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Literary Orientalism: East-West Literary and Intellectual Interactions in Selected Texts From Late-Eighteenth and Early-to-Mid-Nineteenth-Century English Literature

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LITERARY ORIENTALISM: EAST-WEST LITERARY AND INTELLECTUAL INTERACTIONS IN SELECTED TEXTS FROM LATE-EIGHTEENTH AND EARLY-TO-MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH LITERATURE

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Title: Literary Orientalism: East-West Literary and Intellectual Interactions in Selected Texts From Late-Eighteenth and Early-to-Mid-Nineteenth-Century English Literature

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This dissertation explores alternative readings of East-West intellectual and literary interactions in selected texts from late-eighteenth and early-to-mid-nineteenth-century English literature. My main argument is that Walter Savage Landor's *Gebir*, Robert Southey's *Thalaba the Destroyer*, Percy Shelley's *The Revolt of Islam*, William Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab" from the *Prelude*, Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park,* and Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* have engaged with textual and contextual knowledges and mindsets from the East, with an emphasis on the Arabic and Islamic world, to articulate alternative perspectives designed to reform what they see as individually, socially, culturally, literary and politically uncivilized aspects of British society.

The knowledges and mindsets the selected writers engage with from the Islamic and Arabic world include religious notions such as damnation, redemption, divine order, submission, and faith. They also have literary traditions, such as mystical and oral poetry from Arabia. Interestingly, Austen and Brontë expand these engagements to include more personal and social mindsets that pertain the women's world and the entire society. Their novels incorporate an alternative Eastern understanding of notions such as woman's propriety and self-denial. They also discuss notions such as self-regulation, self-reliance, confinement, exposure and enclosure. My examination of the writers' reformative arguments and perspectives in the selected texts underscores open-ended perception of their engagements with the East. The outcomes of these engagements span from philosophical, literary, intellectual, and political agendas. Whereas the

political dimension of these engagements is always dissected from the philosophical and literary ones, I emphasize that considering the literary and philosophical platforms of the selected writers' engagement with the Islamic and Arabic knowledges and examining them in their Islamic and Arabic context enhance our understanding of their critical political arguments.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), late eighteenth-century and early-to-mid-nineteenth-century British literature's engagements with the Arabic and Islamic world and the Eastern world in general has been a site of critical proliferation. However, this exuberance limits our knowledge of these engagements to narrow and controversial assumptions, especially those that perpetuate suspicions about the ability of literature to avoid articulating self-oriented cultural and racially humiliating interrogations of the Arab and Muslim "Other." According to this line of thinking, the propagation of imperialist ideology at home and geopolitical interests abroad is more important than literary interactions between cultures. On the other side, other critical arguments in the field problematize the previous assumption, and they instead, articulate less culturally determinist and essentialist insights. In *Romantic Writers and the East: Anxiety of Empire* (1992), for example, Nigel Leask argues that nineteenth-century Orientalism exhibits "ambivalent" and anxious attitudes toward the "Other." In this dissertation, I offer a new reading of literary interactions by contending that the East and West cannot be read as distinct entities in British Orientalism. I am not alone in this view. In *Making England Western: Occidentalism, Race, and Imperial Culture* (2014), Saree Makdisi argues that British Orientalism has been involved in a "civilizing mission" that was at work in England and abroad in the Orient.

Following Makdisi, this dissertation sets out to explore alternative arguments on those intellectual and literary interactions that have received less critical attention than the seriousness of their "civilizing mission" would suggest. My discussion emphasizes a shift in exploring the questions of what, how, and why we read the way we read interactions between various "world

literary and [non-literary] knowledges" (Krishnaswamy), especially knowledges from the Arab and Islamic world, in Walter Savage Landor's *Gebir* (1798); Robert Southey's *Thalaba The Destroyer* (1799), Percy Bysshe Shelley's *The Revolt of Islam* (1817); William Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab" in "Book V" of *The Prelude* (1805); Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814), and Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853). In particular, I study these engagements in the light of the writers' articulation of alternative, critical and non-ethnocentric intellectual perspectives to reform what they see as individually, socially, culturally, and politically uncivilized aspects of British society. My purpose is not to belittle nor debunk the bulk of critical arguments that have emerged in the field. Rather, I think that the interactions that I explore keep the doors open to more "open-ended" conceptions of their knowledge substance, function, and their immediate historical and current significance.

