

Desai's Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard as Global Literature

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Erin M. Fehskens,
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Abstract: In her article "Desai's *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* as Global Literature" Erin M. Fehskens argues that scholars readily recognize Kiran Desai's Booker Prize winning second novel *The Inheritance of Loss* as world literature following David Damrosch's and Franco Moretti's notions. However, Desai's first novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* is often overlooked. Although *Hullabaloo*'s focus is narrow and local, its allegorical implications encode the processes of globalization and resistance to it into the novel. Thus, the novel can be read as an example of global literature, which uses the discontinuous nature of allegory to critique the de-differentiating practices of globalization and the specter of difference that accompanies these practices. Desai uses the return of Coca-Cola to India to illustrate the effects of multinational companies on the social and ecological landscapes of the Global South.

Erin M. FEHSKENS

Desai's *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* as Global Literature

Kiran Desai's *Hullabaloo in a Guava Orchard* begins with a period of water scarcity during which the dreams of Kulfi Chawla — dreams of food and water surpluses — sustain her through the final months of her pregnancy. In the beginning of the narration we read about the search to find explanations for the mysteriously prolonged drought affecting the village. The theories range around the globe, from volcanic ash in Tierra del Fuego to coastline currents in West Africa to shifting molecular structures of polar ice caps to an Iraqi attempt to steal India's longed-for monsoon. From this initial, international expansiveness, the novel settles into a localized cause for the hot, dry weather, a gesture that would seem to dismiss the wider context in which it began. Seeking a solution to this gap between individuated human experience and weather, the novel implies causal or analogical links between Kulfi and the drought. The narrator imagines an improbable symbiosis between one person and a pervasive weather condition: "She grew larger as it got worse" and later "She seemed to be claiming all the earth's energy for herself, sapping it dry, leaving it withered, shriveled, and yellow" (3). As an enormous monsoon finally breaks the record-long drought in their backwater village of Shahkot, Kulfi goes into labor and gives birth to Sampath, the family's first born son whose arrival in the village no one will ever forget. The rains immediately flood the streets and homes of Shahkot while a Red Cross plane loses one of its aid packages above the village dropping the case into a tree just outside of the Chawla home.

Sampath is born at a moment of natural, localized, and material non-governmental surplus. This story stands as the structural miniature of the narrative's larger focus, which is the story of Sampath's retreat from the town into an overgrown guava orchard where he becomes unwittingly a local guru who garners national fame and eventually enacts a metamorphosis that frees him from the strictures of his environment and the worship of the local residents. Resources, scarcity, and surplus are always in focus in the novel, from the lack of rain and abundance of powdered milk tins in the beginning to the clandestine engineering of sustained water and electricity to the orchard through its conclusion. Desai contextualizes subtly Sampath's flight to the orchard as contemporaneous with Coca-Cola's return to India in 1993. The beverage giant's presence in India was marketed as part of the country's move towards economic liberalization. Since then, environmental activists have drawn repeated attention to the extreme draining of water resources by Coke's bottling plants located in rural and semi-urban regions in the country. Like Kulfi and then like Sampath, Coca-Cola symbolizes a new beginning for the village — rains and a guru — and like the multinational corporation, they also draw all local resources into themselves thus impoverishing the areas around them. The orchard space signifies allegorically the inevitable resource crisis imposed on nations in the global south by multinationals. Desai's novel remains focused on the local confines of an orchard outside a small town in Northern India, but reading the narrative as an allegory of globalization in the region expands its critical reach drawing it into the ongoing theorizations of world or global literatures.

Although born in India, Kiran Desai — daughter of novelist Anita Desai — has spent much of her adolescent and adult life in the U.S. Members of the Indian press characterized her as an outsider to her "home" culture who submitted to a Western desire for arranged marriages, spices, and exotic foods to make Indian fiction digestible (see Mahanta for a collection of these reviews). Although Desai considers her work a product of an expatriate's nostalgic longing, her "home culture" critics read that nostalgia as a marketed exoticism of the kind that Graham Huggan and James English critique in their respective studies on the consumer industry of global literature. Desai's second novel, the Booker Prize winning *Inheritance of Loss*, has garnered much praise and inspired substantial literary criticism consigning *Hullabaloo* to the shadows of its later-born, more worldly sibling. Unlike the comic, satirical, parochial, and exoticist *Hullabaloo*, *Inheritance* is materially and thematically a novel that exemplifies our contemporary naming of world literature (on this, see also Sturm-Trigonakis). While *Inheritance* takes the global movements of bodies, commodities, and ideas as its primary narrative focus, *Hullabaloo* appears to occupy more local and less contemporary terrain. *Inheritance* belongs to the body of work produced by global Anglophone

writers who address the key issues of (im)migration, globalization, and human rights directly, but there is another strain of writing from these figures that takes on these issues in indirect ways and thereby sheds greater light on the plight of local populations whose sufferers often lack the means to insert themselves into narratives of massive migration.

