The Imperial Addiction of *Mary Barton*

Liam Corley

Here was a panacea—a [pharmakon nepenthez] for all human woes:
here was the secret of happiness, about which philosophers had disputed
for so many ages, at once discovered . . . Thomas de Quincey

During the early Victorian period, a slow and at first imperceptible euphoria spread within Great Britain's public sphere, a delirium resulting from and contributing to a burgeoning national addiction to the sociopolitical and economic privileges of empire. A growing belief in Great Britain's imperial destiny was reflected and injected dose by dose through a variety of unlikely literary, political, and ephemeral texts. Elizabeth Gaskell made a purgative contribution to this project of national discovery in her 1848 novel of working class suffering, *Mary Barton*. It is common enough to assert that Elizabeth Gaskell insists through the substance of her narrative that the material conditions and individual integrity of members of Manchester's working class must be considered important elements in any rendering of the English social body and economic well-being. However, *Mary Barton* presents not only a challenge to the domestic economic and political ideas of her contemporaries, it also contains a critique of the imperial addictions and assumptions which increasingly characterized early Victorian descriptions of economic and political normalcy.

Elizabeth Gaskell sets *Mary Barton* during one of the worst periods of economic depression in Manchester in order to depict the suffering that had heretofore gone unmarked by much of the country. The cotton economy of Lancashire experienced seemingly unpredictable cycles of boom and bust throughout the middle of the nineteenth century which caused immense suffering among the workers in the cotton manufacturing industry.[1] The main action of the novel occurs from 1839 – 42, a period in which a downturn in global trade contributed to widespread

unemployment and partial employment among the Manchester working class. As both a contribution to and a formulation of the 'condition of England' question, *Mary Barton* has been evaluated primarily as a description of a local problem: what should be done about the poverty and degradation of the operatives in Manchester? Or more broadly, how should middle-class England understand its Christian responsibilities to the laboring classes?[2] In most cases, the insular focus of criticism on *Mary Barton* contributes to a 'domestication' of Gaskell's challenge to developing 'theories of trade' (*MB,* p. xxxvi) by causing readers to overlook the significant internal evidence which implicates *Mary Barton* in the construction of a global hegemony—the complex of attitudes in which the 'condition of England' could only be considered as the 'condition of England in the world.'[3] Gaskell's attempt to construe the ways in which the working class was enmeshed in the construction of Britain's overseas hegemony leads to a contradictory resolution which both interrogates and relies upon assumptions about English colonial power.

Elizabeth Gaskell begins her story of industrial Manchester after its dependence on foreign trade for both raw materials and markets is well established. Manchester's cotton production far exceeded the demand of domestic English consumers. Gaskell represents this reliance of British mercantile interests on foreign markets amenable to monopoly and control by describing the commission that precipitates the worker's strike as coming from 'a new foreign market' (*MB,* p. 200). The potential instability of this foreign demand causes the manufacturers to assert their control over the means of production by offering lower wages to the already desperate operatives. The industrialists are able to enforce their contract despite the violent protests of the workers, and this continuing economic violence constitutes their power to control foreign demand. Despite the emphasis of the action on domestic factors, the industrialists' goal

remains the assurance of foreign demand, and the narrator insists that '[i]n the long run the interests of the workmen would have been thereby benefited' (*MB*, p. 200). While Gaskell spends most of her narrative depicting the negative effects of low wages and partial or unemployment, here she subordinates her concern for working class suffering to the imperative of guaranteeing foreign demand.

Gaskell also relies on the economic opportunities of empire for the successful resolution of the marriage plot which unites Mary Barton and Jem Wilson and relocates them to Canada. Coral Lansbury argues that Gaskell's choice to have the young couple emigrate indicates that 'Gaskell could see no resolution to the industrial conflict. . . . Emigration was always an admission of failure at the same time as it held out the promise of a better life.'[4] While this may accurately reflect Gaskell's pessimism about the prospects for Manchester, it also reveals that to be an English failure is still to hold a position of privilege in the world. Jem Wilson receives a lucrative colonial position in a Canadian agricultural college: 'a comfortable appointment—house,—land,—and a good percentage on the instruments made' (*MB,* p. 443). By utilizing extant assumptions about the power of the English to control wealth abroad for a successful resolution of her plot, Gaskell constructs a vision of domestic social harmony that is necessarily underwritten by the forcible extension and maintenance of empire. This association of domestic harmony and overseas empire extends even to seemingly minor details in the story. When Mary takes refuge with the Sturgis' after her pursuit of Will and the *John Cropper*, Mrs. Sturgis leads her 'into a little room redolent of the sea, and foreign lands,' in which there is 'a small bed for one son, bound for China' (*MB,* p. 371). After the trial, this will serve as Mary's sick bed, and she will rave and recuperate in a space created by the absence of a sailor 'bound for China.'

