

## SYNTHESIZING HINDU AND CHRISTIAN ETHICS IN A. MADHAVIAH'S INDIAN ENGLISH NOVEL *CLARINDA* (1915)

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THE NOVELS OF INDIAN WRITER A. Madhaviah (1872–1925) are deeply ambivalent toward British Protestant missions in the Madras Presidency. The son of a Brahmin family from the Tirunelveli District in what is now the state of Tamil Nadu, Madhaviah had the opportunity to form close intellectual relationships with British missionaries and Indian Christian converts while studying for his B.A. at the Madras Christian College, completing his degree in 1892. Although he remained a Hindu throughout his life, Madhaviah's first English novel, *Thillai Govindan* (1903), praises some missionaries for their moral characters, naming in particular the Madras Christian College's principal, William Miller (1838–1923); however, the same novel also criticizes other unnamed Madras missionaries for extravagant lifestyles that squandered the money of unsuspecting supporters in Britain (64). Madhaviah's deep commitment to late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Indian women's reform movements, including widow remarriage, the abolition of child marriage, and women's education, meant that he often agreed with British missionaries championing similar reforms in Indian society. However, his early novels also criticize the proselytizing activities of missionaries, particularly in educational settings. In his Tamil novel *Padmavati Carittiram* (1898, 1899) and English novel *Satyananda* (1909), Madhaviah exposes missionary attempts to take advantage of a young pupil's inexperience in an educational setting or to exploit a quarrel between pupil and family members to secure a conversion. Yet in contrast, Madhaviah's final English novel, *Clarinda: A Historical Novel* (1915), offers perhaps the most positive depiction of an Indian Christian conversion in his fiction. A historical novel that reimagines the life of a renowned eighteenth-century Marathi Brahmin woman convert living in Thanjavur, Madhaviah's *Clarinda* offers Christian conversion as a liberating decision for the young Clarinda. Her conversion allows her as a widow to escape the patriarchal control of her abusive husband's family and to contribute to her community as a philanthropist and an early social reformer. While Madhaviah remained critical of certain conversion tactics, which could transgress ethical boundaries, Madhaviah also acknowledged that missionary goals for women's improved lot within society often intersected with his own convictions.

Madhaviah's mixed support and censure for colonial missions exemplifies his ability as a late-colonial Indian subject to shuttle between cultures, religious traditions, and languages in both his education and his fiction. Receiving both colonial English education and traditional

instruction in Tamil with a pandit in his youth, Madhaviah produced novels, poetry, plays, and translations simultaneously in both English and Tamil throughout his writing career (Holmström xii). This choice set Madhaviah apart from some of his contemporaries,<sup>1</sup> gained him recognition as one of the Tamil novel's founding innovators, and also opened the possibility for English-language publication outside Madras. Madhaviah was seeking to publish his English works in Britain as early as 1910, writing to the English Indian poet Sarojini Naidu to inquire into the best way to find a publisher abroad (Naidu). In 1915, the same year in which he published *Clarinda* in Madras, Madhaviah sent both *Clarinda* and *Thillai Govindan* with his friend J.C. Maloney in the hopes that Maloney could find a publisher for him during his time in Britain (Holmström xv). Vinay Dharwadker suggests that this ability to write while shifting between political allegiances, cultures, and literary traditions is a characteristic of what Dharwadker calls the "ambidextrous" Indian subject (123). Rather than choose to "resist" or "collaborate" with British political power and cultural influences, these late nineteenth-century Indian authors chose to cultivate "syncretistically interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, and transnational" roles in the colonial order that allow them to intervene in multiple colonial and metropolitan contexts (122).<sup>2</sup>

I would argue that Madhaviah's ability to write in different languages and envision multiple audiences for his work is linked to his multivalent stance towards colonial projects like Protestant missions. In *Clarinda* in particular, Madhaviah's nuanced portrayal of his heroine's conversion reflects his ability to shuttle "ambidextrously" between multiple cultures and their values, but *Clarinda*'s conversion narrative also signals Madhaviah's own appropriation of approaches to comparative religion that were practiced at the very missionary institution he attended as an undergraduate. *Clarinda* deliberately reworks Protestant missionary approaches to discussing comparative religion, especially late-Victorian fulfillment theology, to establish common ethical ground in Hindu and Christian traditions. While missionaries might encourage these conversations as tactics to draw potential converts towards the Christian faith, Madhaviah's novel urges Hindu and Protestant communities to allow their similar ethical values regarding philanthropy and virtuous womanhood to unite them for the common purpose of promoting Indian women's educational reform.

Rather than see *Clarinda*'s conversion as the adoption of a new identity, I theorize her conversion process as a cultural or ethical "translation" of her old identity as a high caste Brahmin woman into a new social and religious context. The word "translate" carries the etymological sense of carrying something between two locations, essentially "to bear, convey or remove from one person, place or condition to another" ("Translate" def.1.a). When the concept of translation is applied to a cultural or ethical value, the initial cultural concept is not lost, but is rather introduced into a new milieu or community, necessitating some changes but also resting on a fundamental similarity, or comparison, that makes translation possible in the first place.

In staging *Clarinda*'s conversion as translation, Madhaviah's novel may participate in a teleological vision for a synthesis of religious and ethical values in Indian intellectual projects and future collaborations among Hindu and Protestant social reformers. However, Madhaviah's eighteenth-century heroine's narrative simultaneously (and anachronistically) touches on many of the women's social reform issues of the nineteenth-century British Raj (including the abolition of *sati*, child marriage, widow remarriage, and women's education) and it contains a different historical telos than traditional historiographies of British India

would suggest. As Mary Ellis Gibson puts it, the narrative “moves from Orientalist inquiry, to Anglicist cultural hubris, to the rebellion of 1857, to late Victorian jingoism and racism, to the triumph of Indian nationalism” (“Introduction” 325). Gibson suggests that scholars in recent years have complicated this metropole-centered historiography, examining “new global historiographies that emphasize imperial circuits and transperipheral exchanges in addition to dyadic relationships” (“Introduction” 325). Gibson and Leela Gandhi have each challenged the often unquestioned boundaries that have separated authors based on race or national origin through investigating the political and literary friendships existing between authors writing on the subcontinent and in Britain (Gandhi 1–12; Gibson, *Indian Angles* 1–14). Looking at networks rather than national origins, Caroline Levine suggests, interrogates the very assumptions that nationalism predicates itself upon, including the assumption that the land of one’s birth should align seamlessly with a national culture and identity (659). In situating works like Madhaviah’s *Clarinda* within the histories of late-Victorian Protestant institutes of higher education in India and turn-of-the-century Indian women’s social reform movements, this essay reveals the cultural and religious networks that scholars have increasingly traced between colonial India and the British metropole. Madhaviah’s *Clarinda* as both “translated” convert from Hinduism to Christianity and ultimately as “translator” of religious and cultural values across multiple religious, caste, and racial boundaries situates Indian colonial subjects – and novelists – in a complex, if also uneven, set of relationships and ideologies which might limit them, but also provide contexts for exchange and collaboration.