Hullabaloo is not world literature according to David Damrosch's universalizing definition in that it does not "transcend the boundaries of the culture that produces it" (*How to Read* 2) owing to its importance or value to cultures outside of its location of production. In fact, Desai's status as a global author makes this kind of essentialist gesture to a culture of origin non-functional. However, Desai's second novel reflects Rebecca Walkowitz's theorization of (im)migrant literature as transnational rather than diasporic and this theory is derived from Damrosch's theorization of world literature. Walkowitz draws together the materialist critiques of Damrosch's circulation-translation-production triumvirate in *What is World Literature?* — which vests literary endeavor as "world literature" — and she connects this economically infused circulatory structure to the kind of thematic or tropic approach that lies at the center of Franco Moretti's "Conjectures on World Literature" and his *Novel: History, Geography, and Culture* and Pascal Casanova's *World Republic of Letters*. *Inheritance* is structured around tropes of dwelling and circulation as it narrates the experiences of (im)migration and globalization from privileged and underprivileged points of view. Desai's winning of the Booker (a connection to British Commonwealth authors) and her living in New York (a connection to migratory authors around the globe) performs the metropolitan shift that Casanova sees taking place — moving world literature's republic of letters from Paris to London to New York. Walkowitz has done the work of bringing these three loci and their theorizations of world literature together and tracing their conceptualizations of world literature into the work of (im)migrant literature. Desai's second novel, then, is a prime example of world (im)migrant literature and yet these formulations would seem to neglect a novel like *Hullabaloo*. While Desai's second novel exemplifies the practices and tropes of world literature, I argue that *Hullabaloo* offers us a way to consider the mode of allegory as it expresses a relationship between world literature and globalization. If world literature from Damrosch's, Moretti's, and Casanova's points of view is imagined and traced through economic metaphors like circulation and production (Damrosch), is rooted in centripetal movements towards centers of intellectual capital (Casanova), or is expressed in the uneven intersections of localized and travelling forms of knowledge (Moretti), then it seems worthwhile, even inevitable to think about world literature as a system that exists alongside and conjoined with globalization. For this reason, I refer to world literature as global literature to make more insistent and apparent these connections.

Concepts of global literature rest on figures of circulation and cross-cultural movement and on centripetal and centrifugal forces drawing metropolitan and marginal areas into relation. Instead of conceptualizing global literature only through travelling figures, we can also think the term through an analogical mode, especially if we attend to the link between global literature and globalization and consider globalization in long-durational terms. This form of analogy is one in which "every world-system rests on the ruins of the previous one, and because of this, world-systems are interrelated, albeit that the new system always expands and transforms the elements that it borrows from the previous one" (Behdad 69). Ian Baucom amplifies the repetitive and transformative nature of these historical and economic analogies by proposing that "If it is this serial incarnation of the space of flow in one place after another that permits [Anthony] Arrighi's history of three hundred years of capital to be simultaneously a history of the long twentieth century, then the analogy I have proposed between *then* and *now* is not an analogy at all but an eternal recurrence, a continual stopping and resetting of the clock of history at the eschatological moment of finance capital" (160; emphases in the original). Without dispensing the equivalence logic of the analogy with which Baucom begins, it operates as a spectral analogy, distant — i.e., the eighteenth to the twentieth century — and yet occupying hauntingly the present and not just related, but repeated. The analogical form supposes a relational or structural equivalence, a de-differentiating gesture reflective of globalization's flattening of difference. But as Baucom argues, within the analogy's de-differentiation erupts the specter of difference (162) and so too with globalization: as forces from above (multinational capital) enforce homogenization, forces from

below occupy positions protective of difference. This analogical philosophy of history finds a companion in conceptualization in Fredric Jameson's theory of allegory.