Job Legh's fascination with foreign creatures expresses another aspect of domestic trends which served to normalize among the British their nation's imperial relation to a world increasingly denominated as 'colonial.' Legh's interest in taxonomic control over creatures from foreign lands is facilitated by Britain's mercantile power, a relation given expression in the person of Will, the sailor. Legh's interest in foreign insects and animals causes him to be 'deep in conversation with the young sailor, trying to extract from him any circumstances connected with the natural history of the different countries he had visited' (*MB*, p. 175). Job and Will's amusing debate about Mermaidicus and Exocetus exemplifies the clash between taxonomic and romantic notions of travel, and Will's complaint that some folks 'never knows beasts unless they're called out o' their names,' reflects the same sensibility which led Gaskell to write her challenge to 'theories of trade' in 'work-a-day-English' rather than theoretical 'Sunday clothes' (*MB*, p. 179). Gaskell portrays Job's ascendance in the debate as a result of his relation to Margaret, the object of Will's desire, thus closely associating Job's intellectual authority with his paternal authority. That even this provincial patriarch could become an arbiter of biological exotica signifies the depth to which imperial notions had already saturated British society during the period in which Gaskell wrote. Thomas Richards describes the trajectory of Linnaean pursuits like Job's as passing 'first from the domain of science into the domain of myth, and last into the domain of ideology. . . . [T]he project of constructing universal taxonomies of form remains very much alive, one of the last surviving emblems of the Victorian imperium, the project of a positive and comprehensive knowledge of the world.'[5] Job's skepticism regarding Mermaidicus in the face of Will's account of an eyewitness testimony enacts the power of rational projection and an attempt to order the natural world that became characteristic of British departmental overseers in the administration of the empire. While Job also serves as a comic

figure in his taxonomic pretension (witness that earwigs supply his apparent motive for visiting Jem and Mary in Canada), his role as a representative of the imperial archive underscores the ideological function of 'a positive and comprehensive knowledge' which can command the resources of the British merchant marine from the patriarchal center of the home. Job's agency throughout the novel emphasizes how his knowledge of the world can be mobilized to serve the domestic interests of the working class, most notably in the assistance he renders to Mary during her attempt to prove Jem's innocence.

Working class poverty and success in *Mary Barton* are thus shown to rely on participation in mechanisms of economic hegemony that reach beyond the confines of both Manchester and England. In relation to the workers' strike, this connectedness results in a double-bind in which both the workers and the industrialists can be seen as responding to forces apparently beyond their control. Since the narrator excuses the industrialists for lowering wages by invoking the need to guarantee foreign demand, she legitimates a world in which workers would always bear the brunt of fluctuating foreign demand. They could escape only by taking their place within the machinery of empire. The clash of the novel's economic and emotive imperatives here leaves Gaskell open to the charge of incoherence, for what the heart seems to reveal about the reader's obligation to ameliorate suffering, the mind must reject in favor of economic utility. What Gaskell does not directly state in the novel, but which is implied by the historical period in which she places it, is that foreign demand is not, to borrow de Quincey's wording, the 'panacea . . . for all human woes' that it first appears to be. To observe how the novel comments upon the desirability of world economic hegemony, we must look closely at the sources of economic depression in *Mary Barton*, which can be in part attributed to the disruption of a particular foreign market: China.

