baba, as a child, thought the lights from the next town lay miles and miles away from her and her cousin on top of the courtyard wall, when in fact the lights were only a mile and a half away. She says, "It seemed a long way away…but ours was a tight protected world, circumscribed by the high walls around the garden, the orchards, and more closely by the courtyard and the house" (48). Here, she identifies her tiny world as being bound by the walls that surround the perimeter of the courtyard and the home, and she says of her world, "if I longed for adventure, it was only against the background of this sure protection. If I wanted exciting things to happen, it was probably because I felt I could afford it – the Jalnabad house was so safe" (48). Returning to Asok Mitra's description of the courtyard, he says, "The location of the courtyard is inseparable from the questions of privacy and security" (115). Baba certainly echoes this sentiment in recognizing the courtyard as the principal site of privacy and safety in her home. Her need and longing for self-discovery stems almost directly from her early experiences in the house and her experiences living within the protection of the courtyard walls. It is

this "contained familiarity" (Rau 158) against which Baba protests in her quest for adventure in leading a life unordinary to the one she was raised to expect.

Although Baba's desire to deviate from her cultural norm derives from her reluctance to lead the life exemplified by the tradition associated with the courtyard, he also reflects warmly on the courtyard throughout the book. As she continues socializing with Alix, she recounts more memories about the courtyard in a way that reflects her positive views and attachment to the space and what it represents. She recalls the "early-morning bustle of the courtyard" and speaks of the household as an entity, "shaking back the night and approaching the glowing day" (24). The courtyard is the site where the house unites and acts as one body. By mid-morning, the courtyard is busy with people:

> Servants would be taking down the mosquito nets and the bamboo frames from the long row of beds where the entire family slept at night, stacking the beds on themselves on one side of the courtyard, but always leaving one for (her) grandmother to sit on, strategically placed so that she could watch the coming and going of all the members of the household and rule the compound almost without moving from her place. (44)

Various vendors parade through the courtyard as well and Baba recalls with joy the bangle vendor "squatting in the courtyard of the Jalnabad house, surrounded by all the girls in the family" (172). Thus the courtyard becomes much more than just an open area in the middle of a home. We see how the courtyard transforms and shifts, to encompass every member of an extended family, how it becomes at once, bedroom, living room, and dining room at different times of the day. Additionally, we see the image of the grandmother as a matriarch at the head of the family supervising all the activity in the space. Baba says she "rules" over the compound "almost without moving from her place" (44). Baba presents the image of her grandmother and parallels her to a

Queen sitting authoritatively on her throne. Almost as if she were reigning over a country, she presides over the courtyard, her nation in miniature, as vendors, tradesmen, fishmongers, and family weave in and out of this one space throughout the day.

Baba's reflections on the courtyard thus serve two purposes. Her initial thoughts regarding the space establish the courtyard as the prime illustration of everything she is trying to escape – the heavy tradition and overwhelming sense of security. However, she also reminisces and discusses the courtyard sentimentally as a place for her entire extended family to gather, a place where her grandmother rules the home, and a place where every aspect of business is conducted each day. She thus reflects on her experiences and perceptions of the courtyard in a way that allow her to use her image of the courtyard as evidence to support either perspective she considers in her struggle to define her own identity and path in life. Imagining the courtyard with its high walls, closing her off from the outside world, she envisions herself wanting to leave the safety and security of this place, and thus reject the more traditional national Indian values. However, finding comfort in the "contained familiarity," (a phrase she had first used negatively in reference to the tradition of the courtyard), Baba identifies and embraces the security offered by the walls of the courtyard. The courtyard becomes the crux on which Baba defines her allegiance to tradition and to her strong national and cultural values.

