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## *The American Self image in Walt Whitman's Eyes and Poetry*



### Abstract

The present article is intended to thoroughly and comprehensively examine the image of America in Walt Whitman's eyes and poetry. In addition, this paper principally deals with the religious and secular ideas that shaped Whitman's exceptional view of America. Moreover, it attempts to give a thoroughly deep analysis of Walt Whitman's long poem, Passage to India focusing on what makes America, according to Whitman of course, a unique, universal, and exceptional nation and, then, be the best democratic country that all the world should strive for.

### ملخص

تعالج هذه الورقة البحثية صورة أمريكا أو العالم الجديد عند و في شعر وولت ويتمان الملقب بشاعر الديمقراطية الأمريكية. يرتكز المقال على تحليل قصيدته " المرور إلى الهند" و التي يصور فيها الأمة الجديدة على أنها استثنائية و ذات صفات إلهية و يعتبر التقدم التكنولوجي لأمريكا كجزء من الخطة الإلهية التي تتضمن قيادة أمريكا لكل شعوب العالم إلى نهاية التاريخ

[American exceptionalism] is a reaction to the inability of people to understand global complexity or important issues like American energy dependency. Therefore, they search for simplistic sources of comfort and clarity. And the people that they are now selecting to be, so to speak, the spokespersons of their anxieties are, in most cases, stunningly ignorant. (Zbigniew Brzeziński)

## Introduction

In recent years, a throng of thinkers working in a remarkable array of ideology, history, and politics have taken an intense interest in questions concerning the role played by America in the modern world. Many American authors and poets wrote about this topic and attempted to clarify the American point of view that always considers America as the centre of the entire world and as an exceptional nation. The present paper undertakes the image of America in Walt Whitman's poetry. In fact, critics have often evinced that American exceptional self image is one of the most important themes in Whitman's poetry.

Important is the idea that Whitman has long considered himself as a spokesman for the Americans. This is the reason why his *Leaves of Grass* is seen by many critics as a new Bible which celebrates equality, freedom and democracy as fundamental social values often associated with his new nation. In connection with this, one can equally add that his transcendentalist philosophy of life which is known to be thoroughly based on the idea of the over soul that is the belief that God is found in all men and even in nature helped him to a great extent shape this very specific world view. In this context, V.A. Shahane (1972) confirms that Whitman believes that 'all men are divine and possess powers of revelation equal to any god's power (Shahane : 22). Simply put, the poet denies significance to old gods because, according to him, God is to be found in all men. He maintains that « *The supernatural is of no account, meaning that the Divine is here on Earth for all men, who must only become ready to accept this divinity* » (Ibid.).

Interestingly, the reader of Whitman's poetry may easily observe that the new philosophy that Whitman's poetry has attempted to

consolidate is principally based on freedom and equality among all the members of the one society. One can further note that Whitman went beyond that to consider democracy as a new religion not only for the Americans but rather for the entire humanity. According to him, this would guarantee that all human beings would be equal and enjoy their natural rights. As far as his religious thought is concerned, one should stress that like Jefferson before him, the poet believes that church and the state should be separated. In other words, he sustained the principle that religious life should be separated from civil life. For him, since God is present everywhere and inside every individual, mankind should be free to worship God without mediators...

Perhaps, this is the reason why many critics agree that Whitman's ideas had a great impact on American presidents whose policies served the marginalized minorities in the American society among whom, one can cite: Abraham Lincoln and Barak Obama who like Whitman, believed that they should build an exceptional American society in which there should be no space for poverty and injustice, so to speak. But before delving into analyzing the theme of the American self image in Whitman's passage to India, it might be useful at the outset to have a thorough idea about the meaning as well as the history of American exceptional self image as one of the fundamental concepts in the America culture and which can be considered as one of Whitman's preferred and fundamental themes.

### 1. America in the Americans' Eyes

As stated earlier, America has long been seen by the Americans as an exceptional nation and as « *the beacon on the mountain so that people around the world can see its warm light of salvation.* » (Yanhua) Important is the idea that since the colonial period, the puritans claimed the newly settled land as the promised land. Interestingly enough, this idea has continued to shape the Americans' self image till present day.