Deteriorating British relations with China over the issue of opium smuggling led to the first of the so-called Opium Wars between the two countries in the spring of 1839.[6] From May, 1839, until the treaty of Nanking in August, 1842, British exports of cotton and opium to China were severely curtailed. The loss of revenue from opium sales also led to a modest decrease in Indian demand for cotton products because the smuggled opium was exported from India to China, and a portion of the profits thereof supported Indian opium farmers who were an important market for Manchester cotton.[7] The effects of the Opium War were felt immediately in Manchester. In 1838, Manchester merchants had exported 739,904 pounds sterling worth of cotton manufactures to China through the port of Liverpool. While this represented only 4% of total British exports of cotton goods to foreign countries in 1838, the subsequent decline in exports to China in 1839 and 1840 represents 30% and 35%, respectively, of the total decline in exports to foreign countries during those years.[8] The loss of the China trade was part of the complex of factors that led to the unemployment and partial-employment depicted in *Mary Barton*, and it was significant enough to motivate the Manchester merchants to political action. After months of slack business and uncertainty, thirty-nine Manchester merchants petitioned Parliament in September, 1839, for 'prompt, vigorous, and decided measures' to resolve the conflict in China, pleading that the cessation in trade 'may eventually entail very serious losses on us.'[9] The eventuality of this loss, not its present reality, is precisely what John Barton observes in the Manchester industrialists: while the workers starved to death, he saw only idleness and pleasure among the industrialists. Even 'sacrificing capital to obtain a decisive victory over the continental manufacturers' would not result in equivalent material suffering among the industrialist class (*MB*, p. 201).

The historical moment in which the Manchester industrialists petition Parliament for decisive military action to stabilize foreign demand coincides with the fictional moment in which the Manchester industrialists precipitate a strike in their attempt to guarantee foreign demand by lowering wages. Unlike the petition to Parliament carried by John Barton and his fellow Trade Unionists which Gaskell places in the spring of 1839, the industrialists' 1839 petition regarding the China trade was received respectfully and heeded. During the months of the strike, Harry Carson's murder, and the subsequent trial depicted in *Mary Barton*, British warships were forcing their way into Chinese ports to avenge the Chinese government's destruction of British-owned opium contraband and to guarantee the right of the British to demand access to Chinese markets. As a result of the war, the British were able to expand their access to Chinese markets from one port to five, and by 1864 the total value of the trade, including opium, between China, England, and India exceeded 100 million pounds.[10] Consequently Gaskell's choice to set *Mary Barton* during the Opium War not only associates the economic violence of the industrialists against the working class with British imperialism in China, it also highlights the metaphoric possibilities of the economic interdependence of the cotton and opium trade.

As a result of the first Opium War, the relationship between cotton manufacturing and the opium trade became a topic of public debate. The most prominent discussion of the connection between the opium trade and the plight of the English working class occurred in 1843 when Lord Ashley, later the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, presented petitions from three missionary societies to the House of Commons urging the abolition of the opium trade. In the course of condemning the trade on moral grounds, Lord Ashley also appealed to commercial interests. Mary Mason summarizes Lord Ashley's argument as follows: 'The opium traffic was harmful to British trade because a pernicious drug was substituted for the manufactures of Great Britain. . . . The

extension of England's commerce and the opening of new markets for British manufacturers would greatly benefit the English working classes.'[11] Though nothing substantive came of Lord Ashley's resolution, speeches for and against it placed the opium trade directly before the British people through the press, and they were among the first public discussions of the connection between working class hunger, opium addiction, and the industrialists' desire for expanding markets. By associating the cotton trade with the opium trade, Manchester industrialism could be portrayed as both a source of plenty and a site of need, for the tremendous productive capacity of the Manchester mills depended upon foreign markets for economic viability. Furthermore, the brazen association of military might and economic right exemplified in the opium trade also underlay the relations between the cotton masters and the workers. The worker's attempt to upend the hierarchy of dependence through their trade unionism depends on an understanding of the relationship between masters and workers as one of reversible need, the same reasoning which led the Chinese to believe that the British would not be willing to sacrifice their addiction to tea and porcelain for the sake of opposing Chinese efforts to rid themselves of an unwanted supply of opium. In both cases, coercion proved the logic faulty.

