

Race Against Memory: Katherine Mayo, Jabez Sunderland, and Indian Independence

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A major event in the American debate over India's independence was the 1927 publication of *Mother India*, an explicitly pro-imperialist book by conservative Pennsylvania journalist Katherine Mayo. In the controversy over her book that ensued, American intellectuals struggled to understand India's culture, history, and national liberation movement in light of their nation's own historic experiences with revolution, nation building and civil war. Fawning in its support of British rule, and extravagantly critical of India's social practices, Mayo's book denied any analogy between India's quest for independence and America's own revolutionary past. Indeed, Mayo's engagement with India rested firmly upon a racially exclusive reading of American traditions that reflected deep contemporary concerns about America's role in the Philippines, immigration to the United States, and other domestic conditions. Responding to Mayo in his best-known work *India in Bondage*, Unitarian minister and long-time pro-India activist Jabez Sunderland sought not only to rehabilitate Indian culture in the wake of Mayo's attacks but also to position the mirror of American history to reflect more positively India's struggle for independence. Skillfully using the language of American collective memory that had emerged as the staple discourse of the American pro-India movement during the inter-war years, Sunderland rejected Mayo's racial nationalism and made direct comparisons between Indian leaders and the American revolutionaries.¹

This American debate over the Indian independence movement has received little attention from historians. Citing the Anglo-American cultural and diplomatic rapprochement of the late nineteenth century and the subsequent alliance between the two countries during the first world war, most students of the period have dismissed the pro-India movement in the United States as ineffective and relatively unimportant. Even scholars who have examined the movement directly have acknowledged that pro-India activities in the United States were limited to a small number of Indian students, transient ex-patriot nationalists, and a few American liberals whose commitment to India's cause was secondary to their domestic reform agendas. Some studies have detailed America's limited diplomatic role in India's quest for independence during and after the second world war, but they pass quickly over the domestic debate that preceded it. While Indian scholars have shown somewhat more interest in the American public's view of Gandhi and the nationalist movement during the inter-war years, they have not significantly revised the rather dismissive American scholarly consensus on the issue. In examining one aspect of the American debate over India, this article seeks not to elevate the importance of Americans in the ultimate dissolution of the British Raj, but rather to suggest that the scholarly dismissal of the American discourse on the issue has obscured an important contest over *American* identity and memory that was embedded in it.²

Americans like Mayo and Sunderland who engaged the Indian nationalist movement in part through competing constructions of American national identity did so in the context of a larger international discourse in which British officials and Indian nationalists were the primary protagonists who stood to lose or gain from such constructions. Seeking American support for a colonial regime that was under siege from an indigenous resistance movement, the British Indian government used a variety of means, including systematic propaganda and outright censorship, to suppress parallels between American and Indian history. In this respect, Katherine Mayo's use of Anglo-Saxon racialism was ideally suited to reinforce notions of Anglo-American commonality and to undermine anti-colonial images of America's past. But for Indian nationalists seeking to build organizational support and public sympathy for their cause in the United States, such a racially exclusive American identity not only threatened to erode popular interest in struggles against colonialism in Asia but also provided the basic ideological grounding for race-based restrictions on immigration and naturalization in the 1920s. While their writings have received scant attention from American historians, Indian writers like Lala Lajpat Rai and Kanhaiya Lal Gauba consciously used memory against race in identifying their own movement with what they saw as the best of the American political tradition and by linking Mayo to its most destructive historic contradictions. Revealing the potential for highly charged debates over national identity to create international anti-colonial alliances, these Indian writers emphasized the glaring discrepancies between the principles of America's founding myths and the persistent lynching and disfranchisement of African Americans.³

A close reading of the discourse on India reveals an international debate on American identity and points out the subtle and complex relationship between concepts of national identity and collective memory. While frequent uses of memory—in this case selective and overtly politicized representations of the American past—provided a framework for participants on both sides to engage the complex issue of America's relationship to the British Raj, it also created serious rhetorical and interpretive problems as well. Divorced almost entirely from discussions of history itself, these writers deployed memory only when it suited their discursive and ideological purposes and they were often unaware when obvious contradictions in their uses of the past damaged rather than strengthened their arguments. At the same time, however, in constructing usable versions of America's collective experience, Sunderland, Mayo, Rai, and others raised provocative questions about the nature of that experience. If these intellectuals engaged India and colonialism through the distorting lens of American memory and identity, they nevertheless emerged from the encounter with partially revised understandings of their own traditions.⁴

When Katherine Mayo's *Mother India* was published in the summer of 1927, it was received with great enthusiasm by British officials, who were concerned about the impact of Indian nationalist sentiment on American public opinion. Just a few months after the book's appearance, for example, the finance minister of the government of India personally expressed gratitude to Mayo for countering nationalist propaganda and showing her fellow Americans "the difficulties of the English in their task in India." Given the message and impact of *Mother India*, this attitude is not difficult to explain. After a three-month tour of India during which she received both hospitality and research assistance from British officials, the sixty-year-old Pennsylvania journalist had produced a scathing attack on Indian society. Written in a vivid, popular style and filled with gruesome details and anecdotes, Mayo's book insisted that India's independence should be resisted by all informed westerners so long as the society's rampant sexuality and its brutal suppression of women and low-caste Hindus continued unchecked. Mayo's India was a hyper-sexualized society in which the vast majority of children of both sexes were exposed to sexual abuse and exploitation. Claiming that 90 percent of Indian children suffered from venereal disease, she questioned the moral logic of those who sought to remove the reforming influence of British rule. Indeed, Mayo's main critique of the Indian nationalist movement was that it was led by men whose physical and mental vitality had been sapped by an adolescence filled with enervating sexual indulgence. Since Indian men were reared "in influences and practices that devour their vitality," Mayo argued that "their hands are too weak, to fluttering, to seize or to hold the reins of Government." The book was widely reviewed in the United States and Great Britain, and it sold 140,000 copies in less than a year.⁵

While Mayo's book was designed to strengthen the traditional imperialist discourse that denied the right of self-government to "less civilized races," it

also attempted to counteract what American and British pro-imperialists believed was a false but nevertheless dangerous analogy between the Indian nationalist movement and the American Revolution. Many American liberals found the parallel between American colonial resistance and Indian nationalism irresistible. In what had become commonplace in liberal discourse on India by 1930, the editors of the *Nation* responded to Gandhi's civil disobedience campaign against the Salt Tax by asserting that "India has just as much right to take over its own government today as Americans had in 1776. We cannot see how anyone who believes in American institutions and the principles underlying them can hesitate." Edward Thompson, a British intellectual who had toured American universities in the late twenties, was shocked by what he believed was a naive, American assumption that "history runs along a few regular lines liable to repetition." As a result, Thompson complained, he was forced to defend his government's policies against the general charge that "the events of 1776 are being reenacted in India" and the specific assertion that "the salt tax agitation" in India was "the Stamp Act agitation all over again." This unfortunate tendency among American liberals to universalize their nation's historic experience, he felt, not only led them to oversimplify the issues at stake in India but also exposed serious differences between British and American culture. "For Thompson, the failure of Americans to appreciate the deeply conflicted nature of India's political and social institutions exposed what he saw as the glibness and superficiality of liberal discourse in the United States."⁶