1. What-to-Read in These Engagements

While other critical works in the field mainly interrogate British writers' attitudes or cultural and political implications toward the Eastern world, I explore the selected writers' engagements with textual and contextual knowledges from that world and their reformative prospects. For example, Landor's *Gebir* builds on the Islamic narrative of the fate of Ad's people and their city Irem. Southey's *Thalaba* proves his thorough and "scholarly" expertise in Islam and Arabic poetry. He engages with the Islamic narrative of the two angels of Babylon, Harut and Marut and translated poetry from the *Suspended Odes* of Arabia. In the same way, Shelley's mystical poetry is said to be highly influenced by the well-known Persian poet Hafiz. Moreover, Wordsworth also engages with the oral tradition of Arabic poetry. On the other side, Austen and Brontë engage with mindsets and moral codes such as propriety, enclosure, and self-regulation that are also important in the Eastern world. My examination of these engagements focuses on

explaining how they negotiate the reformation of England's internal social, literary, and political conditions as part of the writers' public intellectualism responsibilities.

The agendas and outcomes of these engagements cannot be limited to the articulation of geopolitical interests in the Arab and Islamic world. Instead, they, as I argue, yield and are grounded on, literary and intellectual or philosophical dimensions as well. Whereas these dimensions are usually dissected or underrepresented by critical investigations for the sake of political and geopolitical concerns, my point is that British literature's textual literary and non-literary engagements with the Arab and Islamic world enhance these writers' influence by and use of political ideas from that world. Therefore, understanding the literary, religious and philosophical Arabic and Islamic orientations of these knowledges bolsters our understanding of their critical political perspective, especially in the case of Southey's *Thalaba* and Wordsworth's "Dream."

At this point, we need to highlight the role of literature and translation works such as George Sale's famous translation of the Quran (1734) and Sir William Jones's scholarship on Arabic language and poetry in making these alternative sophistications from the Arabic and Islamic world available to the selected writers.[1] This turns to be imperative as we get to know that Southey owned a copy of Sale's translation of the Quran from which he has learned the story of Harut and Marut. Southey also integrates concepts and textual knowledges from Arabic literature from Jones's scholarship. Jones's expertise includes his translations of poetry including *The Mu'allaqat, or Seven Arabian Poems which were Suspended on the Temple of Mecca* and from Persian poetry such a *Persian Song of Hafiz*. Jones's engagement with Arabic and Persian poetry has enabled him to develop his own poetical theory that he explicates in his "Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nation" (1772) and "An Essay on the Art, Called Imitative" (1772). In

these two essays, Jones engages with Arabic poetry as an alternative literature that can be studied to invigorate Western poetry in terms of its form and content. As he discusses in "Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nation," Arabic poetry for Jones set different and peculiar formative and content features. Jones attributes this difference to the influence of Arabia's natural environment on poetry. Jones writes, "If we allow the natural objects, with the *Arabs* are perpetually conversant, to be *sublime* and *beautiful*, our next step must be, to confess that their comparisons, metaphors, and allegories are so likewise" (224). Michael J. Franklin, the editor of a collection of Jones's translations and essays, explains that Jones's "panegyric" obsession with the poetry of Arab Bedouins has a specific reason, which is related to his attempt to push for reviving the pastoral genre in English poetry. Franklin writes, "In the *Mullaqat* Hellenistic tradition is fully assimilated to a specifically Bedouin mentality, and these poems represent the supreme art of the herding and hunting nomad. This outburst of poetry in its unexpected confidence and maturity seemed to confirm Jones's contention that pastoral genre was more alive in the Yemen than in Europe" (189). However, I shall argue that Jones predicates his engagement with Arabic poetry on a more practical and theoretical basis. In a literary manner that anticipates the later poetical manifesto of Samuel Tylor Coleridge's and William Wordsworth's "Preface" to the *Lyrical Ballads* (1801), Jones locates the locus of renovating Western poetry in the extent the poets free it from "the perpetual repetition of the same images, and incessant allusions to the same fables" (336). Therefore, Western poets, according to Jones, should expose themselves to different modes of poetry, with Arabic poetry as an example. Jones believes that his expertise in Arabic poetry and translations set a role model as to what should be done in this respect. He writes,

> It has been my endeavor for several years to inculcate this truth, That, if *the principle writings of the Asiaticks, which are reposited in our public libraries, were printed with*