In a more practical sense, *American exceptionalism* is a phrase that is often used to summarize the Americans' belief that their country is an exceptional nation, with a special people and special role to play in human history. Indeed, American exceptionalism is a theological concept. It is remarkable that before the foundation of the

modern United States of America, the New World was viewed as God's sacred land. (Calabresi, 2006: 86).

In line with this, Thomas B. Byers argues that American exceptionalism is not only the claim that America is different, but that it is unique, one of a superior nature and which must have a unique moral value and responsibility' (*Ibid.*) One can, therefore, assume that American exceptionalism is an ideology that refers to the ways in which the United States is different from the rest of the world.

One should note that, indeed, as an American myth, American exceptionalism started during the Puritan period far before the 19th Century. One can further note that its first seeds appeared with the first settlers, the Puritans who had completely believed in the idea that they were the chosen people and the newly settled land was the promised land which John Winthrop later on described as a City upon a Hill.

It is not surprising that this idea of exceptional nature of both America and the Americans continued to shape the American self image especially with the founding generation whose nationalistic beliefs and convictions had a great role in building the new nation which they wanted to be remarkably different from the other nations. In other words, American exceptionalism was first launched by the Puritans as a religious idea and continued to develop and to finally acquire a secular form during the Age of Enlightenment and the nineteenth century.

For his part, the French thinker, Alexis de Tocqueville, supports the idea that « *the position of the American people is, therefore, quite exceptional, and it may be believed that no democratic people will be placed in a similar one* » (Dougall, 2012: 2) Others believe that the idea is deeply rooted in American history, and that it appeared even before the birth of the United States as an independent nation. Jack P. Green, for instance, a leading colonial historian, persuasively argues that the intellectual construction of America as an exceptional place began in Europe, and thus American exceptionalism is originally a European idea' (Calabresi, 2006: 1345).

Indeed, it goes almost without saying that the first settlers of the newly settled land were European radicals who came to see America as a land that offered a golden opportunity for them as persecuted religious groups to establish godly Communities especially in Plymouth Plantation and Massachusetts Bay Colony. Moreover, seen from another perspective, the New World was also seen as a space that provided « *exceptional opportunities for the mass conversion of souls to Christianity* » (Ibid.). In fact, this European conception of America as being an exceptional land has been discussed and constituted a wide space of debate among English thinkers and men of letters. For this reason, many historians trace the idea of America as an exceptional nation to the colonial period when the Puritan settlers declared themselves as chosen people and the North American continent as a promised land.

At this point, it is important to draw attention to the important fact that the Puritans were a radical religious faction who emerged during the Reformation Age. They insisted that it was their duty to purify the corrupted church. Moreover, they thought that they were the Elect or God's sheep. (Ceaser, 2012). In line with this, James W. Ceaser claims that for the Puritans, « *the idea of being a selected agent was more than a theological possibility; it was a lived experience, formed in their exodus and errand in the wilderness* » (Ceaser, 2012: 12).

Still, in connection with this, one can further observe that the Puritans as a religious radical group basically depended on religion to justify the special and extraordinary image they attempted to draw to their godly, new nation. Simply put, they saw God in themselves, and they insisted that they were God's chosen people or God's sheep who were supposed to lead the entire world.

There is a need to stress the fact that the Puritans came to America to create a thoroughly godly society that conforms to the Puritan beliefs and which suits their reformist aspirations. Stephenson went beyond that to maintain that the New World for the Puritans was the location of the millennium-a « *place for the end [...] of history* » (Calabresi, 2006: 1347). Indeed, the idea of dealing with America as a new promised land attracted early colonial leaders. William Bradford, the leader of Plymouth colony, for instance, through his work of Plymouth Plantation, attempted to persuasively argue that God has

chosen America to be a new promised land and a home to a special people, those who were saved in the Mayflower (ibid).

It should be clear from the foregoing that the very origins of American exceptionalism can partly be traced back to 1630, in which John Winthrop, a Puritan leader and the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, delivered his famous sermon entitled A Model of Christian Charity to Puritan settlers on the Arabella. (Bathke, 2012: 2). Historians and all those interested in American studies often agree that John Winthrop's sermon was a landmark in the history of American exceptionalism and it is widely considered as cornerstone of American identity' (op.cit.). In fact, John Winthrop 's image of America, as a city upon a hill, is inspired from the Bible. In the same context, anticipating the blossoming future of his country Winthrop insists that « [s]he's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home. » (Calabresi, 2006: 1336).