*Contested Indian Womanhood: Missionary and Hindu Nationalist Perspectives*

BRITISH POLITICAL ASCENDENCY ON the subcontinent during the nineteenth century fostered uneven power dynamics in inter-religious exchanges. Geoffrey Oddie has shown how eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European discourse “imagined” and reinvented Hinduism in the image of Christianity, as a unified religious system based on doctrines, sacred texts, and Brahminical authority (13–14). This reimagining allowed European Orientalist scholars and British nineteenth-century missionaries to couple their reading of Hindu sacred texts with their own cultural experiences to condemn what they felt were moral deficiencies in this supposed “Hindu” religious system. Some prominent Western missionaries and reformers had, from the early nineteenth century, suggested that Hinduism was a system with cultural and religious values inherently oppressive to women. The Scottish missionary and educationalist Alexander Duff (1806–78) illustrates this view in an 1839 pamphlet that was originally a lecture delivered to the Scottish Ladies Society in Edinburgh entitled “Female Education in India.” In his lecture, Duff draws passages from the *Code of Gentoo Law* and the *Laws of Manu* to argue that Hinduism maintains the Hindu woman in subjection by keeping her under the total authority of fathers and husbands, denying her “a will of her own,” and making her into a “crouching and submissive drudge” for men (7).<sup>3</sup> Duff contrasts his notion of a “Hindu” view of women with the Christian ideal of women as “helpmeet” for men, arguing that only in Christian salvation will women regain the status they lost after the Fall, when they were cursed to have husbands “rule over” them (3–4).

Yet the status of women on the subcontinent was not simply a moral or religious issue for British missionaries, but also a political one upon which British imperial power was, at least rhetorically, predicated. In *The History of British India* (1820) James Mill asserts that

“The condition of the women is one of the most remarkable circumstances in the manners of nations. Among rude people, the women are generally degraded; among civilized people they are exalted” (383; bk. 2, ch. 7). Given the restrictions placed upon women in Hindu societies, Mill infers that at no period can they be considered “civilized,” a conclusion tacitly sanctioning the British colonial presence.<sup>4</sup>

This kind of critique provoked in turn a reinterpretation and reform of Hindu traditions, especially among Western-educated Hindus. Early nineteenth-century Indian reformers like Rammohan Roy championed the notion of an Indian or Vedic “golden age” that spanned the composition of the Vedas and Upanishads, and drew from this literature ideals – including ideals about the better treatment of women – that would supposedly reform modern Indian society if put into practice (Chakravarti 33–34). Staging the expansion of women’s educational opportunities as a recovery of past Vedic traditions rather than an adoption of European values allowed reformers to challenge the conclusion of assessments like Mill’s, while perhaps simultaneously reinforcing Mill’s premise that the status of a civilization’s women determined the degree of its advancement. The ideal high caste or Brahmin woman, as she was celebrated in Hindu nationalist discourse, was often a composite of the Victorian “Angel in the House” and a certain interpretation of Vedic femininity: that a woman should be the spiritual anchor of the family, modest and traditional in dress, educated enough to be the companion of her spouse, and devoted to her husband and children, the latter whom she would raise to strengthen India as a nation.<sup>5</sup> The late Victorian British reformer Annie Besant, who was also an advocate for Indian nationalism, drew on this Vedic ideal to argue in favor of Indian girls’ and women’s education, suggesting that educated Hindu women should resemble either the supportive wives and mothers from Hindu mythology, or the *Brahmavadini*, the unmarried woman scholar, rather than the Western New Woman training for a profession outside the home (73).

Yet even if this high caste Hindu woman resembled the Victorian Angel with her domestic accomplishments and companionate marriage, she was most decidedly not a Christian. A change in religious affiliation would destabilize the notion of the high caste woman as domestic anchor of spirituality and could fundamentally disrupt a Hindu woman’s marriage and home, since the convert’s altered religious status would ostracize her from her family and caste community. The threat that women, especially high caste women, might convert to another religion in a missionary school could create further tensions between British missionaries and Hindu reformers, who shared a desire to improve the lot of Indian women. Partha Chatterjee has argued that elite Hindu families in Bengal hesitated to send their daughters to newly-opened missionary schools for fear that they would convert, and these families only warmed as a group to women’s educational reform when Hindu schools became available (128). Moreover, the 1893 controversy at the Indian Christian convert Pandita Ramabai’s schools for Brahmin widows in Poona illustrates the ways in which reform efforts could become divisive among different religious communities when the cultural ideals of the Brahmin woman were concerned; when the newspaper *Kesari* published a rumor that Ramabai was actively converting pupils to Christianity, twenty-five pupils were subsequently withdrawn from her school (Forbes 65).<sup>6</sup> Kumari Jayawardena has suggested that those Theosophist or Orientalist Western women reformers more interested in Buddhism or Hinduism than Christianity were more likely to form sisterhoods with Indian women in the midst of their reform efforts, since these reformers were affirming traditional values in the process (2, 265). While in theory British missionaries and Indian Christian converts like

Ramabai might champion women's educational opportunities similar to those which Hindu and/or Indian nationalist reformers were seeking, these groups were not always united in practice.

*Comparative Religion in Christian Higher Education: Models for Madhaviah's Clarinda*

THE STATUS OF INDIAN WOMEN within these competing accounts of Hinduism remained contested throughout the nineteenth century, but the earlier dynamic of British missionary critique and Hindu response was also complicated in the comparative religious rhetoric coming out of missionary institutions of higher education, particularly in the latter half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The nineteenth-century rise in the European study of comparative religion raised a series of questions regarding the origins, content, and future of religion, and of Christianity in particular. The influx of information about other religious traditions, filtered as it was through preconceived European categories, nevertheless prompted theologians and Orientalist scholars, including F.D. Maurice, Friedrich Max Müller, and Sir Monier Monier-Williams, to entertain the possibility that certain universal values or practices undergirded the various traditions grouped within the category of the "religious" (Wheeler-Barclay 8). Fulfillment theory – the idea that all religions have teachings that contain some elements of truth, but those truths can only find their fullest expression in Christianity – gained credence particularly in missionary educationalist circles in India, where missionary professors taught religiously diverse groups of elite male Indian students.<sup>7</sup> Hayden Bellenoit has suggested that since some of these missionaries claimed that Christianity was the "universal" religion, they felt obligated to demonstrate Christianity's relationship with all other religions of the world, an attitude which could be condescending, but which also made it possible for students of other faiths to enter and shape the debate (31). Inequalities in imperial power relations could thus influence relationships between those of different faiths in colonial India, but inter-religious friendships and mentoring relationships could also operate as networks of borrowing, exchange, and debate.