If we combine this economic figurative landscape with the application of spectral analogy from Baucom and Ali Behdad, then we can see that global literature employs the form of unequal equivalences like the spectral analogy and Jamesonian allegory. At the heart of Baucom's reading of speculative finance and literary form is Jameson's theory of genre as the ideology of form. Baucom is not the only theorist to rely on Jameson as a critical anchor either in terms of postmodernity or literary form. Consider Moretti's concept of world literature: "in cultures that belong to the periphery of the literary system (which means: almost all cultures, inside and outside Europe), the modern novel first arises not as an autonomous development but as a compromise between a western formal influence (usually French or English) and local materials" ("Conjectures" 58). This is based on an observation made by Jameson on the subject of the Japanese novel. Peter Hulme and Behdad also refer to Jameson's theories of genre and postmodernity to situate their arguments on the relationship between the postcolonial and global. At the root of these returns to Jameson is an enduring interest in the possibilities of thinking about global literature allegorically for Jameson's study on "third world" literature in the age of multinational capitalism is surely the specter haunting the bibliographies of said studies. Or, to think about the relationship between global literature and globalization we must think allegorically.

Hullabaloo emerges as a perspicacious rewriting of Jameson's enduring maxim: all third world literature is national allegory. It shows us that local-worlded literature is globalization allegory, even — perhaps especially — when its characters remain rooted in local spaces. In Jameson's contentious essay on literary mode and literature of the global south, he recovers allegory from its relation to the logic of equivalence and claims that it is the mode through which contemporary "third world" literature can be apprehended, a declamation that has been widely criticized for its limitations and widely supported for its possibilities. It is significant to note that Jameson does not title his study in reference to postcoloniality or postmodernity and their attendant linkages with political, philosophical, and aesthetic reorganization. Rather, he uses specifically economic "multinational capitalism" paired with the economic method of international organization — "third world literature" — as if to imbue the historical moment in a particularly economic light. In this way, he offers an important insight into the ways in which the economics of multinational capitalism override the political and cultural effects of decolonization as central concerns in postcolonial literature as it is among postcolonialists rather than, say, scholars of Chinese literature.

Given the complex global network facilitated by multinational capital, it seems that a "national" allegory enforces an inappropriate notion of comparative scale to the figural mode employed by this vast and discontinuous collection that comprises "third world literature." Setting aside for a moment the modifier national, we should first consider Jameson's description of allegory: "the allegorical spirit is profoundly discontinuous, a matter of breaks and heterogeneities, of the multiple polysemia of the dream rather than the homogeneous representation of the symbol. Our traditional conception of allegory — based, for instance, on stereotypes of Bunyan — is that of an elaborate set of figures and personifications to be read against some one-to-one table of equivalences: this is, so to speak, a one-dimensional view of this signifying process, which might only be set in motion and complexified were we willing to entertain the more alarming notion that such equivalences are themselves in constant change and transformation at each perpetual present of the text" (73). As Jameson proceeds, he finds the discontinuities produced by an allegorical signifying system to allow more than one figure to stand for the nation, meaning that the nation itself is capable of differentiated representation (73-74). Thus not only are allegorical relationships discontinuous, but in the particular case of the "third world text" the figure that stands in as the nation can be more than one. To connect this claim to the ideology of form would focus on the crises inherent in representation and communal coherence at an early or foundational stage of the nation. Jameson's reading of Ousmane Sembène's work bears this out. But what about later eras beyond the initial scramble for reorganization post-independence? As postcolonial nations confront additional crises of representation and connection when impacted by globalizing capital, it seems that the kind of allegory must change bringing local and global spaces to bear symbolically on each

other and making an impossibly vast network of connections apprehensible through a local, digestible story that signifies far beyond itself. Literature written from the Global South in an age of multinational capitalism is endowed with an interest in the impact of globalizing forces on local spaces, some inflected regionally and some nationally so. The levels of figural association are multiple just as the allegorands are multiple in Jameson's rehabilitation of allegory. I maintain that his theory of allegory as discontinuous equivalences is a fruitful way to think through the analogous relationship between globalization and global literature. Global literature allegorizes globalization in part by making the local not simply local, but indicative and illustrative of unequal global relations.

