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Journal of Transnational American Studies

Title

“The Barbary Frontier and Transnational Allegories of Freedom”

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/47t0j33k>

Journal

Journal of Transnational American Studies, 10(2)

Author

Bejjit, Karim

Publication Date

2019

DOI

10.5070/T8102046344

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THE ROUTLEDGE
COMPANION TO
TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN
STUDIES

Journal of Transnational American Studies 10.2 (Winter/Spring 2019–20) Forward

*Edited by Nina Morgan, Alfred Hornung
and Takayuki Tatsumi*

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

THE ROUTLEDGE COMPANION TO TRANSNATIONAL AMERICAN STUDIES

Journal of Transnational American Studies 10.2 (Winter/Spring 2019–20) Forward

The Routledge Companion to Transnational American Studies provides scholars and students of American Studies with theoretical and applied essays that help to define Transnational American Studies as a discipline and practice.

In more than 30 essays, the volume offers a history of the concept of the “transnational” and takes readers from the Barbary frontier to Guam, from Mexico’s border crossings to the intifada’s contested zones. Together, the essays develop new ways for Americanists to read events, images, sound, literature, identity, film, politics, or performance transnationally through the work of diverse figures, such as Confucius, Edward Said, Pauline Hopkins, Poe, Faulkner, Onoto Watanna, and others. This timely volume also addresses presidential politics and interpictureorial US history from Lincoln in Africa, to Obama and Mandela, to Trump.

The essays, written by prominent global Americanists, as well as emerging scholars shaping the field, seek to provide foundational resources as well as experimental and forward-leaning approaches to Transnational American Studies.

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First published 2019
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Names: Morgan, Nina, editor. | Hornung, Alfred, editor. | Tatsumi, Takayuki, 1955- editor.
Title: The Routledge companion to transnational American studies / edited by Nina Morgan,
Alfred Hornung and Takayuki Tatsumi.

Description: London ; New York, NY : Routledge, 2019. | Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018054392 | ISBN 9781138058903 (hardback : alk. paper) |

ISBN 9781351672627 (epub) | ISBN 9781351672634 (web pdf) |

ISBN 9781351672610 (mobikindle)

Subjects: LCSH: United States--Study and teaching. | United States--Civilization. |
Transnationalism.

Classification: LCC E175.8 .R68 2019 | DDC 973.0071--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018054392>

ISBN: 978-1-138-05890-3 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-16393-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo
by Taylor & Francis Books

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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THE BARBARY FRONTIER AND TRANSNATIONAL ALLEGORIES OF FREEDOM

Karim Bejjit

Introduction

Over the last decade or so, fresh critical explorations of the Barbary frontier have come to shape a distinct and important terrain in American Studies. Although past US diplomatic and naval encounters with North African states, notably Algiers and Tripoli, have traditionally received a great deal of attention among American historians, it is only lately that the Barbary episode has spurred a flurry of critical interest and generated a continuing debate about its impact on the politics of the early republic and relevance to current geopolitical American interests. Recent scholarly publications have thrown new light on a wide range of questions bearing as much on past historical actualities as on their complex reconfigurations in literary and dramatic texts of the early post-revolutionary period. New reprints and annotated editions of early American accounts of captivity in Barbary have also contributed to this revival of interest and helped resurrect an old and almost forgotten literary heritage.¹

In this chapter, my aim consists first in offering a broad critical survey of the cultural context in which this renewed and varied American engagement with the Barbary phenomenon is anchored. As much as one wants to insulate these belated and nuanced voices from the vociferous clamor that followed in the wake of 9/11 tragic incidents, it is nonetheless futile to try to mitigate the sustained ideological fallout of this conjuncture or pretend to expunge the lineaments of its violent ethos. The narrative of the Barbary Wars has for the most part been a monolingual one dominated by a triumphalist impulse. There is a strong need today for well-documented counter narratives that highlight the complex socio-economic structures of pre-colonial North African polities and their troubled relations with the United States and European powers beyond the reductive and recycled slogans of being piratical and terror-sponsoring states. Given the paucity of alternative readings reflecting North African perspectives on these early encounters, the discursive ascendancy of the European and American narratives will likely remain unchallenged.