British Protestant missionary institutions of higher education in late colonial India often encouraged comparative religious inquiry for the ultimate purpose of evangelism. The earliest institutions set up in the first half of the nineteenth century hoped to influence Indian cultures as a whole through converting high caste, elite students in educational contexts. The relatively small number of converts from these institutions dismayed some missionary societies and supporters back home (Porter 260–67). Yet many mid- and late-century missionaries remained convinced that their institutions could have, if not a religious influence through numbers of converts, a positive moral influence upon Indian society. By shifting the focus from "religious conversion to cultural conversion," and claiming to have an impact upon "nationalist consciousness," missionary institutions of higher education in India could argue for the importance and relevance of their work amidst increasing pressure to justify their missions – especially in light of their low convert numbers – to their home organizations (Mallampalli 176–77). Bellenoit has suggested that these institutions actively encouraged students to compare ethical ideas and religious traditions to form "culturally-hybrid" notions of morality, creating an educational environment that was "neither an agnostic or public-removed secularism, but a religiously-plural one which held itself together with theism" (86–87).

The Madras Christian College, A. Madhaviah's alma mater, was one institution that cultivated such an ethos in its educational atmosphere. In an 1888 essay for the *Madras Christian College Magazine*, the college's principal, Scottish missionary William Miller, criticizes missionaries who compare the moral evils present in Hindu societies with Christian ethical ideals to emphasize Hinduism's status as a "false" religion. "Such comparisons are as unfair as they are fatal," cautions Miller, because "ideals must be compared only with ideals and actualities only with actualities" (406). Both "heathendom" and "Christendom," Miller argues, have morally compromised histories, yet God is not far away from any "of them who seek Him" (406–7). Miller asserts that he believes God to be fully revealed only in Christ, "the sun and centre of God's manifestation of Himself and the one consummation of his Love"; however, Miller draws on the example of St. Paul's Mars Hill sermon to the Athenians in Acts 17 and argues that acknowledging the divine truths present in Hindu traditions represents a "first step" towards bringing Hindus, or those of other faiths, towards an eventual conversion to Christianity (407–8). Comparative ethical conversations function for Miller as *preparatio evangelica* for those of other faiths, and these dialogues can simultaneously cause Christians to examine the "unfaithful[ness]" within their own historical tradition, teaching them humility rather than "well-satisfied self-complacency" (407). Miller's own sustained personal and professional correspondence with A. Madhaviah throughout the novelist's career suggests that Madhaviah retained friendship and admiration for his former professor, even if he never shared Miller's faith.<sup>8</sup> In his first English novel, *Thillai Govindan*, Madhaviah would praise Miller by name as one whose "noble life of self-sacrifice and philanthropy shone like a magnificent beacon-light" among his pupils (63). Madhaviah emphasizes Miller's moral example rather than his doctrinal beliefs, gesturing towards the common moral principles that he believed he shared with Miller; "the same ethics was preached in all the scriptures," Madhaviah's narrator observes in *Thillai Govindan* (133).

Although few students in these institutions converted to Christianity, there is evidence that some Indian graduates from the Madras Christian College saw the work of their alma mater as a positive element in Indian communities, even as these institutional efforts intertwined with evangelism. In an 1889 article for the *Madras Christian College Magazine*, M. Kuppaswami Chetty identifies as a "Hindu and a pure theist" and expresses enthusiasm for any institution willing to teach "pure religious truths" and for the efforts to bring those of different faiths and castes together for the purpose of social reform (365). Another Hindu student, H. Naraina Rao, writes in an 1890 article that he entered the college with "the full and proud conviction that I could tear Christianity to tatters in no time," but through his education he now is "willing to write in praise of those whose sincerity as Christians I could never believe in formerly" (497). Rao does not elaborate on the ways in which religious instruction specifically changed his view of Christianity, but his short narrative suggests that his esteem for Christianity is based on the "sincerity" of its adherents rather than the truth of specific doctrines. Furthermore, Rao celebrates that Christian ideas have caught on in other Hindu movements, including the Theistic Somaj that he says he attends every Sunday, which involves readings from the Bible among other texts (500). Both Chetty and Rao thus stress their reformist and theistic commitments as part of a show of solidarity with the Madras Christian College's approach to inter-religious education, leaving room for those of multiple faiths to collaborate on social reform issues, including Indian women's education.

While in the eyes of some missionaries, religious and ethical comparisons drew the "heathen" student and Indian society closer to Christianity and its ethics, both Miller and his



students could also imagine other social or political ends for this kind of comparative moral inquiry.<sup>9</sup> Although Madhaviah's relationship to Indian nationalist movements themselves remained ambivalent, he adamantly supported many social reform causes, and his essays, novels, and poetry often contain strong pleas for Indian women's education reform, the abolition of child marriage, improved treatment of Hindu widows, and other women's issues.<sup>10</sup> Drawing on his alma mater's practice of making ethical comparisons across religious traditions, Madhaviah infuses *Clarinda* with the technique in order to suggest the potential for unity among women's educational reformers of different faiths.

Based on the life of the historical Clarinda, an eighteenth-century Indian Christian convert and philanthropist whose brief history is chronicled in church mission records,<sup>11</sup> Madhaviah's novel reimagines his historical materials to explore the emotional and intellectual motivations behind Clarinda's conversion and her acts of charity, patronage which she was renowned for in the Palamcottah Christian community whose village church still bears her name. As convert, Clarinda is not a divisive figure but rather a cultural translator who can demonstrate both the common societal problems and ethical ideals that certain Hindu and Christian communities share. Rather than foregoing Hindu ideals and practices in her conversion, Clarinda finds ways to synthesize Christian and Hindu values, demonstrating each community's desire to draw on common values to improve Indian women's lives.

