AUDIBLE EMPIRE: SOUNDSCAPES, "SONIC MARKERS" AND CREATION OF EASTERN IDENTITY IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE AT HOME AND ABROAD, 1830 - 1900

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Due to its heavy use of guttural sounds, the German language is seen as an 'angry' sounding language—an understanding most definitely influenced by popular culture that responded to the "aggressive" German in World War I and World War II. This principle of associating specific sonic characteristics to a group of people as cultivated within popular culture and imagination can be equally found in nineteenth century imperial Britain's society. There are expectations people generate over expected senses of particular regions. This is an active process whereby there is a creation of certain soundscapes based on ethnic distinctions. This process, as this thesis will demonstrate, was markedly prevalent in the nineteenth century as people began to 'imagine' a global world outside of their local region more prevalently with the onset of a truly global empire. The 'imagination' of the Eastern soundscape is a key theme of this thesis. The British Metropole utilized imagination loosely based upon experiences of the East to generate expected soundscapes and "sonic markers" which aided the Victorian construction of racial and cultural identities. These "sonic markers" were derived from imagined soundscapes, where "soundscapes" denote the general sounds one would expect to hear in a specific geographical region. The conception of generally "Eastern" soundscapes relayed back to the metropole meant expected sounds were constructed, from which the "sonic markers" found in Victorian theatres could then be derived. Through these processes, an Eastern identity was created, and its vast size and multiple identities and complexities were reduced and simplified to easily identifiable sounds and expected identities found in, for example, name constructions, accents, and musical signaling.

To successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of the constructions of identity and recognizable sounds, this thesis will explore the topic through three sections: *Sounds of the East*, *The Victorian Stage,* and *Changing Soundscapes and Identity* to answer the question: *how are soundscapes and constructed sonic markers manipulated to form racial and cultural identities at home and abroad*? The first section will explore the first stage of the process through which the sounds of the East were transported back to Britain and provided the material – the Eastern soundscape– upon which the Victorian melodrama could then generate identities and sound expectations. The section provides context for the following section which analyses specifically in detail *The Mandarin's Daughter*, *Lalla Rookh*, and *Mr. Buckstone's Voyage around the Globe*. Rana

Kabbani demonstrates the necessity for this context by arguing, "Europeans . . . depended on each other's testimony to sustain their communal image of the Orient."[1] Therefore, as Jonathan Sterne states, the "history of sound must move beyond recovering experience to interrogating the conditions under which that experience became possible in the first place."[2] This thesis is required to extend its scope to include this necessary aspect. The second section will explore how the "factual" presentations of the Eastern soundscape, as found in the travelogues and ethnographies, are translated and presented to the Victorian audience. The final section focuses on how soundscapes and sonic markers can be further manipulated to alter and establish indigenous identities , thus demonstrating some of the wider ramifications of cultural imperialism with missionaries working to alter the soundscape of these indigenous communities through the importation of western harmonies and language and altering the soundscape. This process meant the "native" would be raised from their heathenism and become civilized.

This thesis will demonstrate the importance of exploring soundscapes in the study of imperialism, popular imperial culture, and nineteenth-century racism to better understand the process identity construction during this period. Exploring oriental themes on the Victorian stage is not new in scholarship. However, studies usually place precedence on analyzing visual elements—the stage, backdrops, and costumes to name three examples—rather than sound.[3] This focus on the visual is useful and an essay based on sound analysis cannot afford to dismiss these important audience cues and stage world-building and slip into "audism (ethnocentrism of those who hear)," especially given the prevalent position afforded to the visual.[4] While it is firmly established now, as demonstrated by the adage of "seeing is believing," during the nineteenth century, there was a process of transitioning away from an auditory-based society to that of sight with, for instance, reading taking far greater precedence over the previous verbal communication.[5] However, as also pointed out by Sterne, between 1750 and 1925, sound became an object and a domain of thought and practice.[6] This thesis also goes someway to answer a question posed by John M. Mackenzie: "How successful were popular cultural vehicles in conveying an imperial world view to the British public?"[7] Using sound offers an alternative approach to answering this important question, and therefore will demonstrate that Victorian melodramas and

[1] Rana Kabbani, *Europe's Myths of Orient,* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 39.
[2] Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 28.
[3] Mark M. Smith, *Sensing the Past: Seeing, Hearing, Smelling, Tasting, and Touching in History,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2007), 41.
[4] Sterne, *Audible Past*, 28.
[5] Ibid at 3.
[6] Ibid.
[7] John M., MacKenzie, *Imperialism and Popular Culture,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 10.

literature were effective tools for transporting Western conceptions of the East back home and enabling the construction of racial and cultural identities.

This thesis has drawn on a wide variety of primary material. The selection of specific sources was partially due to what was accessible, but it was also purposeful. As Mark M. Smith identifies, work on "sounds," listening, or similar topics, often relies too much on music scores in analyzing sound.[8] It is for this reason, that this dissertation aims to demonstrate some of the alternative sources that offer valuable insights into the construction of native soundscapes and sounds, as well as sonic markers of racial identity. Musical analysis, therefore, plays a very limited role in this thesis. It should be noted as well that this thesis has the period limitation of 1830-1900 as this is the start of the Victorian period and, at the turn of the century, the theater stage became more about English patriotism than presentations of the exotic.

