

# A Tantalising Introduction to One of the Most Accomplished Personalities in Eighteenth-century Britain

## BOOK REVIEW

### Sir William Jones: A Reader

Edited by Satya S Pachori

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OVERS and admirers of Sir William Jones in particular and orientalism in general will be much delighted by a recent publication of a very judicious and convenient selection of his works entitled "Sir William Jones: A Reader", edited with introduction and notes by Satya S Pachori, Chairman and Professor of English, Department of Language and Literature, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, USA. It is a very timely publication since Jones has been out of print for nearly 200 years, although there was a particular demand for his works which were not very easily available to modern readers and enthusiasts of Jones.

Sir William Jones was the greatest orientalist of the eighteenth century and one of the greatest of all times. He was born in London on 28th September 1746. His father, a mathematician, a friend of Newton and Halley and vice-president of the Royal Society, hailed from Anglesey, an island in North Wales. Jones was sent to Harrow in 1753 at the age of seven, and studied there until 1764, where, among several other European languages, he also learnt Hebrew and the Arabic writing system. He was admitted to University College, Oxford, in 1764 and elected Bennett Scholar. Here, inter alia, he studied Arabic and Persian as well. Jones became a private tutor of Lord Althorp, the future Earl Spencer, in the summer of 1766. On 7th August this year he was elected to a fellowship at University College. The Duke of Grafton, hearing of his proficiency in Arabic and Persian, offered him the post of interpreter for the Eastern Languages which he modestly refused. He met Anna Maria Shipley whom he married years later. In 1767 Jones visited Europe and started learning Chinese. By then he had acquired some fame as an orientalist and it was reinforced by his translation of *L'Historie de Nader Chah* in 1770. It included an essay on Oriental poetry and 13 Ghazals of Hafiz in French. Jones studied law from 1770 to 1774 and became a barrister. His *Grammar of the Persian Language* was published in 1771 and his noteworthy book of verse *Poems Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatic Languages* in 1772. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1772 and a member of the famous literary club of Dr Johnson in 1773.

Jones' works are thus numerous. But for nearly 200 years many of these were not available to the readers. In this context S S Pachori's *Sir William Jones: A Reader* has a special importance and significance since it will enable present day readers to have an easy access to many works of Jones. The book has obviously an oriental bias for it mostly includes Jones' oriental publications which are rather much sought for by readers, scholars and researchers interested in oriental studies all over the world. Pachori, himself an orientalist in his own right, has done a very commendable job by bringing out this book.

Besides the brief Acknowledgements and Invocation of Ganesh (by Jones), the Foreword by Rosane Rocher and Preface by P H Salus, the book contains three sections under three different headings such as: I. Literature; II. Language and Linguistics; and III. Religion, Mythology, and Metaphysics. The first section has three sub-sections: (I) Poetry, (II) Drama and (III) Criticism: Under Poetry Pachori includes: The Palace of Fortune.

an Indian Tale: The Seven Fountains, an Eastern Allegory: Caisa, or the Game at Chess: An Ode in Imitation of Alcaeus: The Muse Recalled: Damsels of Cardigan: The Moallakat: Jones' Argument to the Poem of Amrikals: The Poem of Amrikals: Lines from the Arabic: On Parent Knees: The Concluding Sentence of Berkeley's Siris, Imitated: Written After a Perusal of The Eighth Sermon of Barrow, 1786: The Enchanted Fruit: or, The Hindu Wife: An Antediluvian Tale written in The Province of Bihar: A Hymn to Camdeo: The Hymn: A Hymn to Narayana: The Hymn: A Hymn to Seresawty: The Hymn: Jones's Original Version of a Sanskrit Hymn to Sarasvati: A Hymn: to Ganga: The Hymn: A Hymn to India: The Hymn: A Hymn to Surya: The Hymn: A Hymn to Lachshmi: The Hymn: Two Hymns to Pracriti: The Hymn to Durga: The Hymn to Bhavani: Gitagovinda: or, The Songs of Jayadeva. The sub-section under Drama includes — Sacontala; or The Fatal Ring: An Indian drama by Calidas: Preface: Sacontala; or The Fatal Ring. The following appears under sub-section Criticism: Essay on the Arts, commonly called Imitative; An Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations; on the Mystical Poetry of the Persians and Hindus; on the literature of the Hindus, from the Sanscrit: Jones's English Advertisement to His Printing of the *Ritusamhara*.