#### *Clarinda as a Historical Novel: Representing Two Religious Traditions*

MADHAVIAH'S *CLARINDA* REFLECTS UPON a century of women's social reforms in colonial India within the genre of historical romance. In her study of English-language poetry in nineteenth-century India, Mary Ellis Gibson has pointed out that British literary movements like Romanticism could influence the work of colonial poets far beyond the periodized parameters typically given to those movements (*Indian Angles* 156), and the same could perhaps be said of the Victorian novel's influence on colonial Indian prose. *Clarinda* owes much of its basic structure to the nineteenth-century British historical novel. Like the works of Walter Scott and George Eliot's *Romola* (1862–63) with which Madhaviah was familiar, *Clarinda* draws on historical accounts, interweaving the narratives of historical figures with those of fictional characters. Madhaviah's Clarinda, or Clavirunda as she is called before her conversion, is a brilliant young Sanskrit scholar whose Pandit grandfather has taught to read and write in multiple languages. After her grandfather's death, Clavirunda is hastily married to the elderly Dewan, who treats her unkindly and does not appreciate her cultivated intellect. When the Dewan dies, Clavirunda narrowly escapes a forced *sati*. An English officer, Lyttelton, rescues her from the pyre and offers her shelter from her husband's family. The plot device of the English officer rescuing the unwilling *sati* ties Madhaviah's work with other nineteenth-century Orientalist romances,<sup>12</sup> but the rescue also reminds readers of earlier women's social reform issues in which British East India officials and missionaries were involved in the first decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>13</sup> Lyttelton and Clavirunda fall in love, and she converts to Christianity after receiving Lyttelton's religious instruction, changing her name to Clarinda.<sup>14</sup> Although Lyttelton cannot legally marry Clarinda because he already has a (mad) wife in England, he tricks her with a sham wedding, a deception that perhaps signals Madhaviah's debt to other Victorian narratives like *Jane Eyre* (1847). With this device, Madhaviah creatively absolves Clarinda from knowingly cohabitating with Lyttelton outside of marriage, allowing her to retain her status, to some extent, as a moral exemplar

of female sexual purity, while remaining faithful to historical accounts of her relationship with Lyttelton. Lyttelton's trick is only exposed when a German missionary, the historical figure Frederick Schwartz, learns of their unlawful liaison and refuses to baptize Clarinda. Although Clarinda is devastated at Lyttelton's betrayal, she returns to care for him in his final illness. After Lyttelton's death, Clarinda becomes an active philanthropist and leader in the Christian community of Palamcottah, and Schwartz returns to baptize her along with her faithful servant and her adopted son.

The action of *Clarinda* is situated at a crucial turning point in eighteenth-century subcontinental history, when the British were gaining ascendancy over the French in South India and consolidating their power in various Indian kingdoms, including the kingdom of Thanjavur.<sup>15</sup> Choosing this transitional period in colonial history allows Madhaviah to imagine Hindu Brahmin society before it has come into significant contact with Protestant Christianity and British cultural influences. For Madhaviah, the romance between Clarinda and Lyttelton thus represents the first contact between two different civilizations. The "Prayer" which opens the novel depicts the graves of Lyttelton and Clarinda as a place where "The East and the West lie there side by side," the final resting place of "two distant representatives of the two great civilizations" (*Clarinda* 3). Critics have read Eliot's Romola as both an individualized, realist heroine and a representative for larger shifts in moral and intellectual growth in Western culture, and Clarinda has a similarly dual status, representing her cultural and religious community even as she remains an individuated character in a realist narrative.<sup>16</sup>

Madhaviah's tactic of comparison does essentialize, to some extent, religious and cultural traditions in a way that might obscure internal differences in doctrine, practice, or ritual within each. Madhaviah also sometimes allows Brahmin traditions to represent "Hinduism" as a whole and similarly sometimes positions Hinduism to stand in for a pan-Indian "civilization," as he does in the Prologue. Benjamin O'Dell has cautioned contemporary scholars against such an approach, which could "[smooth] over seismic differences in favor of an artificial creation of common ground," obscuring caste, regional, and other differences (547). In my analysis of Madhaviah's text, I have chosen to mirror Madhaviah's use of the word "Hindu" in speaking of a variety of Indian religious and cultural traditions, and "Brahmin" when speaking of traditions that he acknowledges are caste specific, although I acknowledge that these two terms are sometimes conflated in his work. However, Clarinda's status as a Christian convert also complicates this reading of Clarinda as a representative for Brahmin/Hindu/Indian cultures before European contact. As she falls in love with Lyttelton, Clarinda chooses to convert to his religion, allowing herself to be wooed away from both her community and her religion.

Yet the way in which Madhaviah depicts Clarinda's early education and Christian conversion is not the celebration of a historical progression that would replace Hindu ethics or Indian political power with Protestant doctrines and the British Raj; rather, Madhaviah explores Clarinda's conversion as a synthesis of Hindu/Brahmin and British Protestant values. Clarinda is a moral exemplar as a philanthropist and a self-sacrificial, loving wife, two roles that Madhaviah argues are valued in both religious and cultural traditions. As the next sections will demonstrate, Clarinda's cultivated mind aids her in becoming an example for Indian women; her education gives her the tools to critique her society and to become an early social reformer herself by the end of the text. Although at times Madhaviah's text might reinforce differences between religious communities and threaten to ossify religious traditions themselves through the act of comparison, I would argue that his depiction of Clarinda as



convert also aims beyond religious or cultural essentialism, attempting to establish commonly held values that will unite both communities around women's education and other women's reform efforts.

*Sakuntala, Eve, and the Problems of Misogyny in Hindu and Protestant Traditions*

WHEN MADHAVIAH INTRODUCES THE young Clarinda to the narrative, he uses the scene to critique misogynist perceptions of women's intellects and to suggest that these perceptions have roots in both Hindu and Judeo-Christian tradition. Clarinda, already an accomplished Sanskrit scholar, becomes outraged when she reads the verses in Kalidasa's play *Sakuntala* that compare the subtlety of women to the wiles of the *koil* bird, which lays its eggs in other birds' nests for them to raise.<sup>17</sup> Clarinda fumes to her grandfather:

Why should the female sex be so maligned, as if men are all patrons of virtue and innocence and why should the female "koil," and not the females of these simple birds which foolishly hatch and bring up her offspring, be taken as typical of the sex? It is so unjust, so like a man to say it. (*Clarinda* 55; bk. 1, ch. 9)