Thompson's fears about the potential of American memory to generate sympathy for Indian nationalism suggests that imagined traditions remained a potential problem in Anglo-American relations well into the twentieth century. Although many historians have correctly emphasized the role of Anglo-Saxon racial discourse in generating more positive American attitudes toward Britain's imperial project during this period, it is important to recognize the powerful elements in the nation's historical consciousness that this racial discourse was in part designed to overcome. Historian Ruth Miller Elson, for example, has shown that while school history texts in the United States became increasingly sympathetic to the British during the nineteenth century, they nevertheless used Britain's eighteenth-century imperial arrogance as the central foil in developing concepts of American national identity. In their descriptions of the American Revolution, for example, they still portrayed England "as a corrupt monster with enormous financial resources, fighting to maintain its tyranny" who committed "deliberate atrocities" including "profanation of churches" and "murdering civilians." Americans consumed the rhetoric of Anglo-Saxon racial commonality and shared imperial-racial mission, but these concepts existed in tension with equally powerful images that contrasted "old, powerful and corrupt Britain" with a "young and pure" America. While they sometimes overlapped and reinforced one another in forging new concepts of American identity, then, the discourses of race and memory could also be used against one another in contesting that identity.⁷

Examples of a link between anti-colonialism, anti-British sentiment, and central elements of the culture's collective memory are not difficult to find. For example, the autobiographical writings of Agnes Smedley, who emerged in the 1920s as a leader of the Friends of Freedom For India, made such a link explicit. Explaining her opposition to American entry into World War I as an outgrowth of radical political associations, she also cited more broadly shared cultural assumptions. "I also had the typical American anti-British bias," she wrote in *Daughter of Earth*, "based on the history I had studied in the schools—of the American Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Civil War." "I knew nothing of Germany," she remembered, "but England had always been a vampire and a conqueror." Similar sentiments could be expressed by those with entirely different political values. In a scathing response to one of Theodore Roosevelt's pro-imperialist speeches, the publisher William Randolph Hearst lambasted Roosevelt for what he saw as an "un-American" endorsement of colonialism against the most basic political principles learned by all American schoolchildren. "If Roosevelt's speech expresses Americanism," Hearst argued, "then Patrick Henry's patriotic words should be torn from the First Readers of young Americans. . . ." Hearst went on to suggest that if Roosevelt was right to support British colonialism, then Americans would soon have to accept that their own revolution was "a mistake" and that the Boston Tea Party was "a treasonable act."⁸

It is important to note that this use of memory to overcome perceived differences between Indian and American history and identity reinforced positive cultural connections that had been building rapidly since the early nineteenth century. While Harold Isaacs once argued that the image of Indians as "benighted heathen" practicing an archaic and oppressive religion is "perhaps the strongest of all that come to us out of India from the past," he and other scholars have also demonstrated the existence of alternate American understandings of South Asia. Beginning with the Transcendentalists, for example, American religious intellectuals developed a more sophisticated understanding of Hindu spiritual and literary traditions through correspondence with Indian scholars. Building on earlier visits to the United States by Indian religious leaders like Protap Chandra Mazumdar, moreover, Swami Vivekananda's 1893 appearance at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago and his subsequent, well-publicized lecture tour gave American audiences deeper understanding of the philosophical and ethical bases of Hinduism. While Unitarians and other religious radicals usually possessed the most positive and nuanced images of India in the early twentieth century, the views of more orthodox American missionaries were also changing. Based on an extensive analysis of missionary publications, historian S.M. Pathak argues that "a more sympathetic attitude" toward Indian spiritual culture had emerged among all but the most conservative organizations by 1910. Indeed, the "mass adulation" that greeted the Nobel prize-winning Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore when he arrived in America for a nationwide tour in 1916 suggests the emergence of popular interest in Indian culture as well. That Tagore

often told American journalists of the links between his ideas and the works of Benjamin Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman further highlights the consistent pairing of identity and memory in the cultural relationship between India and the United States.⁹

By the time that Mayo wrote *Mother India*, moreover, these rhetorical and ideological uses of American memory had become important weapons in the propaganda arsenal of the small but growing Indian nationalist movement in the United States. Although nationalist activities in America were always relatively limited, they took on increased energy and focus during the first world war. In California, for example, a small Indian revolutionary or “Ghadar” movement made up of Bengali students and Sikh laborers fomented violent resistance to the British Raj through shipments of weapons and propaganda from the United States. Responding to pressure from the British in the spring of 1917, the American government secured convictions of more than twenty “Hindu conspirators” in San Francisco and Chicago for arms trafficking that violated American neutrality laws. As the United States government prepared to deport the convicted conspirators, however, opponents of deportation used American revolutionary memory to protest. The NAACP’s *Crisis* pointed out the irony of deporting Indians from the United States “for exactly the thing of which Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin, held in immortal memory by all Americans, were guilty: they have been struggling to free their country from the rule of the stranger.” In the *New York American*, Senator Joseph I. France of Maryland expressed his opposition to legislation to deport wholesale Indian activists not only because he believed that they would be executed upon their arrival in India but also because such an action was “inconsistent . . . with the long and honorable tradition of this country as a land of refuge for the oppressed.”¹⁰

At the same time, the more moderate India Home Rule League of America was founded in New York City through the efforts of exiled Punjabi nationalist Lala Lajpat Rai. While Rai sought to mobilize Indian students from Columbia and other area universities, he was also building alliances with a variety of influential American academics and liberal activists. Rai’s connections gained him access to progressive publications like the *Nation* and the *New Republic* where he was able to contest mainstream press accounts of conditions in India that often relied on British news sources. The Home Rule League, and especially its monthly publication *Young India*, were specifically designed to counteract what pro-India activists saw as a powerful British imperial propaganda machine actively seeking to manipulate American opinion and to undermine the nationalist movement abroad. Perhaps the most consistent message to American readers of *Young India* was that British contentions about India’s incapacity for self-government were repetitions of arguments made about Americans. “King George III and Lord North declared that the American colonies were not fit to rule themselves,” wrote one American contributor. “How would we like to have King George, or any other foreign King, add to his title ‘Emperor of the United States

of America,’ and in his proclamations speak of this country as ‘My American Empire!’”¹¹

For American pro-India activists, analogies between the struggle for independence and reform in the United States and India’s nationalist aspiration were both irresistible and constituted a basic ideological framework for rejecting the paternalist ideology that sustained British rule in India. In November of 1918, when the Indian Home Rule League of America held a “Hindu vegetarian dinner” at the Grand Hotel in New York City to celebrate its one-year anniversary, several of the American speakers linked India’s national aspirations and key aspects of American history and political thought. Oswald Garrison Villard, the editor of the *Nation* and a long-time anti-imperialist, rejected the notion that wartime discussions of India’s right to self-determination was “discourteous to an ally” because the issue involved principles basic to America’s identity. He went on to quote Abraham Lincoln’s famous antislavery maxim that “no man is good enough to govern any other man, without that other man’s consent.” Henrietta Rodman, founder of the Greenwich Village-based New Feminist Alliance and member of the Home Rule League council, argued that the United States “could hardly support a colonial attitude in India which is almost identical to the one it fought against in 1776.” Finally, Unitarian minister Jabez Sunderland, the vice president of the League, suggested that the part of America that sympathized with India was the “America whose heart throbbed for the freedom of the slaves . . . in the days of the Civil War.”¹²

Through *Young India*, moreover, the League’s leaders elaborated and developed these concepts in ways that sought to teach Americans about India’s culture while drawing direct parallels between America’s past and India’s present. Implicitly acknowledging the cultural and information gap that prevented most Americans from perceiving their own values at stake in India’s nationalist movement, *Young India* sought to construct a simple but effective well of common experience. This became especially significant as the stunning news of the Rowlatt Acts protests and the Amritsar massacre raised the stakes in the Anglo-Indian battle over American and world opinion.¹³ In April 1920, after Lajpat Rai had left for India and Sunderland had taken over as editor, the magazine included brief articles applying historic American quotations to the colonial situation in India. It quoted, for example, Abraham Lincoln’s 1858 rejection of American pro-slavery paternalism as “the arguments that Kings have put forth for enslaving the people in all ages of the world,” in direct opposition to Great Britain’s claim “that she is ruling the people of India for their benefit.” Reminding readers of Patrick Henry’s famous demand for liberty or death, *Young India* also informed them that Ram Mohan Roy, the nineteenth-century Bengali religious and political reformer had once said, “I would be free, or not at all.” Although separated by time and culture, Henry and Roy were freedom fighters whose resistance to the power of a tyrannical British Empire demanded the approbation of all liberty-loving peoples, especially Americans. To celebrate the former without applauding the latter, the journal’s creators implied, was

either base hypocrisy or simple race prejudice. After all, they argued, “the wrongs suffered by India from her foreign rulers are far greater than the American Colonies ever were.”¹⁴