> *the usual advantage of notes and illustrations, and if the languages of the Eastern nations* were studied *in our places of education, a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should have a more extensive insight into the history of human mind; we should be more furnished with a new set of images and similitudes, and number of excellent compositions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate.* (336)

Jones's work has triggered a remarkably broad literary significance and impact. We read in Franklin's prefatory comments on Jones's translations that, "Coleridge, like Herder, was greatly impressed by the *Moallakat*, and compared its sublimities *with* 'The Book of Job' (Table Talk, pp. 72-3). It influenced Samuel Rogers's 'Pleasure of Memory', Landor's *Poems from the Arabic and Persian*, Browning's 'Muléykeh, a Dramatic Idyle', and Tennyson acknowledged that it gave him the idea of *Locksley Hall*" (189-190). In respect to the writers under scrutiny in this dissertation, there are textual evidences that prove the influence of Jones's work on the poems of Landor, Southey, Shelley, and Wordsworth. Jones might be the secondary source from which Landor reads about Ad's people and their city. Also, Shelley's introduction to and influence by Parisian poetry and poets should have happened through Jones's translations. I can even argue that Austen's and Brontë's novels have traces of Jones' intellectualism in the way they disseminate an alternative "history of human mind" such as self-regulation, propriety, and enclosure from the Arab and Eastern world in general to nineteenth-century English readership.

Needless to say, Jones's literary impact is mostly obvious in Southey's and Wordsworth's poems. In addition to Southey's "scholarly" and "diffuse" expertise in Islam, *Thalaba* also demonstrates his insightful and critical knowledge on Arabic poetry. He copies the following poetry from the well-known pre-Islamic Arabic Ode, the *Poem of Tarafa*: "For time

will produce events of which thou canst have no idea; and he to whom thou gavest no commission, will bring thee the unexpected news" (Jones 211). Southey has obtained the translation from Jones as Franklin asserts. My notion is that unless we get hold of the meaning of Tarafa's most-cited sophistication of wisdom, we fall short from apprehending what Southey's moralism teaches us on the individual's power, will, and most importantly, the individual limited vision and understanding of how the world functions. On the other side, Wordsworth seems to draw upon Jones's conception of Arabic poetry as repertoire of an alternative poetics. In "Dream of an Arab," He argues that Arabia's oral poetry opens a venue for Western poets and educators to consider how to make their poetry and the knowledge it articulates more enduring in the minds of the learners and vouchsafe its transmittance from a generation to another.

As discussed earlier, we can understand the selected writers' engagements with literary and non-literary texts from the Arabic and Islamic world as part of an innovative and reformative literary movement that Jones has called for and anticipated earlier. Interestingly, Landor, Southey, Shelley, Wordsworth, Austen and Brontë all incorporate new perceptions, themes, theories and images as alternative contents to be articulated in their literature. However, it is possible to understand this literary movement as concomitant with a philosophical intellectual debate the writers have involved in. The common intellectual consensus in this debate is the "return" to the more traditional understanding and explication of the process of moral, social and political reformation. What is central to this trend is the belief that the individual constitutes the core of this process. Landor, Southey, Shelley, Austen and Brontë, as I discuss in the upcoming chapters, put an emphasis on the cultivation of an individual capable of listening to his/her inner "conscience," and who can consciously engage with the historical process that shapes his/her

existence. The intended outcome of this process, as these writers envisage it, is enhancing the individual's capability to self-regulate his/her moral, material and political quests.

According to M.H. Abrams, this argument has had a broader social and political value. In *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (1971), Abrams points out that the obsession of late eighteenth-century British literature onward with old forms of sophistication has gone hand in hand with the intellectual search for a public discourse to respond to the politically and socially instable late eighteenth-century. Abrams writes, "the several decades beginning with the 1790s constituted a genuine epoch in intellectual and cultural history; not, however, by absolute innovation but by a return to a mode of hereditary wisdom which was redefined, expanded, and applied to the emerging world of continuous political, industrial and social revolution and disorder which is the world we live in today" (146). In addition to the politicization of self-regulation as a historical necessity, I should add that the texts I engage with motivate us to reconceive what constitutes self-regulation or self-education. They tell us that self-regulation is not just the extent to which one shows conscious and material readiness, strong will, and self-determination. Rather, Austen, for example, later asserts the Landor's, Southey's and Shelley's point on the innate part of self-regulation. As Fanny Price declares it in *Mansfield Park*, "we all have better guides in ourselves if we attend to them" (Austen 413). Inner guides are the parameters of self-regulation or self-correction, but their role should be supplemented by the external assistance and guidance of education, experience, and training. Therefore, the writers attempt to disseminate regulated mindsets and knowledges the public should expose itself to and practice. For instances, *Gebir* and *Thalaba* integrate religious moralizing in reforming the political process. *The Revolt* also conditions political reform by the prevalence of and public's inclination to observe "comprehensive liberal morality." In addition,

Mansfield Park and *Villette* underscore the vitality of extended familial and social ties and moral enclosure for the consolidation of social solidarity in the face of social, political and material threats and challenges.