The decisive moment of return and reconciliation with the cultural and national ideals the courtyard represents comes when Baba leaves her home to visit her mother in another part of India. Baba's mother, after "fulfilling her obligations" to the family, left

the home years ago in order to pursue her own interests. In the company of her mother, Baba meets a young man who works at the school where her mother occasionally teaches. Krishnan begins to come over to the house more often and ultimately every day for tea. Baba's maternal grandmother prepares lavish tea time meals for them on the verandah and eventually, Baba begins to feel as if she is being courted. She begins to have romantic feelings for Krishnan. In classic western fashion, as Alix has portrayed to Baba, she begins to imagine their courtship, Krishnan's eventual proposal, and their marriage. Baba is rudely surprised one evening as Krishnan casually mentions his fiancé who lives in his hometown with his mother, planning their wedding. Baba is almost destroyed at this news. Her interest in Krishnan and her understanding of their romantic relationship transposed her outside of the practices traditionally expected in her culture. She had seemingly finally broken free and escaped from the courtyard walls and their tradition. However, in her freedom, she faced deep amounts of pain and potential further rejection. So, Baba returns home and finds the very "suitable" man who had proposed to her months earlier and she asks him if he would still like to marry her. They agree the match is appropriate and Baba faces the prospects of moving into a new home, with a new courtyard filled with a different family, but with the same stable tradition to uphold her.

Ultimately Baba returns to the traditional lifestyle exemplified by the courtyard. She poignantly recalls the days she and her cousin Gita would "scurry about" (45). No matter where she went, however much she explored, or whom she spoke to, she says she would "always return to the courtyard as a sort of center of gravity" (45). The courtyard,

like gravity, drew everything to it and kept the world revolving as it should. Similarly, as an adult, although Baba battled heavily with identifying a path for herself and although she sought counsel from many diverse people, she always returned to the courtyard as a place, which gave her identity rooted in a strong sense of tradition and nationalism.

She describes the space in a manner consistent with descriptions outlined in actual domestic accounts from colonial subjects. Although her words are similar in detailing the space, her tone however, differs drastically from European accounts. In an account of Indian life written by a settler in the colonies, the Indian home and courtyard is described simply as saying "it provides shelter from the sun and rain, and supplies that amount of privacy which walls can afford." The author goes on to say, "But when you seek for comfort, taste, and decoration, you seek in vain. In its social aspect it is entirely wanting in that spirit which leads enchantment to our own idea of home life" (Compton 102). This description reflects what Anne McClintock describes as "English racism (which) drew deeply on the notion of *domestic* barbarism…as a marker of racial difference" (53). McClintock outlines how the English in their colonizing efforts, tended to view the colonized as being barbaric somehow in the organization of their homes. She points to the citation of lack of furniture or different furniture, and unfamiliar flooring, as English support for the inferiority of both foreign homes and foreign people. However, it is in the presence of sparse furniture and bare flooring, that Baba ultimately *renounces* western influence in her life and reestablishes her own sense of nationality and belonging to tradition. It is in the midst of pushed back beds, and a

grandmother perched on a cot overseeing the workings of an entire house that Baba finds the same comfort and stability, which some Anglo-Indians had argued did not exist in Indian homes. Rather, the comfort and stability found in Baba's courtyard is different from that found in an English drawing room. Baba does not, in the end, find comfort in the stiff drawing room of her friend Alix, nor in the uncertainty and supposed freedom Alix's western ideas about love may offer. Ultimately, Baba finds the most comfort, reassurance, and pride, in being able to accept and find comfort in the consistency and regimental lifestyle demonstrated in the courtyard, even if it is at the expense of her individual desires. After her heart is broken, she returns to the courtyard to be mended.

The courtyard in Indian homes stands sacred and segregated from western influence. As Baba comes to question nearly every aspect of her life and what is expected of her, the courtyard seems to remain constant. The courtyard is a site of unquestioned normalcy during a time where "normal" is breaking down and being redefined and restructured every day. The courtyard has not been infiltrated by outside influence. This is a place of tradition and strong family values. The courtyard aptly rests at the very center of the home and in other ways at the center of a secure Indian culture. In the midst of a failing colonial system, the redefining of a political structure, and the identification of a new sense of nationality, the courtyard alone remains loyal to everything that is time-honored and revered as being distinctly Indian.