Hullabaloo's narrow geographical scope expands allegorically to represent a globalized center and periphery. As Sampath's father takes more and more action towards capitalizing on his son's reluctant willingness to persist in being the "monkey baba" — including publishing his photo in the newspaper — the resources and wealth in the village of Shahkot contract into the orchard. Sampath's wisdom, as a commodity, is diffused throughout the country. Building on the non-material form of spoken wisdom, the photo "brands" Sampath as the monkey baba and offers a material companion to his original commodity. Mail addressed to Sampath via this brand name begins to reach him in the orchard despite the lack of an official postal address. Because the mail is delivered, this suggests an official ratification of both title and location thus giving his unsettled retreat the imprimatur of settlement and commerce. Not only does Mr. Chawla ensure that "water gushed into the tank all day long" — which is unlike the uneven and inconsistent water supply throughout India — but he also begins to imagine converting Sampath into a tourist attraction, "a whole complex with a temple and dormitory accommodation for travelers designed to suit modern tastes in comfort" (90, 127).

There are precisely two historically situated details in the novel which are otherwise set hazily sometime after independence in India. The first — a reference to a popular Bollywood film, *Love Story* — is a passing detail at best. It mostly concerns Pinky and Ammaji, two minor figures in Sampath's family and the novel's focus more generally. The other reference occurs at the moment in which Mr. Chawla decides to pursue Sampath's retreat as a business venture. Leading up to this moment, Mr. Chawla attempts an arranged marriage for Sampath, hopeful that the presence of a lovely woman will tempt him out of his tree. He speculates on the failure that is his son exclaiming "What am I to do with this boy? ... The best education. A job. A wife. The world served to him on a platter, but, oh no, none of it is good enough for him. Mister here must run and sit in a tree. He is not in the least bit thankful for all that has been done for him" (62). The sentence fragments which populate Mr. Chawla's complaint reveal a separation between Sampath and the opportunities which have been heaped — literally at this juncture — at his feet. This syntactic strategy is especially significant when considered alongside the final sentence in the same chapter following the transcript of Sampath's first appearance in the local newspaper. After Mr. Chawla reads out the brief story, the narrator contextualizes it in the newspaper that "There it was — a modest column introducing Sampath to the world, along with news of a scarcity of groundnuts, an epidemic of tree frogs and the rumour that Coca-Cola might soon be arriving in India" (67). Significantly, four unrelated news stories appear in succession in this single sentence, their paratactic structure obscuring any possible relationship of causality, progression, or importance among them. To be sure, these four elements — one "human interest," two ecological, and one corporate — suggest the array of narratives which populate the commodities of print capitalism which draw together Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" and which comprise the modern nation. Interpreted in this way, Sampath's appearance alongside an article about a beverage company, tree frogs, and groundnuts functions metonymically to stand in for the larger business of print capitalism at the root of modern nationalism.

However, the particular company mentioned in the description of the newspaper page left India in 1977 following the socialization of the economy and the consequent threat that it would be required to divulge its secret formula to Indian shareholders (see Harish and Gopal 47). It only returned in 1993 following Indian economic liberalization. This beverage company is also the world's largest and Coca-Cola itself "is the world's most valuable brand" and Coca-Cola was eager to return to India because it considered the country an emerging market ripe for increasing revenue for the ever-expanding multinational (Walsh and Dowding 109). Capital seeks new

markets to grow and for Coca-Cola in the 1990s India was just that market. But why draw out the importance of this single detail rather than a surplus of tree frogs or a scarcity of groundnuts? Mr. Chawla's remarks, which follow this observation, link Coca-Cola's thirst for profitable new markets to Sampath's conversion into a new business venture for Chawla. Immediately following the sentence, the subsequent chapter opens with Chawla's epiphany: "It was at this time that Mr. Chawla had a realization—all of a sudden, with a tumble and rush of understanding — a realization so quick and so incredible in nature that his heart began to pound. Sampath might make his family's fortune. They could be rich! ... What an opportunity had arisen out of nowhere! ... He, Mr. Chawla, must move as quickly as he could to claim these possibilities for his family, possibilities that stretched, he was sure, well beyond his sight's furthest horizon" (68). The atemporality of the newspaper description's paratactic sentence structure belies the temporality of the medium itself and its everydayness coupled with its present-tense significance. Although the paper appears every day, the stories which populate its pages are only "current" on the day in which they appear. It is then no wonder that Mr. Chawla's epiphany is temporalized as an instant ("all of a sudden"). Linking the roots of his scheme in the instant-temporality of the newspaper and focusing on the long-term profitability of his son's retreat from the world, the novel asserts a clear, although indirect connection between Coca-Cola's return to India and Mr. Chawla's branding of his own son. Just as capital seeks ever-new markets requiring a horizon at which it will never arrive, Mr. Chawla sees the profitability of his son extending to a similarly unreachable end.