Simply put, convinced that they were chosen by God to settle in his promised land which they called New Jerusalem, the Puritans spared no effort to evince that both the American land and people were absolutely the best on Earth. In short, they backed the idea that « America was thus going to be a New Jerusalem-a Godly light to all the nations of the world » (Calabresi, 2006: 1348).

Unsurprisingly, most of the Puritan leaders and theologians justified the exceptional nature of America by several passages from the Bible, especially the one which is found in the 'Second Book of Samuel, which reads as follows: « [a]nd I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed » (Ibid.). According to Steven G. Calabresi, there is another passage that was more important in supporting the Puritans' evidence that America is the chosen land, is the one from Mathew, in which Jesus encouraged his followers to do exactly what Bradford and Winthrop were trying to achieve for the sake of making America a real city on a hill. The passage is as follows:

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to

everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. (Calabresi, 2006: 1348).

Interesting is the idea that the Puritans had a firm belief that they were protected and assisted by the hands of God which according to them were everywhere. In reality, their firm conviction in their choosiness strengthened their responsibility and readiness to fight against all that may go against the idea that they were God's elected people. Perhaps, because of this belief that even modern American politicians often assert that the United States must be vigilant in its « *witch-hunts to fight an enemy that might endanger the American polity and its allies* » (Bathke, 2012: 2).

Accordingly, even the future American generations or the Puritans' successors continued to believe that the Americans were super humans. But during the founding era, the idea of American exceptionalism began to acquire secular ideals. This was mainly due to the remarkable spread of deism as well as the strong European philosophical influences on the colonies. For his part, Bercovitch comprehensively treated the secular aspects of the American philosophy of life:

[I]n fleeing the Old World, the [Puritan] emigrants were abandoning a bankrupt monarchical order to establish a new way of life, civic and economic as well as religious. It was to *their* cause of liberty, rather than to some Old World despot, that filial allegiance was due [...] [W]hat the fathers began, the sons were bound to complete. (Calabresi, 2006: 1353).

In this respect, it is worth noting that the Americans' conviction that they should eradicate all that might corrupt life in the New World is the main reason that led to the change in the way the idea of American exceptionalism was conceived by the Americans. In other words, with the passage of time the Americans felt the necessity of secularizing their political and social thought. Perhaps, that is why after being a religious issue; American exceptionalism became a secular and ideological project especially since the Revolutionary period.

In addition to this, it might be important in this regard, to note that America at that time was the only place in which every man could own a land, 'As Jack Greene notes, « [w]idespread possession of landed property [...] turned the colonies into societies in which virtually 'every [free] Male Inhabitant became a Freeholder, and by consequence entitled to a share in the Government of the Province » (op.cit.), an idea that has been clearly explained by Crèvecoeur in his *Letters from an American Farmer*. In anticipating the blossoming future of the New World, Crèvecoeur explicates:

Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit. (Crèvecoeur, 55).

Part of the exceptional nature of the Americans, according to them of course, lies in their firm belief in the principles of freedom and equality as well as in their conviction that the American individual should stand against all that precludes or stifles these two social values in the American community.

To understand the development of the American political and social thought it is important to recognize that since the Age of Enlightenment, the Americans started to think logically, and they became aware of the necessity of rejecting all that was logicless. Consequently, they started to question their relation with their mother country, and strongly opposed the harsh treatment of the monarch who deprived them from enjoying the same rights as their brothers, the British men. The fact of being harshly taxed without being represented in the British parliament forced the colonists to call for their independence and to declare a revolution against their mother land. Their aim was, then, to establish a democratic government that would respect human rights. In other words, they sought to build a nation that all people around the world should strive for. In stressing



the religious and the secular roots of the American Revolution, James W. Ceaser affirms that « [S]ome thinkers beginning to draw a connection between God's divine plan for history, which now involved putting an end to tyranny in the world, and the achievement of an independent and free republic in America». (Ceaser, 2012: 12).

