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Journal of Transnational American Studies

Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/5k00f4gh>

Journal

Journal of Transnational American Studies, 8(1)

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Publication Date

2017

DOI

10.5070/T881022879

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Beyond the Black Atlantic: Pacific Rebellions and the Gothic in Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno"

COLLEEN TRIPP

"Eyes" line the pages of Herman Melville's 1855 serial novella, "Benito Cereno." In fact, variations of the words "eye" and "sight" occur in seventy-one instances of the 150-page first edition, first printing of "Benito Cereno" in *The Piazza Tales*.¹ Given the story's gothic overtures and shipboard rebellion in the Pacific, Melville's fixation on panoramic vision and surveillance makes perfect sense. "Benito Cereno" strategically plagiarizes Chapter Eighteen of American captain Amasa Delano's 1817 travelogue, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels, in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres: Comprising Three Voyages Round the World; Together with a Voyage of Survey and Discovery, in the Pacific Ocean and Oriental Islands*.² In a departure from his preceding Pacific novels, which detail the minutiae of maritime culture, Melville excises Delano's references to sailing and navigation and instead narrates a prolonged encounter with one of the many real-life rebellions that punctuated the captain's Pacific voyages.³ In this particular chapter, Captain Delano stumbles upon a West African slave mutiny on board the Spanish *Tryal* off the coast of Chile in 1805. Mixing travel writing with the fictional genre that copied its form, sea romance, Melville's suspenseful plot dualistically narrates how African slaves took control of a Spanish slave ship but masqueraded as if still enslaved when Delano happened upon their drifting boat.⁴ Melville's creative doubling within the narrative, from the ship as a "whitewashed monastery after a thunder-storm" to the wailing "throng of whites and blacks," prompts his readers to contemplate his novella in a straightforward, black-white manner: there were Western sailors and enslaved Africans on board this ship in mutiny.⁵

However, "Benito Cereno," published amidst intense debates about the domestic remnants of transatlantic slavery, also engages with Orientalism and the Pacific world, featuring the specter of phantomlike Asian sailors, Malay piracy, and Peruvian women covered in garb reminiscent of the Spanish Moors.⁶ Melville's drifting

San Dominick, after all, is a former Spanish Manila galleon, the popular Asian trading ship of the Spanish empire, and the narrative takes place in the South Pacific, the gateway to the so-called “riches of the East.” Such a perspective also highlights that Captain Delano is an American whaler and China trader, set to travel on to Hawai’i after he recuperates his share of the *San Dominick’s* wealth. Melville’s Delano, too, walks among the West African slaves on board and twice, in moments of personal doubt and terror, imagines rebellious East Asian and Pacific Islanders. Delano had heard stories of anti-imperialist Malay pirates lying in wait under decks, “a hundred spears with yellow arms ready to upthrust them through the mats.”⁷ In another moment, the narrator fancies himself the famous Alexander the Great, metaphorically undoing the Gordian Knot (known alternatively as a Turk’s Head) before he went on to conquer Asia.⁸

The presence of sinister Malay figures and phantoms amidst the specter of Atlantic revolutions in “Benito Cereno” reminds us of equally important historical contexts of transpacific trade and migration that played key roles in shaping American cosmopolitan culture in the period.⁹ While previous investigations of the story’s enslaved African peoples and black–white racial dichotomy have taught us an incalculable amount, paying attention to the complex modalities of Orientalism and transpacific trade in the story underscores the important connections of transatlantic slavery within the global arena.¹⁰ In fact, reading the symbiosis of Orientalism, rebellion, and transpacific migration in this story makes even more relevant previous analyses of the story’s engagement with the Haitian Revolution and the infamous *Amistad* slave insurrection.¹¹ In what follows, I propose that Melville’s narrative of a transatlantic slave mutiny—punctuated by phantom Orientalist references to East Asia and the South Pacific—suggests the indispensable role that the Atlantic revolutions played in framing European and US imaginings of East Asia and the South Pacific, as seen in Pacific travelogues and its imitative cross-genre of fiction, the sea romance. Melville’s employment of the gothic as an expression of incipient racial and cosmopolitan anxieties, along with his unique adaptation of the travelogue’s “prolonged promise” and temporality, expresses East Asia and the South Pacific as a foreboding source of (the promise of) racial alterity and links his East Asian–Pacific and African populations through an Orientalist frame.¹² Conversely, Melville’s comparative juxtapositions of West African slaves and villainous Malay characters—figures associated in the antebellum US with Muslim origins—crafts an alternative, cross-Islamic community identification for imperial resistance in his “strange history” on the “almost final waters” of the Pacific.¹³ In light of American independence in the late eighteenth century and Britain closing its West Indies ports to the new republic, the alternative markets of the Mediterranean (particularly the North African coast) and Eastern Asia and the Pacific Islands became attractive sites of commerce and resource, both of which were unevenly associated with the Islamic world.¹⁴ While postcolonial critics positively read Melville’s pluralistic collectivity on board the *Pequod* in *Moby Dick*, Melville’s rebellious Malay phantoms in both *Moby Dick* and “Benito Cereno”

betray moments of Islamic racialism and the problems of a republic built on slavery and the imperialism of the Asia Pacific, as seen in the Philippine-American War, the destruction of the Hawai’ian monarchy, and other future imperial endeavors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁵

Melville’s “Benito Cereno” suggests in form and content the significance of the figure of Malay Pacific rebellions and the presence of an American frontier cosmopolitanism that both looked to its forebears (Old World Europe and its West Asian influences), while also considering the South Pacific and East Asia as its future mainstay of expansion, labor, and culture.¹⁶ Indeed, like the genre of the novel, accounts of Pacific travel feature dynamics of prolonged promise, a narrative temporality of expectation, because the long voyages across oceans were motivated by the pursuit of new knowledge and wealth as well as profitable products and trading partners. Melville frames the introduction and conclusion of “Benito Cereno” with references to West Asia (Near East) and the Spanish empire, but makes prominent within the story’s action and conquest a cosmopolitan desire for and fear of exploration of East Asia and the South Pacific, seen through Delano’s legacy as a China trader, the capture of the ship, and the gothic, prescient mode of Orientalism that includes nondescript masses of Asian laborers and pirates amidst African slaves. It is no coincidence, either, that Melville’s preceding Pacific novel, *Moby Dick*, features a doomed crew of Malay harpooners led by Fedallah, an Oriental “turbaned” Parsi whose South Pacific crew is housed under the deck, a reference itself to an emerging threat.¹⁷ Melville’s fiction replicated in print the intense international competition and scenes of violent colonialism that characterized maritime voyages themselves, which balanced attention to scientific and ethnographic discoveries and the considerable commercial profits propelling imperialism. In addition, by setting Delano’s account of the *Tryal* mutiny within a gothic, internationalized imagining of the Pacific, Melville exploits post-Enlightenment American rationality, reinforcing the unthinkability and anxiety of a possible cosmopolitan Islamic world where Malay pirates, lascars, “Manillamen,” and Africans lived and ruled.¹⁸

If, as Edward Said argues in *Orientalism*, “[f]or Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma,” Melville explores East Asia and the South Pacific as an equally “lasting trauma” for the new American empire.¹⁹ In the early 1850s, in the wake of the First Opium War and the beginning of California statehood, Americans looked to the Pacific as one of the next logical frontiers of the nation’s manifest destiny. Edmund Burke of the popular Young America Movement—a political faction supporting free trade and expansion—remarked in June 1852, “[t]he grasping of the magnificent purse of the commerce of the Pacific” was one of “the ideas for which the term Young America is the symbol.”²⁰ Melville’s deployment of references to the people and commodities of Asia and the South Pacific in a story of mutineering black slaves serves as a reminder to scholars that racial formation and cosmopolitanism emerges from more than a simple black–white binary or a single hemisphere or even a single national frame. The

complex global world found in Melville's "strange history" speaks to the myriad of historical moments where people, empire, and commodities connected the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Melville's world of South Pacific pirates hiding beneath the deck of a decrepit Manila galleon—all narratives of abstract struggles over global capital and encroaching transpacific foreigners—functions as a collective harbinger of modern changes in labor and economy that threaten American Anglo-Saxonism, embodied here in the character of Captain Delano, even as the financial health of the US nation is shown to increasingly depend on the developing East Asia–Pacific shipping network. This Asian and South Pacific cosmopolitan influence, seen through a portrayed cunning threat and commodities, articulates an emasculating and corrupting influence of Orientalism. This essay thus looks at an early moment of cosmopolitanism and trade in American culture—the tensions and fears of an encroaching transpacific, Orientalist source of alterity amidst the domestic concerns of a transatlantic mutiny.