Katherine Mayo’s use of race in *Mother India* was designed in part to undermine these simple analogies between America’s past and India’s present. Although Mayo consistently denied pursuing any political agenda in writing the book, examinations of her correspondence, background, and previous political activism have revealed a deeply conservative understanding of American history and identity. A member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants and a favorite of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mayo was aligned with conservative women’s groups that celebrated the lineal and Anglo-Saxon racial character of American nationalism and who aggressively sought to preserve what they believed were Anglo-Saxon traditions against threats posed by labor radicals, European Catholic immigrants, and African Americans. Cementing her ties with such groups and presaging her later views on the Philippines and India, Mayo’s early journalistic work emphasized the need for immigration restriction and for greater state control over unruly social elements that threatened Anglo-American traditions as she understood them. In 1917, for example, she put her highly effective writing skills behind the effort to establish a rural police in New York State and heaped praise on the force’s ability to control immigrants and blacks whose involvement in labor violence threatened the social order. “In making her case for the state police force,” observes historian Mrinalini Sinha, “Mayo effectively invoked the twin specters of hordes of male immigrants and ‘Negroes,’ who lacked ‘manly’ self-control, and of defenseless Anglo-Saxon women, who needed the manly protection of the state police.” Indeed, it seems that Mayo’s ability to link fears about race, gender, and national identity was a major element in the success of her early writing.¹⁵

Mayo’s desire to preserve Anglo-Saxon social, cultural, and political dominance in America, moreover, became a dominant theme in her pro-imperialist writings in the 1920s. In *The Isles Of Fear*, her 1924 work on America’s role in the Philippines, Mayo had employed racial arguments to undermine the analogy between Asian independence movements and America’s revolutionary past. While anti-imperialists in the United States had often equated the Filipino independence movement with the American Revolution and linked independence leader Emilio Aguinaldo with the founding fathers, Mayo warned her readers explicitly against such comparisons. “You must deliver your mind from the treacherously recurring subconscious idea that he is a brown skinned New England squire living in a tropical Lexington or Concord,” she asserted. Filipino leaders were not modern American revolutionaries, but rather corrupt and oppressive bullies who brutalized and defrauded “the Malay mass” of landless tenant farmers. Far from violating its revolutionary heritage, she maintained, America’s presence in the Philippines constituted a partial check on the power of venal and self-interested indigenous leaders, and it provided a source of inspiration for an otherwise inert mass of victims. In language that

recalled racialist themes in American anti-slavery culture, Mayo suggested that legitimate revolution against *domestic* oppression in the Philippines could occur only when the downtrodden mass of the population had absorbed the Anglo-Saxon love of liberty from Americans. “[T]he intervention of the Anglo-Saxon spirit,” she insisted, “has stirred, here and there, to some embryonic degree, the dormant spirit of liberty and justice in those nine million or more serfs.”¹⁶

Mayo’s shrewd redeployment of the language of memory allowed her to reconcile America’s imperial role in the Philippines with its anti-colonial past. It was not the Filipino struggle for independence that recalled “our Spirit of ‘76,” but rather the American-aided struggle against domestic oppressors who were “incomparably worse than was ever that poor, mad old German George III.” Nevertheless, Mayo’s conservative and racially-exclusive reading of American history compromised her pro-imperial reworking of the Revolutionary analogy in *The Isles of Fear*. She felt compelled to remind her readers that the Filipinos were “not dark skinned white [men], but Malays,” with “an historical and psychological background” that left them unable to assimilate American political traditions that had emerged from centuries of Anglo-Saxon racial development. Well-intentioned American educators in the islands, then, were making critical errors in introducing national heroes like Abraham Lincoln and Patrick Henry to Filipinos, who were “unprepared” to draw the correct lessons from their lives. In admiring Lincoln the president and emancipator, they failed to see the “rail-splitter, hewing a way through hardship.” In Patrick Henry, they saw only the great orator, not the “patriot, ready to give all to his country.” Humility, hard work, self-sacrifice, and patriotism were qualities that the Filipino people might learn slowly under American guidance and protection, but until then a proper understanding of American history remained inaccessible to them. “Interpreting our national history by his own race experience,” she concluded, the Filipino student “innocently sets up parallels where none exist.” In the end, Mayo seemed to reject even her own limited application of American memory to the experience of Asian peoples.¹⁷

By the time she wrote *Mother India*, then, Mayo had already established a rhetorical strategy that was well-suited to counter the anti-British uses of American memory that had emerged in the wartime debate over India. While adding her sensational image of a hyper-sexualized society that tyrannized over Indian women and sapped the political virility of Indian men, Mayo made extensive use of the material from *The Isles of Fear* to undermine any analogy between India’s present and America’s past. Like America’s “charges” in the Philippines, Britain’s Indian subjects were not capable of understanding the full meaning of the political language that had animated American heroes like Patrick Henry because they lacked the “racial experience” upon which it rested. Words such as liberty, equality, and justice might be an intoxicating “new vocabulary whose rhythm and thunder they love to roll upon their nimble tongues,” but they were empty of meaning when uttered in a cultural vacuum. “Words are built upon the life history of peoples,” Mayo insisted, and Indians were “oblivious of

the thousand years of laborious nation building” that shaped both their meaning and their efficacy in Anglo-Saxon contexts. Aware that India’s pre-colonial past included long periods of centralized government, Mayo simply denied the relevance of such experience in the modern debate over India’s political future. The “creative, historic period” of the Hindu’s past is “as unrelated to him as the period of Pericles is unrelated to the modern New York Greek,” she argued. In relation to their power to grasp the concepts essential for democracy and effective self-government, *Mother India* contended, neither Filipinos nor Indians had any history at all.¹⁸

Yet beyond its obvious conclusion about the need for continued British rule in India, Mayo’s book also raised a variety of implicit questions about the American past. Though she followed a well-established conservative tradition in emphasizing the uniqueness of American Revolution, her rhetoric also seemed to undermine the significance of the Revolution’s political accomplishments by grounding them so completely in racial experience. By denying the applicability of American revolutionary ideology to the Philippines and India, in other words, Mayo questioned its universality and buried its originality under a millennium of Anglo-Saxon cultural development. At the same time, her obvious Anglophilic advocated a re-imagination of American history in relation to Britain and its empire. Americans who honored the founders of English colonies in North America, she argued, should also remember their contemporaries who established trading posts in the Bay of Bengal and who fought heroic “French and Indian wars” to secure control of south Asian trade. Taking this historic link one step further, Mayo sought to weaken liberal American criticism of Britain’s role in India by comparing the Raj positively with United States government policy toward Native Americans. “While we have nearly exterminated and never enfranchised our Indians,” she told her American audience, “our British cousins have multiplied theirs, and led them into a large and increasing measure of self-government.” As an antidote to anti-British uses of American memory, Mayo was at times willing to use more critical representations of the American past. In so doing, however, she raised questions about the supposed benevolence of American Anglo-Saxon rule which otherwise formed the basis of her pro-imperial ideology.¹⁹