No wonder that even Thomas Paine, though a deist, could not get rid of nor rise above the idea of the divine nature of the New World. In his *Common Sense*, for instance, Paine insists that « *it is the duty of the state to effectively uphold the rights of citizens including the right to a minimum standard of wealth and social security* » (Edward, 121) However, one cannot fail to notice that through Paine's same text, there is a clear « *sense of urgency and millennialism that does indeed reflect utopianism* » (Marienstras, 75) and even universalism. For instance, in justifying the call of independence, he considers the geographical distance between the New World and Britain as part of a divine plan. In *Common Sense*, he notes:

Even the distance at which the Almighty hath placed England and America, is a strong and natural proof, that the authority of the one, over the other, was never the design of Heaven. The time likewise at which the continent was discovered, adds weight to the argument, and the manner in which it was peopled increases the force of it. The reformation was preceded by the discovery of America, as if the Almighty graciously meant to open a sanctuary to the persecuted in future years, when home should afford neither friendship nor safety. (Paine, 23-24).

For his part, Herman Melville also stresses the exceptional nature of the American nation; he proudly notes:

We Americans are the peculiar, chosen people –the Israel of our time; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world. God has predestined, mankind expects, great things from our race; and great things we feel in our souls. The rest of the nations must soon be in our rear. Long enough have we been skeptics with regard to ourselves, and doubted whether, indeed, the political Messiah had come. But he has come in us. (Russel & Russel, 1963: 504).

It should be clear from the foregoing passage that the original cause that led the great bulk of the modern American thinkers and authors to export the idea that America is an exceptional nation is their conviction of the divinity of the Old World. One of them was Whitman; this romantic poet who, through his poetry, has always attempted to celebrate American exceptionalism.

## 2. Modern America through Whitman's Passage to India

Undoubtedly, one of Whitman's most famous and successful poems is *Passage to India*. This poem is described by a throng of critics as the most important poem in the 1871 edition of *Leaves of Grass* and as the last of Whitman's significant poems. In this poem, Whitman obviously and directly expresses his great admiration to the scientific achievements of his time such as the opening of the Suez Canal, the laying of the transatlantic cable, and the joining of the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads at Utah; the latter that was established in order to produce the nation's first transcontinental railway. About the image of America in *Passage to India* Wiggins states that « *Passage to India appears to be the fulfillment of a larger, spiritual plan that leads to the settlement and establishment of the American nation as history moved towards this point in time and around the globe* ». (Wiggins, 2006: 58)

As a matter of fact, it is worth noting that unlike the other poems of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, *Passage to India* has not received a considerable appreciation during the first years of its publication. But with the passage of time, it started to be viewed by many of Whitman's readers and critics as one of his's greatest literary achievements. This might be attributed to the fact that they realized that it thoroughly embodied Whitman's philosophy of life as well as his world vision. Backing Wiggins' idea, Harsharan Singh Ahluwalia in his 1983's *A Reading of Whitman's Passage to India* argues that the thematic coherence and richness of imagery argue for its inclusion among Whitman's successful works. The form of the poem is that of a rhapsody in which images and motifs are repeated to lead the reader in one fairly clear direction. (Ahluwalia)

It is obvious, then, that *Passage to India* has a great importance in Whitman's literary career. Undoubtedly, it proves that Whitman is a strong believer in the idea that America has a special mission to

achieve, and that he is a staunch supporter of the concept of Manifest Destiny that is the Westward Expansion. This certainly leads me to open the discussion over Whitman's idea that America is part of God's divine plan on Earth.

As a matter of fact ,it is important to understand that Whitman's *Passage to India*, like all his poems of *Leaves of Grass*, is very representative of the poet' s vision of his nation. In addition to this, Whitman often tries to state the reasons that justify the uniqueness and the exceptional nature of the new nation. In *Passage to India*, Whitman went beyond singing and celebrating his mother country, he transcended the United States' position as a leading nation. According to Wiggins, "American" in this sense is not a political or locational identity, but more of a sensibility and spirituality (Wiggins, 2006: 58).