Gaskell's treatment of addiction and exploitation in *Mary Barton* is both suggestive and involved. Gaskell's recognition of the multiple forms of dependence pervades *Mary Barton*, and one of its prominent forms includes the characterization of the ideal relationship between workers and masters as symbiotic. However, at the heart of *Mary Barton* lies a more ambivalent evocation of dependence and desire: the image of John Barton as an opium-eater. The foreign dependence of the industrialists, which is only fleetingly referenced throughout the novel, is vividly pictured in the body of John Barton, and the consequences of addiction are equally vivid. John Barton's physical decline is presented as both the result of malnutrition and opium: 'No

haunting ghost could have had less of the energy of life in its involuntary motions than he' (*MB*, p. 407). His listlessness should not be confused with numbness, as is made evident in the description of John Barton's face when he returns to his home at the end of the novel: 'And as for his face, it was sunk and worn like a skull, with yet a suffering expression which skulls have not' (MB, p. 417). John Barton's opium addiction and his subsequent recourse to violence can be seen as the representative pattern of how Gaskell weaves the triple strand of physical, commercial, and narcotic desires throughout the narrative as both implicit and explicit stimuli for action. She invokes the reader's sympathy in explaining John Barton's recourse to opium addiction as a means of lessening the hunger pangs of starvation and the intellectual pangs of daily perceiving economic injustice: 'Before you blame too harshly this use [of opium], or rather abuse, try a hopeless life, with daily cravings of the body for food. Try, not alone being without hope yourself, but seeing all around you reduced to the same despair' (*MB*, p. 198). Thus, in a novel which does not directly reference the Opium War as a contributing factor to the principal scenes of suffering, we are still presented with an image of the dire consequences of addiction such as the one industrialists had for foreign markets: the tortured and violent addict who, for reasons of interpersonal connections, yet deserves sympathy.

John Barton's addiction functions in multiple ways within the novel. First, it completes his status as the representative sufferer of the Manchester industrialists' greed and ruthlessness. As a leader in the trade union, he is at the center of the controversy over the industrialists' attempt to guarantee the foreign market. As an opium addict, he also becomes doubly associated with the Chinese, metonymically through the use of opium and metaphorically as a representative of the human suffering that results from the industrialists efforts to control foreign demand. In the former role, John Barton assumes a complex and pathetic position, for

missionary agitation about Chinese opium addicts emphasized the British East India Company's role in sustaining and extending the drug's reach in Chinese society.[12] The anti-opium lobby grew in strength through the latter half of the nineteenth century, and John Barton prefigures the dire consequences for Britain's involvement in the opium trade heralded by this movement: '[T]he Orient (especially China) will enter, colonize, and conquer the English body in the form of a contaminating contagion enabled by Opium.'[13] In the words of Reverend George Piercy, a former missionary to Canton, 'It begins with the Chinese, but it doesn't end there.'[14] By figuring domestic opium addicts as a just revenge for the addiction of the British to unjustly sustaining foreign markets, anti-opium rhetoric suggests how the addiction of a figure like John Barton can become a metaphor for the industrialists need for stable markets and the colonial relationships which result. Whether or not Gaskell meant for John Barton's opium addiction to be seen as a metaphor for British expansionist policies, the thrust of her tale establishes the basis for such a critique of British imperialism.

The imperial dependencies of foreign trade and colonial subjugation appear in *Mary Barton* as ambiguous *deus ex machina* at crucial junctures in the plot. Gaskell privileges the pursuit of foreign markets and colonies as a panacea for the suffering depicted in the novel. Nonetheless, she also expresses horror at the tremendous human costs associated with industrialism and presents the conflict between the Trade Unionists and the masters as inevitable given the material conditions of the workers. She refuses to pass glibly over the substantial suffering of the working classes and presents their complaints with dignity and humanity. Most significantly, John Barton's decline and final recourse to violence make him a horrifying example of the results of dependencies such as are valorized with reference to economic exigencies elsewhere in the novel. That the extension of empire, an assumed good through most

of the novel, should be so incongruously paired with the degradations of opium addiction may appear at first contradictory, an inconsistency to be attributed to narrative incoherence. How can a beloved source of nurture also be the foulest ill? Additional clues to Gaskell's attitude towards the ambiguous association of John Barton and the industrialists can be found in Mary Barton's transformed view of her father during her breakdown subsequent to Jem's trial:

> Among the mingled feelings she had revealed in her delirium, ay, mingled even with the most tender expressions of love for her father, was a sort of horror of him; a dread of him as a blood-shedder, which seemed to separate him into two persons,—one, the father who had dandled her on his knee, and loved her all her life long; the other, the assassin, the cause of all her trouble and woe. (*MB*, p.408)