Clarinda suggests these verses are symptomatic of a larger patriarchal narrative that constructs women as deceivers who use their cunning to manipulate the men around them. Her grandfather initially attempts to deflect Clarinda's outrage by criticizing her reading practices, reminding her, "This is drama . . . and you should not saddle the poet with all the sentiments he puts into the mouths of his various characters" (56; bk. 1, ch. 9).<sup>18</sup> The Pandit may be correct in assuming that in the context of the play itself, the audience's sympathies rest with *Sakuntala* as a woman whose husband has falsely accused her of deception; however, he also offers other examples from the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* to support the play's claim, suggesting that Sita and Draupadi caused major wars in Indian mythological history. Rather than acknowledging the Pandit's interpretations as proof that traditional Indian texts contain nothing but misogynistic narratives, however, Clarinda offers a counter-interpretation of these two female characters' stories. Clarinda reads Draupadi as a woman who "showed a keener sense of honor than her husbands . . . and she had to goad them on in the noble path of duty and glory" while the "saintly Sita . . . [is] far less subtle and cunning than Rama; in fact, she was like a child to the bitter end, and suffered all her life for it" at Rama's hands (57; bk. 1, ch. 9). In Draupadi's narrative, Clarinda reads against patriarchal scorn for women's cunning to uncover the potential for women to use their intelligence for moral purposes. She also acknowledges the personal suffering that iconic women like Sita and *Sakuntala* undergo in spite of living up to the feminine ideal of a chaste and loving wife. In Clarinda's reading, women suffer more when men exercise their cunning and superior social positions against them.

For Clarinda Hindu texts do not always put forth the notion of women as troublemakers and schemers; rather certain male-dominated interpretations of those texts reinforce these female stereotypes. In interpreting the narratives of Sita and Draupadi, Clarinda anachronistically answers those early missionary and Orientalist scholars who would assume that Hindu texts merely reinforce female submission, rather than problematize it. Furthermore, Clarinda offers this critique as a product not of Western education, but of a traditional Sanskrit one. Lakshmi Holmström argues that this passage demonstrates that

Clarinda not only has acquired knowledge through her education, but with it the ability to reason, so that she “achieves a post-Enlightenment intellectual make-up without having had a ‘Western’ education” (xxx). Some contemporary Indian readers received Clarinda’s thoroughly traditional and Sanskrit-based education as evidence of the potential impetus for general social reform within Indian traditions, perhaps in exclusion of British influence. Madhavia’s friend Srinivasa Sastri praised Madhavia’s portrayal of Clarinda in this respect:

That without English education she could early bring a fresh mind to bear on the characters of legend and the perplexing problems of actual life around her is proof to me, welcome beyond words, that in indigenous culture at its best, you still discover the elements of courage, freshness of outlook and virility of purpose so necessary to progress. (292)<sup>19</sup>

While Clarinda’s “post-Enlightenment” critique of patriarchal bias in literary interpretation may represent a cultural anachronism in her mid-eighteenth century context, her proto-feminist interpretations counter Orientalist discourses that criticized the supposed moral deficiencies in Hindu texts, knowledge, and practices. Clarinda’s rebuttal represents the novel’s own confidence in a moral and intellectual basis for social progress within indigenous traditions.

Madhavia reserves some critique for Western misogynistic treatments and interpretations of women’s characters within this exchange as well. The Pandit, in his efforts to argue for the dangers of women’s cunning, tells Clarinda, “The Jews say that the first woman tempted the first man to transgress and sin against God, and thus ‘brought death into the world and all our woe’” (*Clarinda* 57; bk. 1, ch. 9). Here Madhavia juxtaposes Hindu and Judeo-Christian narratives to draw a strong comparison between the ways that women have been maligned in both traditions. Madhavia even allows Pandit Rao to quote Milton’s description of the Fall in Genesis to show a critique of female cunning that runs through some literary as well as sacred Christian texts. Both traditions need “reform” based on their common belief that women’s cunning represents a danger for men and for society as a whole. However, as the novel progresses, Madhavia also reserves strong praise for the social equality and compassion emphasized in Christian tradition, values that can undergird similar projects to improve Indian women’s lives. *Clarinda* suggests while some traditional Hindu and Christian texts, and more importantly, their interpretations, reflect a misogynistic skepticism towards women’s capacity to use their minds for moral ends, both cultural traditions also contain values which can bolster social reform efforts in India.

#### *Conversion as Translation: Philanthropist and Christian Pativrata*

DESPITE EMPHASIS ON THE LIBERAL, or even proto-feminist, potential within Hindu traditions in Clarinda’s early reading of *Sakuntala*, it is initially tempting to read Clarinda’s later conversion as a wholesale rejection of Hinduism. The content of Lyttelton’s Christian instruction for Clarinda does underline the strengths and weaknesses that Lyttelton (and perhaps Madhavia) sees in Christian and Hindu thought and practice, but Christianity initially emerges as the moral, if not the rational, exemplar. Lyttelton admits to himself that “Christianity, as a philosophy, as a rational explanation of life and its problems, was weak on all sides, and could not satisfy a keen intellect like [Clarinda’s]”; he therefore largely ignores doctrinal points (that of Christ’s divinity in particular) and examines Christ’s

character, praising his “infinite compassion, love for suffering humanity” (*Clarinda* 210; bk. 3, ch. 5).<sup>20</sup> In this characterization, Lyttelton emphasizes Christ’s message as the antithesis of the “injustice of the caste-system.” Lyttelton’s Christ “has a special message to the miserable and unfortunate in life” and teaches “the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood and complete equality of all men in His eyes, from the meanest to the highest” (210–11; bk. 3, ch. 5). In criticizing the caste system, Lyttelton sets Clarinda up to embrace Christ’s teaching as a viable alternative; Christ’s compassion for the socially low and vulnerable is a model that, as Madhaviah emphasizes, initially appeals to Clarinda’s loving heart, rather than her rational mind. Lyttelton thus constructs Christianity as a corrective that can rectify social inequalities that he finds inherent in local caste traditions, on a social as well as potentially a political scale.