Since Coca-Cola's return to India in 1993, it has become one of the country's largest international investors placing US\$1 billion in circulation in the country (see Hills and Welford, 168). It has also exacerbated the country's mounting water crisis: in an already "water poor" country (Walsh and Dowding 107), Coca-Cola's drinks require three liters of water for each liter of soft drink or bottled water that it produces (see Ciafone 119). To capture the needed water for their bottling plants to function, Coca-Cola locates its plants in rural areas in India. In fact, one bottling plant is located in Uttar Pradesh, a northern province near Desai's Shahkot. The company draws groundwater at such tremendous rates that the levels have dropped precipitously in the regions where bottling plants are located endangering the livelihoods and agricultural work of the rural poor who live around them. Additionally, many bottling plants have been accused of polluting reserves and nearby lands with the disposal of industrial waste and effluent water (many commented on Coca-Cola's damaging actions which intensified the water crisis in India, a crisis that has been tied to bureaucratic mismanagement of public resources, corporate overuse, insufficient conservation efforts and dam projects [see Burnett and Welford; Ciafone; Fishman; Harish and Gopal; Hills and Welford; Roy; Shankar; Thomas; Walsh and Dowding]). Attempting to remake their public image as a multinational corporation committed to the ecological sustainability of their production at the local level, Coca-Cola has initiated a groundwater harvesting scheme that many regard as insufficient given the damage they have wreaked thus far on the availability of water in rural spaces. In short, Coca-Cola inserted itself into the Indian market as a result of economic liberalization and since its return to the country it attempted to brand itself as the only choice for a "cold drink" (Ciafone), as a major investor in local economies, and as a connection between the global soft drink commodities market and the local Indian markets in which it can be purchased. In order to achieve such widespread notoriety and availability, its bottling plants have wreaked havoc on local water supplies in rural spaces, enclosing and privatizing common resources, and siphoning them away from populations who use them.

Sampath's guava orchard — once Mr. Chawla initiates his designs on it — functions in a similar way siphoning common and scarce resources like water and electricity. The residents of Shahkot lived without regular access to water and electricity and yet Sampath's family enjoys an abundance of both once they move into the orchard on a permanent basis and thus Mr. Chawla's practices and plans symbolize the exploitative efforts of Coca-Cola bottling plants in rural communities and he speaks of this kind of controlling desire at the end of his guru complex vision; it would be "a prize pilgrimage stop and an environment that he could keep control of" (127). Sampath's orchard and the contraction of resources into it for capital gain allegorizes the ways in which Coca-Cola protects its resources, including its secret formula, in the West while distributing the labor of mixing and bottling to each of the countries in which it sells its commodities. Local populations control the

bottling plants (this has been much rarer in India, however), but they do not control or manage the profits from their production locally nor do workers in plants throughout the Global South enjoy equal benefits and pay. The structural inequality of labor beneath the product's veneer of homogeneity illustrates an illusory diffusion of equivalence that carries a specter of difference as inequity. The tension between these movements can also be felt in the construction of Sampath's guru location both outside Shahkot and yet central to the profitable operations linked to the town. Sampath's orchard functions doubly allegorically in this way — his is both the site of multinational capital centrifugally expanding to the margins and the unequal redistribution of resources centripetally contracting to metropolitan centers in the global north.

Allegorands are multiple and discontinuous in global literature. Sampath is the bottler of ready-made wisdom fresh for distribution throughout India. His increasingly elaborate home among the branches of a guava tree suggests his complicity with Mr. Chawla's efforts to draw resources into this space. Mr. Chawla stands as another, more rapacious and extractive allegorand of Coca-Cola's water policies of its bottling plants. The two characters could not be more different in their novelistic representations. Sampath even denies any species likeness between them: "He and his father were as different as black from white, as chickens from potatoes, as peas from buckets" (127). Yet when we view the novel as an allegory of globalization we start to see some startling similarities between them. We also begin to see the ways in which the novel is functioning as a critique of the return of multinational corporations to India and the ways in which they produce homogeneity and reduce the local wealth of communities. Thus while Sampath suggests a retreat from pressures to profit and modernize, his father turns his retreat into a modernized space for ever-increasing and diversified profit.