CHAPTER V

DEFINING SELF AND OTHER ON THE VERANDAH

The verandah was a covered space that surrounded the perimeter of an Indian home. The specific purpose of the verandah was to provide a space that shielded people from the overwhelmingly hot Indian sun and yet was still open to cool breezes, which the stuffy interior of the home could not provide. Because the verandah was a relatively moderate place to reside, in terms of climate, much activity took place there. English and Indian families had their breakfast and teas on the verandah and often the verandah served as a meeting place or for receiving guests. Because of its position on the perimeter of the home, the verandah acted as an important divide between what was considered part of the home and what was considered outside the home. Distinguishing between "home" and "Other" was a critical task in the colonial context and the verandah represents this struggle as a physical space in the home.

Reading the narrative of nationalism is unavoidable in E.M. Forster's A Passage To India. Forster's 1924 novel focuses on the conflict and relationships between English and Indian people cohabiting in India during the British Raj and the lines they attempt to construct in order to identify themselves and to separate themselves from their supposed "Other." A Passage to India is a story grounded in the perceptions, stereotypes, and assumptions at work in the British colonial project. The verandah in A Passage to India seems heavily charged in representing this overlap in perception, stereotype, and assumption. The verandah serves as a space which both physically and psychically argues sides in one of the most fundamental aspects of colonialism – the preservation of

one's own national identity. In Forster's A Passage to India, the verandah's role in working out these issues of nationality is primarily rooted in the concept of hospitality.

Hospitality does not always reflect altruistic motives but sometimes a means of establishing status and reaffirming one's own identity. Early in the novel, we are introduced to Miss Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore, two women visiting from England – Adela to observe her prospective husband, Ronny, at work and Mrs. Moore to see her son, Ronny, happily married. However, neither of the women seems to immediately "fit in" with the behavior and attitudes of the rest of the English in India. Adela and Mrs. Moore are interested in seeing "the real India" (an idea which in and of itself is not lacking objectification and totalization of "all Indian people" by assuming there is *one* "real" India) and they immediately accept an invitation from a resident doctor, Aziz, to take them on a field trip to the local Marabar Caves. During the Marabar Caves expedition Aziz prides himself on having guests and being responsible for their care and Forster writes of him, "Hospitality had been achieved, they were 'his' guests; his honour was involved in their happiness, and any discomfort they endured would tear his own soul. Like most Orientals, Aziz overrated hospitality, taking it for intimacy, and not seeing that it was tainted with the sense of possession" (Forster 157).

It is important to note here that there are three assumptions at work in the narrator's statement that should not be casually overlooked. Primarily, the narrator makes a generalization about race and nationality that cannot be left unquestioned. The summation of Aziz as "like most Orientals" unjustly categorizes both him and other members of this supposed group of "Orientals" as undeniably belonging to one

homogenous assemblage of people. It incorrectly makes an assumption about the sameness of individuals who share the same geographic location. Furthermore, the tone of the comment condemns "Orientals" and therefore biases the rest of the narration about the characters in the novel. The second assumption at work in this statement is that "Orientals" mistake hospitality to mean intimacy, which reflects the narrator's inherent supposition that as a group, "Orientals" feel a certain way about hospitality and that this way of feeling is wrong and mistaken. The third and parallel assumption here is from another perspective, presumably British, that hospitality incorporates "a sense of possession" and that this perspective is unerring and characteristic of all "British." In a sense, the narrator's unbiased credibility is severely weakened in this statement. The narrator speaks with an English voice and presents some of the perspectives Aziz and his friends might have been facing in Colonial India. In order to coherently present an account of how the verandah acts as a site of negotiating and measuring national identity in A Passage to India, I will build my argument from the foundation the narrator lays in his statement about Aziz's hospitality.

Derived strictly from the narrator's assessment of Aziz's behavior, I argue that hospitality, the act of having someone as one's guest, becomes a politically charged act in the British Colonial project. No longer does hospitality represent a selfless act by opening oneself to possible inconvenience by hosting a guest. Forster instead paints the British picture of control and possession in having someone act as one's guest. The host or hostess is not at mercy for having the guest and needing to entertain or impress them,

rather the guest is subject to and almost consigned to an inferior position as someone upon whom the host's honor and values will be imposed.