The bifurcation of consciousness evidenced in Mary's attitude towards her father is attributed to the disjunction between affective ties and the exercise of moral judgment. Mary's ambivalence is not incoherent within the narrative frame of a tale that means to humanize debates about 'theories of trade' by presenting them 'truthfully' through individual lives (*MB,* p. xxxvi).[15] After all, Gaskell's novel deplored a system enabled by and enriching a class of Manchester merchants to whom she was both personally acquainted and occasionally beholden as a consequence of her husband's role as the most prominent Unitarian minister in Manchester. Gaskell is further able to associate Mary's ambivalence towards her father with British imperialism in China by the ingenious act of having Mary express the above sentiments during her recuperation at the Sturgis', in a room which normally accommodates a son who is sailing to China. This association is doubly poignant because a British sailor in China during the historical moment in which the novel is placed would inevitably be involved in some fashion with the execution of the first Opium War.

The use of opium addiction as a trope for empire leads one to many and contradictory reflections on the nature of the imperial enterprise and its end result. By constructing John Barton's body, the beloved and reviled site of addiction, violence, and despair, as a metaphor for the English political and economic body, Gaskell provides a bleak vision of the trajectory of empire. Gaskell concludes the industrial portion of the novel with the restricted ameliorative agency of the elder Carson, a domestic precursor of the colonial bureaucrat laboring under the White Man's Burden. But the necessarily limited activity of the now-enlightened imperial agent is not able to erase the effects or the memory of the addiction figured in the body of John Barton. The historical period of England's imperial addiction, feverishly alternating between colonial dependence and desire, concludes in much the manner as the celebrated English Opium-eater ends his confessions:

> [I]f the gentlemen of Surgeons' Hall think that any benefit can redound to their science from inspecting the appearances in the body of an Opium-eater, let them speak but a word, and I will take care that mine shall be legally secured to them . . . . I assure them they will do me too much honour by 'demonstrating' on such a crazy body as mine: and it will give pleasure to anticipate this posthumous revenge and insult inflicted upon that which has caused me so much suffering in this life.[16]

The constitutive ideological process which resulted in widespread social and economic support for the British empire can be explored by recourse to such 'crazy' bodies as *Mary Barton*, so full of 'suffering in this life.' By emphasizing the ways in which *Mary Barton* critiques, extends, and assumes the construction of the English social body in the global economy of empire, I have tried to clarify the ways in which Gaskell's engagement with 'theories of trade' merit more

careful consideration as a contribution to historical and contemporary debates about the material suffering of workers in a world context. In a global context of economic recolonization, one use of Gaskell's evocation of working class suffering could be to energize movements defending the human rights of foreign workers who are exploited through the addictive demands of western consumers mediated through a globally empowered merchant class not unlike the industrialists of *Mary Barton*.[17] One continuing function of *Mary Barton*, read as both cultural product and culture producer, can be to awaken contemporary readers to the hidden investments and addictions which underlie the ongoing exploitation of foreign people and places by Western nations.[18] Such an unabashedly sentimental and political claim is both an interpretation and reenactment of Gaskell's accomplishment in *Mary Barton*.

Notes

[1] Steven Marcus, *Engels, Manchester, and the Working Class* (New York: Random House, 1974), p. 11.

[2] See, for instance, Monica C. Fryckstedt's discussion of the similarities between *Mary Barton* and the Unitarian "Reports of the Ministry to Poor" in *Elizabeth Gaskell's Mary Barton and Ruth: A Challenge to Christian England* (Stockholm: Uppsala, 1982) pp. 90-97. See also Hilary M. Schor, *Scheherezade in the Marketplace: Elizabeth Gaskell and the Victorian Novel* (New York: Oxford UP, 1992), pp. 21-28. Deirdre d'Albertis discusses *Mary Barton*'s contribution to

debates about women as charity workers in *Dissembling Fictions: Elizabeth Gaskell and the Victorian Social Text* (New York: St. Martin's, 1997), pp. 58-64.

[3] For more on why we should not accept at face value Gaskell's claim that she knows nothing of 'Political Economy, or the theories of trade,' see Mary Lenard, *Preaching Pity: Dickens, Gaskell, and Sentimentalism in Victorian Culture* (New York: Peter Lang P, 1999), pp. 115-16.