However, in moving from her life as a Hindu into her new life as a Christian, Clarinda carries a desire to help those weakest within her society and to improve her community through philanthropic acts. While living with her first husband, the Dewan, who has essentially married her for her property, Clarinda refuses to submit to his wishes to dispose of her *stridhana* property as an inheritance for his nephew. *Stridhana* was property that a woman often brought with her into a marriage, and was, at least in law, if not always in practice, something that a woman could control according to her own wishes (Sundar 416).<sup>21</sup> In Clarinda’s case, this property consists of several houses and the income from two villages. In a letter written in Marathi to the Dewan, a composition that displays her own education and intelligence, Clarinda asserts that she has determined to fulfill her grandfather’s wishes to establish charities with one of the village incomes, and she requests her husband’s help in doing so. Although Clarinda describes this act of charity as a “pious duty to the sacred memory” of her grandfather, her letter also expresses her burgeoning desire to help those outside her family circle (*Clarinda* 127; bk. 2, ch. 5). Later, after the Dewan’s death, Clarinda’s in-laws attempt to wrest her property from her again, and when Clarinda wins her lawsuit against them, she immediately establishes a “chuttram” to lodge pilgrims from all castes, a “patasala” for feeding and lodging 108 Sanskrit scholars, and a series of wells, keeping only a small maintenance for her living expenses. These acts of charity are in line with traditional philanthropic practices among propertied Hindus (Sundar 414).

Clarinda’s early philanthropy reflects a traditional mindset towards addressing spiritual, educational, and material needs in her community, and her commitment to carrying out these philanthropic acts suggests that she already has a firm moral foundation in traditional Hindu practices on which she can build as she continues to learn about other social reforms she might pursue as a Christian. The missionary or Orientalist discourse that might locate social reform efforts within Western and Christian cultures while ignoring the impetus for reform within Hindu traditions thus receives another challenge in Madhaviah’s depiction of philanthropy – particularly compassionate and charitable giving – in *Clarinda*.

However, in response to reformers who feared losing Brahmin ideals of high caste femininity in the figure of the Christian convert, Madhaviah stages Clarinda’s conversion as the translation of idealized Brahminical womanhood in a companionate marriage to a Christian context. In her conjugal life with Lyttelton, Madhaviah describes Clarinda as the embodiment of a *pativrata*, which the text describes as a “High-born Hindu wife . . . [whose husband] is not merely her lord and master, but also her God” to whom she consecrates her wifely duties as a form of worship (*Clarinda* 227; bk. 3, ch. 8). Although Madhaviah’s narrator clearly admits that this ideal might help to perpetuate socially sanctioned discriminatory

practices surrounding the poor treatment of widows and *sati*, the narrative also expresses some admiration for this kind of wifely devotion.<sup>22</sup> Madhaviah describes Clarinda as

the descendent of an immemorial life of “pativratas,” [who] had this instinct deeply ingrained in her nature . . . deep love, admiration and gratitude, all impelled her in the way of her own wifely duties . . . and Lyttelton soon experienced what it was to have a loving and intelligent Brahmin lady as wife. (228; bk. 3, ch. 8)

Clarinda’s interest in the new faith and her pseudo-marriage to Lyttelton do not erase her identity as a “Brahmin lady”; rather, her new life with Lyttelton provides a romantic and conjugal context in which her *pativrata* nature, figured here as a kind of inheritance, can find more full expression. Lyttelton appreciates her devotion and in turn showers her with a “wealth of affection” that includes jewelry and expensive clothes as well as love; through his lavish gifts, he plays the role of enamored husband or lover to her role as *pativrata* (229; bk. 3, ch. 8).

Robert Hefner has suggested that conversion involves “the acceptance of a new locus of self-definition, a new, though not necessarily exclusive, reference point for one’s identity” (17). However, Clarinda’s conversion essentially flips this definition, translating a set of old identities (philanthropist, *pativrata*) within a new religious framework and community. The fact that Clarinda only becomes a *pativrata* as a Christian convert directly counters Hindu nationalist discourses that might assume the ideal woman must sustain Hindu religious practice within the home. In contrast, Madhaviah suggests that this self-sacrificial femininity draws upon an ethical impulse transcending participation in a particular religious or cultural community. Madhaviah redefines an essential “Brahmin” femininity as that which Indian women can exercise within multiple religious traditions, because this feminine ideal reflects a set of values that various religious communities celebrate.

Gauri Viswanathan suggests that conversion remains a powerful force within national and religious discourses and communities precisely because the convert occupies “several positions in relation to both nation and religion,” allowing her to critique her new religious tradition at the same time as she may seek to “reform” the tradition which she has ostensibly left (39). Madhaviah’s Clarinda occupies this dual position within Christian and Hindu communities, embodying the ethical ideals that these communities share while simultaneously exposing the moral shortcomings present in each community’s practices. Clarinda’s two husbands, one Hindu and one Christian, both fail to act on the ethical ideals in their respective traditions. Like Sita and Sakuntala’s husbands, Clarinda’s husbands try her duty and her affections with their deception and their selfishness, and they embody the critiques leveled at their communities as they cause her to suffer. The Dewan treats Clarinda as an inferior and starves both her mind and her affections with his ridicule and neglect, confirming the caricature of Hindu attitudes towards women in Alexander Duff’s lecture and Mill’s history. Lyttelton, while he does have real affection for Clarinda, tricks her with a pseudo-marriage to satisfy his lust and to care for her as his wife. His deception mirrors British colonialism’s paternalistic duplicity, offering protection but extracting resources for the colonizing country’s own use.

But where her husbands fail, Clarinda succeeds, embodying each tradition’s ethical ideals and allowing Madhaviah’s readers to compare both traditions’ morally compromised “actualities” with their moral “ideals,” much as MCC Principal William Miller urged his

fellow missionaries and pupils to do in their comparative religious discourses. Clarinda's self-sacrificial devotion transforms her into not just a Christian *pativrata* but also a Christ-like figure. Clarinda's decision to return to Lyttelton to nurse him through his bouts of sickness and final illness also sets her apart as an exemplary model for not merely Hindu women but wives in general. Englishman George Westcott observes to Lyttelton that "no English-woman, however good and devoted, could have made a better wife or nurse to you" (*Clarinda* 253; bk. 3, ch. 12). However, Clarinda acts not just as Lyttelton's nurse, but his spiritual savior. On his deathbed, Lyttelton asserts that Clarinda has been his true savior, speaking of her in clearly Christ-like terms: "My soul was diseased and dead for many years, and your redeeming and all-powerful love commanded it to live once more" (246; bk. 3, ch. 11). After his revealed deception, Clarinda no longer considers Lyttelton a shining example of the Christian ideal, but she becomes a figure of that ideal by fulfilling her wifely duties as a physical nurse and spiritual helpmeet.