I assume that the major additional intellectual contribution this dissertation lends to its readers is the discussion of how the selected writers make political use of their literary and philosophical engagements with knowledges from the Islamic and Arabic world. Therefore, my notion is that the literary works that I explore outline an "open-ended" and open-minded understanding of their interaction with their internal political spectrum. I can hold that their political perspective is reformative and challenges political bigotry and narrow mindedness. The selected poems and novels are usually approached as either revolutionary, conservative, or imperialist, Landor's *Gebir*, Southey's *Thalaba,* and *Shelley*'s *The Revolt* mark a political disillusionment with the idea of revolution, but they simultaneously do not enact the resignation to the corrupted political order or diminish individual agency. Their political outlook, possibly with the exception of Shelley's, shapes its undertakings and commitments from its active, conscious and morally regulated engagement with the order its acts within. On the other side, the public and political discourse of Austen's *Mansfield Park* and Brontë's *Villitte,* as I argue, take a middle ground by endorsing social and political "enclosure" as a self-protecting tool to diminish, or wane, the effects of the exposure to unregulated revolutionary and social mindsets. However, the novels also seek to reform excessive reactionary conservative order by asserting the individual's self-regulation of his/her material and intellectual rights.

What enables us as readers to understand this political recipe is to invest on, read and understand the related perceptions the writers engage with from the Islamic and Arabic world. Otherwise, we tend to get inadequate, prejudiced and monolithic understanding of the works'

reformative perspectives as well as the Islamic and Arabic knowledges. In *Islam and the English Enlightenment, 1670-1840* (2012), Humberto Garcia provides an important, insightful, and historically-informed exploration of how Islam, or the idea of "Islamic Republicanism," or "radical interpretation of Islam" has been "central" to the English Protestant reformers' political secular discourse against the political and religious order in the late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century England. Garcia dates this political engagement with Islam to the late seventeenth-century deist movement (5), which is marked by the publication of Henry Stubbe's *The Rise and Progress of Mahometanism* (1671). The deists' interest in Islam, according to Garcia, has predicated on religious and spiritual grounds, that their engagement with Islam relates to their exploration of other primitive monotheisms, including Christianity and Judaism. However, Garcia maintains that this scholarship has had its political ends as well. Garcia writes,

> By reading the scriptures beside profane histories, deists helped shape the *Historica monotheistica*, a comparativist study that challenges Christocentric history and politics. Radical dissenters used this study to question the theological authority of an exclusionist Anglican establishment. From Stubbe onward, deism implied a temper or attitude toward England's toleration policy and religious plurality rather than a systematic creed. (5-6)

Not only do deists endorse an openness to and inclusion of Islam in the historiography of world religions, Islam as well constitutes for them an alternative model of political governance that suffices their radical quests. This particular use of the Islamic rhetoric stems from the way those deists read Islam. According to Garcia, the deists have conceived Islam as a revolution, and that "Islam's worldwide triumph as anticipating the Protestant Reformation. In their imagination, Muhammad is an earlier and more radical reformer than Luther" (7).

This understanding and political employment of Islam has become integral in 1970s radical discourse. However, Landor's, Southey's and Shelley's engagements with Islam and other writers' such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, John Toland, and Edmund Burke, in the light of Garcia's argument, invest on Islam as a counter or "rival" subverting discourse, not as much as an alternative set of political and religious knowledges. This engagement has been concomitant to the fueling of political reformation zeal in England sparked by the outset of the French Revolution. Garcia argues that the incomplete poem of Coleridge's "Mahomet" (1799), for instance, reveals how English radicals have conceived the Islamic republics of the Ottoman empire in Hungary, Turkey, and Egypt and the Mughal empire to