Importance of Sound as an Analytical Tool

This thesis aims to respond to and enhance previous explorations of Victorian culture through an analysis of sounds. Victorian theater is already extensively studied, typically with a focus on visual performance elements. One example is Ray Johnson's article, in which he states that "the narrative in popular theatre was carried along by pictorial devices enhanced with music and special effects," thus placing sound as a purely secondary feature.[9] The privileging of the visual over the sonic means, however, that one of the major senses is dismissed. Sound was a vital aspect of the theatrical experience, a sentiment that has been espoused by William Rough, who highlights that audiences were highly encouraged to join in with the singing and other musical aspects.[10] Michael Pisani argues that the music worked at a "subconscious level to make audiences more susceptible to extraordinary situations" occurring on the stage.[11] Especially in the melodrama, music was composed specifically for each play and worked to underline "mood, atmosphere, convey time and place, suggest status, ethnicity or class" through musical gesturing.[12] At this point, Mary Jean Corbett raises the question "where does performance-as-identity-construction leave off and performance-as-theatrical-work begin?"[13] How far can an analysis of theatrical performances and resulting depictions of soundscapes be taken from the stage and analyzed in the context of wider society and imperial actions? David Mayer states that

[8] Smith, *Sensing the* Past, 42.
[9] Ray Johnson, 'Tricks, Traps and Transformations– Illusions in Victorian Spectacular Theatre,' *Early Popular Visual Culture* 5, no.2 (2007): 151-165, doi:10.1080/17460650701433673.
[10] William Rough, 'Sickert's Mirror: Reflecting Duality, Identity and Performance C1890', *The British Art Journal* 10, no. 3 (2009): 142.
[11] Michael Pisani, 'Music for the Theatre: Style and Function in Incidental Music', in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 71.
[12] Ibid at 71.
[13] Mary J. Corbett, 'Performing Identities: Actresses and Autobiography,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 109.

melodramas often responded directly to immediate social circumstances.[14] By confronting social issues, identity being one of these, the stage is a platform upon which these conflicts are dramatized and provided some form of an answer. Therefore, the stage is directly linked with the real world with the identities constructed on stage both responding to and informing the off-stage construction of identities. An example of this can be located in the debates over Zwarte Pete in the Netherlands. The fictional companion to St. Nicklaus in the Netherlands is under challenge as groups such as the Liberal Left arguing he instills racist tropes and represents "ritualized degradation," wherein children come to associate his being black with being mischievous and "bad" alongside directly influencing Dutch memory of Western imperialism.[15] Fictional characters have real consequences as people who have little knowledge or experience of the "real" world, upon constant exposure to these characters and sonic signaling, come to expect these characteristics from the real-world counterparts to the stereotyped, in this case, the "native" character found on stage. As the melodrama is built upon stock characters and polarization between good and evil, it becomes an effective vessel for creating racialized identities that have real-world consequences.

Therefore, the audible aspect of theatres does require more attention in scholarly analysis. Nevertheless, as Pisani highlights, there does not yet exist a comprehensive study on nineteenth-century theatrical music.[16] This, however, is not necessarily due to a lack of interest, but as Pisani goes on to discuss, rather a matter of a lack of material. Pisani explains that apart from Henry Bishop "no single collection of any theatre composer survives," a fact which presents a considerable obstacle to a comprehensive study of Victorian theatrical soundscapes.[17] This is perhaps one explanation for why there is such a dominant focus on the visual versus the sonic aspects of theatre productions. While this is a prominent issue, this thesis works towards demonstrating, in part, that relying on music to explore sonic transcriptions of the East eliminates a vast array of sources that could be used to generate an understanding of the theatrical sonic world. Analyzing only musical portrayals of the East also often lacks a connection to the consequences of these auditory constructions. For instance, Michael Saffle discusses remarks of Europeans towards oriental soundscapes, specifically their response to hearing Chinese music, but fails to expand this and discuss the explicit consequences these accounts have on the construction of Chinese, or, more generally, Eastern identity.[18] By utilizing sound studies, one can read texts in new ways to extrapolate recordings of sounds by what Murray F. Schafer terms

[14] David Mayer, 'Encountering Melodrama,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 146.
[15] Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence– Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race,* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 140, 164.
[16] Pisani, 'Music for Theatre,' 70.
[17] Ibid at 79.
[18] Michael Saffle, 'Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages: Chinese-Themed Operettas and Musical Comedies in Turn-of-the-Last-Century London and New York,' in *China and the West*, ed. Michael Saffle and Hon-Lun Yang (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 107.

as "earwitnesses" accounts, and thereby start constructing some of the process of constructing identities through the Victorian auditory experience of the East.[19] Examining the acoustical field requires a focus on "events *heard* not objects *seen*."[20] Schafer also demonstrates in his book that the sense of hearing cannot be closed off at will, with the ear's only protection being "an elaborate psychological mechanism for filtering out undesirable sounds" and focusing on desirable sounds.[21] This idea demonstrates the importance of recognizing and giving space for an analysis of soundscapes since sound, by definition, is anthropocentric.[22] Furthermore, Sterne argues that sounds, hearing, and listening are "foundational to modern modes of knowledge, culture, and social organization," especially in the nineteenth century when sound increasingly "mediated and help inform ideas about class, identity and nationalism."[23] This indicates once again how an exploration of soundscapes and sound provides good insight into the nineteenth-century conception of the East which built racialized identities.

Due to the difficulty in locating music manuscripts and the difficulty in relating musical analysis to its consequences, and since many scholars are pushing for a move away from purely musical analysis when discussing sound, this thesis will only remark on compositions in a limited capacity. Instead, it will highlight the creation of the Eastern soundscape, not only through music but also through the speech and names of characters, whereby their identity is forged sonically through sonic markers. Sonic markers are the perceived expectations of sound associated with and created for specific racialized identities utilized by British Imperial society to assert their narrative of dominance.