They also use Sampath as an anchor commodity to which they attach a variety of side businesses, from Ammaji's snacks sold in the orchard to Mr. Chawla's guru offerings which he collects at the end of each day and sells again for additional profit. Relying on the desire of Shahkot's populace to consult their local guru, as well as pilgrims travelling from more distant places, Mr. Chawla succeeds in creating something out of nothing, a kind of capitalist sleight of hand that resembles Michael Watts's theory of fast capitalism and the petro-magic of Nigeria's oil boom that Jennifer Wenzel traces into Nigerian literature. As Mr. Chawla surveys the orchard while calculating the growing balances in his bank account, he notes that the "advertisements hung colourfully on the neighbouring trees ... All paid for by lavish donations, boxes of nuts and more sweetmeats, yellow, green, pin and white, than anybody knew what to do with. If it was not for Mr. Chawla none of this would exist. None of it" (127). What he creates, however, mars the beauty of the orchard suggesting the damaging effects of fast capitalism in aesthetic and ecological terms. Sampath, departing from Mr. Chawla's pride in the orchard, observes that "Ugly advertisements defaced the neighbouring trees; a smelly garbage heap spilled down the hillside behind the tea stall and grew larger every week" (181).

The inevitability of capitalist modernity harbors the losses of alternative possibilities and so under the crushing inevitability of globalization as de-differentiation is the possibility for other ways of constructing community (Jameson 81). The discontinuous nature of allegory contains both inevitability (of sameness) and possibility (of difference). Thus an allegory of globalization in a novel like *Hullabaloo* brings encoded globalized forces to bear on a localized space, but it also imagines the possibilities of alternative structures of relation taking root — or in the case of this particular novel, taking flight. For Sampath, his role in the orchard catalyzes his father into an allegorization of national government and multinational corporate-mismanagement of local resources. Sampath's transformation at the end of the novel and his close association with the monkeys imagines a post-human alternative liberating himself of human form and taking to the forest. The atheist spy's accidental fall at the end suggests another alternative: the gruesome possibility of cannibalism literalizing the metaphor of exploitative consumption. So the novel presents diametrically opposed possibilities and neither holds the human subject as an inviolable center of the drama. Either consume each other or escape into a radically reoriented posthuman affiliative community and way of being in the world.

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard may seem to only develop a narrative around a brief *Times* of India item on a hermit who climbed a tree, but it also suggests and illustrates ways in which

localized literature set in the Global South operates allegorically as global literature dramatizing the effects of multinational capital on rural and semi-urban spaces. The novel's critique of globalization also reveals a subtle engagement with postcoloniality. The title of Jameson's study presupposes a functional relationship between postcolonial literature (the argued term "third world literature") and globalization (dressed down to its key feature, the chartered companies in Baucom's "Globalit" or its ethos and "multinational capitalism" in Jameson's), but the terms are imbricated problematically. The emphasis on transnationalism and global flows in theories of globalization can occlude the structural inequalities constitutive of the colonial encounter and the inequities which remain functional in the era after colonization ends. On the other hand, if we historicize globalization as synchronous with the colonial endeavor, then we can see that their projects have always already been linked (see Hulme). When we consider the ways in which globalization stands on the theoretical premises of coloniality and postcoloniality (as Behdad does), we see that the threat of homogenization or "the de-differentiation of exchange is also the site that is haunted by a return of difference" (Baucom 162). Difference here refers in one sense to the colonial project and its use of differentiation to abet representational and material violence. The return of difference also speaks to other possibilities: when we consider the structural violence that underwrites multinational capital's expansion, the narrations of globalization's reach — Coca-Cola in India, for example — are also keyed to the resistance to this reach.