Conservative groups in the United States enthusiastically received *Mother India*. They immediately greeted it as a counterweight to the anti-imperialism of the American left and to what they perceived as an essentially anti-Christian interest in Indian spirituality among educated Americans, especially women. Mabel Benedict, president of the New Jersey chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, for example, was delighted with the book and invited Mayo to speak to her group as part of a series of luncheon meetings designed to “offset the constant stream of radicals brought to our women’s clubs and churches.” Benedict was deeply disturbed by the apparent popularity of Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore and Hindu mystics like Swami Yogananda, whose visits to the United States had generated sizable audiences. In exposing the

rampant sexuality and social oppression that Hinduism allegedly justified, Mayo's book would forever silence the "silly clergy and radical women who prate of Oriental superiority and mysticism to evangelical Christians." For Edith McMahon, another of Mayo's conservative admirers, the whole debate over India turned explicitly on issues of race, sexuality, and American identity. In their religious "propaganda," she argued, traveling Indian mystics possessed "a deadening narcotic" that utterly "infatuated . . . inane women" with the seductive power of "opium or chloroform." This religious intoxication, she feared, was "prostituting, degrading, demoralizing, and degenerating to the body, heart, mind, soul and spirit" of American women. Clearly intimating that Hindu religious leaders sought to control the bodies of western women just as Mayo's book had shown was the case in India, McMahon went on to argue that nothing less than the racial destiny of Anglo-Saxon America itself was at stake. Hindu religious thought, if not challenged by responsible Americans, would prevent "any development or unfoldment of the Nordic, Anglo-Saxon, and American mind and soul."²⁰

While Mayo's supporters agreed that India's nationalist leaders bore no resemblance to the heroes of American history, they nevertheless believed that Mayo's relentless condemnations of India's gender and caste oppression made her worthy of comparison with the nation's greatest crusading heroine. "Just as Harriet Beecher Stowe who exposed slavery in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" which stirred the depths of America's heart," wrote an appreciative reader, "so I believe your book will be classed in the same exalted position." Indeed, for many, the comparison between Mayo and Stowe seemed apt given the subject matter of the book and the storm of controversy that its publication generated. A member of the West Side Unitarian Church in New York City, for example, told Mayo of her minister's highly favorable pulpit review of the book in which the author of *Mother India* emerged as the clear victor after a lengthy comparison with Stowe. "While your book had at least started a war of words your similarity to Mrs. Stowe ceases there," Anna Wyeth reported of Rev. Slaten's sermon of the day before. "She didn't trouble to make a visit to the South to gather facts." *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was a great work of moral inspiration, the minister had apparently argued, but *Mother India* had successfully combined that book's stirring emotional appeals with the scientific accuracy required of modern social criticism. American pro-India activists had used memories of slaveholder paternalism as a means of condemning Britain's contemporary ideology of empire, but Mayo's skillful journalism had engaged many of her readers in an almost complete reversal of these anti-imperialist historical analogies. In defending British rule, Mayo's book could be read not as a craven defense of latter-day southern slaveholders but rather as a plea, based upon empirical observation, to protect Indian women and untouchables against a rapacious and archaic Hindu oligarchy.²¹

While *Mother India* pleased conservative defenders of social order in America, it generated a firestorm of criticism from Indian nationalists all over

the world. The negative responses usually heaped scorn on Mayo's politically motivated misreadings of Hindu culture, but several commented on the representations of American history and identity that were so much a part of her argument. Less than a year after the book's appearance, Lala Lajpat Rai, the Punjabi leader and founder of the India Home Rule League of America, published a lengthy rebuttal of Mayo entitled *Unhappy India*. Having lived for five years in the United States, Rai insisted that he had a far more solid empirical basis from which to comment on American society than Mayo's brief six months in India had provided. Mayo's arrogant indictment of Indian society, he believed, proceeded from a hypocritical blindness to the pervasive racial violence, grinding poverty, and sexual exploitation in her own society. Even a casual perusal of American history, he argued, showed that the stigma of caste, the oppression of women, and the callous indifference to the plight of the poor were hardly unique to India or Hinduism. "When Americans issued their famous Declaration of Independence, slavery was an established institution in their country," he reminded his readers. "It is less than seventy years ago that the American Civil War . . . was fought because of this institution." Using extensive quotations from the NAACP weekly *Crisis*, moreover, Rai vividly described the lynching and burning of blacks in Mississippi and the murderous St. Louis race riot of 1917. "One would have thought the Americans would be the last people to declare Hindus to be unfit for *Swaraj* and democracy," he argued. "Even today the untouchables in India are neither lynched nor treated so brutally as the Negroes in the United States." Rai carefully disavowed any intention to paint a one-sided picture of American life as Mayo had done in India, but rather intended to show how easily a skillful writer could use a society's problems to indict its essence.²²

A year after Rai's book appeared in Calcutta, another refutation commenting directly on American life appeared in Lahore. Like *Unhappy India*, K.L. Gauba's book, wryly titled *Uncle Sham: Being the Tale of a Civilization Run Amok*, pointed out the hypocrisy of American reverence for heroes like Lincoln while African Americans were lynched and disfranchised. It was not Indians who misunderstood America's political traditions as Katherine Mayo claimed, but rather it was Americans who needed lessons in their own history. "This book will have requited the many hours of unpleasant labor," he wrote, "if it can induce Uncle Sam to see himself as others see him, to adapt his practice to his professions, . . . his democracy to the principles that inspired Washington and for which Lincoln died." Written in a much more polemical style than Rai's book, *Uncle Sham* was vulnerable to charges that it had been written in a "revengeful spirit," as one of Katherine Mayo's correspondents believed. Indeed, Gauba's indictment of American society was so thorough that it threatened to confirm Mayo's version of American identity and unravel the rhetorical links that wartime pro-India activists had established between American history and Indian nationalism. One of Gauba's Indian readers claimed that the book "tears the star spangled banner to pieces." Consequently, some Indian nationalists now

worried that Mayo was about to win an even greater victory over their movement by provoking men like Gauba into blanket condemnations of American culture that would poison relations with sympathetic Americans. Taraknath Das, a Bengali activist who had obtained U.S. citizenship during the war, feared that “British politicians and supporters of Miss Mayo” would be “delighted by this turn of affairs, because they [feel] that Indian attacks on America in general will alienate American sympathy toward Indian aspirations.” For Das and other Indians who had worked so diligently to establish an alliance with American liberals, a growing Indian backlash against Americans seemed almost as disastrous as *Mother India* itself.²³

What Das and others desperately hoped for was an American of stature greater or equal to Mayo’s who could undo the serious damage that her book had done both in the United States and India. The task fell to Dr. Jabez T. Sunderland, a veteran of over thirty years of pro-India activism. Although born in Yorkshire, England in 1842, Sunderland had grown up in the United States, served in the Union army during the Civil War and preached for over fifty years throughout the United States and Canada. The author of several popular books on liberal Christian theology, Sunderland’s Unitarianism included a deep respect for non-Christian traditions as sources of spiritual truth. His interest in India seems to have begun quite early, but he was deeply affected by Swami Vivekananda’s famous paper on Hinduism at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Two years later, he eagerly accepted an offer from the British Unitarian Association to spend a year in India studying social conditions, education, and religious culture. After his return, Sunderland began publishing widely on Indian political and social issues, including a highly influential 1908 article in the *Atlantic Monthly* that linked India’s periodic famines with British tax policy. While this first visit permanently altered his previously pro-British views on India’s political future, a second trip in 1913 brought him into direct contact with Lajpat Rai as well as British anti-imperialists Charles F. Andrews and Annie Besant. Although in his late seventies by the end of the first world war, Sunderland had helped to create the India Home Rule League of America and had became the final editor of the League’s publication *Young India*.²⁴