The verandah stands as a fundamental space in delineating the boundary between one's own space, a space to be "hospitable," and that which is not one's space. I base my discussion of the verandah around the idea that the verandah is a space separated from what would be considered the "home." The verandah surrounds most homes (both settler and indigenous homes) in India and therefore acts as a physical boundary to the home. According to a British-authored domestic manual written in 1904, "Every room (in an English bungalow) has direct access to the verandah…Very few bungalows have halls, the verandah in the front of the house doing duty for such" (Compton 157). Furthermore, the verandah in English homes acts as a sort of private space in that the English in India endeavored to shut off the verandah by stretching "chicks," screens made of "loosely woven slips of bamboo," between pillars of the verandah in order to make rooms out of the verandah (160). The verandah in Indian homes functions much the same way. Additionally, an account of Indian life written during the colonial era describes Indian activity on the verandah as being a place for eating and socializing (Humphrey 187) and this pattern of activity is reinforced in Rabindranath Tagore's The Home and The World where we see the verandah act as the chief meeting place for socializing and plotting various aspects of a nationalist uprising. The verandah is an area considered to be part of the home, in that it is the site of many domestic activities, and yet the verandah also is distinctly *not* part of the home because of the physical ways it borders the home.

More so than physically, the verandah carries symbolic meaning about how and when the rules of hospitality are to be engaged. There is a particular moment in A Passage To India that exemplifies how the verandah is used in negotiating the rules of hospitality. As Aziz approaches his boss' bungalow in a motor car, he recalls a "case" that had occurred the year before wherein "an Indian had driven up to an official's house and had been turned back by the servants and been told to approach more suitably" (Forster 14). Aziz remembers this incident and stops his driver outside of the pool of light that fell across the verandah so that he may approach the verandah "more suitably" – on foot. When he arrives at the home, and is standing on the verandah, Aziz is offered use of the home but declines. He prefers to stay on the verandah saying to himself he was "too dignified to enter it" (15). The idea of hospitality as a means of possession and control is revisited here in Aziz's rejection of entering what he calls an "Anglo-Indian" home. ("Anglo-Indian" is not intended to be used as a reductive term here but instead to remain consistent with the terms and classifications colloquially used by the characters in the novel.) He refuses to enter the home because he thinks that once he becomes a guest in an English home, he becomes more distinctly one of "their" guests. He would be subject to following certain customs and perhaps would be made to feel inferior. On the verandah, as the last line on which he can balance before completely falling into Anglo-India, Aziz is able to maintain his integrity and pride in his national identity because he is not subjected to that of another. As Aziz leaps off the verandah to leave, he runs excitedly back to his area of Chandrapore. Forster describes him, "But to shake the dust of Anglo-India off his feet! To escape from the net and be back among manners

and gestures that he knew! He began a walk, an unwonted exercise" (15). As Aziz stood on the brink of the Civil Surgeon's home, on his verandah, he was close to being caught in Anglo-India. For him, the verandah acted as the thin line upon which he could balance before entering the world of Anglo-India.

This perspective is in line with the narrator's assertion that hospitality is "tainted with a sense of possession" (157). However, the narrator describes Aziz as a typical "Oriental" in that he overrates hospitality and mistakes it for "intimacy" (157). Entering someone's home as their guest has a distinct flavor of intimacy and closeness, of being friendly and similar enough to share social time together. If the narrator describes Aziz correctly in saying he mistakes hospitality for intimacy, and Aziz rejects the supposed hospitality by choosing to remain on the verandah and not enter Major Callendar's home, Aziz likewise rejects any intimacy he supposes is being offered by entering the home. He therefore rejects any notion that he and Major Callendar are in any way intimate, friendly, or familiar with each other. His decision to stay on the verandah defines the difference between them by saying they are not close acquaintances nor do they desire to be. More so than this, Aziz distinctly says he is "too dignified" to become intimate with an Anglo-Indian such as Major Callendar in reaction to the *undignified* way Major Callendar has treated him and other Indians in the past. Aziz's choice to remain on the verandah apparently establishes the verandah as a powerful space in the assertion of personal and national identity. The verandah that surrounds the home and is at once *part* of the home also stands as a space entirely divided from the home. It is a space where an Indian man can simultaneously recognize the possible subordination he

might encounter upon entering an Anglo-Indian home as well as powerfully and symbolically demonstrate the perceived differences between two nations – the Anglo-Indian nation represented inside the home, and the Indian nation represented outside of Major Callendar's home.