Sita Anantha Raman has shown that Madhavia's celebration of a modern female in companionate domesticity aligns him with other late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Tamil authors, including Vedanayakam Pillai, who wished to recuperate the ideal of the domestic *pativrata* to foster "social stability" in modernizing India ("Old Norms in New Bottles" 104). While I agree with Raman that Madhavia's celebration of the modern domestic *pativrata* indicates to some extent a socially conservative stance towards gender and sexuality, reading Clarinda's continued status as *pativrata* in light of her Christian conversion and her "unlawful" marriage with Lyttelton also suggests that Madhavia grants a personal spiritual agency to Clarinda that exists outside the authority of the Christian church and perhaps even the authority of her husband. Clarinda declares their pseudo-marriage something that "God hath brought together," in contradiction to the missionary's pronouncement when he declines to baptize her, and she keeps Lyttelton from doing physical, and perhaps spiritual harm to himself through suicide, furthermore encouraging him in faith through his final illness (*Clarinda* 248; bk. 3, ch. 11). Whereas Lyttelton fails to embody Christ's example, Clarinda succeeds, albeit in the role of devoted wife.

As philanthropist and Christian *pativrata*, Clarinda synthesizes Hindu and Christian ideals most fully in the charitable work that she undertakes after Lyttelton's death. She starts a school for indigent children in her house, teaching them to read and write in Tamil, and she attempts to alleviate poverty in her community through monetary assistance as well. Moreover, she promotes debates between Protestant leaders and their Catholic rivals, becoming a "clever and able exponent" of Protestant doctrine herself (*Clarinda* 260; bk. 3, ch. 14). In these activities, Clarinda perhaps resembles the famous Christian convert Pandita Ramabai, another Marathi Brahmin widow and Sanskrit scholar whose schools for high caste widows caused such a controversy because of the alleged conversion of Hindu pupils (Forbes 65). Yet Clarinda's status as a social reformer who teaches children and gives generously within her community signals her apotheosis as a model for other high caste women to emulate, perhaps in a way that does not depend on their conversion to Christianity. As Hindu intellectual Srinivasa Sastri suggested in a letter to Madhavia regarding the Tamil translation of *Clarinda*, "a new purpose in life might be added to a woman's ideal and transform some well-to-do widows at least into sisters of mercy" (292). Sastri's comment suggests that although Clarinda's conversion facilitates her own transformation into a sister of mercy, wealth and a lack of family obligations are the essential things an Indian woman needs to do social reform work. Madhavia's *Clarinda* might also recall the Hindu reformer

Sister Subbalakshmi, who started a boarding school in 1912 in Madras to train high caste child widows as teachers (Forbes 71). Clarinda reads both the *Puranas* and the Bible to her schoolchildren, suggesting that her legacy for the next generation might be less an extension of Protestant evangelism and more a synthesis of values from British/Christian and Hindu/Brahmin cultural and religious contexts.

*Situating Clarinda: History, Genre, Readership*

IN PRESENTING CLARINDA AS AN idealized heroine transcending her eighteenth-century context as she engages in social reforms reflective of turn-of-the-twentieth-century concerns, the novel may operate within multiple genres at once. George Levine has suggested that George Eliot's historical novel *Romola* mixes the genre of romance with realism, Eliot's eponymous protagonist embodying the "personal, free, uncontingent life of the romantic heroine" alongside other characters, such as Savonarola, who are limited within the "social, conditional enmeshed life of the ordinary man" (94). Clarinda, too, demonstrates a spiritual agency and a somewhat radical female subjectivity that suggests the romantic heroine, as she places her conjugal desire and her individual moral and intellectual discernment above the expectations of male authority figures, both Hindu and Christian. Yet if in her response to these expectations Clarinda reads more as an idealized heroine of a romance than a high caste woman enmeshed in the complex contingencies of history, her social problems themselves keep the novel anchored in some measure of fin-de-siècle social realism. As Madhaviah allows characters, including Clarinda, to debate issues such as the education of women, child marriage and the treatment of high caste widows, his novel participates in the Indian social reform genre prevalent in the latter decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, texts which were written in both English and Indian vernaculars and often focused on women's issues.<sup>23</sup> If Clarinda is in some respects a radical, idealized model for high caste Indian women to imitate, her narrative also invites them to understand and participate in ongoing social reform efforts in their contemporary moment.

*Clarinda's* plot, with its *sati* rescue and an interracial romance between an Indian woman and British man, might also suggest affinities with earlier Anglo-Indian romances like Philip Meadows Taylor's *Seeta* (1872).<sup>24</sup> However, it lacks the elements of more contemporaneous Indian romances by Flora Annie Steel and Fanny Emily Penny, where it is often the Western woman, rather than the Western man, who crosses racial boundaries in romantic relationships. Before he left for London commissioned to help Madhaviah find a publisher for *Thillai Govindan* and *Clarinda*, J.C. Maloney suggested to Madhaviah in a 1914 letter that he feared publishers were looking for something "more highly spiced – Mrs. Penny's style" (Maloney). While Maloney's choice of words is somewhat vague, his response suggests that despite its romantic title, Madhaviah's *Clarinda: A Historical Novel* thematically and/or stylistically resists an affinity with other contemporary romances set in India.

Maloney's comparison and Madhaviah's unsuccessful efforts to publish the book in London raise questions about the nature of Madhaviah's intended and historical readerships for an English novel like *Clarinda*. Recent critical attention paid to Toru Dutt's, Sarojini Naidu's, and Rabindranath Tagore's Indian English works and their turn-of-the-century publication and reception in Britain suggests that British readers were engaged consumers of Indian English literature, though perhaps, as Mary Ellis Gibson notes, they might have often received this literature as an extension of "romantic orientalism" (*Indian Angles* 255).<sup>25</sup>



Although *Clarinda* was never published in London, T. Fisher Unwin, a noted publisher of first-time writers and international authors, published Madhavia's *Thillai Govindan* in London in 1916 (Codell 919). Moreover, Madhavia envisioned the audiences for his Tamil and English novels as overlapping, sometimes through the medium of translation.<sup>26</sup> In a 1913 letter that Madhavia received from Srinivasa Sastri, Sastri suggests that the *Clarinda* manuscript he has read will be influential for Tamil women readers "when the story is translated into Tamil" (292).<sup>27</sup> The text was eventually translated in 1976 (Madras: Kiristava Illakkaya Cankam), though not in Madhavia's lifetime. Madhavia's attempts to position his texts for British metropolitan as well as Tamil colonial readers, while unevenly successful, suggest that more work on the transnational publication and trans-linguistic reception networks of colonial Indian English fiction might further complicate the notion that in the long nineteenth century, literary transmission ran only one way, from metropolitan center to colonial periphery. Priya Joshi has begun this work in her study of the way Indian readers shaped transnational literary consumption (114–21, 179–80). If Madhavia imagined his heroine Clarinda to synthesize values from his own Brahmin community with the fulfillment theology he encountered at the Madras Christian College, he may have imagined a similar role for his texts themselves, crossing national boundaries and "translating" across languages as well as religious communities.