Pacific Travelogues in the Age of the Atlantic Revolutions

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Pacific travelogues and news of voyages in and around the Pacific Rim circulated widely in the Atlantic world.²¹ Intereuropean American competition in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries stimulated an explosion of transcultural Pacific travel, trade, and exploration by the Russians, the Spanish, the English, the French, and the Americans.²² The topographies of the Pacific constructed in many of these Western texts, such as maps and travelogues, were rarely cohesive or clearly defined. Travel writing, in particular, participated in what Elizabeth DeLoughrey refers to as Islandism (the construction of anticipated Pacific colonialism through the representation of the Pacific islands as isolated and contained spaces) as well as the mixing of Orientalisms when articulating difference and similarities between East Asians and Pacific Islanders.²³ Considering that typical Europeans and Americans of the era had only partial knowledge of East Asian, Polynesian (the North and South Pacific), and American west coasts, sailors were at the forefront of global communication. Their participation in the China trade, whaling, and sealing encouraged regular trade within and around the Pacific Rim. Pacific trade networks were also becoming commercially insinuated within global transoceanic networks, such as the trade of European finished goods for Chinese teas, silks, and porcelains by way of the North West trade in sea otter pelts.²⁴ Spanish, English, French, and American empires also informally established contact between the two oceans through politics and writing, sponsoring Pacific voyages and cartographic ventures for imperial and scientific gain. As Greg Grandin notes, the hunting and violent butchery of fur- and oil-bearing mammals supplied capital to buy the slaves being transported into the New World plantations (whose profits built empires), while entrepreneurial sailors and captains, such as American captain Amasa Delano of the British East India Company, smuggled opium into China and used the profits for other trade ventures.²⁵

During the era of global Atlantic revolutions in which “Benito Cereno” is set, maritime voyagers’ fears of Atlantic insurrection fueled interest in East Asia and the South Pacific and influenced these travellers’ responses to the people and things associated with these new routes and geographies.²⁶ While Americans and Europeans in the mid-nineteenth century typically associated the “orient” with the Near East (western Asia, or the lands of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), maritime voyagers were becoming increasingly familiar with the “Far East” (East Asia) and the Pacific Islands.²⁷ In his 1770 travelogue, *An Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean*, Scottish East India Trading Company clerk Alexander Dalrymple noted the spirit of revolution in the North American colonies: “[I]f colonies are aiming at independence ... the only means of preventing these intentions, and of securing the power and prosperity of the mother country, must be by extending its commerce to distant nations.”²⁸ James Warner even observed that, to Europeans during this time, Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands around it seemed like the Barbary Coast, “an Islamic world whose activities centered on piracy and slavery.”²⁹

Like Atlantic travelogues, moments of resistance and rebellion populate the international archive of Pacific travelogues and the genre that copied its form, the sea romance. However, as Michelle Burnham argues in “Early America and the Revolutionary Pacific,” contemporary historians and literary critics routinely overlook these events, arguably because of the Pacific world’s noncohesive geography and political identity.³⁰ The 1784 travel narrative of Captain James Cook infamously describes Cook’s death and beheading at the hands of Sandwich (Hawai’ian) Islanders. Captain Amasa Delano’s own travelogue tells of First Mate Fletcher Christian’s mutiny aboard the *Bounty* and his eventual death on Pitcairn Island, where he was executed by natives rebelling against oppressive treatment by the English mutineers. Later, in the 1830s, the US merchant ship *Eclipse* was attacked by “treacherous design of the Malays.”³¹ In 1852, the *New York Times*’ article, “Sailors in Trouble,” for example, reported that thirty-five Chinese, Malays, and Portuguese sailors assaulted a sea captain, causing quite a “sensation.”³² Even Melville, dubbed the “modern Crusoe” in a *New York Morning News* review in 1846, intrigued his readers by crafting novels set in the Pacific that combined both romantic inventions with the rhetoric of factual realism, including maps, details of whaling and maritime culture, and “dusky phantoms” of Malay pirates who, as critic Spencer Tricker notes, function as South Pacific figures phenotypically related to Melville’s other Orientalist characters, Manilamen and lascars.³³ From North and South America to the Pacific Islands and East Asia, anti-imperialist Pacific insurrections were at the forefront in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions. As Burnham aptly notes, these diverse Pacific rebellions did not follow Western Enlightenment’s convention of revolution, which defines a “revolution” by the frame of a national democratic uprising and an empire’s geographic coherence.³⁴

It is within these historical contexts that Herman Melville's "Benito Cereno" and its companion text, China trader Amasa Delano's 1818 travelogue, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, extend the specter of Atlantic revolutions and mutiny in the Pacific, particularly those of East Asia and the South Pacific. Like other Pacific travelogues, Delano's *Narrative of Voyages and Travels* employs the temporal dynamics of "prolonged promise," a prolonged narrative temporality that mirrors the experience of Pacific travel, because "there was no profit without prolongation."³⁵ Known as a precursor to the genre of the novel developing in the Atlantic world, travelogues were often organized as the long historical record of a ship's route and its risks, including mundane details of weather, nautical issues, and commercial encounters written in the past tense, with an assumed profit by the end of the tale. From the actual material length and book titles to the minutiae of navigation, travelogues replicated in narrative form the extensive duration of the voyages themselves. By measuring the pace of travelogues (and Delano's travelogue in particular) with reader-oriented narratological metrics, Delano's temporally slow plot progression and prolonged scenes of nautical details generate little to no expectation or desire for the reader and result in a slow-paced, prolonged narrative plot.³⁶

However, the protracted space and time of travelogues, like real-life voyages, are also antithetically characterized by a sense of urgency and risk. Pacific travel writing is punctuated by moments that generate high excitement and expectation for the reader: commercial encounters with foreign peoples, mutiny, and receiving profit, to name a few. Critic Michelle Burnham describes how these scenes of profit, trade, and violent encounters propel the plot rapidly forward: "While only a few days or even hours may pass, the narration of that time often takes up a large number of pages. The narrative pace for readers accordingly speeds up, often quite dramatically, and plotting itself shifts from a largely geographical activity ... to a narrative dynamic."³⁷ These moments of what Burnham characterizes as "dilation and acceleration" within the narrative prove true in Delano's real-life Pacific travelogue (435). Delano documents the *Tryal* mutiny in all of Chapter Eighteen, while chapters four to five document the mutiny aboard the *Bounty* and the first mate's subsequent beheading by Pacific natives. Delano's travelogue even includes a folding map of Pitcairn Island to better orient his readers to the site of the beheading and the geography of the South Pacific. As Burnham notes, conquest and "violence [in travelogues] gets buried inside a calculation, counted as one risk within a prolonged but profitable equation. Short-term losses are effectively canceled out by long-term gain" in the narrative world (439). This antithetical temporal mode of dilation and acceleration helps explain the popularity of travelogues, whose readers were less invested or well-versed in the nautical world.

Melville, in his strategic plagiarism of Delano's travelogue, adapts one of the travelogue's major scenes of excitement, Chapter Eighteen of the *Tryal* mutiny. Even more curious, Melville takes the entire length of a novella to recount (in often present-tense terms) the historical mutiny—150 pages.³⁸ In fact, much of the story is devoted

to fictional Delano’s imperial benevolence in the moment and his mistaken assumption of peace on board while the ship is under mutiny. Critic Kendall Johnson discusses Delano’s own real-life “strategic benevolence” while encountering different forms of slavery during his voyage from the West Indies to China after the Haitian Revolution.³⁹ In his travelogue, Delano advises his readers to “avoid national prejudices” and to “extract the good from evil” when taking a stance on slavery, particularly because of the “varieties of opinions and pursuits” that come from its economic opportunities.⁴⁰ Melville’s adaptation of Delano’s travelogue—a temporally slow plot narrative of mutiny that purposefully excises mundane nautical details and uses the present tense—begins to resemble a conquest narrative rather than Delano’s own historical descriptions of virtuous scientific and state voyages of commerce and cosmopolitanism.

Melville also crafts a temporal mode that, like travelogues, is characterized by both acceleration and dilation, but his story is squarely focused on rebellion and domination in a gothic mode. For most of the narrative, Delano either witnesses rebellion or hears stories of rebellion—the boat under mutiny is even named the *San Dominick*, or Saint-Domingue, the site of the Haitian Revolution—but he is too obtuse to understand. In fact, Melville’s only scenes of excitement that break up the regularity of the fictional Delano’s surveillance and missed moments of resistance are Orientalist moments underscored by gothic overtures of (more) sinister soon-to-be violence or rebellion directed at Delano. These Orientalist scenes, alternating throughout “Benito Cereno,” along with the symbology of the Malay featured in both “Benito Cereno” and his other Pacific novels, make clear the incipient anxieties of an increasingly multicultural society and the imperialist engagements with peoples in and around the Pacific. Of course, Melville’s construction of the *Tryal* mutiny and Pacific rebellions as gothic did not relieve readers of the tension and anxiety inherent in their evaluations of these anti-imperialist events and the possible future of the new US republic. To the contrary, Melville’s narrative mode creatively juxtaposes the *Tryal* mutiny and the less historically recognized Pacific rebellions of East Asia and the South Pacific in comparative frames throughout the story, uniting the minority populations through a transregional Muslim, albeit Orientalist, frame.⁴¹

Melville’s “Strange History”:

Comparative Islamicism and Rebellion in “Benito Cereno”

Crossing hemispheres and temporalities, Melville begins “Benito Cereno” with a visual–linguistic motif of Old World (“Near East”) Orientalism and a panorama of the soon-to-be mapped Pacific. Orientalism, in fact, appears as geographic references throughout his sea romances, from landscapes to population size. In *Mardi*, Melville muses that “the Pacific is populous as China,” while “in your dreams you may hie to the uttermost Orient.”⁴² Again, invoking a sense of immensity, Melville’s *Pequod* in *Moby Dick* is described as on the “almost final waters” of the Pacific.⁴³ This sense of

limitless ocean hearkens both to the US imperially framing the imagined pan “Orient” as an exotic frontier, while also linking Orientalism with the Pacific itself, whose people and places were quite literally still being geographically imagined in the nineteenth century. Framing his setting, Melville offsets his story with Muslim minority peoples whose prying eyes overlook the ocean. From his first page’s “intriguante’s eye” wearing a veil of Islam to Muslim Babo’s black head on the last page, Melville establishes a cosmopolitan, Orientalist setting for his story set during the age of sail just before the Barbary Wars.⁴⁴ He first describes two ships, the Spanish *San Dominick* and American *Bachelour’s Delight*, in the harbor of Santa Maria, an island off the coast of the tip of Chile. Melville pointedly likens the Spanish *San Dominick’s* hull (covered by vapors) to the partially covered eye of a Limanian woman wearing a saya y manta, which is an overskirt and thick veil adapted from the veil of Islam. He writes that:

With no small interest, Captain Delano continued to watch her—a proceeding not much facilitated by the vapors partly mantling the hull, through which the far matin light from her cabin streamed equivocally enough; much like the sun ... which wimpled by the same low, creeping clouds, showed not unlike a Lima intriguante’s one sinister eye peering across the Plaza from the Indian loop-hole of her dusk saya-y-manta.⁴⁵

Melville’s veiled eye of Lima presents both the perceived fear and romance of Islam and Orientalism in American culture. Not coincidentally, Melville wrote “Benito Cereno” four years after one of his favorite magazines, *Harper’s Weekly*, published “Lima and the Limanians,” an October 1851 travel article discussing Peru, including the transcultural dress of the saya y manta and its potential for obscuring identity.⁴⁶ In Lima, Peru, during Spanish dominion, the saya y manta (traditionally made from silk) rose in popularity with all classes of the city. The conservative black garb covered the body, but allowed for the woman’s eyes to peek out. To some, this slight showing suggested brazen coquetry or even a form of masquerade because of the woman’s ability to hide her racial identity. Many of these *intriguantes* (meaning both intriguing and scheming) found freedom in their sexual anonymity and mobility. Most significantly, however, the shawl was reputedly used by some to conduct more discrete adultery.⁴⁷ The seductiveness and rebellious nature of the Moorish veil in this portrayal nicely captures what Timothy Marr notes as Islam’s stereotypical role as a heretical rival and original cultural effrontery to America in nineteenth-century culture.⁴⁸ The eye, distinct from Christian European heritage, sensationalizes Islamicism and Islamic oppression in this middle-class, antebellum text.⁴⁹

Considering the veil’s associations with rebellion and its panoramic vision across the Pacific, the opening scene positions the mutiny narrative within an Orientalist, Islamic frame. Flora Tristan, author of *Peregrinations of a Pariah* (1838),

describes the adapted veil as a figurative symbol of the Orient’s influence on Western identity and its role in rebellion. She writes in her 1838 travel account of Peru:

A great many foreigners have told me about the magic effect on the imaginations of some of their number produced by these women ... The saya, as I have said, is the national costume, all the women wear it, no matter what their rank; it is respected and is a part of the country’s customs, like the veil of Moslem women in the Orient. These ladies go out alone to the theatre, to bullfights, to public gatherings ... they remain free and independent in the midst of the crowd, far more so than the men... Freedom of action characterizes everything she does.⁵⁰

Like the watchful gaze of Muslim Babo crossing the ocean, the anachronistic, veiled eye foretells the Pacific as a site of global intimacies and insinuates an even further expansion of Oriental contact through the suggested panorama, a simulation of a speedy journey across time and space. The linguistic complex of the coquettish, rebellious image—italicized Spanish language within English prose along with the Indian loop-hole and an Oriental veil—also insinuates the complex, transcultural internationalism of the region in the era, as seen in the story’s comparative juxtaposition of rebelling African slaves and native peoples in and around the Pacific.

Under this watchful veiled eye, Melville introduces geographic and commercial articulations of East Asia and the Pacific Islands within his narrative, suggesting the US imperial interest in the Far East and Pacific Islands and incipient anxieties about the social and cultural contact. Take, for example, the mundane details offered in the first pages of the narrative: “In the year 1799, Captain Amasa Delano, of Duxbury, in Massachusetts, commanding a large sealer and general trader, lay at anchor, with a valuable cargo, in the harbour of St. Maria.”⁵¹ Santa Maria is correctly located off the mid coast of Chile, but Melville deliberately stations the island at the tip of the hemisphere, straddling an imagined critical edge between the (trans)Atlantic and the (trans)Pacific. Not coincidentally, Delano’s ship, the *Bachelor’s Delight*, carries the same name as that of the infamous buccaneer Captain John Cooke, who previously plundered and died by these Pacific waters.⁵² Lest we miss the story’s emphasis on US–East Asian Pacific networks, the narrator pointedly notes that Delano had just returned from Canton, where he traded in “teas and silks,” and is set to travel onwards to Hawai’i’s Sandwich Islands at the end of the tale.⁵³ Later, the China trader peculiarly compares his commodities with that of a sultan’s.

Fictional Delano’s menagerie of Asian-affiliated commodities and transpacific voyages echoes American cultural history, considering US imperial and trade interests in the Asia Pacific were instantiated long before and after the period in which “Benito Cereno” is set. British Americans of early America, for example, imported an

extraordinary amount of Asian-inspired goods (approximately 70 million pieces of porcelain) into the colonies before 1800, using Chinese-inspired porcelain ware and other Asian-inspired goods for cultural capital and social devices.⁵⁴ Delano, likewise, had just returned from Canton, China, one of the three major Asian seaports for colonial Western trading and a significant site for American trade. Historically, the late eighteenth century ushered in what Jean Heffer defines as the Golden Age of Sail (roughly from the sailing of the *Empress of China* in 1784 through the Civil War), and the increase in Asia Pacific trading and maritime technologies resulted in a deluge of American sailors and ships sailing across the Asia Pacific.⁵⁵ By the turn of the nineteenth century, European and American ships and sailors were visibly disrupting life in the Pacific Islands, colonizing or informally claiming the islands and regions through imperialism or trade. Even when Melville was writing this novella, East Asia and the Pacific were important topics in American culture because of the consolidation of the whaling industry and the Opium Wars, which allowed Western powers to gain unfettered access to Chinese products and markets for European and US trade.⁵⁶ Hong Kong became a colony in 1839 during the First Opium War, which was also the first time that a large European military and naval force appeared in the Pacific. After the writing of “Benito Cereno,” the annexation of Hawai’i and the Philippine–American War in 1898 by the United States suggested the beginning of formal intervention and expansion into the Asia Pacific. In satirizing this long history of Western imperialism — Melville’s pastiche of the “Near East” and “Far East” features Delano serving coffee that is as “fine as any sultan has tasted” (225–26)—the China trader becomes the Orientalist stereotype of the greedy despot whose aggressive imperial relations span from the transatlantic to the transpacific.⁵⁷

Rather than acts of violence by Western empires being obscured or diminished (as in travelogues), Delano’s prolonged fear of rumored insurrection evokes the anti-imperialist rebellions from the Atlantic to the Pacific at the end of the eighteenth century, when Americans pondered the future of their new expanding republic and their empire of trade. Delano boards the *San Dominick* to aid the drifting ship and notes he feels uneasy in the Pacific, due to “the sort of stories, at that day, associated with those seas.”⁵⁸ Melville also notably includes multiple iterations of disloyalty and unease in his serial: He includes “conspirator” and “pirate” eight times throughout the text, while “suspicious” occurs in twelve instances and “uneasiness” in seven instances. Later, after Delano imagines Malay pirates below the deck of the *San Dominick*, the narrator insinuates hearing populist gossip of Malay piracy, “[n]ot that Captain Delano had entirely credited such things. He had heard of them—and now, as stories, they recurred” (166).

Melville transforms Delano’s Pacific travel writing into a gothic, populist record of resistance. As Lisa Lowe describes in *Immigrant Acts*, gossip is, in fact, multivocal, being without origins or borders and exemplifying “both antinarrative and antirepresentational strategies that dehierarchize linear narrative accounts ... with a popular, multiple record of very different kinds of activities and modes of social

organization.”⁵⁹ Because of the eventual revealing of mutiny on board, the rumors of revolt register as a credible social record and insinuate unimaginable circuits of resistance in the Pacific. Melville’s employment of gothic suspense, rumors, and references to Saint-Domingue all speak to the real-life anxieties Americans experienced after the successful Haitian Revolution in 1804. Historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues that the “events that shook up Saint-Domingue from 1791 to 1804” were “‘unthinkable facts’ in the framework of Western thought,” while Matt Clavin considers the flood of gothic historical narratives of the Haitian Revolution and argues that “the Gothicization of the Haitian Revolution reinforced its unthinkability.”⁶⁰ Similarly, by deploying the vocabulary and imagery of the gothic in “Benito Cereno,” Melville made the *Tryal* historical and the exploration of the Asia Pacific gothic. Because the gothic’s appeal lies in the inexplicable, indescribable nature of mysterious places and repugnant acts of violence, “Benito Cereno” relies on the rationality of post-Enlightenment American thought to exploit the unthinkable nature of insurrection and independence of Africans and the peoples and natives in and around the Pacific.⁶¹

Melville’s gothicization of Malay figures in “Benito Cereno” stylistically and contextually forges associations between the Muslim West African slaves and the Asian indentured servants and Pacific Islanders on board this “strange house and ship,” reinforcing the “unthinkability” of a New World where Africans and peoples of the Asia Pacific might live and rule alongside Europeans and Americans.⁶² Tellingly, Delano imagines the figure of the Malay at the heart of Melville’s tattered slave ship in the middle of the story, figuratively gesturing towards a transpacific future affecting the interior, moral decay of the American social body. Delano, while walking the ship, imagines a group of Malay pirates under the deck of the *San Dominick*:

[a]mong the Malay pirates, it was no unusual thing to lure ships after them into their treacherous harbours, or entice boarders from a declared enemy at sea, by the spectacle of thinly manned or vacant decks, beneath which prowled a hundred spears with yellow arms ready to upthrust them through the mats.⁶³

The term “Malay” originates from Johann Friedrich Blumenbach’s monogenist cranial research, which became the foundation for early racial sciences and contributed to our modern notions of race as a social category.⁶⁴ Blumenbach argued that physical characteristics (skin color, cranial profile) depended on geography and diet. Building on Linnaeus’s proposed four subcategories of *Homo sapiens*, Blumenbach’s research focused on five races, with the white “Caucasian” being the original and most “beautiful” of the collective. The remaining four races—Malay, American Indian, Asian, African—had “degenerated” due to distance and climate. By moving from the Linnaean four-race system to his own five-race scheme, Blumenbach radically changed

the rationale of human order from a geographically based model to a hierarchy of worth, based upon perceived beauty.