> confirm, yet promise to resolve, the shortcomings plaguing the Christian prophetic monarchy in England: the downfall of Cromwell's government followed by the restoration of the Stuart regime and the high Anglican church; disenfranchised nonconformists barred from holding public office, including property rights, and preferment due to the Test and Corporation Acts; women's inability to own wealth and property under English common law; and the gradual disillusionment with the French Revolution combined with a conservative backlash and governmental suppression of radicals in England. (3)

As far as I am concerned, the problem that might arise from Garcia's argument is the production of an essential connection, back then and now, between Islam as a political discourse and *Gebir*, *Thalaba* and *The Revolt* on one hand and the rhetoric of anarchy that sweeps through England in the wake of the revolution on the other hand. This connection might end in misrepresenting Islam, and, thereby, negatively impact the reception of these engagements and of Islam itself. Garcia points out how the poems of *Gebir* and *Thalaba* were subject to public and state

censorship based on the belief that they are executing a revolutionary pro-Islamist external and foreign agenda.[2] We might then understand the revisions Landor, Southey and Shelley have done to their poems as proofs of the poets' developing "self-censor[ship]" as Garcia concedes (138). In the case of Landor, this "reflects a fear that his work on Arabic and Persian poetry—including *Gebir*—could be publicly perceived as a propaganda in support of the Islamic republic instituted by 'Ali Bonaparte', the self-styled Jacobin Mahdi" (138). *Thalaba* could cause Southey the same sedition charge as well. Thus, he disassociates himself with the radical cause by allegorizing it in the poem by "plot[ting] an alternative history that locates Unitarian dissent in the Islamic Near East" (Garcia 179). Moreover, what concerns me is that reading the poems in this way leads us to perceive the poets' engagements with knowledges from the Islamic and Arab world and their revision of their revolutionary and radical politics as totally apocalyptic. In this way, we, besides misreading the Islamic outlook as totally apocalyptic, strip the poems and these knowledges from their active reformative prospects.

Therefore, what is central to my discussion of the poems' political engagements with Islam is to emphasize their "malleable discourse," to use Garcia's words, as they make possible alternative interpretations of their political history. Garcia himself touches on this premise as he argues that "Mahometanism was a useful bricolage medium for a diverse group of writers from various political and religious backgrounds. … to provide both a model and an idiom for the definition of political liberty" (10). In his revision of *Gebir*, I contend that Landor uses the apocalypse of Ad's people to moralize against outcomes of the revolution such as tyranny and excessive and morally unregulated political ambitions reflected in the Napoleonic colonial expedition in Egypt. As well, the regulation of Thalaba's quest that is manufactured by his encounter with the two angels of Harut and Marut in Southey's epic emphasizes that life "will

produce events [and] will bring thee the unexpected news," to quote Tarafa. In the case of Southey's politics, it reveals Southey's notion that destruction in the name of revolution is misleading and, thus, his disaffiliation with the revolution is natural and inevitable. Moreover, Shelley's mysticism in *The Revolt* complicates further the scene. For him, radicalism nor conservatism truly explain the post-revolutionary moral and political dilemma. The problem is deeper than this, that people of all political sects are not morally and ethically educated to amend political division. Shelley, as I argue, uses mysticism to articulate his "dying politics" toward either revolution or reformation.

2. How-to-Read These Engagements

In examining the selected writers' engagements with textual and contextual knowledges from the Islamic and Arabic world, I take advantage of my personal understanding of the contextual interpretation of these knowledges. I stress the principle that reading the knowledges in their context enhances the understanding of what the Islamic or Arabic part of the poems and the novels would mean or imply in the context of the works' reflection on or critique of England's internal political, social, religious or literary spectrums.

By putting much weight on undertaking this shift, I build upon a corpus of critical insights in the field that underscore breaking with what becomes traditional and fully consumed approach to study British Orientalism. In "Beyond Occidentalism: Toward Nonimperial Geohistorical Categories" Fernando Coronil believes that new studies in the field of Orientalism should move beyond studying Western Orientalists' debilitating representations of the Orient to studying the material and intellectual contexts in which these representations have emerged. As critical practices such as postcolonialism have failed to resolve East-West binaries, this new critical approach, Coronil asserts, "create[s] the impulse to approach the gap between Western