[4] Coral Lansbury, *Elizabeth Gaskell* (Boston: Twayne, 1984), p. 22.

[5] Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (New York: Verso, 1993), p. 50.

[6] British demand for Chinese products like tea and porcelain created a dangerous imbalance of trade which led to a net transfer from 1710 to 1759 of nearly 27 million pounds worth of silver specie. In Jack Beeching, *The Chinese Opium Wars* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975), p. 19. By exploiting a modest Chinese market for opium, the East India Company was able to redress the imbalance. British opium exports to China created problems of its own. Under Chinese law, trade in opium was forbidden. After the East India Company's monopoly on the China trade was rescinded in 1834, opium smuggling skyrocketed and Chinese authorities began to take more resolute measures against the smugglers. By 1839, tensions had broken into open hostilities, the first of the Opium Wars between Great Britain and China.

[7] For the example of India, which demonstrates that even an indigenous cotton industry could be displaced by Manchester cotton if there were sufficient military and political support for the venture, see Marcus *Engels, Manchester, and the Working Class*, p. 8. India is, however, a complicated case, for as British exports began displacing the indigenous cotton industry, it became necessary to supplement the local economy with a new source of income so that the Lancashire exports could be purchased. Beeching notes that '[t]he opium-growing cultivators of

Bengal, paid cash by the government for their crop, were precisely the kind of thriving market Lancashire was looking for. The more opium grown, the more cotton cloth sold.' See Beeching, *Chinese Opium Wars*, p. 33. While Beeching exaggerates the possibilities of prosperity accruing to the peasant farmer, some correlation between cotton sales and opium production can hardly be denied. See Brian Inglis, *The Opium War* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1976), pp. 87-89. From a miniscule annual production in the mid-eighteenth century sufficient for local consumption, Indian cultivation of opium exploded from the end of the eighteenth until the early twentieth century.

[8] Statistical data derived from table 25 in James A. Mann *The Cotton Trade of Great Britain* (London: Cass, 1968), p. 124.

[9] *Journals of the House of Commons* Vol. 39. ed. E.L. Erickson (London: HMSO, 1840) p. 639.

[10] Exports of cotton piece goods to China increased from 21 million yards in 1838 to 113 million yards in 1856.

[11] Mary G. Mason, *Western Concepts of China and the Chinese, 1840-1876* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1939), p. 109.

[12] Another imperial association with opium is also possible, that of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey accounted for nearly 90% of all British opium imports for most of the nineteenth century. It was reputedly of a higher grade than Indian Opium, which was dedicated to mitigating the imbalances of the China trade. See Virginia Berridge and Griffith Edwards, *Opium and the People: Opiate Use in Nineteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987), Chapters 1 and 9.

[13] Barry Milligan, *Pleasures and Pains: Opium and the Orient in Nineteenth-Century British Culture* (Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1995), p. 83.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Another interesting association can be found in the name of Will's ship, the *John Cropper*. Cropper has at least two meanings here. First, 'cropper' describes the gathering of crops, the collection of materials goods. A secondary meaning of cropper is more enlightening: of a misfortune, or a fall. Merchant vessels such as the *John Cropper* were indeed both a means to gather in profits and the stumbling block that could lead to an unfortunate fall.

[16] Thomas de Quincey, *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*. 1821. introd. William Bolitho (New York: Heritage P, 1950), p. 77.

[17] A unit on *Mary Barton* in an undergraduate literature course could easily include readings about the anti-sweatshop movement in order to emphasize the relevance of this reading strategy. Despite Thomas Reccho's claim that 'emphasiz[ing] how social/political/economic conflict is played out (or not)' in *Mary Barton* enacts a form of 'interpretive violence,' I believe that such an exercise would open interpretive possibilities that increase rather than attenuate the intersubjectivity of reader and text. Thomas Reccho, 'A Monstrous Reading of *Mary Barton*: Fiction as "Communitas"', *College Literature*, Vol. 23.3 (1996), pp. 2-22, at p. 4.

[18] Nor should this reading be limited to 'foreign' places. For more on the garment industry in the United States, see Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke UP, 1996), Chapter 7.