The second section — Language and Linguistics — includes the following: A Grammar of the Persian Language; Proposals for Re-printing by Subscription: A Dictionary of the Arabic, Persian and Turkish languages; A Dissertation on the Orthography of Asiatic Words in Roman Letters: A Discourse on the Institution of a Society for Inquiring into the History, Civil and Natural, the

Antiquities, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia; The Third Anniversary Discourse. The following have been included in the third section — Religion, Mythology, and Metaphysics: On the Gods of Greece, Italy, and India; On the Antiquity of the Indian Zodiac; Discourse the Eleventh on the philosophy of the Asiatics; Institutes of Hindu Law, or, The Ordinances of Manu. According to the Gloss of Cuttaca comprising the Indian System of Duties, Religious and Civil; The Preface: The Laws of Manu, Song Brahma: Extracts from the Vedas: Isavasyam: or, An *Upantashad* from the *Yajurveda*: Translation of the Mohamudgaras; or The Ignorant Instructed. Apart from these the book also includes a Selected Bibliography and an Index, both of which will be of much use for pursuers of further studies on Jones.

About the Reader the author himself says: "This Reader contains selected representative works of Sir William Jones... the prominent British philologist, poet, translator, orientalist, jurist, and father of comparative studies. His works have not been published since a six-volume edition of 1799 and a thirteen volume edition of 1807. Also they have never been critically edited and annotated: this is the first volume of its kind". Professor Pachori has thus emerged as a pioneer in respect of Jones scholarship by bringing out such a Reader of Jones and has set a commendable example for other scholars to emulate. In the Foreword, Rosane Rocher has rightly said: "The author of *Sir William Jones: A Reader* is a Professor of English, and in a position to highlight the features of Jones' works which are of the greatest relevance for the general reader and the college student today. He is a life long student of Jones, and