Sounds of the Orient: Depictions of the Oriental Soundscape in Literature

To fully understand and comprehend the translation of Eastern soundscapes for the Victorian play there needs to be an analysis of how the soundscapes were created by "earwitnesses." This section will analyze four texts: *The Englishman in China;* Julius Berncastle's *A Voyage to China;* Maria Nugent's*, A Journal from the year 1811 to 1815, including a voyage to, and residence in India; and* Henry Sirr's *China and the Chinese.*

India

India, which was not only the crown jewel in the British Empire but also a mid-point for journeys further East, was one of the first and most impressionable experiences for British travelers and explorers. As such, accounts of people's first arrival and stay are rife with interesting comments about unusual and new sounds

[19] Murray R. Schafer, *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World,* (Rochester: Destiny Books, 1994), 17.
[20] Ibid at 16.
[21] Ibid at 21.
[22] Ibid at 11.
[23] Ibid at 2; Smith, *Sensing the Past*, 48.

amongst descriptions of the visual impressions. One such account is Maria Nugent's journal published in 1839. On Nugent's arrival in Calcutta, she notes being greeted with "a kind of extempore song, to a monotonous tune."[24] While on initial reading this description could elude consideration, its analysis becomes significant when it is placed in a socio-historic context. Nugent characterizes the Indians as a "mild innocent race" who have a "listless manner" and are "without any energy of character." [25] Furthermore, by portraying the Indian song as "extempore" and "monotonous," Nugent indicates that the music was simple and thus in keeping with the natives' perceived heathenism and lack of civilization due to lacking well-developed fine arts. The strangeness of the Indian soundscape is further established with Nugent's recounting of a religious festival, during which "nothing is heard but their odd tom-tom music."[26] Two things are significant in this comment. Firstly, it suggests that the Indian soundscape, dominated by rhythmic drumming, is reduced to being recognized as noise due to its alien or "odd" sound profile. Secondly, the tom-tom is not an Indian drum but rather originates from China and Sri Lanka, and thus goes some way to demonstrate the process by which the West reduced Eastern soundscapes and musical cultures into one larger "other" soundscape and culture.[27] This is significant for the subsequent plays written and composed which contain elements of the East, as it provides a simple device through which to signify the East. The process of reducing specific cultural groups to being recognizable through a set motif, rhythm or instrument works similarly to how the banjo is used to mark and easily distinguish the presence of a minstrel performance.[28]

The construction of an alien soundscape, especially concerning "native" festivals, is further elaborated on in Berncastle's *A Voyage to China*. His time in India serves as an important formative period during which Berncastle is exposed first-hand to alien soundscapes. Berncastle describes a "Hooli holiday" whereby he depicts a scene of chaos and uncivilized behavior, before continuing to state that the magistrates were attempting to "limit the nuisance of celebration to certain areas."[29] The scene is concluded with the detailing of Berncastle's "rescue" when Sepoys "escorted [him] as far as the city gates, arriving there just in time to avoid a procession of barbarous music."[30] By identifying the celebrations as a nuisance, it becomes clear that the Indian

[24] Maria Nugent, *A Journal from the Year 1811 Till the Year 1815, Including a Voyage to, and Residence in, India, with a Tour to the North-Western Parts of the British Possessions in that Country, Under the Bengal Governmen*t., vol. 1, (London: 1839), 79, British Library.
[25] Ibid at 69.
[26] Ibid at 99-100.
[27] MasterClass Staff Editors, *"Guide to Tom-Tom Drums: 4 Types of Tom-Toms," Master Class,* Last updated November 8, 2020, https://www.masterclass.com/articles/guide-to-tom-tom-drums.
[28] Laura Korobkin,'Avoiding "Aunt Tomasina": Charles Dickens Responds to Harriet Beecher Stowe's Black American Reader, Mary Webb,' *Elh* 82, no.1 (2015): 119-122, doi: 10.1353/elh.2015.0007.
[29] Julius Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol. 1, (London: William Shoberl, 1850), 118-119, British Library.
[30] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol. 1, 120.

soundscape, especially during festivals is noisy– noise being sounds considered undesirable and unwanted. Much how Bryan Edwards states, the "Negroe makes noise not music", the same sentiment was placed on all deemed to be heathen.[31] It thus becomes clear to the Victorian reader that the East is an alien other, and reflective of the uncivilized status that natives had been assigned. The distinct separation of West and East, civilized and uncivilized, is furthered by Berncastle when he recounts a visit to Dungaree Green where the "native town" begins and the western-controlled center of Bombay ends. In the native area, it is "densely crowded" with "coppersmiths hammering away with all their might" and "bullock-hackeries driving along amidst fearful yells."[32] The description details once again a scene of auditory and visual chaos. One could also suggest that by highlighting the coppersmith hammering, Berncastle is drawing a contrast between the industrial and mechanized sounds to be found in English city soundscapes, and the more "backward" and pre-industrial soundscape of India. This would serve to highlight the perception of India being a static ancient civilization. To the middle-class readers of this book, the chaotic and noisy scenes depicted are easily recognizable as undesirable and symptomatic of a lower standard of living given during the period the middle class was undergoing an exodus from the dirty, busy, and noisy industrial city centers of Britain. The strict separation and distinction drawn between where Europeans live and where the "native" area begins is underlined both spatially and sonically and thus aids the creation of the "other" which lives in opposition to the European. By positing the soundscape as another example of the "other," it becomes clear that sound and descriptions by these Western "earwitnessess" are important contributions to the creation of Eastern identity.