representations of the Orient and the 'real' Orient by searching for more complete maps without inquiring into the sources of partiality of Orientalist representations" (55). In the meanwhile, these "complete maps" of East-West intellectual and literary interactions do not abandon the imaginative construction of the Orient in English literature. Rather, they, as Coronil calls for, require us to redirect our critical investigations to study "the conceptions of the West animating these representations. It entails relating the observed to the observers, products to production, knowledge to its sites of formation" (Coronil 56). Resonating with Coronil's perspective, my discussion discerns how Landor, Southey, Shelley, Wordsworth, Austen and Brontë impartially conceive or envision England's political, cultural, social, religious in outlining the dynamics of their engagements with the Arab and Islamic world. However, I need to emphasize the point that we should explore real texts and contexts rather than "representations" to perceive how these writers have really understood the "real" Arabic and Islamic world, and how they have related it to their public intellectual public responsibilities.

I propose that by perpetuating Orientalism as a set of fantastical images about the "exotic" other world that does not exist except the way this writer or another imaginatively constructs it, we acclaim ethnocentric beliefs that diminish that other world's ability to produce its distinct system of cultural, literary, moral, religious, and political thought and the potentiality of this thought to cross diverse epistemological and geographical entities. Revathi Krishnaswamy's argument "Toward World Literary Knowledges: Theory in the Age of Globalization" (2010) strongly supplements Coronil's perspective with praxis. In this mindful and practical reflection on the way we teach literary Orientalism, comparative literature and World Literature, Krishnaswamy believes that our teaching approaches, commitments, and goals tend to be Eurocentric. For instance, Krishnaswamy demonstrates that critical practices that build

on East-West oppositional contrast such as postcolonialism "authorize the first term, Europe, as the grid of reference, to which may be added others in subsequent and subordinate fashion" (402). Therefore, I would agree with Krishnaswamy that globalization, open-markets, and people's immigration and emigration across the world urge us to be more practical in the way we read, write about, and theorize on literature. We need to explore how literature helps us overcome coercion and instead foster and sustain the openness of this world. Therefore, Krishnaswamy contends that such texts I engage with in this dissertation should be taught as containers of

> 'world literary knowledges,' the purpose of which is to open up the canon of literary theory and criticism to alternative ways of conceptualizing and analyzing literary production. This means that regional, subaltern, and popular traditions, whether latent or emergent, may be studied, analyzed, and evaluated as epistemologies of literature/literariness alongside the traditions of poetics that currently constitute both the canon (Euro-American) and the counter-canon (Arabic, Sanskrit, Chinese, Japanese) of literary theory. (408)

I believe that this argument is resonant to my discussion as I seek to emphasize the "open-ended" and "cross-cultural" flow of civilizing and reformative knowledges across different literary traditions. It is also important to affirm the actuality and historicity of these knowledges, no matter the aesthetic medium employed to transmit these knowledges from one context to another.

3. Why-to-Read These Engagements

My intellectual endeavor here is to underscore the useful knowledges and the intellectual commitments and understandings Landor's *Gebir,* Southey's *Thalaba*, Shelley's *The Revolt,* Wordsworth's "Dream," Austen's *Mansfield Park* and Brontë's *Villette* articulate for intellectual

and public consumption. These knowledges highlight new percepts that dismantle, and most importantly, find alternatives to the prevailing dichotomizing political and cultural discourses that dominate the debates on East-West relationships. Most relevant to the field, these alternative precepts complicate the essential colonial or imperial paradigms or taxonomies as essential labels to construe the relationship between literatures and knowledges from the East and their counterparts in the West. In other words, the writers that I engage with demonstrate how literature has been vital in bridging gaps of all sorts between nations. Garcia points out that the current value of reading late eighteenth-century selected British writers' engagement with Islam is that it "reminds us that Islam has a positive constructive role to play in the story of Western modernity, then and now. There is much to learn from a prophetic tradition based on intercultural reconciliation rather than the 'clash of civilizations,' an exhausted paradigm that has stalled public debate in the post-9/11 era" (230). The writers and their texts I discuss in this dissertation go beyond that to underpin the essential fact that we live in intellectual "'connected histories.'" For instance, *Gebir* and *Thalaba* unveils an old and new, Eastern and Western, Islamic and non-Islamic debate on the inseparability between religion, morals and politics. My notion is that these poems antecede the critique of Orientalism as a secular imperialist discourse by articulating a primitive outlook that asserts the role of religious and moralizing prophecies in fostering political reformation. Additionally, Shelley's *The Revolt* conditions political reformation by the extent to which political rivals are morally prepared to give up their narrow political self-interests for the goodness of people.