Beyond his prodigious knowledge of India, the specific content of Sunderland’s anti-imperialist vision also made him a natural choice to contest Mayo’s understanding of American history and identity. Summing up his ideological commitment to the cause of Indian nationalism, Sunderland’s fellow Unitarian minister and pro-India activist John H. Holmes wrote that “to Dr. Sunderland . . . the situation in India . . . was at bottom a duplication of the American situation in 1765-1775, which led to the Revolution and national independence.” Deeply embedded in American history, Sunderland believed, were universal principles of liberty that made the United States the natural ally of those struggling to realize their collective destinies. While the American Revolution was always the overarching signifier in Sunderland’s understanding of India’s cause, he also saw Abraham Lincoln, William Lloyd Garrison, and

Julia Ward Howe as exemplars of a larger democratic tradition with universal applicability. To build a greater Indian understanding of this liberal, reformist element in American culture, Sunderland had worked with the Madras firm of Ganesh and Co. on the publication of his 1925 book *India, America, and World Brotherhood*. Beginning with biographical sketches of Lincoln, Garrison, and Howe, he intended the book to provide Indian readers with three “representatives of democracy at its best” and “leaders in great struggles for freedom.” At a time when many Indians were reading of new American immigration and naturalization laws that specifically used race to discriminate against south Asians, Sunderland sought to acquaint his audience with what he believed was a better America. “The story of Garrison will always be an inspiration, a trumpet call, a challenge to fighters for every kind of freedom, in every land and every age” he argued.²⁵

Sunderland had been working on a lengthy manuscript on Indian issues before the publication of *Mother India*, but he sped up his work in order to control the damage that Mayo’s book, and the publicity surrounding it, had done to the cause of Indian-American relations. His book, *India In Bondage: Her Right to Freedom*, was first published by the Prabasi Press of Calcutta in December, 1928. The press’s editor, Ramananda Chatterjee, was also the editor of the Calcutta nationalist journal *Modern Review* and a leader of the Brahmo Samaj, a Bengali religious and social reform movement that had a long history of working with American and British Unitarians. Both Chatterjee and Taraknath Das believed that a timely Indian edition of Sunderland’s work would provide an authoritative American answer to Mayo’s specific claims about India, and might also demonstrate to the upcoming Simon Commission, a British parliamentary review of the Indian government, that Mayo’s views were unrepresentative of American opinion. “It seems to me,” Chatterjee told Sunderland a few months before publication, “that as, unfortunately, Miss Mayo is an American, a reply from a venerable American like yourself will be appreciated highly in India.” Chatterjee’s belief in the crucial importance of Sunderland’s book is demonstrated, as later events would clearly show, in his willingness to risk prosecution, fine, and imprisonment for the publication of writings that the Indian government might well consider seditious.²⁶

While Sunderland lacked the journalistic skills that made Mayo’s work so popular, his book nevertheless made a powerful case against the Raj. Employing personal testimonies and statistical information gathered from mainly Indian government sources, he argued that British rule in India was morally unjustifiable, parasitic, and ultimately destructive of one of the world’s most important civilizations. Dismissing Mayo’s claims about Indian sexuality as distortions based upon the “spirit . . . of race antagonism,” he maintained that the country’s social and economic problems were rooted in centuries of colonial repression. He believed that the practices of child-marriage and enforced widowhood rightly offended American sensibilities, but denied that they were as widespread as Mayo had claimed and went on to suggest that effective reform could be implemented only after the advent of self-government. More to the point,

however, Sunderland flatly rejected the traditional Anglo-American colonial discourse that cited social problems as justifications for imperial rule. Such arguments, he insisted, were both hypocritical and self-serving. Using a theme that appeared in several Indian responses to Mayo, he insisted that “India knows nothing so bad as our American lynching and burning of Negroes.” He skillfully reminded American readers that the British author George Bernard Shaw had once cited lynching as evidence that “the United States is not fit to rule itself, and ought forthwith to be taken in hand and civilized by some foreign nation, say England or France or Japan.”²⁷

Because of Sunderland’s desire to communicate a progressive image of American traditions to Indians and because he intended to publish an American edition of *India in Bondage*, the book also directly contested Mayo’s conservative and exclusive understanding of American memory and identity. Indeed, Mayo’s overt use of race against anti-imperialist constructions of American memory led Sunderland to re-examine those same constructions in his attack on the racial argument for empire. Fundamentally rejecting Mayo’s image of a particularistic, Anglo-Saxon revolution, he argued that “right is the same and justice is the same in all lands and times,” and that “the principles . . . apply to India today as . . . fully as they did to the American colonies in 1776.” In his reckoning, the American revolutionaries were not spokesmen for a race-specific ideology, but rather far-sighted visionaries whose political principles were both original and universally applicable. Sunderland’s founders viewed “the struggle of any oppressed people anywhere” as “a matter of world concern, which ought to enlist the interest and support of every liberty-loving nation and person in the world.” Since the oppressive empire in question was British, as it had been in 1776, and not American, as it had been in 1898, Sunderland had something of an advantage over earlier anti-imperialists in applying the American revolutionary analogy. The parallel could be stated in the simplest of terms. “If our American forefathers were justified in throwing off the yoke of England,” he asked, “why are not the people of India justified in their struggle . . . to free themselves from the far, far heavier yoke of their foreign rulers and oppressors.” This thinking was described by one irritated British reviewer as “bias and ignorance,” but it nevertheless struck a very clear and precise note.²⁸

Like many activists who have drawn upon memory in the service of larger social or political ends, however, Jabez Sunderland was actually more concerned with American identity than he was with history. If Mayo feared that American support for India implied a betrayal of historic traditions she associated with Anglo-Saxons, Sunderland worried that his country’s failure to support India’s struggle for freedom and nationhood signaled the erosion of the nation’s democratic values. Indeed, he placed the British Raj alongside Italian fascism as twin emblems of an aristocratic, racist, and militaristic spirit that threatened to infect and destroy American culture. He was appalled by the numbers of Americans who “scout the ideas of human equality in our Declaration of Independence, . . . and regard the world as having been made for the white race

and especially for Nordics.” For Sunderland, then, anti-imperialist reconstructions of American memory served not only the cause of freedom in India, but also provided powerful antidotes against America’s own cultural decline.²⁹

In service to these larger purposes, however, Sunderland deployed a highly selective rhetoric of memory that created serious interpretive problems of its own. While his analogy between the American Revolution and Indian nationalism was simple enough, he frequently went further in suggesting that “all of the men who have done the most to make this country illustrious” possessed a deep sympathy with revolutions in other lands. His rather expansive list included Washington, Jefferson, the Adamses, Clay, Webster, Garrison, and Lincoln. While this gallery of greats lent authority and weight to Sunderland’s vision of American identity, it also reveals a willingness to forgo historical accuracy in service to a useful and progressive national memory. As most historians during the 1920s understood, Jefferson and Adams differed profoundly over America’s relationship to the French Revolution and both “recoiled in horror” at the Haitian Revolution of 1791. John Quincy Adams, Daniel Webster, and Henry Clay all responded with extreme ambivalence to the Latin American revolutions of their day and subscribed to the same Anglo-Saxon racialism that animated Mayo. Because a good deal of Daniel Webster’s political career was spent attacking abolitionism, Sunderland’s pairing of him with William Lloyd Garrison indicates a willingness to collapse even the most obvious historical distinctions into useful abstractions.³⁰

But Sunderland’s most serious interpretive problems emerged from his attempts to use the events surrounding the American Civil War to explain the issues at work in British India. On the one hand, *India in Bondage* attempted to discredit British rule by comparing it with the American slaveholding South. Explicitly employing one of the most successful themes of abolitionist rhetoric, Sunderland argued that while British colonization of India robbed a great Asian civilization of its destiny, it also destroyed the best values of the colonizers. “The situation in India is essentially the same as that which existed in our own Southern states in the former days of American slavery,” he insisted. “Men cannot long engage in doing wrong deeds without suffering moral degradation.” Like the American slaveholders whose commitment to chattel slavery had produced an attachment to social hierarchy and violent pastimes, he argued, India’s British rulers also scorned democracy and reveled in archaic forms of leisure. Citing Indian newspaper articles that reported on the conduct of British officials, Sunderland offered “their liquor drinking, their eagerness for hunting, ‘pig sticking’ and killing animals for fun” as evidence that “subjection by force” warped the conscience of the oppressor.³¹