What redeems this rather murky picture of the Barbary affair, however, is the increasing vigor and originality displayed in recent American scholarship itself since it has foregrounded obscure vistas of this remote encounter and endeavored to reinstate the primacy of the old *recits*. In the second part of this chapter, drawing on this burgeoning critical discourse, I

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address the terms and modes of enactment of the Barbary captivity experience in early American plays, and accentuate the rich and powerful symbolism pertaining to the question of freedom inherent in their creative investment of the Barbary frontier.

Refashioning Barbary

In the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist incidents, a series of articles appeared in US printed and electronic media drawing peculiar parallels between the hijackers and the Barbary corsairs. The “Barbary analogy”,² as this lopsided comparison became known in subsequent historical scholarship, was premised on the claim that the depredations of the “Barbary pirates” against American trade in the Mediterranean and the captivity of American seamen in Algiers and Tripoli constituted early acts of terror against the nascent American nation and represented a compelling and instructive proof of the inveterate Muslim hostility against Christians. The advocates of this unbridled discourse (Leiby, Jewett, London, and Wheelan among others), influenced by the belligerent political climate that swept over the country, were content to offer sketchy and rather celebratory accounts of the relations between the young republic and North African states emphasizing the proactive agency of early American political establishment to confront and defeat Muslim foes militarily and ideologically. As Paul Silverstein (2005) has pointed out, these narratives served as “a potent arm in the ideological battle that has paralleled the post-September 11th war on terror,” and were inscribed in the broad contemporary ideological debate on the “clash of civilizations” (2005, 183).

Even in the early 1990s, following American military involvement in the Middle East, the Barbary affair was reframed and its vocabulary reinvented to keep up with the shifting American political interests in the region. The appropriation of the Barbary scene in the accounts of Whipple (1991) and Allison (1995), for instance, was overtly politicized and guided by a desire to demonstrate the continuing relevance of former US conflicts with North Africans to the contemporary geopolitical landscape. Whipple’s reconstruction of US war with Tripoli (1801–1805), however, betrays a slim grip on the historical intricacies of the period and, as one reviewer once noted, it amounts to a “travesty” shot through with numerous imprecisions (Dunne 1991, 563). Allison, on his part, consistently conflates Algiers with the broad and fuzzy nomenclature, “the Muslim World” in his narrative, and endeavors to show how the conflict with Barbary was perceived by early Americans “as part of the contest between Christians and Muslims” (Allison 1995, xv). His rendition of the Barbary scene and of the collective attitudes of early Americans toward this unfamiliar realm across the Atlantic not only hinges on a thin layer of archival evidence, but is also infused with strong moralizing rhetoric.

In more recent scholarship, American historians such as Richard Parker and Frank Lambert have taken pains to resituate America’s early encounters with Algiers and Tripoli in their proper worldly contexts. As a veteran US diplomat with almost a decade of service in North Africa, and as a connoisseur of the region’s chronic political imbroglios, Parker shows how engagement with the Barbary experience represents a beginning moment in US diplomatic history reflecting, through its protracted process, the genuine challenges faced and ultimate policies followed by early US officials at home and abroad to resolve old crises. In his concluding chapter, Parker warns his readers of the misleading and dangerous analogies drawn between past and present conflicts with Muslim states. In the same cautionary spirit, Frank Lambert argues that the Barbary Wars far from “being holy wars... were an extension of America’s War of Independence” (2005, 8), and thus not only have to be tied to a background of conflicting commercial interests among maritime nations in the Mediterranean and

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across the Atlantic, but also read in the light of the contingencies and constraints of a fledging US political system. Lambert notes that while the consolidation of a federal power and the establishment of a navy had been mired in domestic controversy, the Barbary conflict and the prolonged captivity of US sailors in Algiers and Tripoli gave both momentum and legitimacy to the efforts seeking the empowerment of the American federal institutions.