Aziz tries to express this image of asserting his nationality through his actions on the verandah. He purposefully resists entering the home and remains on the verandah in order to make a statement about his strength and his national pride. However, Aziz's "statement" is underscored by the presumed intentions from the other party involved in this incident. Behind Aziz's actions and attempts to assert himself, there is actually a world of fear and racism at work which compels him to say on the verandah – not because he objects to it and defies it, but because he has internalized it. In re-examining how Aziz approaches Major Callendar's home, we see an example of this internalized racism. Aziz arrives at the perimeter of the home in a carriage but then remembers an incident from the previous year. An Indian man had arrived at an Englishman's home in a carriage and had been immediately turned away and told to approach "more suitably" (14). The complicit message in this statement is that "Indians" (as a collective entity) are not worthy enough to arrive at an Englishman's home in a carriage. Rather, the expectation is that Indians should ingratiate themselves and approach an Englishman's home more humbly by traveling on foot. Remembering this incident, Aziz steps out of his carriage, succumbs to the inevitable racism he faces, and approaches Major Callendar's home the way he feels he is expected to – by foot. This internalized racism complicates Aziz's actions on the verandah. It takes his actions from what may have

initially seemed like a strong stand for his nationality and transforms them into a clearly defensive strategy of guarding himself from addressing the overt racism and fear he would surely face upon entering the home. Although it is possible that Aziz very strongly asserted himself on the verandah and chose not to enter the home, it is more probable that because he had fully digested and, in a skewed way, almost accepted the discrimination consistently directed at him, he *assumed* the Anglo-Indians truly *wanted* him to stay on the verandah, and therefore, his decision to stay on the verandah reflects the opportunity to *choose* to remain there instead of being *forced* to stay there. Aziz addresses this internalized racism and assumption on his part of the intentions of the Anglo-Indians in a later conversation when he says, "The verandah is good enough for an Indian"(21).

Soon after he leaves the Civil Surgeon's home, he arrives at a mosque and enters it, only to find himself quite surprised and at first appalled by the presence of an English woman inside. His surprise is two-fold – first at encountering an English woman in his religious space and being outraged at the thought that she might not have taken her shoes off and second, at the idea that an English person would enter *his* space when just before, he had refused to enter an English space. In the Mosque, he encounters Mrs. Moore for the first time. Mrs. Moore is the English woman who has come to India to visit her son, Ronny, and to oversee the possible engagement of her son and Miss Adela Quested. Mrs. Moore has the unique position in the novel as not being completely summed up by the term "Anglo-Indian." She does not consider herself an Anglo-Indian, she does not plan to stay in India for a long period of time, and she finds the views of

most of her self-proclaimed "Anglo-Indian" friends to be narrow-minded and exclusive. She is an English woman, yet Aziz meets her first in a space very sacred to him and to his national and spiritual views. In the mosque, she *has* reverently taken her shoes off and does not react to Aziz's presence as an intrusion upon *her* space just because she happens to be there, as some Anglo-Indians might have done. She in fact reacts apologetically for infringing on Aziz's space.