Because Whitman wrote before the United States becomes a world power and before the age of the modern great technological revolution, one can consider that his depiction of his country is a sort of an anticipation of the American blossoming future. In other words, like Crèvecoeur before him, Whitman was so confident that his country would lead the entire world one day. Commenting on *Passage to India*, Whitman wrote in his iconic book, *Democratic Vistas* that the Pacific will be ours, and the Atlantic mainly ours. There will be daily electric communication with every part of the globe. What an age! What a land! Where, elsewhere, one so great?" (Killingsworth, 2004: 78). In line with this, Wiggins notes « *if America is simply a fulfillment of the world's destiny, then all the people of the world are a part of this community* » (Wiggins, 2006: 58). In the light of this, one can further understand that Whitman's *Passage to India* was more than a passage to India, it is the way by which America can move towards modernity and universal leadership.

It is worth noting that Whitman wrote *Passage to India* in the period known as the Gilded Age, the 1870's and 1880's. This period was a time of great economic and industrial growth. It was during that period, the United States had changed from an agrarian society to an urban one. Big business, corporations, manufactories, and transportation mainly railroads started to develop. All this enhanced America's Westward expansion and placed the new nation among the first producing and industrial countries in the world.

In this regard, one needs to emphasize the fact that the city in which Whitman spent most of his life, New York, played a great role in Whitman's shaping the extremely specific image about the modern United States which, according to him, should lead the entire world and humanity. This might be attributed to the fact that New York was more developed than any other city in America. Indeed, Whitman's biography tells that New York for him was a representative of the industrial, scientific, and economic progress in the United States.

It is no secret that the era in which Whitman wrote *Leaves of Grass* was remarkably characterized by a rapid industrial and scientific development. Many important inventions were carried out at that time such as the telegraph and railroads which connected the different nations with each other and made the world smaller for mankind. It was thanks to the tremendous development in the means of global communication and transportation; people became more informed about America and the world outside its borders. During the composition of *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman was living in New York city. This undoubtedly, helped him be in a direct contact with people of different professions, social classes, and races. For Whitman, New York became a small representative of America's diversity and progress.

In this context, one needs to stress the fact that one of the fundamental themes that Whitman treats in his *Passage to India* is the celebration of the three great engineering achievements: the opening of the Suez Canal, the building of the transcontinental railroads, and the laying of telegraph cables across the oceans. He puts it this way:

Singing my days,  
Singing the great achievements of the present,  
Singing the strong light works of engineers,  
Our modern wonders, (the antique ponderous Seven outvied,)  
In the Old World the east the Suez canal,  
The New by its mighty railroad spann'd,  
The seas inlaid with eloquent gentle wires; (Whitman 467)

Still in the same context, Whitman writes:  
Passage to India!  
Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?  
The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,

The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,  
The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,  
The lands to be welded together. (Whitman 468)

From these lines, one can understand that the industrial and scientific inventions Whitman celebrates in his poem are just a step towards America's divine path. Properly understood, Whitman could predict and anticipate America's Westward expansion. In other words, he could anticipate the mythic idea of the Manifest Destiny which according to him would be part of the accomplishment of God's desire.

Indeed, in *Passage to India*; Whitman straightforwardly presents America as predestined to move Westward. In other words, according to Whitman, it is God who preordained that the New World would expand its territories Westward. Accepting this idea, one can understand that according to Whitman and all those who support the idea of American exceptionalism, America is not created for nothing but for specific purpose and a special role to play in the world. Perhaps, this is the reason why in his book, *Whitman and the earth*, M. Jimmie Killingsworth says that *Passage to India* «invites the soul to realize the animating possibilities implied in technological progress, justified as a natural outcome of the divine plan » (Killingsworth, 2004: 77).

Still, according to V.A. Shahane, Whitman's considers the three scientific and technological achievements as part of the divine plan to connect people with each other. Thus, the poet sees the passage to India as more than physical journey, it is a spiritual one. In *Passage to India*, Whitman seems to sing a new religion in which the modern industrial and scientific achievements will be combined with the spiritual achievements of the past. After the physical connection of the world's nations, it was easy for America to accomplish her divine plan to join all the people of the world together for the millennium or the Judgment Day. (Shahane, 1972). In line with this, Whitman states:

Year at whose wide-flung door I sing!  
Year of the purpose accomplish'd!  
Year of the marriage of continents, climates and oceans!  
(No mere doge of Venice now wedding the Adriatic,)  
I see O year in you the vast terraqueous globe given and giving all,  
Europe to Asia, Africa join'd, and they to the New World,