In focusing on national politics, these reified narratives of the Barbary Wars laid the ground for more elaborate investigations of the social and cultural ramifications of these early events. Steering the debate away from the post 9/11 raucous discourse, David Dzurec (2009), for instance, explores early American archival materials that document American citizens' perceptions of and reactions to the crisis of captives in Algiers in the 1790s. The American press, he argues, played a major role in educating the public about the ongoing affair with Algiers. Letters of captives printed in American newspapers, petitions addressed to Congress calling for immediate action, and theatrical performances enacting the plight of compatriots held in Barbary were part of a growing dynamic American "public sphere". If the conflict with Algiers triggered debate within the political class about the most expedient ways to resolve the crisis and free US captives, it also enabled the American public to exert influence on government and manifest vibrant forms of collective agency.

In his well-researched study, Lawrence Peskin (2009) also investigates the profound impact of US encounters with Algiers and Tripoli on the social dynamics of post-revolutionary America and ultimately on its evolution as a global power in the early nineteenth century. Peskin offers a rich account of the public engagement with the information circulated in print on the sullen predicament of fellow citizens held in Algiers. Galvanized by the vehement appeal of their compatriots, and frustrated by the apathetic attitude of their own officials, Americans endeavored to collect funds for the ransom of the captives. Their efforts did not enjoy official support and ultimately bore meager results. However, as Peskin shows, the crisis with Algiers furnished a productive context for reflection on the questions of slavery, freedom, and national identity in new and quite challenging terms.

Of particular relevance to this chapter is Peskin's attempt to highlight the anti-slavery drift in American literary and dramatic texts of the late eighteenth century set in Barbary. The trope of the white American slave undergoing torture and abuse at the hand of hostile Turks or Moors only thinly masks the stark irony of rampant slavery practices at home, and exposes the paradoxes of contemporary racial discourse. As I make the point in the following section, American playwrights were able to appropriate the stage in order to challenge masculinist notions about race and gender and drive home strong liberal messages about the indivisible human right to freedom. Building on the work of Benilde Montgomery and Joseph C. Schöpp who have set the tone for this new mode of revisionary readings, I attempt to investigate the allegorical nature of these motifs and their camouflaged political implications for early Americans. Algiers and Tripoli indeed supplied the symbolic spaces of alterity on to which were projected domestic images of racial and sexual discrimination.

Another important strand in the proliferating discourse on early Barbary literature has emphasized its genealogical ties to contemporary studies on political Islam. In *Orientalism*, Edward Said had qualified early contact between the United States and pre-colonial North Africa as having limited influence on the growth of American Orientalism, which otherwise, in his view, gained vitality and relevancy only in the post-World War II era particularly among a new generation of social scientists (Said 1991, 290). Recent publications, however, succeeded in confirming the significant place of US Barbary literature in the study of American cultural history, particularly in its relation to Islam and Muslim nations.³ Timothy Marr (2006), for instance, has drawn attention to the multiple uses of the Barbary scene by

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early American writers to celebrate the moral high grounds of the new republic over despotic nations. Americans, he observes, inherited rather rigid notions of Islam as intertwined with tyranny, and in their imaginative undertakings they drew on their secular democratic repertory to challenge and mock traditions and practices sanctified by Islamic tenets. In a similar vein, Anouar Majid argues that America's early encounter with Islam was shaped at once by old religious doctrines and modern political principles (Majid 2004, 64). However, if American construction of the Barbary landscape reveals a fortified sense of national pride, it also evinces a critical energy to address lingering paradoxes such as slavery. The anti-slavery agency that informs captivity narratives employed the Barbary setting to subvert entrenched domestic racial beliefs. In the process, as Majid puts it, these texts "presented a complex picture of African and Arab landscapes, and were used to strengthen the abolitionist cause" (Majid 2004, 84).

One of the fortunate outcomes of these multiple excavations of the Barbary frontier invigorated by their cross-disciplinary approaches is the reclaiming of old texts which had never counted more than entertaining popular narratives, and at best treated as marginal literature. The remarkable diversity and ambivalence of these texts pose a real challenge for readers accustomed to a narrative of American exceptionalism. The plays I discuss in the following pages feature characters who confront Barbary space less as acclaimed heroes than plain citizens who happen to be stripped of their freedom. Since imagined Barbary concentrated in its own realm the evils that emanate from human bondage and despotic government, it served as a stage not only to discredit decadent power structure and ethics, but also to preach American audiences about the virtues of an egalitarian society.