China

The Chinese, much like the Indians, were recognized as a once-great ancient civilization that was in a period of stagnation. Henry Sirr states that "the Chinese have a great dislike to innovation or change in their laws, customs, or costumes", to underline this point.[33] One of the contributing factors to China's "backwardness" was that, "during and after the meal, eructations are heard around, to a disgusting extent," which were elaborated as being "unmusical sounds."[34] The sounds within the formal setting of dining are recognized as wholly uncivilized and barbaric. They would be treated as rude and bad-mannered and thus serves to sonically identify the Chinese as barbarians. The European felt equally alienated sonically through the experience of "pidgin English," or as described in *The Englishman in China*, "mongrel English."[35] This "gibberish" is placed in contrast to "proper" English speech in a notated dialogue:

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[31] Catherine Hall*, Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867,* (London: Polity, 2002), 103.
[32] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol.1, 140-141.
[33] Henry Sirr, *China and the Chinese*, vol. 1, (London: Wm. S. Orr, 1849), 317.
[34] Ibid at 159.
[35] Anon., *The Englishman in China,* (London: Saunders, Otley, 1860), 42, *British Library.*

"Ho! Soyer, thou heathen, what hast thou for dinner? / Just now have got soup, fiss, cully, and lice, and one piece fowlo, one piecee labbit."[36] The notation places the two speech styles in opposition to each other, demonstrating the difference between the Englishman and the "other," as well as providing a distinctive "sonic marker" through which to identify a Chinese person. With just a few having "acquired a tolerable facility of speaking English", the speech is identified with the lower intelligence assigned to the Chinese.[37] Furthermore, *The Englishman in China* provides a formula through which to recreate the style, stating that all that is needed is the addition of an "ee" —"*walkee, talkee, showee, singee*."[38] These accents are reproduced in plays such as *The Mandarin's Daughter!* to sonically designate characters and thus assign a specific and recognizable identity.

Lastly, the English recognized that China possessed some "useful [fine] arts" since China was an ancient civilization, which consequently raised them "above the untutored savage" and brought them close to being civilized."[39] However, it was still beneath Western equivalents. Sirr states it is the "most inharmonious and unmusical sounds" with the accompaniment being "abominable."[40] This sentiment is echoed in *The Englishman in China*, which states, "Whatever it may be to them, it is only a complication of noisy and unpleasant sound to us."[41] The lack of harmonious musical soundscapes is identified as being among the reasons for a lack of civilization and is thus combined with all other aspects of the books to help build an Eastern soundscape that is alien, noisy, and barbaric. The description is also useful for contemporaries looking to construct an Eastern sound for the stage as it outlines key features of the "quintessential" Eastern sound: unharmonious, "twanging," and heavily rhythmic.[42] The idea of an opposing Eastern soundscape is underlined by a description offered in *The Englishman in China*. The author recounts hearing "that sound H****a's *piece de resistance*, 'The Carnival of Venice", causing the author to return the "ship a happier man."[43] The happiness, and perhaps relief, in hearing a familiar sound amidst the alien sounds, demonstrates that the western ear rejected the Eastern soundscape and musical sonic qualities.

The principal element that emerges from these various depictions is their coherence in portraying the East as uncivilized, backward and alien to Western sensibilities. The numerous differences and idiosyncrasies of each Eastern culture are erased to enable the creation of the "other" which is far easier to construct and identify. Additionally, by confining all Eastern people into an Eastern soundscape, it

[36] Ibid at 43, 76.
[37] Ibid at 67.
[38] Ibid at 42.
[39] Berncastle, *A Voyage to China*, vol.2, 150.
[40] Sirr, *China and the Chinese*, p. 160.
[41] Anon., *The Englishman in China*, 162.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid at 16.

becomes possible to translate them into characters on the stage that are easily identifiable to the Western audience.

The Victorian Stage: Translations of Soundscapes and Sonic Markers, and the Creation of Racialized Eastern Identity

As the nineteenth century experienced a "craze" over Eastern themes, the Victorian stage entered an arena in which the previously discussed Eastern soundscapes were utilized as and translated into a performative tool.[44] As Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon argue, the stage worked to render the "East as 'unachievable and unrecognizable' for the consuming gaze of the western spectator," and thus would reflect the alienated experience of those who traveled.[45] The link between composer or playwriter and reflecting travelogues or reports on the East is important given that most, if any, had no first-hand experience of Eastern cultures.[46] This realization raises the question: Could any late nineteenth or early twentieth-century playwriter or composer accurately portray the East?[47] The answer would be a resounding no. However, as will be subsequently explored, this does not necessarily matter; that is, the creation of an Eastern soundscape was more about capturing the essence of an "Eastern" sound through which the vast reaches of the empire could be imported back to the metropole. As Nicholas Cook argues, the purpose was not to imitate but to represent.[48]

Mr. Buckstone's Voyage Around the Globe

Analyzing the play *Mr Buckstone's Voyage around the Globe* (1854) reveals the presentation of an "oriental spectacle" on Victorian stages.[49] The play describes itself as a "Cosmolographical and Visual extravaganza" in which the character Mr Buckstone travels through various scenes, interacting with different regions—Europe, Asia, Africa and America.[50] Before the Asian scene is revealed, music is played. Pisani suggests that within the melodrama genre, music served to underscore dialogue and/or convey mood, atmosphere, time and place, and ethnicity.[51] This implies that, despite