In Blumenbach's research, the term "Malay" was intended to identify inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula and Southeast Asian archipelagoes. However, in antebellum American culture, references to Malays often included South Asia and the Asia Pacific as a whole, influenced by early America's piecemeal knowledge of the regions, lack of US activity in British-controlled India, and interest in the Pacific world during the golden age of American sailing.⁶⁵ For example, one "Washington Gossip" columnist of the *New York Daily Times* muses about the race of Hawaiians in 1854: "But it is by no means a settled question to what race the Hawaiians belong ... I have little doubt that they are Malays."⁶⁶ The addition of a fifth Malay category was crucial to the new creationist reformulation—and therefore becomes the key to the conceptual transformation of race. Religion also became a factor in the new standard of race sciences, considering that the hierarchy of worth and inferiority, as derived by Europeans and Americans, used as evidence the peoples and civilizations consolidated by Western empire, such as West Africans and Pacific Islanders. That is to say, European and American public discussions of race and religion formed meanings around issues of difference that were part of the process of defining certain groups as other: as subjects for pacification, subjugation, civilization, and exploitation. As Tomoko Masuzawa's *Invention of World Religions* details, the classification of religions and the concept of "world religions" is largely the product of nineteenth-century scientific scholarship, which is insinuated in structures of colonial power.⁶⁷

Melville encompasses the colonial intersectionality of race and religion by setting "Benito Cereno" just before the Barbary Wars, an event that captivated the cultural imagination of everyday Early American readers and indubitably influenced Malay pirate symbology. The US, a relatively new republic, informally defended the freedom of the sea from the so-called Muslim African pirates of the outposts of the Ottoman Empire (the Barbary Coast) in the Barbary Wars. This led to a crisis of faith, slavery, and republic in political discourse, and the Barbary captivity narrative became one of the bestselling genres of the American eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Because Malays were often Muslim by faith, American readers and public discourses of the Asia Pacific understood an Islamic association between the two communities of African and Malay pirates.⁶⁸ In 1837, an issue of the *United Service Journal* titled "Colonization of the Eastern Archipelago" considers the "best mode of repressing their [the Malays'] atrocities" but softens its tone on their "national character," assuming that it is their mode of governing, and not their character, that manifests these atrocities and barbarism. The editorialist attributes this to the global Muslim community, noting that their "governors, who are frequently Arabs ... are a living specimen of all that cruelty, extortion, and tyrannical influence which seems in every quarter of the globe to belong more or less to the Mahometan character."⁶⁹ Earlier in 1837, yet another columnist of the same magazine had essentialized a Malay nation as a beast: "The great body of the Malay nation is unsubdued and irreclaimable: even a

domesticated Malay is like a wild beast half-tamed.”⁷⁰ Finally, the *Sacramento Union* uses the term Malay in American slang to mean unruly, describing a group of drinkers who ran amok: “They so well succeeded in drowning their grief that they became quite outrageous ... a la mode Malay.”⁷¹ Depicting the Malay as a manageable, but also intractably barbaric people of flawed governance in the Asia Pacific, these popular discourses in American periodicals express the uneven ethnographic imagining of racial differences assigned during the era and the gradations of savagery attributed to various Pacific Islanders, Indigenous inhabitants, and East Asians.⁷²

Melville’s en masse depiction of Malays in “Benito Cereno” participates in this Orientalist stereotyping in popular culture, imagining them as lacking self-discipline inside and outside this metaphoric American “home” on the far-flung islands of the Far East/Pacific frontier.⁷³ With the Ottoman Empire stretching from Europe to Malaysia and beyond, Edward Said insightfully notes, “Not for nothing did Islam come to symbolize terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians.”⁷⁴ If the Anglo, propertied, American can freely enter and exit the space of “Benito Cereno,” the group of yellow savage pirates exhibits a different relation to space, hidden from Delano and even from the black slaves, with future promise of atrocities and looting at the heart of the ship. The imagining of the possible mobility of the concealed one hundred yellow arms, as well as their deadly spears, gestures to the fear of barbarism at “home” and abroad and the informal and formal “piratical seizure” of territory. Considering Delano takes control of both ships and mixes the cargo by the end of story, these violent Malay phantoms lurking below the slaves foreshadow the future to come after slavery that will surely follow the American in his travels across the Asia Pacific.

In his *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, the real-life Amasa Delano expressed his sense of vulnerability in the presence of the Malay population while sailing in and around the Southeast Asian coasts and the Pacific world. Delano’s first voyage traveled primarily through the late eighteenth-century slave-trading, maritime network now referred to as the Sulu Zone, a Southeast Asian economic region whose trade networks were largely based on kinship and Islamic law. In this region, Western sailors and captains were themselves vulnerable to enslavement, mostly likely for ransom, in and around the archipelagoes that have now become the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, all of which were loosely politically networked with the Barbary Coast.⁷⁵ Delano details horrors of European enslavement, for example, noting he has “seen several Europeans, who have been in slavery in Borneo.”⁷⁶ He also reports of his own *Commodore* trading peoples of the region: he traded “three or four female slaves of Malay, from nine to twelve years old, which he purchased at Timor; some males of Malay; a Bombay female, born of European parents; and five or six male slaves, from different eastern coasts” (179). Delano also specifically describes the supposed treachery of the Malay figure in parts of this region, writing that “[t]he Natives [of Timor] are Malays and are notoriously treacherous.” He later describes Malays as “a

most wicked and profligate race. They profess to be Mahometans; but are absolutely void of morals, and would commit a murder for the most trifling reward. Their last chief was publicly whipped and branded for his villainies” (155). Later, he gives measured advice to European sailors in their commercial and imperial dealings with Malays at sea: “Europeans must be always on their guard; must never put themselves in the power of the Malays; and never expose themselves to the chance of having their ship cut off. Fourteen guns, and musketry in proportion, are the least force, which every vessel should have in holding any intercourse with these people” (174). In fact, Delano gives multiple moments of caution to his readers when consorting with Malays and eventually cites David Woodward’s dramatic enslavement by Malays in *The Narrative of Captain Woodard and Four Seamen*, betraying his knowledge of the limits of Western commercial power and his own sense of vulnerability during his Pacific voyages.⁷⁷

Melville’s Delano in “Benito Cereno,” perhaps in fear of enslavement himself, later encounters more cunning Malay symbology, mistaking Manilamen and lascar indentured laborers with the West African slaves in an eerie scene of globalization. Delano first perceives the *San Dominick* as “a shadowy tableau” of dreamlike reveries and continues pondering the space on board, thinking he must be in “a strange house ... in a strange land” with “strange inmates.”⁷⁸ “What could all these phantoms amount to?” Delano wonders, as he was “feeling a little strange at first, he could hardly tell why” (173). Melville proceeds to clarify, however, that Delano’s view of the strange, enchanting scene might be a perception of current or future realism, when the narrator notes that “the ship seems unreal; these strange costumes, gestures, and faces, but a shadowy tableau just emerged from the deep, which directly must receive back what it gave” (118).

Contrasted with the oppressed African slaves on the ship, Melville’s “Lascars” and “Manillamen” would have been well known to American readers as the non-European, (possibly) dangerous Asian Pacific commodity laborers. Melville distinguishes lascars and Manilamen from the Malay, but tends to also locate his referents in the Asia Pacific and in the same gothic, violent form as the Malay. “Lascars” first originated as a collective moniker for local populations in and around the Indian Ocean working as sailors for the British empire, and the term in the nineteenth century increasingly became anchored to a racist taxonomy of Asians and Pacific Islanders in the Western world, insinuating barbarism and maritime violence. The word, in Delano’s time, signified indentured laborers and by the mid-nineteenth century, lascars received one-fifth to one-third of the pay of their European counterparts.⁷⁹ Manilamen, likewise, was a collective moniker for local populations in and around the Philippines joining Western voyages, such as the sixteenth-century Spanish galleons.⁸⁰ Blumenbach’s “Malay” category included inhabitants of the Philippines: “This last variety includes the islanders of the Pacific Ocean, together with the inhabitants of the Mariannas, the Philippine, the Molucca and the Sunda Islands, and of the Malayan peninsula.”⁸¹ Lascars in antebellum culture, as previously noted,

signified a similar Malay figure of alterity in both race and religion because of the relative absence of American involvement in India during that time.