The Barbary frontier in American drama

In the final scene of Susanna Haswell Rowson's *Slaves in Algiers* (1794), after the Christian captives have assailed the palace, Muley Moloc, the tyrannical Dey of Algiers is forced to accept his defeat and beg for mercy. His moral conversion symbolizes both the displacement of the Oriental paradigm of power, and the triumph of a republican idea of freedom: "I fear," he says, "from following the steps of my ancestors, I have greatly erred: teach me then, you who so well know how to practice what is right, how to amend my faults" (Rowson 1794, 74). Constant whom the Dey "loaded with chains, thrown into a dungeon," and separated from his daughter Olivia has this advice to offer:

Open your prison doors, give freedom to your people, sink the name of subject in the endearing epithet of fellow-citizen; then you will be loved and revered—then you will find, in promoting the happiness of others, you have secured your own.

(Rowson 1794, 74)

Constant here makes a powerful appeal to a notion of freedom that resonated well with early Americans, which combines physical and moral senses of free will. Incarceration and oppression, by contrast, are metonymies of a despotic power structure that Barbary epitomized in the contemporary American imagination. The reversal of order urged by Constant involves the installment of a democratic structure based on fair government and the advancement of public interest. Inspired by the incidents of captivity of American sailors in Algiers, Rowson deploys the Barbary setting to register her embracement of the ideals of the republic and to ultimately plead for cross-racial and cross-gender tolerance. The liberal

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disposition to forgive the Dey his misdeeds and to reintegrate him into the modern body politic is part of an inclusive process of reconciliation that defines Rowson's political vision. Rebecca, who is held captive in Ben Hassan's home, awaiting the arrival of her ransom money, discards any idea of revenge when she discovers her captor's deceit. Her accidental but timely reunion with her long missing British husband, Constant and daughter Olivia at the close of the play has a strong national flavor as it summons up fresh memories of Anglo-American war and peace.

Nevertheless, in endorsing a transnational discourse of reconciliation, Rowson hardly conceals the residues of contention besetting this process in American domestic space. While it has been noted that in her play Rowson refrains from drawing explicit connections between black slavery in America and the captivity of white Americans in North Africa (Montgomery 1994, 622; Dillon 2004, 422), it cannot be lost on readers the resounding implications of the statements made repeatedly by her characters on the universal order of freedom and absolute immorality of slavery. When at the end of the play Sebastian, the Spanish captive, urges for the enslavement of the Dey by law of retaliation, Rebecca promptly declares:

By the Christian law, no man should be a slave; it is a word so abject, that, but to speak it dyes the cheek with crimson. Let us assert our own prerogative, to be free ourselves, but let us not throw on another's neck, the chains we scorn to wear.

(Rowson 1794, 73)

There is an unmistakable undercurrent of criticism of the social order in these lofty words. It must be remembered that in the late eighteenth century, the questions of race and gender stirred a great deal of controversy and could not be approached in the emphatic terms of posterior eras. On the other hand, the Algerian setting in Rowson's play strikes the reader as a hollow space emptied from its social and cultural contents. In her prologue Rowson acknowledges that the scenes of the play "are only fictitious— drawn by fancy's aid" (1794, 78). Unlike James Ellison's *The American Captive* (1812) which draws heavily on historical information relating to the American naval war with Tripoli (1801–1805), Rowson's play reconfigures Algiers in such farcical terms that it bears only a thin resemblance to the contemporary Mediterranean polity. Jeffery Richards has argued that the plot and structure of *Slaves in Algiers* are influenced by earlier English plays notably Aaron Hill's *Zara*, which is itself an adaptation of Voltaire's *Zaire*. Notwithstanding her recourse to literary conventions, Rowson, I think, had a definite goal in displaying Algiers as a barren landscape doomed by its overbearing authoritarianism and patriarchy. It is precisely in this exotic world destitute of all vestiges of Christian civilization that a liberal discourse on race and gender could be proclaimed in a vehement tone without provoking censure from the conservative forces. Algiers is transformed into a stage where political dialog can be launched in such foregrounded terms that permit the renegotiation of fixed notions and positions. In placing American female characters Rebecca and Olivia at the center stage and empowering them to speak both as women and as patriotic citizens, Rowson calls into question the boundaries of gender especially when males are deprived of their accrued social privileges and as captives are placed on equal footing with their female compatriots. United in their misfortune, Rowson's characters are brought to reconfigure their social roles and acquired liberties in the light of an all-embracing nationalist narrative. Ultimately, Rowson espouses a conciliatory tone, and in her epilogue she addresses her female audience in these tantalizing words: "Women were born for universal sway; Men to adore, be silent, and obey" (Rowson 1794, 77).