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[44] Claire Mabilat, 'Empire and 'Orient,' in Opera Libretti Set by Sir Henry Bishop and Edward Solomon,' in *Europe, Empire, and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, ed. Rachel Cowgill and Julian Rushton (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 224.
[45] Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon, 'Introduction,' in *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s-1940s: Portrayal of the East*, ed. Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 8.
[46] Mabilat, 'Empire and Orient,' 224.
[47] Saffle, 'Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages,' 107.
[48] Nicholas Cook, 'Encountering the Other, Redefining the Self: Hindostannie Airs, Haydn's Folksong Setting and the 'Common Practice' Style,' in *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s-1940s: Portrayal of the East*, ed. Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 16.
[49] "Haymarket Theatre," *Illustrated London News*, April 29, 1854. The Illustrated London News Historical Archive, 1842-2003, 393.
[50] J.R Planche, *Mr Buckstone's Voyage Around the Globe,* (London, 1854). First Performance: Theatre Royal Haymarket, 17 April 1854. The Victorian Play Project.
[51] Pisani, 'Music for the Theatre,' 71.

no scores of the music being found or perhaps existing anymore, the scene-setting music worked to carry the mind through events "by a series of significant symbols" as one newspaper review reflected.[52] Drawing from the previous section's exploration of the Western ear's discomfort with the alien tonality and harmonic structures of Eastern music, it can be further inferred that the music mentioned in the play would follow structures highlighted by Saffle. Saffle argues that in creating faux Eastern music, composers frequently used techniques such as diatonic structures, bland harmonies, ragtime (for humorous qualities), chromatism, tom-tom rhythms, and pentatonic melodies.[53] By manipulating Western harmonies, composers were able to introduce a recognizable Eastern soundscape that represented the East without imitating it. This meant that the composers and playwrights had full control over the presentation of the sounds and the meanings assigned to these sounds. Aside from creating a general Eastern atmosphere, the songs sung during the Asian scene work to establish an Eastern identity as well. 'Ching-a-ring' contains the lyrics, "Chong-moon—Chin-gan—Ar-cow—Zan-Ban—Yang-gyn—Ar ling—Wan-sing!" and "Ching-a ring a ring-ching."[54] Given that vernacular language was understood as a badge of colonial identity, the language choice is significant.[55] This is underlined through Penny Summerfield's exploration of a performance by G.H Macdermott of *By Jingo* (1877). Summerfield highlights how reviews linked his "magnificent enunciation and stentorian voice" with the symbolism of British grit.[56] Here, the sonic quality of Macdermott is explicitly highlighted as contributing to his performance of an acceptable English identity, and thus by extension suggests these vaguely Chinese-sounding words have repercussions for the creation of identity also. Firstly, the words, due to their nonsensical nature and being sung by a dwarf and Chinese juggler, present the Chinese as a non-threatening comedic and mild race. The Chinese juggler's comedic quality and "funny" language place them in opposition to the more serious and respectable Englishman who is represented by Mr. Buckstone in the play.[57] By acting like a Harlequin, a character designed to be a miscreant and play the fool, the characterization of the Chinese fits in with other similar themed plays.[58] This creation of identity is important when one takes into consideration the small Chinese population in London was actively trying to gain middle-class respectability primarily

[52] Haymarket Theatre,' 393.
[53] Saffle, 'Eastern Fantasies on Western Stages,' 108.
[54] Planche, *Mr Buckstone's Voyage*, 17-18.
[55] Andrew Porter,'Cultural Imperialism' and Protestant Missionary Enterprise, 1780–1914.' *Null* 25, no. 3 (1997): 370, doi: 10.1080/03086539708583005.
[56] Penny Summerfield, 'Patriotism and Empire: Music-Hall Entertainment, 1870-1914,' in *Imperialism and Popular Culture,* ed. John M. MacKenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 26.
[57] Ralph Waldo Emerson, 'English Traits,'(1856), in 'The Library of America, Emerson: Essays and Lectures', ed. Joel Porte (New York, 1983), *in* Arthur, Riss, 'Racial Essentialism and Family Values in "Uncle Tom's Cabin",' *American Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (1994), 523.
[58] "The Story of Pantomime," Victoria and Albert Musuem, https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/the-story-of-pantomime.

through language.[59] The play thus works partially to undermine the identities the Chinese were attempting to forge for themselves, instead asserting and assigning a racialized identity to them—that of being comedic, nonthreatening and generally in opposition to Western sensibilities. Another noteworthy aspect of the play is the conflation of Arabs and Chinese, as well as a reduction of Asia to a singular empire. Mr. Buckstone addresses "Asia" with the line "I learned a few of Arabic when young; I will address her in the Eastern tongue– Salam Alicum." Asia responds with "What can I do to serve you? Pray speak English. It's well known throughout my empire."[60] The use of Arabic does little but to sonically authenticate the location and this presentation of the East. Given Asia is later represented by a Chinese juggler singing "Ching-a-ring," there is a lack of consistency over what constitutes Asia. The play, therefore, highlights how for the West there exists for the most part only a singular Asian identity that could be applied to all.