### Conclusion

IN HIS WORK ON THE EARLY Tamil novel, Sascha Ebeling has suggested that the novel as a genre proved alluring to early prose writers in India because it opened the possibility of "probing into possible worlds, of finding imaginary solutions to real social problems" (213). As a social reformer, Madhavia imagines the English novel as a space of mediation between religiously and culturally divided communities, adapting the comparative practices prevalent in Victorian fulfillment theology to argue for robust, intersecting ethical traditions in Brahmin as well as Protestant communities. His text promotes educational opportunities for Indian women and advocates involving Indian women themselves in that social reform work. While the asymmetries of power in colonial contexts often render collaborations between Protestant colleges, British professors, and Indian students (of any religion) uneven, a work like *Clarinda* suggests that those colonial networks could also provide models for finding ethical common ground and building further inter-religious support for social reform projects. If the religious conversion of high caste women – as keepers of domestic spirituality – remained culturally controversial, then conversely the figure of the female Indian convert could also be an ideal means to embody and "translate" ethical and spiritual values across divisions between religious traditions and communities.

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### NOTES

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1. Bankimchandra Chatterjee/Chatopadhyaya, often considered the first Indian English novelist for his *Rajmohan's Wife* (1864), frequently serves as the paradigm for the idea that early Indian authors typically chose between vernacular or English language composition, since Bankimchandra's many subsequent publications in Bangla make his first attempt in English look like a "false start" (Mukherjee 30).
2. Dharwadker distinguishes this ambidexterity from Homi Bhabha's notion of hybridity, Dharwadker maintaining that the nineteenth-century Indian subject acted in a colonial India that offered no one concrete identity or a "territorial or culturally unified whole" which could be appropriated or undermined through hybridity (121).
3. Warren Hastings commissioned Nathaniel Halhed to compile an authoritative collection and translation of Hindu laws, and Halhed and his team of pandits produced *The Code of Gentoo Laws* in 1776 (Oddie 97). William Jones completed an English translation of the *Laws of Manu* in 1794.
4. Like Duff, Mill draws this conclusion based on his reading of the *Laws of Manu* and Halhed's *The Code of Gentoo Laws*.
5. See O'Hanlon 10–14; Chatterjee, chap. 6; and Dalmia 408–14 for discussions of the ideal high caste Hindu woman.
6. The pupils had been allowed to attend Ramabai's private prayer meetings (Forbes 65).
7. Mallampalli identifies T.E. Slater, F.W. Kellet, G.M. Cobb, and J.N. Farquhar as missionary educationalists who espouse versions of fulfillment theology (179).
8. A. Madhavan, grandson of Madhaviah, has a personal archive of Madhaviah's letters that includes many letters from Miller.
9. Kalapati and Jeyasekaran suggest that Miller's own zeal for women's social reform movements, including the anti-nautch movement in 1893, influenced Madhaviah's similar social and political commitments (118–19).
10. Madhaviah's works are frequently critical of aspects of the British Raj and Indian nationalism. For example, *Thillai Govindan* satirizes British arrogance and racism, as well as the disingenuous patriotism and lack of representation for India's impoverished masses at the Indian National Congress meetings (115–26).
11. Madhaviah acknowledges Bishop Caldwell's *Records of the Early History of the Tinnevely Mission of the SPCK and SPG* (1881) and Canon F. Penny's *The Church in Madras* (1904) (Holmström xvii).
12. Jules Verne's *Le Tour du Monde en Quatre-Vingt Jours* (1872) includes a scene of *sati* rescue.
13. See Mani, chaps. 3 and 4, for an analysis of missionary discourses on *sati*.
14. For clarity, I refer to her as "Clarinda" throughout my analysis.
15. Holmström's introduction gives a short synopsis of this history (xxiv–xxv).
16. Sastri suggested that Clarinda shared a similar fate to Romola, both their texts ending with an emphasis on duty (292). For critical readings of Romola's narrative as a mirror for the development of Western culture, especially in relation to Auguste Comte, see Brown xiv and Bonaparte 20, 151.
17. Madhaviah quotes the verses on the *koil* from Sir Monier Monier-Williams's translation *Sakootala, or the lost ring: an Indian drama translated into English prose and verse from the Sanskrit of Kalidasa* (1855) (Holmström 308).
18. This metatextual moment suggests that Madhaviah distances himself from his characters as well, especially those who are hostile towards the social reforms he supports.
19. Sastri (1869–1946) was a South Indian liberal reformer, politician, and orator (V.A.S. 4175).
20. Lyttelton suggests that the Hindu concept of reincarnation rationally explains the presence of suffering in the world, a view similar to the one which Madhaviah expresses in his essay "Religious Reform" (79–80).
21. Sundar notes that in practice the husband often managed the *stridhana* and used it for the family (416).

22. See Holmström, 319, n. 139, for a discussion of Madhaviah's ambivalence toward the *pativrata* as an ideal.
23. Krupabai Satthianadhan's *Saguna* (English, 1889–90), Potheri Kunjambu's *Saraswativijayam* (Malayalam, 1892), and Premchand's *Sevasadan* (Hindi, 1918; Urdu, 1924) represent some of these novels that deal with women's social reform.
24. *Seeta* (1872) depicts a similar interracial marriage between an Englishman and an Indian woman, although the heroine is not from a high caste.
25. See Lootens's work on Toru Dutt, Reddy's analysis of Naidu, and Gibson's *Indian Angles*, chaps. 5–6, for a discussion of Dutt, Naidu, and Tagore.
26. Madhaviah's daughter Lakshmi translated his Tamil novel *Muthumeenakshi* (1903) into English for the *Social Reform Advocate*, and Madhaviah himself translated and adapted his English novel *Lt. Panju* (1913) into the Tamil play *Rajamarthandan* (1919) (Raman, A. *Madhaviah* 47–48).
27. In the 1911 preface to the third edition of *Padmavati Carittiram*, Madhaviah envisions the Tamil novel as particularly accessible for the little-educated woman reader. Madhaviah himself also advocated English language learning for women, teaching his own daughters the language (Raman, A. *Madhaviah* 71, 73). See Chandra (3–27) for a discussion of the caste divide in colonial India that would extend English language learning to upper caste women while offering only instruction in Indian vernaculars for lower castes.

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