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Elizabeth Maddox Dillon in her reading of the play notes that the construction of race occurs within the bounds of a gendered discourse (Dillon 2004, 415–420). The male–female encounter carries strong racial significance and is framed as a futile and incongruous possibility. It must be added that for Rowson, the full realization of this compound alterity is manifested by the Dey who, being a potentate, polygamist, and slaveholder, stands out as the archetypal Oriental male invested with excessive sexual and political power. The rehabilitation of the Dey, therefore, takes place at the sexual as well as the political levels. It involves not only his willingness to embrace democratic principles, but also his conversion to monogamous love and consent to dismantle the harem structure as his final plea to Fitnah to stay insinuates.

In Sarah Pogson's play *The Young Carolinians* (Pogson 1818) gender is approached as part of a large constellation of identity markers including race, class, religion and nationality.⁴ Pogson's female characters, in particular, are socially conservative and entertain no feelings of rivalry toward their male counterparts. Male characters, on the other hand, have little observance for social decorum and are shown to be driven by their sensual impulses. The scenes of the play set simultaneously in Algiers and America are structured around the theme of marriage and its role in generating social coherence and preserving class boundaries (Ford 2006, 116–117). The Algerian context both disrupts and reinforces this social order. When Ellinor and her black companion Margaret are made captives in Algiers, they are unwittingly brought to join their long missing suitors, St Vincent and Zeikel, also held in captivity. Before their reunion is made possible, Ellinor had first to wrench herself free from the covetous desire of her captor Achmet. Pogson resolves this central dilemma in the play once again through the medium of marriage. Achmet is forced to wed Selima whose social status proves to be both convenient and enticing to his ambitious designs. In Charleston, where a good part of the play takes place, Ellinor's sister, Caroline is disheartened by her suitor's passion for drinking and gambling. Their marriage takes effect only after he has abandoned his excessive lifestyle and made solemn nuptial vows. Marriage, as Ford argues in her article, serves as a filter that maintains class distinctions and consolidates class values.

Besides marriage, Pogson also uses race as an apparatus for maintaining social hierarchies. While inter-racial interaction is maintained in the play, racial boundaries are firmly fixed. To cite a notable example, miscegenatic relations both in the American and the Algerian contexts sparked by physical attraction fail to materialize. Neither Margaret nor Ellinor can marry outside their own racial and social categories. Their freedom from captivity is further complemented through reintegration within their respective communities. Another illustration of the social function of race involves the question of slavery in the American society. Pogson addresses slavery from the perspective of a southern apologist. Black characters in her play bear no grudges against their white counterparts and seem altogether contented with their own destinies. Even old Cudjoe accepts his subordinate status and continues to serve his white mistress with infinite loyalty and gratitude:

to be sure I slave for true; but poor folks must work every where. Suppose me poor buckra; well, I serve some rich buckra, him pay me; but when Cudjo sick, or lame, or old too much for work, him turn me away; now missess pay me too—for I get plenty good ting for eat, and when I sick, ah! my deary missess give me too much nasty stuff for cure me.