Just as Kulfi provides us with an image of the rapacious extractor of resources in the beginning of the novel anticipating the text's sustained allegorization of Coca-Cola in India, late in the novel she dons the discursive likeness of an Orientalizing imperialist, flattening worldly differences into a single category of exotic comestibles. The lists of fabulous and rare ingredients which run through Kulfi's mind, for example, provide an uncritical demonstration of the tantalizing exoticism associated with Orientalist discourse produced in the West. Consider the example when Kulfi is imagining ever more unusual cooking projects after living in the orchard for several months: "And sitting in a vast kitchen before an enormous globe, imperiously she ordered her supplies, sent out for spices from many seas away, from mountain ranges and deserts that lay beyond the horizon, for spices that existed only in the fantastical tales of sailors and soothsayers. She sent out for these and for plants that grew on islands no bigger than specks in the ocean, or on mountain peaks devoid of human habitation. She sent out for kingdoms to be ruined, for storehouses and fields to be plundered and ransacked. She asked for tiger meat and bear, Siberian goose and black buck. For turtles, terrapins, puff adders, and seals. For armadillos, antelopes, zebras and whales" (154).

Kulfi's imperious actions begin from a desire for the antipodean unknown, but they soon take on more violent features when she sends out not for unknown spices but for the destruction of kingdoms and plundering of fields. Her list of ingredients invades the forest, savannah, ocean, and ice shelf knowing no bounds and allowing nothing to remain sacred. While her xenophilia and destructive dreams reflect an Orientalist discourse we might expect from a Western writer, Kulfi is decidedly not European. Her daydreaming is spurred by a bad foraging mission in a forest of northern India, an area to which she is an indigenous inhabitant. After seeking out every new edible plant in the space around the orchard, Kulfi realizes that she has exhausted her local market and, like capital itself, seeks to expand in new markets. Her daydream subverts nineteenth-century Orientalist discourse, but it also personifies the desires of capital to expand into uncharted territories and draws together destruction and exportation illustrating the ways in which neo-imperial capital via multinational companies impoverishes its new markets while expanding the profits of those companies in the global north. Kulfi's iteration of lists is her leitmotif in the novel and these disconnected nouns render her character adrift in the officious and status-driven world of Mr. Chawla. They also liberate her from traditional wifely duties like cooking for the family and so, in a sense, these dreams of exotic ingredients also represent an extended imagined liberation from her gendered expectations mirroring the kind of freedom that Sampath attains physically at the end of the novel.

Kulfi's minor efforts at resistance emerge alongside Sampath's more radical actions which reflect the varied environmentalism of the poor that has developed in response to Coca-Cola's presence in the Global South. Grassroots efforts at the local level have drawn national and international attention to the environmental dangers posed by Coca-Cola's operations in India and

Amanda Ciafone sees a link between the local/global resonances drawn out of the Quit Coca-Cola movement and global literature: "India's rural poor have also catalyzed an impressive local, national, and transnational social movement, linking their struggles with others through Coca-Cola's world system of capital, commodities, and culture that resulted in the creation of multinational pressure on the multinational corporation" and in the footnote that follows this section she identifies Moretti and Casanova as global literature and world system theorists who inspired her reading of Coca-Cola's functioning at the local and global levels (132). The novel does not include a version of grassroots resistance to the growing capitalist endeavors of Mr. Chawla and Sampath's complicity with them. However, several characters dream of escape from the orchard imagining a new set of relations or a new community as an alternative to the increasingly capitalistic space of the orchard. Pinky thinks of eloping with the Hungry Hop Ice Cream boy, which symbolizes a retreat into local, comestible products rather than the rarified and hackneyed spirituality of guru wisdom. Kulfi imagines herself as an all powerful imperialist, drawing the most distant animals into her culinary experiments. Sampath himself transforms into a guava and is carried off by a band of monkeys who adopt him into their group. The commodifying and wealth-accumulating forces which lure the monkeys, the atheist spy, and an ever more adventurous Kulfi into their long-term settlement in the orchard are the very forces which catalyze the radical human transformation that imagines symbolically a posthumanist alternative to the impoverishing and extractive practices of multinational capital. Thus the specter of difference that is carried within the homogenizing principles of Mr. Chawla's profit are posthuman possibilities of the gruesome and fabulous variety. While Sampath becomes a guava, the atheist spy falls into Kulfi's cooking pot opening up the possibility of cannibalistic consumption in the orchard. Just as one human finds an alternative community through a radical subject transformation, another human's fate literalizes the violence committed in the name of globalization's profits. Although this small novel ends with a look into a cooking pot in an orchard outside a small town in Northern India, its symbolic scope looks out onto a global horizon.

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