Both lascars and Manilamen, while distinct terms, were mobilized in American culture as part of the same symbology of the cunning Malay (and the Pacific Islands and Southeast Asia) described by Spencer Tricker as “racial palimpsests ... emerging as threatening figures of a barely concealed Malay treachery.”⁸² Delano documents his encounters with these indentured Asian laborers, noting, for example, that both groups were cunning and deceptive: “I have seen most of the Philippine Islands.... There is a class of people among them, who have sprung from Europeans and the natives, and who are said to be peculiarly savage. A large portion of them are of Spanish blood, and are well known under the title of Manilla-men.”⁸³ He goes on to say that “[t]he English will not insure a ship, if she has as many as five or six of these people on board. Many sufferings and losses have been experienced from them, and they are often associated with the Malays in piratical attacks upon ships” (166). Delano also notes that lascars of Calcutta may embrace any religion they like (Mahomet), but “are cunning, and cheat whenever they can” (242). In popular periodicals, one Boston newspaper in 1814 recorded that a lascar shot the captain of the *Spitfire* shortly after boarding, while the *Boston Daily Advertiser* reported in 1816 that lascars had set fire to three ships and partially damaged two in Calcutta.⁸⁴ Later, in 1852, a Massachusetts newspaper—the *Barre Gazette*—narrated a complex mutiny plot put together by “Manillamen” on board the *Herald*.⁸⁵ While positive accounts of Manilamen, lascars, and Malays do exist in Western print and trouble the essentialism of purported racial savagery, the Malay stereotypes of violent treachery in hordes outnumber the sympathetic accounts.⁸⁶

Considering these historical contexts, the Malay figures in “Benito Cereno” betray Melville’s apprehension of Asia Pacific peoples with the same black–white racialism that constructs Delano’s sense of vision and comprehension in the story. In fact, Melville’s Asia Pacific anxieties occur throughout his repertoire of Pacific novels and have been well-documented by literary critics.⁸⁷ While many scholars, such as Elizabeth Schultz, have interpreted Melville’s Orientalist figures as that of East Asia (China and Japan), Tricker focuses on the Pacific world and the Malay. Tricker argues that “[f]rom around the time of *Mardi* (1849) through that of ‘Benito Cereno,’ Melville’s engagement with the Gothic undergoes a radical reorientation,” and that in Melville’s “recurring deployment of these Malay-coded figures as threatening symbols indispensable to his Pacific Gothic mode ... Malays—as sleeping phantoms of Asia—pose more of a threat to the futures of global community.”⁸⁸

I extend Tricker’s inquiry into the figure of the Malay in Melville’s Pacific novels, focusing on the Malays’ specific ties to the Islamic world and cosmopolitanism in *Moby Dick* and “Benito Cereno.” Melville’s *Mardi*, the novelistic precursor to *Moby Dick* and “Benito Cereno,” conjures a single reference to the Malay figure when a drifting ship of the Hawai’ian Isles is observed, much in the same fashion as seen in the subsequent

Pacific narratives: “I could not but distrust the silence that prevailed. It conjured up the idea of miscreants concealed below, and meditating treachery; unscrupulous mutineers—Lascars, or Manilla-men; who, having murdered the Europeans of the crew, might not be willing to let strangers depart unmolested.”⁸⁹ Melville’s racialization once again takes its form as a potentially sinister mass confronting the Anglo-Saxon captain in his story. Clearly, this *Mardi* quote mimes the “Benito Cereno” quotation referring to Malay pirates, once again articulating lascars, Manilamen, and the Malay as interrelated figures of Pacific rebellion within a gothic mode. In the same parlance as the Malay figure, lascars and Manilamen are depicted as a group (rather than individuals), suggesting the Western cultural association with Eastern hordes of Islamicism.⁹⁰ Notably, critics also argue that *Mardi* is Melville’s first novelistic foray into the sea romance, pointing to his exclusion of maps and departure from the style of travel writing, which led to the novel’s commercial failure.⁹¹

In the travelogue-like *Moby Dick*, famous for its long meditations on whaling, and published four years before “Benito Cereno,” Melville imagines a maritime cosmopolis plagued by “five dusky phantoms” on board the *Pequod*. Ahab’s evil lead boatman takes shape in the figure of Fedallah, an Oriental “turbaned” Parsi whose South Pacific (Malay) crew is housed under the deck and summoned by Fedallah himself, a reference to an emerging Western knowledge of an Islamic threat in the Pacific. To begin, the laborers’ leader, Fedallah, is “tall and swart, with one white tooth evilly protruding from its steel-like lips” and wears a Chinese jacket and a turban.⁹² As Carolyn Karcher argues, though he is a Parsi, or Zoroastrian, within the contexts of the Ottoman Empire, Fedallah signifies the Islamic world in general, from Persia to Indonesia.⁹³ His hybridity, in fact, expresses a fearsome, jarring geographic presentation of Islam’s world domain and its historically powerful reach, as Fedallah also informally leads this global community on the *Pequod* and influences the tyrannical tendencies of Ahab. Fedallah is represented as a cultural affront to Western ideology, a “devil in disguise” and referred to as a “shadow” of Ahab’s psyche, like that of Babo to Benito Cereno, when sailors wonder if he “were a tremulous shadow cast upon the deck by some unseen being’s body.”⁹⁴ Melville also rarely humanizes or individualizes Fedallah and his men, in contrast to his more characteristically fleshed-out pagan harpooners, Queequeg, Tashtego, and Daggoo.

The same presence of Islamicism can be found in Melville’s description of Fedallah’s Malay crew, who aid the ship’s search for *Moby Dick*. Fedallah and his crew are forged as a collective of ghosts in the story, appearing to the sailors as “five dusky phantoms that seemed fresh formed out of air” and appear in exciting scenes of encounter with the whale.⁹⁵ The South Pacific crew, however, looks “less swart in aspect” with the “vivid, tiger-yellow complexion peculiar to some of the aboriginal natives of the Manillas” (233). Rather than the historical amalgamation of Fedallah’s Ottoman Empire and largely “Near East” (West Asia) references, the South Pacific crew are explicitly identified as looking like Manilamen, inhabitants of the Philippines. He also refers to the Manilamen as “tiger yellow barbarians” and the three Polynesian

harpooners as “all three tigers” (559, 353). Here, Melville conflates his Polynesians in the story with the phantom Manilamen, affirming his racialization of Manilamen with not just the Philippine isle, but also an extended Pacific world. Later, Melville further orientalizes the crew, describing them as “tiger yellow” and as being made of nautical materials: They were “all steel and whalebone; like five trip-hammers they rose and fell with regular strokes of strength, which periodically started the boat along the water like a horizontal burst boiler out of a Mississippi steamer” (580, 236). Conflating the crew with whalebone and steel and associating them with Polynesians, Melville imagines the Malay pirates as both related to the Islamic shadow Fedallah but also as the materials on ship and of ships. Here, he insinuates the Malay’s Islamic associations, but also their maritime mastery and the limits of Western imperial power in the emerging, soon-to-be-mapped Asia Pacific. The Malay crew’s juxtaposition with a modern, anachronistic steamship in the Mississippi signifies the “grim” phantom futures for the US and domesticates the Malay as both foreign and domestic, a sign of what Robert G. Lee has called the “indelibly alien” subjectivity of Asians in the United States.⁹⁶

Like the Malay crew, the piratical Malay trope also occurs regularly, beginning with Starbuck’s “grim phantom futures” and recurring in moments of rumored Malay piratical domination at sea: “Time out of mind the piratical proas of the Malays, lurking among the low shaded coves and islets of Sumatra, have sallied out upon the vessels sailing through the straits, fiercely demanding tribute at the point of their spears.”⁹⁷ Fedallah’s dusky phantom crew finds its counterpart in Malay pirates, a group of “rascally Asiatics [who] were now in hot pursuit” of the *Pequod* and hastening the crew to their demise, as Ahab searches the straits of Sunda for the great white whale (290). If Fedallah’s physical description largely hearkens back to the historical contexts of the Ottoman Empire and the Near East, his surviving phantom crew—in some respects more terrifying because they resist death by the whale and appear immortal—become signifiers of the Malay and the “Far East” and Pacific Islands. Together, the peculiar “dusky phantoms” of *Moby Dick* cast a resistant Islamic “shadow” on the provisional pluralism of Melville’s *Pequod*. The dusky collective enables Ahab’s demise and fosters his degeneration from humanity, while also functioning in the novel as a specter of Pacific rebellion, the “grim” phantom future of Asian Pacific expansion and Islamic alterity.