(Pogson 1818, 96)

Unlike Rowson's and Pogson's plays, Ellison's *The American Captive* (1812) has no female American characters and frames gender only as a marginal category within a dominantly male

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network of power. Deriving a great deal of its lurid detail from popular narratives of US-Tripolitan conflict, the play transforms Barbary into a field where discursive American notions of masculinity and nationhood can be put to the test and reaffirmed. Set against an oppressively authoritarian backdrop, the play celebrates the struggle of American captives to obtain their freedom and restore justice and order to the Tripolitan community. The eventful escape of the American captive, Anderson, constitutes a pivotal moment in the play that triggers the chain of events leading to the downfall of the despotic Bashaw, Abdel Mahadi. Unlike the malleable Dey Muley Moloc in Rowson's play, the Bashaw emerges as an irredeemable tyrant, usurper, and corsair. As he first makes his appearance on the stage, he indulges in these grave disclosures:

I, who for years have pined in blank obscurity, have like the greedy tyger, bursting from his den, o'er leaped the ignominious bound, and pour'd destruction on the wretch, who rashly dar'd to check my will. [...] Peace has no charms for me; her train is misery and want! Plunder, alone, can prop our sinking realm: Plunder her coffers fill, and once more give to Tripoli, happiness and fame. Already do my corsairs, mann'd with brave and flinty hearts, beset the coast around; soon shall the waves which lash my circling shores, hear to my port the rich and ponderous prize.
(*Ellison 1812, 12*)

In this unabashed self-proclamation, the Bashaw takes pride in having transgressed lawful structures and imposed through force a new order lacking legitimate political and economic foundations. For a republican audience brought up to cherish highbred norms of elective government and free trade, these words have an odious echo. The paradigm of power, which the Bashaw advocates here, represents a violent infringement of American liberties and a threat to their liberal economic and political models. The Bashaw's anti-American disposition is confirmed when news of the capture of another American ship and enslavement of its crew is announced. This new affront, however, sets the stage for American retribution led by Anderson. An idealized version of the irascible William Eaton,⁵ Anderson manifests both courage and political will to deliver his fellow captives and reinstate the deposed prince in exile. Using local agency to escape from Tripoli and enlisting the support of the exiled Bashaw, Anderson resurfaces later in the play backed by American naval force to claim the surrender of Abdel Mahdi. The recovery of Tripoli is fraught with massive violence and bloodshed and is achieved only after Anderson kills the ruthless and unrepentant tyrant.

In view of the complex vicissitudes of the US-Tripolitan war and the modest peace terms concluded in 1805,⁶ Ellison's play seems somewhat extravagant. Beneath the untainted bravura, however, lies a global narrative of democracy cutting across racial and national lines. Ellison's characters whether of Tripolitan or American descent all share the cause of vanquishing authoritarianism and promoting liberty. Even among American captives, racial boundaries are redefined according to a comprehensive notion of American citizenship. When Jack Binnacle, the American sailor boasts that there were no slaves in his own part of the country, the Tripolitan overseer is incredulous and calls his attention to the thriving Transatlantic slave trade. Feeling the weight of this charge, Binnacle exclaims: "Ohoa! avast there! I'm a *Yankee*—no slaves with us, why, a black gentleman, in our part of the country, is the very paragon of fashion!" (*Ellison 1812, 37*). Juba, a black American captive, whom Binnacle appeals to confirm his claim, responds: "O massa, no, no; we brack gentlemen be all *free!*" (*Ellison 1812, 38*).

It is interesting to note that Juba's only appearance in the play is used to rebut allegations of existing slavery in America. The defensive posture assumed by Binnacle, in fact, reflects a symptomatic malaise felt almost ubiquitously by contemporary writers. Given the affinities of

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slaveholding practices in both Barbary and America, the indictment of North African polities is often imbricated with a weighing sense of irony and self-incrimination. Benilde Montgomery goes as far as claiming that literary reenactments of the Barbary captivity in early American plays entail a bold censure of the entrenched slavery culture at home, and serve as a reminder “that the greatest enemy to America’s institutions is not the enemy without but the more subtle enemy within” (Ellison 1812, 630). This statement is particularly pertinent in reading David Everett’s play, *Slaves in Barbary* (1817). Unlike the plays of Rowson, Pogson, and Ellison with their varied emphases on gender, class, and national identity, Everett’s short play set in Tunis explores slavery as a global industry. The central scene of the play takes place in the auction market where slaves of diverse origins and backgrounds are paraded before their future Tunisian masters. Everett ingeniously employs the trope of the market to expose the hypocrisy of official discourses proclaiming the sanctity of human rights and the immorality of slavery. The auctioning of slaves also serves as an occasion to subvert social hierarchies and mock the legitimacy of their racial underpinnings.