## SIR WILLIAM JONES

### A Reader

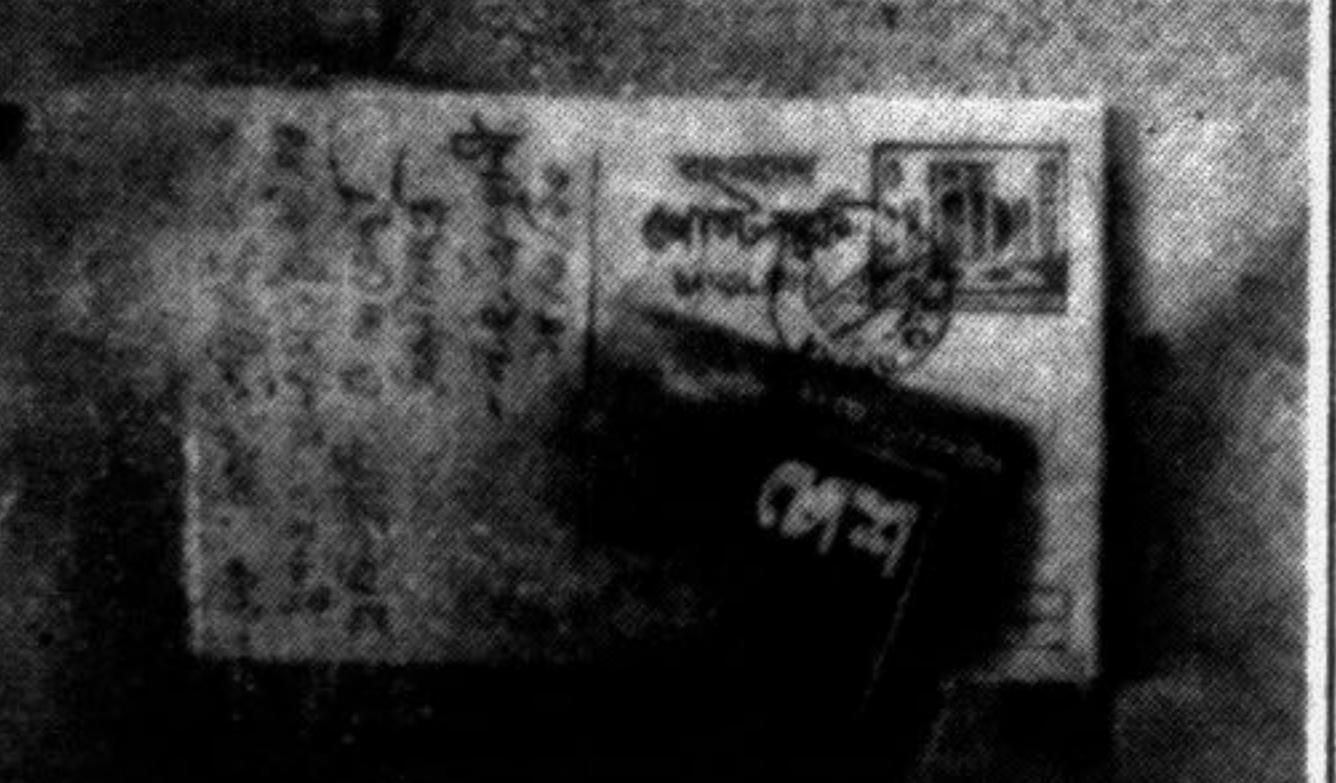


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SATYA S. PACHORI

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## A Promising and Praiseworthy Painter

by Fayza Haq



Nazrul Islam, at a recent exhibition entitled "Letters", held at "La Galerie", had a number of good works, which failed to find adequate buyers (due to unavoidable circumstances prevailing then) despite the good quality of all the pieces.

In "Letter from Islam" (oil on canvas) there were two male figures, one juxtaposed with another, with the one on the left seen with its eyes glazing, while one hand bore a bamboo-stick. The other one too appeared in a rebellious

mood, bearing a similar weapon. Both were seen in loin-cloth. Vermilion and black smudges seen on the headband highlighted the under current theme of warfare. These were figures borne on a post-card, which was enclosed in an envelope, sent by book-post. The envelope carried a stamp of Bangladesh, with the symbol of the Shahid-Minar. An overseas postage mark was also included. The card was meant to be an open message to the Amnesty International, carrying a report about the intermittent political upheavals.

In "Her Open Letter" there were handwritings on the canvas, portraying a sentimental and conventional *billet-doux* spelling out "I have been crying with joy to receive your letter" (seen on the left). This was balanced with mature handwriting and signature, with crossed marks to bring in subtle texture work. These writings in Bangla were to be seen both in the background and foreground. A *shakil* had been depicted as the bearer of this message of a young woman's outpourings to her *petti-ami*. The birds symbolised and emphasised happiness. The colours at the background were buoyant ones, once again to highlight the element of happiness, conveyed by the painting.

In spite of its liveliness, its passionate defensiveness and the disappearance of certain forms of attack against it, hunting with the hounds is threatened. France is the country in which it is practised the most (while it is banned in Germany or in Sweden) and in Northern Europe people's feelings go strongly against it. With the implementation of European unity, lovers of the hunt would do well to watch out!



that hamper the socio-economic stability of the Subcontinent, such as the one concerning the Babri Masjid, in the recent past.

One could see the post-card inside the envelope, with layers upon layers of colours, which differentiated the subject from the backdrop. The monogram of the Shilpkala Academy was also apparent. A post man on a bicycle was included in the composition to

drive home the artist's message. His clothes were done with pale and quick sweeps of beige, pale-green and brown, while the movement of the wheels of the bicycle were carried all across the canvas, in the form of repeated, balanced circles, as one sees in negatives of action films. A post box was included too, on the same canvas.

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There was a building with a locked gate, with an open window, through which no one could be seen, and with a single *shakil* sitting and sulking in the foreground in "One For Sorrow". The subject of pain and agony is expressed by the dark, dismal and abandoned window, as well as the *shakil*.