The Mandarins Daughter and Lalla Rookh

The Mandarin's Daughter! Being the Simple Story of the Willow-Pattern Plate (1851), written by F. Talford is a play set "somewhere in China" and details a romance story. One of the opening lines is "my name is Chim-pan-zee (though in no way related to the one in Regents park)" and "I belong to the Emp'ror of China . . . . I am conjuror, wizard, magician, black doctor."[61] The second line speaks to the subservient nature of the Eastern people and barbarism due to their belief in non-Western medicine and religious systems. The name Chim-pan-zee is however more interesting for identity construction. The monkey or ape is often invoked as a reference to Africans or Aborigines and thus has strong racial connotations. The monkey or ape operates in part as a description of the "other's" comedic identity alongside their animalistic and barbaric state. Thus, by using such a name, the character and by extension the Chinese are linked through a sonic marker of an exotic-sounding name to all other "races" perceived to exist below and as "inferior" to the European race. The use of names to create an "Eastern" soundscape on the stage and thus sonically identify characters is used throughout the play with characters such as He-Sing, Lo-Spi, and Loom-Hoe. These names correspond usually to the role the character has, with Lo-Spi being a detective and Loom-Hoe a gardener. As one review notes these names and plays on words are "duly appreciated" and work to create a "full and humorous" play.[62] This is no surprise given, as Michael Hays discusses, that indigenous individuals and natives

[59] Sascha Auerbach, 'Margaret Tart, Lao She, and the Opium-Master's Wife: Race and Class among Chinese Commercial Immigrants in London and Australia, 1866—1929', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55, no. 1(2013): 38.
[60] Planche, *Mr Buckstone*, 16.
[61] F. Talford, *The Mandarin's Daughter! Being the Simple Story of The Willow Pattern Plate,* (London, 1851). First performance: Punch's Playhouse and Strand Theatre, 26 December 1851, 4, The Victorian Plays Project.
[62] "Easter Performances", *Lady's Newspaper and Pictorial Times*, 22 April 1854, 250, Gale Primary Sources.

were often used for comedic roles to confirm distinctions between the European and colonized subjects.[63] Sonic markers are also utilized in the Air, 'The House Jack Built' which contains the lyrics, "These are trees/ That wibbledee, wobbledee, gon in the breeze."[64] This is a clear example of the use of pidgin English in the format prescribed in *The Englishman in China* discussed above. The language firmly establishes the identity of "Chim-pan-zee" as being Chinese. Furthermore, due to the nature of the words, the language goes some way to infantilize the Chinese due to their inability to grasp the English language properly. As argued by Christian Thorau, linguistic differentiation serves a socially distinctive function in the aesthetic realm, meaning that the difference in speech automatically marks the Chinese as part of the "other."[65] Alongside these sonic markers, lines such as "If he don't stop his curst caterwauling and bawling" served to portray the Chinese as "good tempered and cheerful," meek and emotional, lacking morality and untrustworthy.[66] The fact that these identities are contrasted with the ideal Englishman's character is not accidental—as Claire Mabilat suggests, Victorians had a predilection for ascribing traits that were considered reprehensible to the "other" to reinforce one's own superior state.[67]

Lalla Rookh; Or, The Princess, The Peri, and The Troubadour (1857), based on the poem of the same name written by Thomas Moore, while set in India follows some of the same tropes and characterizations as *The Mandarin's Daughter*. One connection is the display of emotion with the Emperor in *Lalla Rookh* ordering his subjects to "weep all of you" leading to the stage direction "all begin blubbering loudly."[68] As with *The Mandarin's Daughter*, this is an audible and explicit demonstration of emotion. Furthermore, by describing them as blubbering, the sonic quality and emotion are designed to demonstrate the Indian subject's meekness and femininity given the English conception of manliness is often associated with having a stiff upper lip. The description of blubbering and the immediate following of the emperor's order aim to represent the Indian character as subservient, meek, and mild, while also displaying the 'natural' despotic quality of oriental authority. A further similarity to *The Mandarin's Daughter* is the use of 'exotic' names such as "Nogo," "Aurung," and "Lalla" to sonically signal the Eastern location of the play and thus create a "display of Eastern magnificence."[69] The play was published and performed in the same year as the Indian mutiny and, given melodramas often reflected matters of daily concern, the connection

[63] Michael Hays, 'Representing Empire– Class, Culture, and the Popular Theatre in the Nineteenth Century,' in *Imperialism and Theatre: Essays on World Theatre, Drama and Performance*, ed. J. Ellen Gainor (London: Routledge, 1995), 138.
[64] Talford, *The Mandarin's Daughter*, 5.
[65] Christian Thorau and Hansjakob Ziemer, 'The Art of Listening and its Histories: An Introduction,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Listening in the nineteenth and 20th Centuries*, ed. Christian Thorau and Hansjakob Ziemer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 3.
[66] Anon., *The Englishman in china*, 68; Berncastle, *Voyage to China*, vol. 2, 154-5.
[67] Mabilat, 'Empire and Orient,' 226.
[68] William, Brough, *Lalla Rookh; Or, The Princess, The Peri, and the Troubadour,* (London, 1857). First Performance: Royal Lyceum Theatre, 24 December 1857, 13, The Victorian Plays Project.
[69] "The Lyceum," *Morning Chronicle (1801),* 25 December 1857, 5, Gale Primary Sources.

must be kept in mind.[70] The Indian mutiny exacerbated the notion of barbarity and uncivilized nature of the natives and thus the presence of a popular minstrel air, 'Hoop de dooden doo,' is significant.[71] By parodying a minstrel song, the play links the Indian subcontinent and the Indian identity directly to that of the African, thereby placing it within the global heathen and barbarian framework. Due to minstrelsy being well known and conjuring specific ideas of racialized identity—for instance, parodied black accent, the banjo, the cherry, and humorous African—its inclusion in the play means the Indian's otherness was firmly established.[72] The presence of similar sonic signaling and characterization across geographical spaces also demonstrates the technique of defamatory synecdoche and placing values and identities as applicable to all heathens, as Jeffrey Cox describes.[73] In turn, this enables the constructed identities of Eastern subjects within the imagination, created through recognizable and expected sonic markers and soundscapes to become racialized and be placed within the racial hierarchy framework.[74]