Upon establishing that Mrs. Moore is indeed different from the Anglo-Indians Aziz might encounter, Aziz and Mrs. Moore enter into frank conversation rather quickly and Aziz blasts Major Callender for not being present when he arrived at his home and furthermore, for not inviting him inside. There is a distinction to be made here regarding what physically *happened* on the verandah that night and what Aziz later *said* happened on the verandah that night. When Aziz went to Major Callendar's home, he was technically invited inside, but he chose to stay on the verandah, most likely because he had internalized English racism directed towards him, and he assumed the Anglo-Indians would *want* him to stay on the verandah. Later, in the telling of the story to Mrs. Moore, Aziz says he had *not* been invited inside. Although Aziz had clearly said he preferred not to go inside and for apparently good reason, he later alters his story and speaks of the event as it possibly occurred from the Anglo-Indian mindset. He says to Mrs. Moore, "Is this charming, pray?" His word choice in "charming" mocks English speech and he continues, "But was does it matter? I can do nothing and he knows it. I am just a subordinate, my time is of no value, the verandah is good enough for an Indian, yes, yes, let him stand, and Mrs. Callender takes my carriage and cuts me dead" (21). Here,

Forster introduces another possible perspective on the significance of hospitality and the role of the verandah as a geographic marker between what is considered the safe distance of the outsider and the "earned" status of the insider in a home.

Aziz's perspective presents entering someone's home as entering their world, and likewise possibly being subjected to how things work in their world, which might include being consigned to a lower social position. From Aziz's perspective, *not* entering the home, and staying on the verandah, is a safe way of preserving himself and his sense of nation, by not becoming subjected to anyone, and by not directly confronting overt racism which would assume he is not good enough to enter the home. It allows him to defend himself against feeling debased by *choosing* to stay on the verandah rather than facing the possibility of being *forced* to stay on the verandah. The other perspective Forster presents here is possibly that of the Anglo-Indian. Through Aziz's reversed portrayal of the events surrounding his staying on the verandah, we see an Anglo-Indian perspective of entering the home as a sign of acceptance and privilege. Although Aziz had his own reasons for not entering the home that he projected upon saying he was "too dignified" to enter, he reflects the Anglo-Indian discriminatory reasoning behind him staying on the verandah as well. His estimate of the Anglo-Indian mentality assumes that the Civil Surgeon and others like him perceive him to be inferior, so much so that they would not allow him to enter the home. He sketches the Anglo-Indian perspective of entering the home as one defined by merit in character, and a purported integrity and class, which Anglo-Indians do not perceive Indians to possess. From the Anglo-Indian perspective, which Aziz has internalized and has come to expect

as normal, the verandah acts as a barrier to keep the unworthy out. By keeping certain visitors, like Aziz, on the verandah, they refuse to elevate them to an equal status of "English" or "Anglo-Indian" as someone who is fortunate enough to enter the home. Curiously enough, as a side note, the "unworthy" did not necessarily apply to much lower classes of servants. Even for Aziz and his friends, servants and people performing services to them were allowed on the verandah and in and out of the home. Early in the novel, Aziz thinks to himself while lying on the verandah with his friends, "Delicious indeed to lie on the broad verandah with the moon rising in front and the servants preparing dinner behind, and no trouble happening" (7). "Unworthy" only applies to members of an entirely different nationality.

The rather posh, upper-class Anglo-Indian settlers reinforce perspectives of this nature throughout the novel. Their country club is open only to other settlers and when the occasion arises that Indians enter the club, they are treated as unworthy, disgraceful animals to be contained in one corner of the club and gawked at while waiting to see what they will do next, if anything. In one instance, all the women gather to have a "Bridge Party" in order to supposedly "bridge the gap" between the Anglo-Indian and Indian women of the colony. As more and more women arrive, there is a growing divide in the party and when encouraged to go over and talk with an Indian woman, one Anglo-Indian woman exclaims in disgust, "What would you want me to do? Oh, those purdah women! I never thought any would come. Oh dear!" (46). If Anglo-Indians appear to be this territorial about their country club, it is indeed possible that they would feel

similar about their homes and not want to invite seemingly undeserving people into their most personal of spaces.

Although this might have been an Anglo-Indian perspective with which Aziz was familiar, he endeavored to act for the most part independently on the verandah when he decided he was "too distinguished" to enter the home. Perhaps the most interesting factor of Aziz's decision is his later inversion and presentation of this event to Mrs. Moore, a woman he perceives as viewing things from a more Indian-sympathetic point of view. In talking to Mrs. Moore, Aziz paints himself undeniably as a victim to English snobbery, a detail that is not without some truth in the telling but Aziz embraces his victimization in this instance whole-heartedly.