— *L'Actualite en France*

world. In our kind of society, death has almost become a taboo. Moreover, hunting is an unequal pursuit as it is everybody against one. For a profoundly egalitarian society of law, hunting with the hounds is incompatible with its view of the world. What is more, in spite of an apparent democratisation of deer-hunting, class differences are not forgotten. As soon as the hunt is over, everybody returns to his place. The main hunters take out their baskets while the followers start to cut up the animal with their knives. Opponents, who are very sensitive to social differences, can only be irritated by the aristocratic nature of the hunt.

Today, the main argument put forward by opponents is the suffering of the animal. Much use was made of the ecological argument about the disappearance of wild species.

Confirmed opponents cannot understand the logic of the social world proposed by hunting. The urban middle classes from which most of the opponents come, have a far more contemptuous view of the

world. In our kind of society, death has almost become a taboo. Moreover, hunting is an unequal pursuit as it is everybody against one. For a profoundly egalitarian society of law, hunting with the hounds is incompatible with its view of the world. What is more, in spite of an apparent democratisation of deer-hunting, class differences are not forgotten. As soon as the hunt is over, everybody returns to his place. The main hunters take out their baskets while the followers start to cut up the animal with their knives. Opponents, who are very sensitive to social differences, can only be irritated by the aristocratic nature of the hunt.

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## The Trojan Horse of the Vanishing Americans

by Shamsad Mortuza

We die. That may be the meaning of life. But we do language. That may be the measures of our lives.

— Toni Morrison

those brash kids — Hey, you little son of a bitch, listen to me!" conceded the Lakota holy man (John) Lame Deer. He knows such shoutings would make his grandsons listen to him. But he cannot do so. After all, "that's White man's talk."

Lame Deer in his memoir says: I am a man of the earth. Our people don't call them Sioux or Dakota [Lakota's birthplace]. That's white man's talk. We call ourselves like Wicasa — the natural humans. The free, wild common people. The wind has changed. These Native Americans now come out of the grinding mill of language. They have the new words to utter. They have the new urge to settle the course of history — of course by dint of words. Among them is Scott Momaday, a Kiowa descent who earned the Pulitzer prize for his novel *House Made of Dawn*. Momaday, with a Whitmanesque ambience can claim: I invented history. In his memoir, *The Names*, he conjures his grandfather from an old manuscript. He plays upon words like Joycean hero Stephen Daedalus and says: I trace the words. I touch myself to the words. and they stand to me.

Lamour is given these Native Americans a new sensibility. They are no longer the vanishing Americans. They now assert what they want to assert. As Lame Deer says: That Christian name, John, don't call me that when I'm gone. Call me Taheca Usite — Lame Deer.

The little bird in the hands of the Native Indians has certainly grown up: it has become no less than it has become. The writer is a Lecture English at the Jahangir University.

## Viewing Video

by Lenin Gani

TARGATE is a futuristic action thriller set in Egypt. Never did the archaeologists in Giza in 1928 realise the gravity of their discovery.

Many years later at a secret US army base a team of scientists were struggling to unravel the inscriptions. One of them hires the services of an Egyptologist James Spade.

Within a couple of weeks he unlocks the code that is a gateway to the stars.

Then Spade and a group of soldiers headed by Kurt Russel undertake a reconnaissance mission. They befriend the inhabitants who treat the visitors like gods. They also learn there is an alien who enslaves the natives.

The Americans tell their hosts to rise up against the alien.

Eventually Russel and his group are drawn into a full-scale conflict.

The special effects are outstanding. No wonder the film is doing well in the States.

Wisdom is the tale of an average American boy who wanted to do something in life but ultimately paid the price.