The fact that reviews take both the aforementioned plays as good representations of the East means that the native characters are transformed from simple stock characters into "authoritative representations of cultural groups and their relations."[75] On the stage, there occurred a transformation of imagined and expected soundscapes and sonic markers into tools of otherization and fantasy that cemented notions of identity. The sonic markers and the consequent identity formations established on the Victorian stages, therefore, had real implications for the identities ascribed to all those designated as part of the Eastern world. This process helped cement established racial hierarchies and helped place the oriental 'other' as inherently inferior to the Englishman.

Changing Soundscapes and Identities: Tonic Sol-fa Movement in the East

This section aims to examine the consequences of using sonic markers and soundscapes to create and establish identities. Music is a medium for expressing identity, and as cultural identities are constructed through memory and fantasy, an analysis of the Tonic Sol-fa movement in the South Pacific will show that the alteration of harmonic structures was used to civilize the "natives."[76] As Derek Scott argues, "the right kind of music, in the right surroundings, was thought to act as 'a civilizing

[70] Mayer, *Encountering Melodrama*, 146.
[71] Mabilat, 'Empire and Orient', 222.
[72] J. S., Bratton, 'English Ethiopians: British Audiences and Black-Face Acts, 1835-1865,' *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 11 (1981): 131, 135, doi: 10.2307/3506263.
[73] Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise since 1700,* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 118.
[74] Ramón Grosfoguel, 'Race and Ethnicity Or Racialized Ethnicities? Identities within Global Coloniality,' *Ethnicities* 4 (2004): 323.
[75] Hays, 'Representing Empire,' 138.
[76] Christin Hoene, 'Sounding through Time and Space: Music in Postcolonial South-Asian Literature,' in *Time and Space in Words and Music*, ed. Mario Dunkel, Emily Petermann and Burkhard Sauerwald (Bern: Peter Lang, 2012), 88; Stuart Hall, 'Cultural Identity and Diaspora,' in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 226.

influence to which the lower classes were particularly responsive,'" a principle applicable to the lowest of classes—the native.[77] It must be noted that these missionaries entered the South Pacific with certain expectations about the Eastern soundscape and sonic experience they would encounter. Informed by other reports published in the metropole or stage performances such as minstrel shows — "we in the north hear these songs only as burlesqued by our . . . minstrels" —there was an interconnected and cohesive presentation of sonic markers by which the East could be easily identified.[78] It was these sonic markers and soundscapes which would be challenged by the Tonic Sol-fa movement.

The Tonic Sol-fa method as found in the examples examined below was developed by John Curwen and propagated to achieve social reform and enhance Christian worship.[79] It involved "four-part hymn singing as a means of evangelizing indigenous people" and can be posited as a means of cultural imposition.[80] As the evangelicals aimed to change beliefs, religious practices, and moral standards, the Tonic Sol-fa system was a useful tool, especially upon the missionaries realization that cultural identification "was more complex and painful business than the mere adaptation of dress and lifestyle."[81] William Ellis was among those who recognized the need for another form of cultural and imperial intervention with "little hope . . . of their following to any extent the useful arts, cultivating habits of industry, or realizing the enjoyments of social and domestic life."[82] Ellis continues his analysis of the South Islanders detailing that "their music [lacked harmony and] was distinguished by nothing so much as its discordant, deafening sounds."[83] Combined with the insight that the "native's" history, idolatry, and music operated hand-in-hand, it becomes clear that intervention through the Tonic Sol-fa system would enable the transformation of the "native's" identity.[84]

Upon the introduction of the system in most of the colonies, as reported in a report titled *Sol-fa and the Missionaries* (1875), many missionaries and colonists began to comment on the transformative effect that education had on the indigenous population's character.[85] A report on New Guinea states:

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[77] Derek B. Scott, 'Music and Social Class in Victorian London,' *Urban History* 29, no.1 (2002): 70.
[78] "Songs of the Blacks," *Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter*, Jan.1851-Dec.1888 (1860): 254, ProQuest.
[79] Robin Stevens, 'Tonic Sol-Fa in Asia-Pacific Countries: The Missionary Legacy,' *Asia-Pacific Journal for Arts Education* 5, no.1 (2007): 1.
[80] Ibid at 2.
[81] Peggy Brock, 'New Christians as Evangelists', in *Missions and Empire*,' ed. Norman Etherington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 134; Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries,* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 166.
[82] William Ellis, *Polynesian Researches, during a Residence of nearly Six Years in the South Sea Islands*, vol. 1, (London: Fisher, Son and Jackson, 1830), 39, https://archive.org/details/polynesianresear11829elli
[83] Ibid at 281.
[84] Ibid.
[85] "Sol-Fa and the Missionaries," *Tonic Sol-Fa Reporter*, Jan.1851-Dec.1888, (1875), 84, ProQuest.