On the other hand, this analogy became badly confused later in the book when Sunderland also compared British rulers to Northern “carpetbaggers” of the Reconstruction period. Drawing upon the tradition of American historical writing associated with William Dunning, Sunderland represented Reconstruction as a dark moment in American history when corrupt Northerners manipulated

both the defeated South and the votes of pliable ex-slaves in order to enrich themselves. Having described British rule as a kind of corrupt parasitism that rested upon the domination of the indigenous majority, Sunderland simply could not resist the comparison with the post-Civil War South. A serious problem with his interpretation, of course, is that it imported the Dunning school's racist assumptions about African American political "incapacity" into the current debate over Indian national independence. Indeed, Sunderland explicitly condemned the political legitimacy of "our American carpet-bag governments" because "many of the voters were ignorant Negroes" who could not fully understand the nature of the political system. Sunderland seemed unaware that his earlier associations of Indians with American slaves might easily be carried over into an association of Indians with the very "ignorant Negroes" whose votes sustained the Carpetbaggers he condemned. Having used history in an opportunistic rather than systematic fashion, he risked reinforcing the very racist paternalism that sustained his antagonist Katherine Mayo.³²

If Sunderland's attempts to contest and revise Mayo's uses of memory and national identity were at times confused and counterproductive, his general condemnations of British rule in India were clear enough to gain the attention of the Indian government. By May 1929, over 1,400 copies of the Calcutta edition of *India in Bondage* had been sold, and Chatterjee was preparing a second edition of the work that was to contain a list of quotations from American and British missionaries condemning *Mother India*. On May 24, however, the Indian police searched Chatterjee's home, office, and press, and seized forty-four unsold copies of the book and a variety of other materials relating to the production and sale of the work. At the same time, the printer of the book, Sajami Das, was arrested and released on bail pending trial for publishing a "seditious" book. Although Chatterjee and Das eventually avoided the required three-month prison sentences for sedition by paying 2,000 rupees in fines, the main goal of the prosecution seems to have been to suppress the book in India and to discourage its publication in other parts of the world. "By suppressing Dr. Sunderland's book in India, it will possibly be difficult to secure a publisher in America and other countries," wrote Taraknath Das in July 1929. A veteran Indian nationalist who had done propaganda work in many western countries, Das was keenly aware of the problems inherent in international activism. "The British government might bring indirect but effective pressure upon friendly powers so that a book which has been proscribed in India should not be published, because such publication would be regarded as an unfriendly act toward Great Britain," he wrote.³³

Whether such influence was exerted or not, Sunderland found the search for an American publisher extremely difficult. Determined to circulate his own constructions of India and America as broadly as Mayo's, Sunderland contacted nearly all of the large New York City publishing firms, including Harcourt Brace and Co. which had issued *Mother India* and which was preparing to issue another attack on India by Mayo's English collaborator, Captain Harry Field, in the

fall of 1929. Appealing to the firm's sense of fairness and justice, Sunderland hoped that they would "be glad to publish a book wholly different from Miss Mayo's . . . setting forth clearly and fully the side of Indian civilization and life which she for the most part omits." Along with at least eight other major firms, Harcourt declined his appeal. Sunderland was shocked by the refusal of G.P. Putnam's Sons because they had profited on the publication of several of his popular theological works. "This is a British question," George Haven Putnam told Sunderland in February 1929, "which seems to be very far apart from the interests of American citizens." Given the success of Mayo's book in the United States, this explanation at best seemed ridiculous and at worst an indication of a widespread Anglo-American conservative conspiracy. Sunderland's friend and fellow anti-imperialist Alice Stone Blackwell believed that active proponents of a world-wide commercial and colonial alliance between the United States and Britain had prevented leading Boston newspapers from printing what she called her "radicalisms," including articles on India. She suspected that "many persons hate to call attention to any wrongdoings of England's" and would go to great lengths to suppress anti-imperialist challenges to Mayo's understanding of India.³⁴

While the existence of a conspiracy to protect Mayo from substantive challenges is difficult to substantiate, there is evidence for Blackwell's belief that conservatives equated criticism of Mayo with an un-American domestic radicalism. Grace Gray, a member of the arch-conservative Massachusetts Public Interest League, for instance, was furious that Rev. John Haynes Holmes of the New York Community Church had taken Mayo to task in Boston's Symphony Hall. "He was loud in his praise of Soviet Russia and of course condemned Miss Mayo's truths," she told Capt. Harry Field. "He is one of the most anti-Americans that we have, and really belongs in Russia where all is so glorious." Those who supported Mayo's racial Anglo-Saxonism as a central element in American national identity, moreover, could not help but question the patriotism of her critics. Writing from the office of the governor general of the Philippines, Henry Stimson congratulated Mayo for voicing her "convictions as to the consistency of the race and the essential similarity of the problems which confront the Anglo-Saxon administrator," but also went on to condemn anti-imperialists in the United States as disloyal "parlor pinks" whose writings "decry America." Jabez Sunderland's attempt to publish an authoritative rebuttal to Mayo, then, confronted the opposition of those who not only agreed with her position on India but also shared her deeply conservative understanding of American patriotism.³⁵

The October 1929 American edition of *India in Bondage*, with its passionate critique of the British Raj and its alternative vision of American history and identity, resulted from the dogged persistence of its author and from the timely assistance of a coalition of Indian nationalists and American anti-imperialists. With an offer by Lewis Copeland and Co. of New York to publish the book with a \$2,000 advance payment from the author, Sunderland proceeded to raise the

funds from his private savings and from several nationalist organizations, including the New York branch office of the Indian National Congress. Operating from Germany, Taraknath Das prepared advertising sheets to secure advanced sales of the book and he acted as an intermediary between Sunderland and Ram Lal Bajpai, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Congress branch. Independently, other Indians publicized the book through newspaper articles and fliers. Syud Hossain, an Indian National Congress agent in California, convinced a leading San Francisco bookseller to stock the book and wrote an article for the *San Francisco Chronicle* discussing the attempts by the British government to suppress the writings of “an American author of international standing.” While the exact results of these efforts are unclear, the publisher sold more than 5,000 copies of the first edition (a second edition appeared in 1932) and donations by Unitarian anti-imperialist John H. Holmes ensured that over 500 libraries around the world possessed copies of it by 1934. While Katherine Mayo’s friends believed that her efforts ranked with those of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Holmes after Sunderland’s death in 1936 commented that “what Lafayette was in his youth and with his sword to America, Dr. Sunderland was in his old age and with his pen to India.”³⁶

The conflicting and sometimes confused images of American identity and memory that ran through the American debate over India were deeply important to the activists on both sides of the issue. As American intellectuals like Mayo and Sunderland struggled to sort out their nation’s changing relationship with both Europe and Asia, it is perhaps not surprising that they would ask basic questions about themselves at the same time. Indeed, the attitude of Americans toward an Indian nationalist struggle that was more than half a world away clearly depended not only upon how they perceived the struggle itself, but also upon which of their own values and traditions they used to understand it. At stake in the India debate, then, was a battle to control not only the framework for understanding British rule in India but also a battle over the American frame of reference itself. In their various and competing constructions of American identity and memory, Mayo, Sunderland, and indeed Indian writers like Rai and Gauba sought to define the ideological platform from which Americans might engage or even disengage from the discussion.³⁷