Several critics have noted the singularity of Everett’s play and its strong anti-slavery message (Baeppler 1999, 21; Montgomery 1994, 625–926; Marr 2006, 144; Peskin 2009, 80–81). The scene involving the denouncement of a white American slaveholder, Kidnap, by his former black slave, Sharp, is often cited as evidence of Everett’s criticism of the slavery establishment. As a punishment for his brutal treatment of his slaves, Kidnap is in turn reduced to slavery and Sharp made his own overseer as a further sign of disgrace. The reversal of roles and positions, however, is not restricted to Kidnap and Sharp. It involves several other characters including the benevolent Bashaw of Tunis, Hamet who was formerly a captive in Venice and was twice delivered from ignominious bondage by Francisco. Incidentally, it is Francisco’s own brothers Ozro and Amandar who are made slaves in Tunis. Through the clement intervention of Hamet, they are relieved from their cruel master Oran. The revelation of their identities and their intertwined histories occurs at the end of the play. Reciprocating kind treatment to him in the past, Hamet welcomes Francisco as a worthy friend and sets his two brothers free.

The figuring of Bashaw Hamet as a savior endowed with noble sentiments marks a rupture with the demonizing portrayal of Barbary potentates so current in contemporary literature. Interestingly enough, the only white American character in the play is depicted as an inveterate slaveholder bereft of any sense of compassion or tolerance. These subversive inscriptions are imbued with political meaning. In reconstituting slavery as a global traffic, Everett not only reconnects slavery practices at home with the captivity of Americans abroad, but also disengages the question of freedom from the confines of nationalist discourse and recast it as a liberal humanist value. The slave market in Tunis serves as a site where alternative forms of democracy unbound by religion, race, or nationality can be implemented. Such a democracy transcends the flawed prescripts of magistrates and manifests itself only through the auspices of benevolent human nature. Everett places ultimate faith in human agency to champion freedom and combat deep-seated racial beliefs. His liberal framing of Barbary, a notoriously undemocratic realm for Americans, carries subtle satirical overtones, for it conveys a genuine concern with the fundamental challenges to American egalitarian pursuits. The subverting of the master-slave order which takes place in Barbary functions as a symbolic trial of the status quo and of its ethical edifice.

Conclusion

Such appropriative uses of Barbary were part of a broader dialectic on race articulated in numerous contemporary plays and narratives which endeavored through allegorical motifs to

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connect the threads of a global network of servitude and thus make a more compelling argument for its abolition in America. In a freshly independent America still haunted by memories of colonial times and beset by an enduring slaveholding legacy, the Barbary frontier functioned as an elastic site where an amalgam of political concerns, fears, and interests could be accommodated. Within the American dramatic discourse, Barbary's amorphous landscape provided an ideal framework to approach domestic agenda and highlight their long enveloping shadows for Americans, albeit in a refracted and ambivalent form. Race and gender, in particular, formed the inevitable matrices of a progressive debate on freedom which, though set in a transnational context, had an enduring national aura.

Notes

- 1 See Baepler (1999) and Allison (2000).
- 2 This term was used first by Chris Mooney in "The Barbary Analogy" (2001).
- 3 See, for instance, Kidd (2009) or Waller (2011).
- 4 The play originally associated with Maria Pinckney has been recently attributed to Sarah Pogson following a recent discovery of an old South Carolina copyrights register; see Kritzer (2005, 3).
- 5 For a recent account of William Eaton's campaign and siege of Derna, see Zacks (2005).
- 6 See "The Barbary Treaties 1786–1816: Treaty of Peace and Amity, Signed at Tripoli June 4, 1805." *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*. avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/bar1805t.asp.

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