The reason why Aziz presents an entirely different story to Mrs. Moore is grounded in how he identifies his relationship with the Anglo-Indian nation. Aziz portrays a different story to Mrs. Moore in order to further his role as the victim – a victim of an entire Anglo-Indian nation. He has already internalized this role and now he voices his victimization to Mrs. Moore. By imagining Major Callendar to exclude him from entering the home and forcing him to reside on the verandah (as he very well might have done, had he been present), Aziz is able to homogenize Anglo-India, and to an extent totalize the English with a similar racism which has been inflicted on him. By expecting this treatment from Anglo-Indians he is able to group all Anglo-Indians into a mammoth-like existence of faceless, stuffy Englishmen who will always treat him with the same stuffy indifference and disrespect.

We see an example of his expectation of this norm in the first time he visits his friend Fielding's home. He expects an Anglo-Indian's home to be imposing and uncomfortable because of the "typical" Anglo-Indian pride presented in their homes. However, in choosing to enter Fielding's home Aziz comments on the home saying, "Some luxury in it – but no order – nothing to intimidate poor Indians" (66). Here, Aziz implies that Anglo-Indian homes usually aim to degrade Indians, which reiterates the type of treatment Aziz portrayed as customary for Anglo-Indian homes in his conversation with Mrs. Moore.

Ultimately Aziz's goal in reversing the story of how he came to stay on the verandah is to fix a representation for himself of the Anglo-Indian nation by classifying "them" as an entity that would alienate *him*. Benedict Anderson defines a nation as "an imagined political community" because "regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (7). The role of the verandah in the home is to preserve this comradeship by excluding outsiders and people perceived as unworthy of being comrades. Admittedly, although Major Callendar might have excluded Aziz from entering his home, Aziz made the decision overtly as an individual in front of potential oppression. By taking ownership over his decision to enter the home, Aziz attempts to present an assertive, independent nationalistic voice in staying on the verandah.

In presenting the opposite scenario to Mrs. Moore, Aziz simultaneously draws the Anglo-Indian to be "the bad guy." It is at this very tricky moment that the verandah becomes the frame around the constructed picture of a repetitive, homogenous Anglo-

India. And as Aziz frames, defines, and confines Anglo-India, he equally defines his own nationality as Indian within his own frame. Rosemary Marangoly George reiterates, " 'home' and 'non-home' are the basic divisions of geographic space" (21). The verandah illustrates this idea simply as a physical divide between the home and whatever is outside of the home. She also points out that " 'self' and 'non-self' or 'Other' represent the basic divisions of psychic space" (21). As a means of defining Anglo-Indians to be exclusive, Aziz uses the verandah and his position and status within this space as a psychic measure of him"self" and "Other." The verandah allows Aziz to physically see the division between India and Anglo-India in the British colonial project. But beyond physically, the verandah is symbolically meaningful as a distinct element in the overarching task of colonialism – that of defining "Self" and "Other."

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EDUCATION
Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, 2000-2004
B.A. in Psychology, May 2004 (anticipated)
Minor: English
Overall GPA: 3.74 Major GPA: 3.9

HONORS/SCHOLARSHIPS
Lechner Fellowship
Director's Excellence Award
National Merit Scholarship
Summer University Undergraduate Research Fellows Scholarship
Glasscock Center for the Humanities Research Grant
Dean's List
Liberal Arts Honors Program
University Honors
Foundation Honors
Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society
Longhouse - Liberal Arts Honor Society
Magna Cum Laude

PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS
University Undergraduate Research Fellows Senior Honors Thesis
Presentation at 2004 Student Research Week

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
University Undergraduate Research Fellows – April 2003-April 2004. Participated in a year of independent study culminating in a senior honors thesis.
Infant Cognition Lab – Spent three semesters (2002-2004) participating in research on how infants process information in their world relating to factors such as size, shape, and color of objects. The final two semesters, served as the lab Supervisor and organized activity in the lab, managed shifts of student workers, and controlled quality of experimental procedures.