International ideological debates such as that over Indian independence are often overlooked as important cultural sites where collective memory is debated and revised. Although textbooks, historical monuments, museums, and other “official” locations of memory have received attention from scholars, the strategic deployment and revision of the past can also be studied outside institutional and national structures that are specifically designed to display them. That Katherine Mayo’s final book before her death in 1940 was a sympathetic history of British loyalists during the American Revolution testifies to the dynamic relationship between the most overt political uses of memory in support of a transnational Anglo-Saxon colonial mission and more traditional forms of historical writing. Sunderland’s final publication, a series of biographical sketches

of American reformers written for an Indian audience, included what is still one of the few reliable discussions of the life of Alice Stone Blackwell, the activist daughter of radical abolitionist and women's rights crusader Lucy Stone. Whatever the ultimate significance of Mayo and Sunderland to the fate of the British Raj, these American writers used India's past and present to make sense out of their own. In so doing, they reveal the ongoing reconstructions of memory that have so often characterized the cultural politics of American social and political movements.³⁸

Notes

1. Katherine Mayo, *Mother India* (New York; Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1927); Jabez T. Sunderland, *India in Bondage* (New York: Lewis Copeland and Co., 1929). There is currently no biography of Jabez Sunderland, but Katherine Mayo has been analyzed by Manoranjan Jha, *Katherine Mayo and India* (Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1971) and by Mrinalini Sinha, "Introduction," in Katherine Mayo, *Mother India*. ed. Mrinalini Sinha (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

2. See for instance, Alan Raucher, "American Anti-Imperialists and the Pro-India Movement, 1900-1932," *Pacific Historical Review* 43 (February, 1974): 83-110. Raucher writes that "[m]ost Americans, including those in influential government positions, were indifferent to an issue so remote from their lives and apparently from national security or self-interest." (83) General works referred to above include, Kenton J. Clymer, *Quest For Freedom: The United States and India's Independence* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); and A. Guy Hope, *America and Swaraj: The U.S. Role in Indian Independence* (Washington D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1968). For the work of Indian historians, see Manoranjan Jha, *Civil Disobedience and After: The American Reaction to Political Developments in India, 1930-1935* (Delhi: Meenakshi Prakshan, 1973); Jha, *Katherine Mayo and India*; and Somandu Banerjee, "American Interest in Indian Resistance," *India Quarterly* 24 (Oct. B Dec., 1968): 311-332. Joan Jensen, *Passage From India: Asian Indian Immigrants in North America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988) is an important exception, but it deals mainly with surveillance and immigration issues and its detailed coverage ends in 1924.

3. See Lala Lajpat Rai, *Unhappy India*. (Calcutta: Banna Publishing Co., 1928); Kanhaiya Lal Gauba, *Uncle Sham: Being the Strange Tale of a Civilization Run Amok* (Lahore: Times Publishing Co., 1929. While she does not discuss the Indian-American debate of the 1920s, Penny Von Eschen, *Race Against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), 28-32 argues that African American support for Indian independence in the 1930s and 40s was based in part upon a sense of common experience that transcended national boundaries.

4. My use of the concept of memory and its relationship to American national identity has been shaped by Michael Kammen, *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination* (New York: Knopf, 1978); David Thelen, "Memory and American History," *Journal of American History*, 75 (March, 1989); John Seelye, *Memory's Nation: The Place of Plymouth Rock* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); and most recently by Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999). While history and memory are obviously related and overlapping categories of knowledge about the past, I have generally followed David Blight's definition of history as "the reasoned reconstruction of the past rooted in research," as opposed to memory which "is often treated as a sacred set of potentially absolute meanings and stories, possessed as the heritage or identity of a community." See David W. Blight, *Beyond the Battlefield: Race, Memory, and the American Civil War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002).

5. Basil Blackett to Katherine Mayo, June 29, 1927, Box 8, Katherine Mayo Papers, Yale University Library; New Haven, Conn.; Katherine Mayo, *Mother India*, 32. For other British reactions to *Mother India*, see Jha, *Katherine Mayo and India*, 59-65. The early sales figures for *Mother India* can be found in Moyca Newell, to Mr. Latimer, July 19, 1928. Box 7, Folder 48. Mayo Papers.

6. "The Terrible Meek," *Nation* May 21, 1930, 588; and quoted in Manoranjan Jha, "Civil Disobedience, American Opinion and the British," *Journal of Indian History* 56 (December, 1978), 553-584; Edward Thompson, "A Misleading Campaign," *London Times*, July 21, 1930. Edward Thompson's long and complex relationship with India has been examined most recently in Mary Lago, *India's Prisoner': A Biography of Edward John Thompson, 1886-1946*. (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2001).

7. For examinations of the role of Anglo-Saxon racialism in the U.S.-British imperial discourse, see Stuart Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement: Anglo-Saxonism and Anglo-American Relations, 1895-1904* (Rutherford, N.J.: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1981) and more recently, Paul Kramer, "Empires, Exceptions, and Anglo-Saxons: Race and Rule Between the British and United States Empires, 1880-1910," *Journal of American History* 88 (March, 2002), 1315-1353. Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 39-90 looks at this concept in a domestic setting as well. Ruth Elson, *Guardians of Tradition: American Schoolbooks of the Nineteenth Century* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 117, 114. Striking examples of memory as an issue in Anglo-American diplomacy can be found in Dan Dignan, "The Hindu Conspiracy in Anglo-American Relations During World War I," *Pacific Historical Review* 40 (February, 1971), 57-76.

8. Agnes Smedley, *Daughter of Earth* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1973), 249; *The New York Evening Journal*, June 2, 1910. Smedley's description of Britain as a "vampire" bears a striking resemblance to Elson's description of a defaced 1828 century schoolbook in which a student had "drawn horns" on the picture of an Englishman. For a fascinating and meticulously researched biography of Smedley, see Janice R. McKinnon and Stephen R. McKinnon, *Agnes Smedley: The Life and Times of an American Radical* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

9. Harold Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds: American Images of China and India* (New York: John Day Co., 1958), 259; Sushil Madhava Pathak, *American Missionaries and Hinduism: A Study of Their Contacts from 1813 to 1910* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1967), 221-236; R.K. Gupta, *The Great Encounter: A Study of Indo-American Literary and Cultural Relations* (Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1987), 134.

10. On the creation and activities of the Ghadar party, see Jensen, *Passage From India*, 163-225; Dan Dignan, "The Hindu Conspiracy," 73-75; Raucher, "American Anti-Imperialists," 96-100 and L.P. Mathur, *Indian Revolutionary Movement in the United States* (Delhi: Chand, 1970); *The Crisis*, 19 (December, 1919): 78; Joseph Irwin France quoted in "Senator France on Deportation," *Young India*, 3 (February, 1920): 46.

11. On the India Home Rule League of America, see Naeem Gul Rathore, "The Indian Nationalist Agitation in the U.S.: A Study of Lala Lajpat Rai and the India Home Rule League of America, 1914-1920." unpublished Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1965; J.T. Sunderland, "Men Without a Country," *Young India*, 2 (August 1919): 185.

12. Dixie, "Our First Anniversary Dinner," *Young India* 1 (December, 1918): 24, 25.

13. The Rowlatt Acts, issued late in 1918, were a series of anti-terrorist laws that suspended normal criminal procedures—including jury trials—in all cases dealing with political offenses. The laws generated a storm of protest in India in 1919. On April 13, 1919, nervous British authorities in the Punjabi city of Amritsar who feared that a mass uprising was in process fired over 1,650 rounds of ammunition into unarmed crowd killing 379 and wounding nearly 1,500.