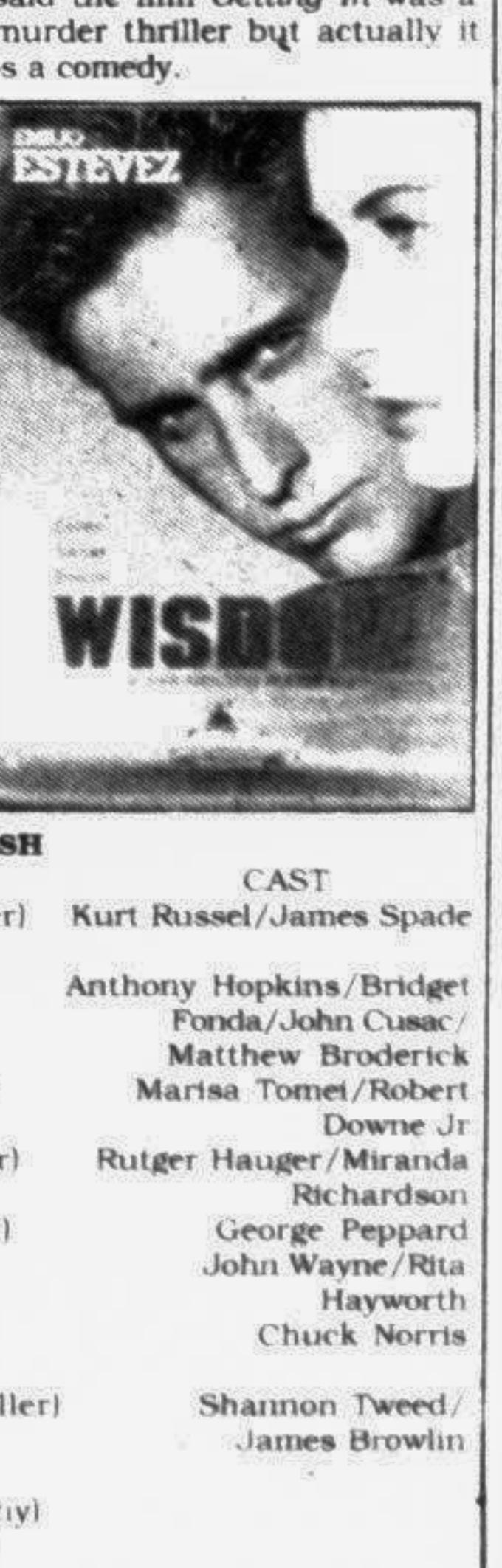
Emile Estevez is John Wisdom in this romantic comedy which also stars Demi Moore (Karen Simmons) and Tom Skerrit (Picket Fences fame).

When I began school in 1948 at the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) day school in our village I was armed with the basic ABC's and the phrases "Good morning, Miss Oleman," and "may I please be excused to go to the bathroom", recalls Ortiz in his autobiographical essay, *The Language We Know*. The statistic language was thus imposed upon a struggling sect of people who deemed to uphold a heritage, culture and language of their own. Quite reasonably, the government found this desire as a dire threat to the process of Americanisation. So, the government 'slow-poisoned', 'brain washed' or reprogrammed the Native Americans in a bid to assimilate them. Eventually, the government party succeeded in transplanting the idea of Gaiman American, which in Acoma expression means the fortune of being an American. And the inculcation was done so deeply that many of the Indians became ashamed and uncomfortable with their own past. In the world of words, the past of these native men have placed them on the shelves of anthropology along with other primitive men.

In another work, "Collage 4" comprising oil-on-canvas, photographs and actual coins, one found the profile of a queen (with flowers on her hair) of the Victorian era, related to the theme of the universal problems of mankind. As found elsewhere in the artist's work, in the centre forefront of the piece were more photographs and varied hues, including silver and gold. The anchor placed in the composition, done in vermilion and cobalt blue, was there to increase the impact of the depiction of human suffering.

Islam, who completed his M.A (Fine Arts) from the Dhaka University in 1994, specialises in painting but also experiments with sculpture. His works, so far, remain a combination of Impressionism and Realism. For someone relatively young and inexperienced, his creations are promising and praiseworthy.

Interestingly, in recent days we have some growing up native Americans' (the epithet is borrowed from the title of Patricia Riley's recent anthology). These new Indians have managed to parry the cultural extirpation, adding voice to



### ENGLISH

TYPE

(Sci-Fi/Thriller)

NAME

1. Stargate

2. The Road to Wellville

3. Only You

4. Fatherland

5. The Blue Max

6. Circus World

7. Delta Force II

8. Indecent Behaviour II

9. The Flight Of Penguins

10. Yokozuna

11. Air Heads

12. Private Lessons II

13. Ghost River

(Romantic)

(Romantic)