The lands, geographies, dancing before you, holding a festival garland,  
As brides and bridegrooms hand in hand. (Whitman, 2007 : 471)

Undoubtedly, the journey presented in Whitman's Passage to India is more than a mere passage to India. It is obvious that according to Whitman it is God who preordained that America should move towards India and even beyond the far East. It seems that Whitman firmly believes that America has a divine plan to go beyond its territories in order to export democracy, peace, and happiness to the whole world and to all human beings on Earth. Stressing this very idea, Harsharan Sing Ahluwalia argues that Whitman discerns God's purpose in the evolution of the universe toward harmony and unity. In furthering this goal, the explorers, engineers, and the architects have played a major part. They have geographically connected the Old World with the new « *not for trade or transportation only, I But in God's name, [...]* » (Ahluwalia, 1983: 111).

From the passage above, one can thus understand that, according to Whitman, it should be America's mission to melt the diversity of the world's people, and it is America which will lead the other nations to live in peace and harmony. From Whitman's point of view, it is God who chose America and the Americans to fulfill his divine plan. Whitman proclaims:

A worship new, I sing;  
You captains, voyagers, explorers, yours!  
You engineers! You architects, machinists, yours!  
You, not for trade or transportation only,  
But in God's name, and for thy sake, O soul (Whitman)

It is not surprising that Whitman became one of the staunch defenders of the common people as well as one of the strong critics of discrimination and injustice in politics and even in other fields like art and culture. In reality, one should not undermine the fact that Whitman lived during a period during which the Jacksonian democracy emerged and ordinary people became the center of the governmental interest and focus. Therefore, as a supporter of human rights and as a defender of the poor and minorities in his society, Whitman must have been influenced the Jacksonianism as an ideology that calls for deep political, social, and economic reforms. For Whitman, the difference

between America and democracy is very subtle. No wonder then that in one of the most important poem in *Leaves of Grass, Song of Myself* ,he describes America as the mother of democracy, and as the predestined land to be the land of freedom ,equality, justice ,and democracy. He writes: « *I speak the pass-word primeval, I give the sign of democracy, By God! I will accept nothing which all cannot have their counterpart of on the same terms* ». (Whitman, 34)

As stated earlier, the transcendentalist movement had a great impact on Whitman's beliefs, ideas and even philosophy of life. His optimistic view of the individual and his transcendentalist belief that all men and women are created equal strengthened his belief in democracy. In addition, transcendentalism as a philosophy of life was built upon self-reliance as a fundamental principle. For that reason, Whitman's celebration of democracy was due to the American democracy's consolidation of the individual's self-reliance, self respect, and freedom (Moore, 2015). According to Tarr Dàniel (1994), Whitman is « *a missionary for humanity, to bring the new Testament of "democracy", of equality, tolerance, self-respect, and freedom open to all* ». (Dàniel, 8).

It becomes obvious that it is this strong belief in the distinctiveness of American democracy that made him deserve the title of "the poet of American democracy". One can also perceive his belief in the divine nature of America.

## Conclusion

After a deep and comprehensive analysis of the image of America in Whitman's eye and poetry, it becomes obvious that as an American, Whitman is a strong believer in the exceptional nature of his nation and as a poet, he is a staunch defender of this myth. When one examines what Whitman says about America, it becomes obvious that he is strong believer in the greatness of his nation .Simply put, if in his *Song of Myself* he stresses that America is the mother of democracy, in his *Passage to India's* he evinces that part of the divine plan is the great role that the modern United States should play in order achieve a universal union between people in all over the globe and, therefore, help them live in peace, harmony, and democracy. Moreover, he insists that the United States ,as an economically powerful country is

assisted by God to achieve the divine plan and to fulfill its sacred mission. Accordingly, one can establish the fact that Whitman's belief in the exceptional nature of his nation enabled him not only to portray America as an exceptional nation but even to anticipate the future of the American modern power and international role in the current globalized world. In light of this, it is not surprising that in this age of globalization, the U.S. President Barak Obama has also clearly proclaimed that « *The United States will always speak for those who are voiceless, defend those who are oppressed, and bear witness to those who want nothing more than to exercise their universal human rights*». (Obama)



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