> When you compare the limited range of Papuan singing, or droning, with this bright, intelligent chorus singing you see how much music has already added that is interesting and ennobling the life of these people.[86]

This "ennobling" comes primarily from the move towards choral singing and using western harmonies in contrast to the use of drums for example, which are in "close association with lew dancing and general licentiousness."[87] A further example of the success of introducing choral singing is highlighted by John Williams, stating, "Eighteen months ago they were the wildest people I had ever witnessed: now they had become mild and docile, diligent and kind."[88]

As the South Pacific cultures, as were many of the "native" cultures, were primarily oral-based and often transmitted through their music, by changing their religious affiliation and introducing new hymns, the culture was irrevocably changed.[89] Franz Fanon to this end argues:

> Colonisation [sic] is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it.[90]

The Polynesian traditions and culture were recognized as imbuing the "native" with irreconcilable heathenism, and thus by undermining and altering it was seen that the "native" would become more civilized. By fundamentally shifting the cultural soundscape of the East, the imperial agents were able to alter completely the identity of the "natives." By removing their music as well as their language through the tutelage of English—as discussed by Anna Johnston—the South Pacific became more Western sounding, thus allowing the indigenous populations to rise above their heathenism.[91] It becomes clear that, through the manipulation of sonic markers, the indigenous tribes' cultural identities are adapted and molded to match western ideals. The manipulation of sound entails a process of racialization because racialization is a process through which "groups use cultural . . . criteria to construct a hierarchy of superiority and inferiority among collective social actors." [92] The indigenous population's soundscape and sonic markers were shifted to align with sounds approved by the West, and thereby their cultural and racial identities were altered to become more docile, productive, and kind. This is in contrast to the assigned identity of "heathen," barbarian—due to practices such as cannibalism and infanticide—and lazy identified through indigenous music and sonic markers. Sound had and still has

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[86] Charles W. Abel, 'Music in New Guinea (Papua),' *The Musical Herald*, (1915), 457-8, ProQuest.
[87] Ibid at 457.
[88] John Williams, *A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands*, vol 1, (London: John Snow, 1837), 16, https://archive.org/details/narrativeofmissi00willuoft/mode/2up.
[89] Ellis, *Polynesian Researchers,* 70, 285-6.
[90] Franz Fanon, 'On National Culture,' in *The Wretched of the Earth* (London, 1963), 170.
[91] Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing, 1800-1860,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 133.
[92] Grosfoguel, *Race and ethnicity*, 326-7.

consequences for the performance and creation of identity and is a powerful tool for those who wish to manipulate it to generate specific narratives and understandings of the world.

Conclusion

This thesis has two main objectives: 1) to demonstrate the importance of using sound as a tool for analyses; and 2) to lay out how the British empire manipulated soundscapes to create sonic markers found on the stage and how these markers were utilized within the imperial context. Earwitnesses exist in many sources as demonstrated by the range used in this thesis. While often only brief details, the comments nonetheless offer great insight into another element of identity creation and conceptions of otherness. The sources also demonstrate that an analysis of the Eastern soundscape and sonic markers limited to musical analysis, as most of the scholarship which touches on this topic does, results in the exclusion of the vast majority of details on the Victorian conception of an "Eastern" sound. The use of travelogues, reports, and plays, alongside limited musical analysis—this being difficult due to the limited copies which still exist in archives—therefore presents a far more holistic appreciation of the created soundscapes and sonic markers. The use of created soundscapes and "sonic markers," first identified in various literature, is converted and translated into a Western form, which is then performed on stage as part of the greater creation of the exotic and imagined Orient, thus working to entrench racialized identities and stereotypes. The songs and plays are what brought a tangible part of the Empire into the homes of the metropole.[93] These identities are then accepted as fact with the plays taken as being mostly factual representations of the East, as demonstrated by newspaper reviews, which then fed into the greater imperialist mechanisms. By creating and generating these sonic markers and soundscapes on stage, the ideology of orientalism and imperialism—including cultural imperialism—became inescapable, and thus formed a closed loop whereby every aspect of society shaped the other to perpetuate and justify the imperial and colonial attitudes of nineteenth-century Britain. The creation and use of sonic markers whereby racial and cultural identities could be sonically recognized and assigned continue to be an important issue, with a 2013 news report following an airplane crash in the San Francisco Bay providing a good example. In the report, the KTVU station states the names of the pilots to be, "Sum Tim Wong," "Wi Tu Lo", "Ho Lee Fuk" and "Band Ding Ow."[94] Spoof names similar to the ones analyzed in this thesis—Lo-Spi, Chim-Pan-Zi, and so on—they were accepted as fact as they met the expected sound for an Asian name. Names as much as speech quality—for instance, pidgin English—are important aspects that make up

[93] Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain, 1876-1953,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 324.
[94] Katherine Fung, "KTVU Reports Racist Joke as Names of Asiana 214 Pilots," *Huffington Post*, 12 July, 2013, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/asiana-pilots-fake-names-racist_n_3588569.

the sonic markers of the Eastern identity. That the spoof names were designed for comedic effect in the face of the tragedy builds on a tradition established on the Victorian stage.

The processes discussed first, the creation of an Eastern soundscape, then its translation onto the Victorian stage, and finally the recognition of the power that soundscapes have for identity and consequently manipulating the soundscape to create new identities, can be applied to all regions of the world once placed under imperial occupation. There needs to be greater attention given to the manipulation of soundscapes and the link to conceptions of identity as these principles continue to be important parts of life both on stage as well as in the real world concerning migration and refugees. As demonstrated by the KTVU news report and various far-right groups, sonic markers are often the first tool through which difference is assigned to those with a non-Western sounding accent or name. Until this occurrence/fact is fully appreciated and recognized, sonic markers will continue to enable the perpetration of a doctrine of otherization and difference.

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