Moby Dick’s dusky phantoms parley into the complex symbology of the Malay and the Islamic world in “Benito Cereno”—black friars, a veiled eye, Malay pirates—and Melville concludes his novella with two arresting scenes: an alluring South Asian “mulatto” servant and Babo’s head, gazing across the Pacific. Delano’s fears of mutiny are quelled momentarily after Cereno invites him to a luncheon, where Delano and Cereno are ushered in by a steward, most likely British Indian but also embodying Turkish slavery—he was a “tall, rajah-looking mulatto, orientally set off with a pagoda turban formed by three or four Madras handkerchiefs wound about his head, tier on

tier—approaching with a salaam, [who] announced lunch in the cabin.”⁹⁸ The scene is a fluid, visual imagining of Orientalism and slavery as the two captains “sat down, like a childless married couple at opposite ends of the table,” served by the “hybrid” mulatto: “‘Don Benito,’ whispered he, ‘I am glad to see this usher-of-the-golden-rod of yours; the sight refutes an ugly remark once made to me by a Barbadoes planter; that when a mulatto has a regular European face, look out for him; he is a devil.... For it were strange indeed, and not very creditable to us white-skins, if a little of our blood mixed with the African’s, should, far from improving the latter’s quality, have the sad effect of pouring vitriolic acid into black broth; improving the hue, perhaps, but not the wholesomeness’” (212, 213). The two captains feast after this declaration, and soon after, Delano invites Cereno onboard his boat, boasting in true ruling-Muslim fashion of his coffee that is “as fine a cup as ever any sultan tasted” (225–26).

As with *Moby Dick*’s Fedallah, Melville presents the steward as the embodiment of Oriental ethnicities, mixing Islamic signifiers into one character. However, “Benito Cereno” differs in its sensual, feminine gendering of the Islamic/Asian steward in a narrative of slavery. Melville’s turban-wearing phallic “goldenrod” mixes symbols of Turkish and African slavery, hinting at the enslavement of Asian men and women and the well-worn stereotype of the Islamic world as a source of moral dissipation and sensuality. If Delano and Cereno are a childless couple, clearly, Cereno, who is described in the narrative as sickly and “yellow,” is the gendered female half of the dichotomy, while Delano intimates an aggressive masculinity. The homoerotic sensuality surrounding the “goldenrod” servant suggests the global intimacies of both old and new forms of race-based slavery in Africa and Asia that geographically spans the Atlantic and the Pacific.

Melville fittingly ends “Benito Cereno” with rattling white bones, the rebellion of the slaves (including the South Asian goldenrod servant), and Babo’s severed black head gazing down an expanse of the Pacific, crafting a troubled, macabre visualization of the black–white continuum. Delano’s lunch promptly ends when he decides to leave this “haunted pirate ship” and “strange history” (184, 187). As told by the legal deposition, Delano climbs down from the ship, but sees “that the fag-end, in lashing out, whipped away the canvas shroud about the beak, suddenly revealing, as the bleached hull swung round toward the open ocean, death for the figurehead, in a human skeleton; chalky comment on the chalked words below, ‘Follow your leader’” (239–40). Aranda’s bones (the owner of the slaves on board the ship) now cover the bust of Christopher Columbus, the ship’s original figurehead. At this moment, Delano realizes the state of mutiny on board the *San Dominick*. He uses violence to quell the mutineering slaves and collects the ship’s bounty. The slaves soon go to trial, and Cereno, irrevocably affected by the ordeal, remains forlorn and emotionally distraught even after the slaves are sentenced, claiming that a “shadow” has been cast over him by “the negro” (268). Babo is eventually silenced like the phantom Asian and Pacific Islanders of the story: “As for the black—whose brain not body, had schemed and led the revolt, with the plot—his slight frame, inadequate to that which it held.... Seeing

all was over, he uttered no sound” (269). Babo is beheaded for his role as a conspirator, and Melville notes that “the head, that hive of subtlety, fixed on a pole in the Plaza, met, unabashed, the gaze of the whites; and ... three months after being dismissed by the court, Benito Cereno, borne on the bier, did, indeed, follow his leader” (269).

With a hint of sympathy, Melville notes that Babo’s fully fleshed head, small in stature but magnanimous in leadership, looks onto the Pacific and holds the metaphoric gaze of the white captains, now peering at Aranda’s bones and Cereno’s corpse as objects in a reversal of the master–slave dialectic but also as an Islamic, heretical affront to the white captains. Considering the Orientalist luncheon right before the mutinous unveiling, Orientalism and the setting of the Asia Pacific also become integral to the reading of the final scene. Babo’s gaze across the Pacific, like the woman’s veiled eye in the introduction, insinuates the unarticulated “ghost in the machine” of the black–white Gordian knot in “Benito Cereno.”⁹⁹ Rather than discussing blackness, I call attention to Orientalism and its relation to Islamicism in the narrative, which refuses articulation. Not surprisingly, Cereno and Babo are both silenced in the end of the tale, unable to communicate, and the Gordian knots of the tale remain tangled and the phantoms remain present but unseen.

Notes

¹ I am citing “Benito Cereno” from Melville’s 1856 first edition, first printing of *The Piazza Tales*: “Benito Cereno,” in *The Piazza Tales* (New York, London: Dix & Edwards, 1856), 110–271. However, Melville first serially published “Benito Cereno” in *Putnam’s Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science and Art* from the October through the December issues of 1855. There are no significant textual differences between the *Putnam’s Monthly* edition and book edition. Interestingly, variations of the word “eye” and “sight”—eyeing, eye, eyes, sight—occur in seventy-one instances of all editions of “Benito Cereno.” This means words associated with seeing and vision occur almost every two pages of the edition analyzed here.

² Captain Amasa Delano’s travelogue, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels, in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres: Comprising Three Voyages Round the World; Together with a Voyage of Survey and Discovery, in the Pacific Ocean and Oriental Islands* (Boston: E. G. House, 1817), first published in Boston in 1817, will be referred to here by the abbreviated *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*. Hershel Parker intimates in his biography that Melville may have read Delano’s travelogue around 1847 or before, considering the description of a ship in Melville’s *Mardi* is strikingly similar in language to Delano’s description of an abandoned brigantine in *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*. Parker also notes that *Narrative of Voyages and Travels* was likely in one of the Melville family libraries; *Herman Melville: A Biography, Volumes 1851–1891* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 235.

³ Delano's *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, like much of international early Pacific travel writing, features violent encounters in and around the Pacific Rim and Asia, including rebellions on board ships and scenes of Western imperial conquests and resistance. For example, besides Chapter Eighteen documenting the *Tryal* mutiny, chapters four and five of Delano's travelogues tell of First Mate Fletcher Christian's mutiny aboard the *Bounty*, a ship, sponsored by the English government, that set sail in 1787. Christian successfully seized Lieutenant Bligh's ship and launched the Loyalists adrift in the *Bounty's* largest boat. Christian eventually settled on Pitcairn Island, where he was executed by the Tahitians who revolted against the oppressive treatment by the English mutineers. Delano's travelogue even includes a folding map of Pitcairn Island to better orient his readers to the geography of the South Pacific. Another famous example of resistance in Pacific travel writing is the narrative of Captain James Cook. The publication of James Cook's travel narrative in 1784 has long been associated with its description of Cook's death and beheading at the hands of Sandwich (or Hawaiian) Islanders. For more information about the *Bounty* mutiny, see Richard Hough, *Captain Bligh and Mr. Christian: The Men and the Mutiny* (London: Hutchinson, 1972). For more on the international archive of Pacific travel writing, see Michelle Burnham, "Trade, Time, and the Calculus of Risk in Early Pacific Travel Writing," *Early American Literature* 46, no. 3 (2011): 425–47. Her article discusses Delano's *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, as well as James Cook's travel narrative and includes a brief transnational survey of Pacific travel writing from 1760 to 1820, a period of international competition for scientific discovery and commercial profit that provided the context for much of these voyages.

⁴ For a more detailed account of Melville's adaptation of Delano's travelogue, see Harold H. Scudder, "Melville's *Benito Cereno* and Captain Delano's *Voyages*," *PMLA* 43, no. 2 (1928): 502–32, which summarizes the insertions, changes, and deletions.

⁵ Melville, "Benito Cereno," 113, 116.

⁶ Timothy Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 155–56. See Marr for more on Islamicism in American racial and cultural discourses. Melville refers to a Limanian women dressed in a "saya y manta," a popular style of skirt and cloak in Peru, also known as "Tapada limeña" (quite literally, "covered Limanian woman"). For more on its imitation of the covering worn by the Spanish Moors, see Roderick William Cameron's *Viceroyalties of the West: the Spanish Empire in Latin America* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968).

⁷ Melville, "Benito Cereno," 163.

⁸ For more on the Age of Revolution, see David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760–1840* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Also, the Asia Pacific is a region of diverse and rich cultures with a long history of symbiotic trade relations with Western empires. However, the designation of the Pacific as a region is of our own critical making. As critic Robert Borofsky argues, "We need to remember that the field's self-defined area of study—the 'Pacific'—is a constructed artifact of the discipline"; "An Invitation," in *Remembrance of Pacific Pasts: An Invitation*

to *Remake History*, ed. Robert Borofsky (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 25. See Rob Wilson and Arif Dirlik's *Asia/Pacific as Space of Cultural Production* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995) and Rob Wilson's *Reimagining the American Pacific: From South Pacific to Bamboo Ridge and Beyond* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2000) for more information on Anglo-colonial imaginings of the Asia Pacific region and its role in Western consumption.

⁹ Multiple authors have engaged with Melville's Orientalist representations of what we now identify as the places and peoples of the Pacific Rim and Asia. This includes analyses of *Omoo*, *Typee*, *Mardi*, *Moby Dick*, and “Benito Cereno,” among other texts. For an excellent collection of essays on Melville and the Pacific, see Jill Barnum, Wyn Kelley, and Christopher Sten's “*Whole Oceans Away*”: *Melville and the Pacific* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2007). For more on spatial scales of the Pacific in Melville's writing, see Hsuan L. Hsu's *Geography and the Production of Space in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). For more on the gothic mode in Melville's writing, see Elizabeth Schultz's “‘The Subordinate Phantoms’: Melville's Conflicted Response to Asia in *Moby-Dick*,” in Barnum, Kelley, and Sten, eds., “*Whole Oceans Away*,” 199–212; and Spencer Tricker's “‘Five Dusky Phantoms’: Gothic Form and Cosmopolitan Shipwreck in Melville's *Moby-Dick*,” *Studies in American Fiction* 44, no. 1 (2017): 1–26. For more on labor in his Pacific novels, see C. L. R. James's *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways: The Story of Herman Melville and the World We Live In* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1953).