14. "Lincoln on Subjugation," *Young India* 3 (April, 1920): 76; "Patrick Henry and India," *Ibid.* On the importance of American official and public opinion toward both the British and the Indian nationalist movement in the early 1920s, see Diwakar Prasad Singh, *American Attitudes Towards the Indian Nationalist Movement* (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1974), 232-265; Manoranjan Jha, "Britain and the Pro-India Activities in the U.S.A., 1917-1922," *Political Science Review [India]* 12 (January/June, 1973): 1-34.

15. On Mayo's role in the Pennsylvania Police debate, see Gerda Ray, "From Cossack to Trooper: Manliness, Police Reform, and the State," *Journal of Social History* 28 (Spring, 1995): 565-86. On Mayo's work as a form of imperial feminism, see Liz Wilson, "Who Is Authorized to Speak? Katherine Mayo and the Politics of Imperial Feminism," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 25 (1997): 139-153; Mrinalini Sinha, "Introduction," 10. Sinha's brilliant introduction to the new abridged edition of *Mother India* summarizes recent scholarship on Mayo while arguing that widespread outrage against the book helped to consolidate a feminist/nationalist alliance in India. Anglo-Saxonism in American national identity is examined systematically in Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 39-90; Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 46-91; Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981); and Anderson, *Race and Rapprochement*.

16. Katherine Mayo, *The Isles of Fear: The Truth About the Philippines* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1924), 11, 64, 46. Comparisons of the Filipino independence movement with the American Revolution and other events in American history can be found in Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 160; and Daniel Schirmer, *Republic or Empire: American Resistance to the Philippine War* (Boston: Schenckman, 1972), 65-82. My argument here should not be construed as a denial of widespread anti-imperialist racism. The literature on this is extensive and convincing.

17. Mayo, *Isles of Fear*, 196, 212. The impact of a conservative intellectual tradition in which the American Revolution was a unique, inimitable event is addressed in Hunt, *Ideology*

and U.S. Foreign Policy, 92-124 as well as in Harlow Sheidley, *Sectional Nationalism: Massachusetts Conservative Leaders and the Transformation of America, 1815-1836* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 118-147.

18. Mayo, *Mother India*, 195.

19. Mayo, *Mother India*, 285, fn. 1.

20. Mabel Benedict to Katherine Mayo, January 3, 1928, Box 6, Folder 42, Mayo Papers; Edith McMahon to Katherine Mayo, February 3, 1929, Box 6, Folder 43, Mayo Papers. See also, Sinha, "Introduction," 8-24.

21. Lionel Cruikshanks to Katherine Mayo, January 10, 1929, Box 6, Folder 42; Anna Wyeth to Katherine Mayo, April 6, 192, Box 6, Folder 45; and E.O. Carrier to Katherine Mayo, Box 7, Folder 54, Mayo Papers.

22. Lajpat Rai, *Unhappy India*, ix-xi, and 104; See also, Lajpat Rai, *The United States of America: A Hindu's Impressions and a Study* (Calcutta: Banna Publishing Co., 1919).

23. Kanhaya Lal Gauba, *Uncle Sham: Being the Strange Tale of a Civilization Run Amok*, 195. The publishing history of *Uncle Sham* is discussed briefly in Jha, *Katherine Mayo and India*, fn.9, 105; For an example of the attention that *Uncle Sham* received in the mainstream American press, see "India: Devil People?", *Time*, August 26, 1930, 30-31; "The Maharaja" W.H.M. to Data and Panglina, [n.d], Box 7, Folder 53, Mayo Papers; This remarkable letter is a report of the "Maharaja's" visit with K.L. Gauba at the Indian Government summer capital at Simla. Although not formally addressed to Mayo and her companion Moyca Newell, the letter is marked "ans." and initialed "K.M.;" T.K. Das, Typescript review of *India in Bondage* for *Liberty*, [Calcutta], Box 5, Correspondence Folder for July, 1929, Jabez T. Sunderland Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. A list of pamphlet responses to *Mother India* can be found in Sinha, "Introduction," 34.

24. The only work that treats Sunderland's career in any detail is Spencer Lavan, *Unitarians and India: A Study in Encounter and Response*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Exploration Press, 1991), 143-180. On Sunderland's role in the India Home Rule League see Naeem Gul Rathore, "Indian Nationalist Agitation in the United States;" Raucher, "American Anti-Imperialists," 86-90, and Jensen, *Passage From India*, 19, 99, 178, 237. See also, Jabez T. Sunderland, "The New Nationalism in India," *Atlantic Monthly* 102 (October, 1908): 526-535.

25. Jabez T. Sunderland, *India, America and World Brotherhood* (Madras: Ganesh and Co., 1925), vii. Sunderland received several positive comments on the book from Indian readers and at least one attempt was made to translate it into Bengali. See Sailendranath Milra to J.T. Sunderland, June 13, 1928, Box 5, Sunderland Papers.

26. Ramananda Chatterjee to Sunderland, June 13, 1928. Box 5, Sunderland Papers. Information on R. Chatterjee, the Prabasi Press and the *Modern Review* can be found in David Kopf, *The Brahmo Samaj and the Shaping of the Modern Indian Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 149-154; and K. Nandi, "Ramananda Chatterjee: A Brief Biographical Assessment," *Modern Review* [Calcutta], (May, 1965), 36-75.

27. Jabez T. Sunderland, *India in Bondage* 2nd ed. (New York: Lewis Copeland and Co., 1932), 561, 247.

28. *Ibid*, 42-43, 44-45; "India Through American Eyes," *London Times*, July 21, 1930.

29. Sunderland, *India In Bondage*, 34.

30. *Ibid*, 43; Michael Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 92-124, is a useful guide to the views of American leaders on revolutions abroad.

31. Sunderland, *India in Bondage*, 95, 91. For these aspects of the abolitionist critique of the South, see Ronald G. Walters, *The Antislavery Appeal: American Abolitionism After 1830* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

32. *Ibid*, 300-301; A brief description of the Dunning school and its underlying racial assumptions can be found in Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper and Row, 1988), xix-xxi. While W.E.B. Du Bois's *Black Reconstruction in America* did not appear until 1935, Sunderland does not seem to have been aware of the emerging critique of Dunning among African American scholars, nor was he conscious of the African American anti-imperialist tradition described in Von Eschen's *Race Against Empire*.

33. T.K. Das, 1929 Typescript review of *India in Bondage* for *Liberty* of Calcutta in Box 5, Sunderland Papers.

34. J.T. Sunderland to Harcourt Brace and Co., May 13, 1929; Alice Stone Blackwell to J.T. Sunderland, January 31, 1929, Box 5, Sunderland Papers.

35. Grace Gray to Capt. Harry Field, February 7, 1928, Box 6, Folder 43; Henry Stimson to Katherine Mayo, September 14, 1928, Box 7, Folder 49, Mayo Papers.

36. Lewis Copeland to J.T. Sunderland, August 5, 1929; J.T. Sunderland to Edson Sunderland, Nov. 26, 1929; T.K. Das to Ram Lal Bajpai, August 29, 1929 (carbon copy); Syud Hossain to J.T. Sunderland, October 16, 1929, Box 5, Sunderland Papers; Syud Hossain, "British Proscription of Book on India Arouses Indignation," *San Francisco Chronicle*, Oct. 13, 1929; and J.H. Holmes, "India and World Peace," *Unity* (September 21, 1936), 21. Interest in Sunderland's book was indeed generated by the Indian Government's attempt to suppress it.

Time, August 26, 1930, 30-31, ran a brief article on the issue that included an interview with Sunderland.

37. One example of the more institutional approach to memory is Laura Hein and Mark Seldon eds., *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States* (Armonk, New York: Sharpe, 2000).

38. Katherine Mayo, *General Washington's Dilemma* (Port Washington, New York: 1938); and Jabez T. Sunderland, *Eminent Americans Whom India Should Know* (Calcutta: Prabasi Press, 1935), 197-197.