¹⁰ While I examine the symbiotic processes of Atlantic and Pacific trades in the story, previous scholars of “Benito Cereno” typically examine issues of race and slavery through a distinct transatlantic lens. For examples of this transatlantic framework, see Dana Nelson's *The Word in Black and White: Reading “Race” in American Literature, 1638–1867* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Leonard Tennenhouse's *The Importance of Feeling English: American Literature and the British Diaspora, 1750–1850* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Michael Paul Rogin's *Subversive Genealogy: The Politics and Art of Herman Melville* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); and James, *Mariners, Renegades and Castaways*.

¹¹ Carolyn Karcher makes a powerful argument for the influence of the Amistad slave insurrection on Melville's writing of “Benito Cereno” in “The Riddle of the Sphinx: Melville's ‘Benito Cereno’ and the Amistad Case,” in *Critical Essays on Herman Melville's “Benito Cereno,”* edited by Robert E. Burkholder (New York: G. K. Hall, 1992), 196–229.

¹² For more on the presence of Islam in Melville's “Benito Cereno,” see Greg Grandin's *The Empire of Necessity: Slavery, Freedom, and Deception in the New World* and Timothy Marr's *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*. For more on Spencer Tricker's figuration of Melville's “Malay” pirates as an urtext for his other Orientalist characters, lascars and Manilamen, see “‘Five Dusky Phantoms’: Gothic Form and Cosmopolitan Shipwreck in Melville's *Moby Dick*.”

¹³Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (New York: Bantam Press, 2003), 368. Also, in future descriptions of the Pacific world (Asian coasts, Pacific Islands), I will use the phrase Asia-Pacific. While this phrase is anachronistic to the time in which the story is set, Melville often mixes the geography of East Asia and the Pacific Islands in his Pacific novels, crafting a Pacific, Orientalized world affiliated with Asia. Christopher Phillips, citing Juniper Ellis, argues in “Mapping Imagination and Experience in Melville’s Pacific Novels,” in Barnum, Kelley, and Sten, “*Whole Oceans Away*,” 131, that Melville uses imagery of the blank, expansive Pacific as “a narrative device that creates this tabula rasa, the ‘description of a “blank” Pacific ocean that awaits mapping’ (15), as if the Pacific had no meaning without Melville’s creative talent to bring it forth.”

¹⁴ Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*, 29–30. Also, James Warren describes the Sulu Zone—a Southeast Asian region of trade that included East Asia and the Pacific Islands—and its associations with the Islamic world in the introduction to *The Global Economy and the Sulu Zone: Connections, Commodities, and Culture* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day, 2000): “The Sulu Zone (Sulu Sultanate) constituted a Southeast Asian economic region with a multi-ethnic pre-colonial Malayo-Muslim state ... the ‘Sulu Zone’ was not an important economic region until the end of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century” (2).

¹⁵Kathleen Moore has articulated the complex racialization of Muslim peoples and its intersection with religion: “The process of racial formation, of ‘whitening’ or ‘blackening,’ is not yet completely understood as it relates to many Muslim immigrants... . For instance, Nadine Nabers argues that historically Arab Americans have been simultaneously classified as white and non-white and have been racialized by religion (Islam) instead of biology. Other scholars have examined the experience of South Asians, Iranians, and others and have consistently found that, in the case of Islam, religious identity serves as a malleable and important means of structuring systemic inequality.” Kathleen Moore, “Muslims in the American Legal System,” in *The Cambridge Companion to American Islam*, ed. Juliane Hammer and Omid Safi, 149 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). For more, see Julianne Hammer and Omid Shafi, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to American Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁶ Cosmopolitanism, born from Enlightenment principles and the growth of democracy during the Age of Revolution, is defined by Pauline Kleingeld and Eric Brown in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* as the universalist ideal recognizing “all human beings, regardless of their political affiliation, are (or can and should be) citizens in a single community.” The history of American cosmopolitanism though is best described as a history and culture of multiple cosmopolitanisms in the US. This liberal, abstract ideal has been applied or invoked in multiple realms of American culture and political, legal, and public space: moral cosmopolitanism, political cosmopolitanism, material cosmopolitanism, and more. Judith Butler makes the apt claim that “the universal” is always culturally contingent and resists stasis. In other words, universality is an evolving ideal “that has not yet been fully or finally made.” Like Tom Lutz in his book

Cosmopolitan Vistas, “I intend cosmopolitanism as a term [in this essay] that collapses the distinctions between the economic, ideological, and artistic realms” and participates in discourses of racial formation in the mid-nineteenth century. Pauline Kleingold and Eric Brown, “Cosmopolitanism,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition); Judith Butler, “Universality in Culture,” in *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 45–52; Tom Lutz, *Cosmopolitan Vistas: American Regionalism and Literary Value* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 27.

¹⁷ Spencer Tricker notes that “[s]uch details of appearance—Chinese suit and Indian turban, a complexion somewhere between brown and yellow—secure Fedallah’s Malay moorings, but present insuperable obstacles to a mono-ethnic reading of his character. Seen in this light, Fedallah is very much a Lascar, a figure of the Gothic Malay”; Tricker, “Five Dusky Phantoms,” 8.

¹⁸ Matt Clavin gives a wonderfully succinct definition of the gothic genre: “Gothic is an emotive literature rooted in Europe’s Dark Ages and distinguished by literary conventions that today are cliché’s: the trapdoors, subterranean passages, and confined spaces of medieval castles, churches, and convents; and the virginal heroines, murderous villains, and inexplicable specters that inhabited these dark and mysterious places. A conflicted art form that capitalized on the distance between the darkness and superstition of the Middle Ages and the light and reason of the modern world, the genre is commonly understood as a temporal phenomenon, a literary and psychological rebellion against reason.” Clavin, “Race, Revolution, and the Sublime: The Gothicization of the Haitian Revolution in the New Republic and Atlantic World,” *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 5 no. 1 (2007): 4.

¹⁹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), 59.

²⁰ Qtd. in Merle Curti, “Young America,” *American Historical Review* 32 (Oct. 1926): 45.

²¹ In 1557, Portuguese traders first settled in Macau, establishing the first European trading presence in the Pacific. Just ten years later, the Spanish Empire began its Galleon trade between Acapulco and Manila. See Michelle Burnham, “Trade, Time, and the Calculus of Risk in Pacific Travel Writing,” for more on the history of European presence in the Pacific.

²² Burnham, “Trade and Risk,” 427.

²³ Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, *Routes and Roots: Navigating Caribbean and Pacific Island Literatures* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2007), 12.

²⁴ Burnham, “Trade and Risk,” 428.

²⁵ Greg Grandin, *The Empire of Necessity: Slavery, Freedom, and Deception in the New World* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2014), 131, 72.

²⁶ For more on the global influence of Atlantic Revolutions, see Michelle Burnham, “Early America and the Revolutionary Pacific,” *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 128, no. 4 (2013): 953–60.

²⁷ Jill Barnum, Wyn Kelley, and Christopher Sten, eds, “Whole Oceans Away”: *Melville and the Pacific* (Kent, OH: The Kent State University Press, 2007), 183.

²⁸ Alexander Dalrymple, *An Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), xxvii.

²⁹ James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768–1898: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery, and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2007), xii.

³⁰ See Burnham, “Early America and the Revolutionary Pacific.”

³¹ Robert Burts, *Around the World: A Narrative of a Voyage in the East Indian Squadron under Commodore George C. Read by An Officer of the U.S. Navy* (New York: Charles S. Francis, 1840), 41.

³² Joyce Chaplin, *Round About the Earth: Circumnavigation from Magellan to Orbit* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013), 177.

³³ Tricker, 2. For the review referring to Melville as “Crusoe,” see Evert Duyckink, *New York Morning News Review*, March 21, 1846.

³⁴ Burnham, “Early America and the Revolutionary Pacific,” 958.

³⁵ Burnham, “Trade and Risk,” 43.

³⁶ For more on reader-oriented narratology, see Peter Brooks’s *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992). Brooks understands plots are not “fixed structures, but rather a structuring operation peculiar to those messages that are developed through temporal succession” (10).

³⁷ Burnham, “Trade and Risk,” 435.

³⁸ Melville uses variations of the word “present” in 52 instances of his 150-page narrative.

³⁹ Kendall A. Johnson, *The New Middle Kingdom: China and the Early American Romance of Free Trade* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 86–87.

⁴⁰ Amasa Delano, *A Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres: Comprising Three Voyages Round the World Together with a Voyage of Survey and Discovery in the Pacific Ocean and Oriental Islands*, Vol. 1 (Printed by EG House for the author, 1817), 256.

⁴¹ Per Spencer Tricker, the term “Malay” in American antebellum literature “broadly signifies inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula and Southeast Asian archipelagoes,” while also tending “to locate its referents in Asian-Pacific, as opposed to South Asian, spaces” (3). He also aptly notes that the Malay Orientalist stereotype “functions as a kind of

urtext for interpreting phenotypically similar groups,” the Asian contract laborers, Lascars and Manilamen, as seen in “Benito Cereno.” Like much of the pan-Orientalist stereotyping of the antebellum era and beyond, the figure of the Malay, often Muslim by faith, and its related figures in Melville’s Pacific literature, Lascars and Manilamen, could be associated with Islamic stereotyping in popular culture (whether Muslim or not). For more, see Spencer Tricker’s, ““Five Dusky Phantoms’: Gothic Form and Cosmopolitan Shipwreck in Melville’s *Moby-Dick*.”

⁴² Herman Melville, *Mardi and a Voyage Thither* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1998), 702, 1025.

⁴³ Melville, *Moby Dick*, 368.

⁴⁴ Greg Grandin’s *The Empire of Necessity: Slavery, Freedom, and Deception in the New World* is the most up-to-date account of the *Tryal* revolt. Grandin convincingly suggests that Melville combines facets from the two real-life instigators of the revolt—an educated, West African Muslim Babo and his son Mori—into the single character “Babo” for “Benito Cereno.”

⁴⁵ Melville, “Benito Cereno,” 111.

⁴⁶ Anonymous, “Lima and the Limanians,” *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, October 17th, 1851, 598–609. For more on the *saya y manta*, see William Maxwell Wood’s *Wandering Sketches of People and Things in South America, Polynesia, California, And Other Places Visited: During a Cruise on Board of the U.S. Ships Levant, Portsmouth, and Savannah* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1849). Wood devotes an entire chapter to describing the *saya y manta* and its function in culture. Wood is best known for being a commodore and surgeon general of the US Navy.

⁴⁷ Douglas Robillard’s *The Poems of Herman Melville* (2000) includes some helpful explanatory notes on Melville’s work, including the significance of the *saya y manta*.

⁴⁸ Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*, 4.

⁴⁹ See, e.g., “The Circassian Slave Trade,” *Spirit of the Times; A Chronicle of the Turf, Agriculture, Field Sports, Literature and the Stage* 19, no. 49 (January 26, 1850): 585.

⁵⁰ Flora Tristan, *Flora Tristan, Utopian Feminist: Her Travel Diaries and Personal Crusade*, trans. Doris and Paul Beik (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 29.

⁵¹ Melville, “Benito Cereno,” 109.

⁵² Cooke, an infamous English privateer, exploited communities off the Pacific coast of Latin America for food, boats, and money. He later died off the coast of Costa Rica from an illness he picked up in Chile during his looting. David F. Marley, *Pirates and Privateers of the Americas* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2010), 82.

⁵³ Melville, “Benito Cereno,” 155.

⁵⁴ Caroline Frank, *Objectifying China, Imagining America: Chinese Commodities in Early America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 142.

⁵⁵ Jean Heffer, *The United States and the Pacific: History of a Frontier*, trans. W. Donald Wilson (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 45.

⁵⁶ John Kuo Wei Tchen, *New York Before Chinatown: Orientalism and the Shaping of American Culture, 1776–1882* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 47.

⁵⁷ In *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*, Marr argues that Melville strategically juxtaposes Islamic despots and American sea captains throughout his work to suggest the moral bankruptcy and greed of his era.

⁵⁸ Melville, “Benito Cereno,” 1.

⁵⁹ Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 115.

⁶⁰ Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995): 82; Matt Clavin, “Race, Revolution, and the Sublime,” 2.

⁶¹ Matt Clavin, “Race, Revolution, and the Sublime,” 15, gives a wonderfully succinct reasoning for the appeal of the gothic genre: “At the turn of the nineteenth century, in an increasingly modern and enlightened world of rational and liberal thinking, many continued to struggle with the forces of darkness and the inexplicable. Whereas the Enlightenment inspired a widespread faith in reason and a newfound optimism regarding humanity, Gothic’s attraction lay in its exploration of the dark side of human nature.”

⁶² As Greg Grandin outlines in *Empire of Necessity*, the West African slaves on board the original *Tryal* were most likely Muslim. Atufal’s name, for example, was likely the compression of a first and last name, considering “Fal” was a popular surname in Senegal.

⁶³ Melville, “Benito Cereno,” 366.

⁶⁴ Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, *On the Natural Varieties of Mankind: De Generis Humani Varietate Nativa*, Bergman Books, 1865.

⁶⁵ For more on the US’s golden age of sailing, see Heffer, *The United States and the Pacific: History of a Frontier*, 45.

⁶⁶ *New York Daily Times*, September 26, 1854, 4.

⁶⁷ Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

⁶⁸ For more on the impact of the Barbary wars, see Lawrence A. Peskin, *Captives and Countrymen: Barbary Slavery and the American Public, 1785–1816* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009).

⁶⁹ “Colonization of the Eastern Archipelago.” *United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine, Part 1*. London. (July 1837): 328, 329.

⁷⁰ “The Malay Pirates: With a Sketch of their System and Territory,” *United Service Journal and Naval and Military Magazine, Part 1*. London. (April 1837): 458–59.

⁷¹ *Sacramento Weekly Union*, May 1, 1852, 3.

⁷² For more on the representation of the Malay, see Hussein Syed Alatas, *The Myth of the Lazy Native* (London: Cass, 1977).

⁷³ The figure of the Malay was often an oft-discussed racial figure in popular culture, even in children and adolescent literatures. In the *Boys’ and Girls’ Magazine and Fireside Companion*, Francis Forrester writes in 1848, “Malays are dreaded as pirates by the people of Asia. They pursue plunder or conquest with awful daring; they have no mercy for strangers, and their friendship is uncertain. A small offence they take as an insult, which they revenge with frenzy and fury.” For more, see [Francis Forrester], “Malay Village,” *Boys’ and Girls’ Magazine and Fireside Companion* (NY), April 1, 1848, 138.

⁷⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, 59–60.

⁷⁵ Johnson, *The New Middle Kingdom*, 70.

⁷⁶ Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, 165.

⁷⁷ Johnson, *The New Middle Kingdom*, 70.

⁷⁸ Melville, “Benito Cereno,” 117–8.

⁷⁹ Grandin, *Empire of Necessity*, 313.

⁸⁰ Filomeno V. Aguilar, “Manilamen and Seafaring: Engaging the Maritime World Beyond the Spanish Realm,” *Journal of Global History* 7 no. 3 (2012): 369.

⁸¹ Blumenbach, *On the Natural Varieties of Mankind*, 9.

⁸² Tricker, “Five Dusky Phantoms,” 4.

⁸³ Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, 166.

⁸⁴ *American Watchman*, Boston, MA, September 20, 1814. *Boston Daily Advertiser*, Calcutta, March 1816.

⁸⁵ *Barre Gazette*, “Massacre of the Crews of Two English Ships.” April 9, 1852.

⁸⁶ Benjamin Morrell’s sympathetic narrative in *A Narrative of Four Voyages: To the South Sea, North and South Pacific Ocean, Chinese Sea, Ethiopic and Southern Atlantic Ocean, Indian and Antarctic Ocean. From the Year 1822 to 1831* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1832) recalls engaging the services of sixty-six Manilamen who “kept quiet as lambs—so easy is it to govern others when we can govern ourselves” (86). This is corroborated by other

accounts, such as Robert MacMicking, *Recollections of Manilla and the Philippines, During 1848, 1849, and 1850* (London: Bentley, 1851), 146–47.

⁸⁷ While not an exhaustive list, the following scholars engaged with moments of Orientalism and cosmopolitanism in Melville's repertoire of Pacific novels: Timothy Marr, "'Out of This World': Islamic Irruptions in the Literary Americas," *American Literary History* 18 no. 3 (2006): 521–49. Amirhossein Vafa, "Call Me Fedallah: Reading a Proleptic Narrative in *Moby-Dick*," *Leviathan* 16, no. 3 (October 2014): 39–56; and Elizabeth Shultz, "'The Subordinate Phantoms': Melville's Conflicted Response to Asia in *Moby-Dick*," in *'Whole Oceans Away': Melville and the Pacific*, eds. Jill Barnum, Wyn Kelley, and Christopher Sten (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2007).

⁸⁸ Tricker, "Five Dusky Phantoms," 2–3, 16.

⁸⁹ Melville, *Mardi*, 58.

⁹⁰ Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*, 91.

⁹¹ Christopher N. Phillips writes in his chapter, "Mapping Imagination and Experience in Melville's Pacific Novels," in *Whole Oceans Away*: "In the eyes of Melville's readers, he had violated the social contract that *Typee* and *Omoo* had established: the audience would believe and enjoy the story as long as the author aimed for verisimilitude in geography and plot, thus winning 'the confidence of his readers'" (131).

⁹² Melville, *Moby Dick*, 206.

⁹³ Carolyn Karcher, *Shadow Over the Promised Land* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1980), 314.

⁹⁴ Melville, *Moby Dick*, 325, 527. Marr notes that, beginning in the Renaissance, Europeans "prophesied Islam as an antichristian force in league with Satan" Marr, *The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism*, 91.

⁹⁵ Melville, *Moby Dick*, 231.

⁹⁶ Robert G. Lee, *Orientalists: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), ix.

⁹⁷ Melville, *Moby Dick*, 381.

⁹⁸ Melville, "Benito Cereno," 211.

⁹⁹ Toni Morrison, "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature," lecture presented at the Tanner Lectures on Human Values, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, October 7, 1988.

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