In addition to these general venues of East-West historical connections, I think the poems and Austen's and Brontë's novels also bolden a more specific correspondence between their political history and ours. Much of what concerns Arab intellectuals about the chaotic social,

economic and political conditions of their countries during the Arab Spring now reproduces those writers' debates on the conditions of Europe in the wake of the French revolution. Some Arab intellectuals share Landor and Southey's concerns on how revolution has ended up producing excessive morally unregulated political ambitions and practices. They also share Austen's and Brontë's concerns on the impact of political unrest and revolution on individuals, families and social and public mindsets. In the meanwhile, there is a similar concern on the social, cultural and political impacts that reactionary conservative waves and the reproduction of old regimes might convene.

Not far from actual politics, re-reading *Gebir*, *Thalaba*, *The Revolt*, *Mansfield Park*, *Villette* and Wordsworth's "Dream" now urge us to reconsider the politics of our profession. I believe that Coronil and Krishnaswamy are right on pressing on exploring and teaching such literature to ascertain what connects people other than divide them. I shall add that this literature yields a different necessity. Whereas Krishnaswamy focuses on how to re-accommodate our teaching of world literature in a Western academic context, I believe that the poems and novels that I engage with, besides their enhancement of worldly identification, can secure and expand non-Western readership and engagement with this literature. My point is that *Gebir*, *Thalaba*, *The Revolt*, Wordsworth's "Dream," *Mansfield Park* and *Villette* bolster meaningful informative mediums in Arabic and Islamic educational contexts. Arab and Muslim readers of literature can find knowledges in these texts that relate to their cultural, religious, cultural, and social norms. For instances, *Gebir* and *Thalaba* lay manifestations on observing religious prophecies, submission and Destiney. Wordsworth's "Dream" as well underscores the poetry of the Arab Bedouin as a source of knowledge and it can develop effective learning skills. *Mansfield Park*

and *Villette* yield additional insights into familial solidarity, moral self-regulation, the importance and limits of woman's self-reliance.

4. Chapters Overview

Chapter Two explores Walter Savage Landor's *Gebir* and Robert Southey's *Thalaba The Destroyer* alternative prospects on regulating the individual's moral and political quests through their engagements with Islamic prophecies and literatures. In this arena, Landor and Southey underscore the importance of a conscious engagement with history and material circumstances, at the end of which individual can self-reflect on and self-correct his or her unregulated quests. Chapter Three discusses how Percy Shelley in *The Revolt of Islam* and William Wordsworth in "Dream of an Arab" articulate alternative insights on the usually underrepresented traditional knowledges and practices. Through Shelley's engagement with the mystical philosophy and poetry from the Islamic world, he reveals how the post-revolutionary political chaotic condition in Europe is difficult to reform because the public as well as politicians are not morally prepared to do so. In particular, in his engagement with oral poetry from Arabia, Wordsworth would argue that poetry can enhance the learners' ability to preserve and communicate knowledge. His point is that educators should enhance the capability of the learners to store knowledge in their memories and transmit it to others. In Chapter Four, I discuss how Jane Austen in *Mansfield Park* and Charlotte Brontë in *Villette* engage with mindsets from the Arabic and Islamic world such as women's self-denial, careful exposure, propriety, and self-regulation as alternative prospects to reform the personal, familial, social and political spectrums. Chapter Five raises concluding remarks on the dilemma that incumbers the selected writers and their texts on one hand and their readership and state censorship on the other hand. General speaking, the selected works have not received that remarkable applaud from their readers. This leads us to pose the

questions of what it means to be a public intellectual, and how the intellectual should reconcile between his or her convictions and public responsibilities. Moreover, there is a need to explore the impact of readership on the writers' literary and intellectual engagement with the other world, and how that engagement also impacts the readership's understanding of that world.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUALIZING THE MORAL AND POLITICAL SELF IN WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR'S *GEBIR* AND ROBERT SOUTHEY'S *THALABA THE DESTROYER*

1. Introduction

In this chapter, I argue that Walter Savage Landor's and Robert Southey's engagements with Arabic and Islamic literary and non-literary knowledges in *Gebir* (1798) and *Thalaba The Destroyer* (1801) articulate an alternative and non-ethnocentric mode of conceptualizing the formation of the self, including its moral, religious and political endeavors. The poems underscore the individual's conscious participation in understanding the history of ideas by observing, reflecting on and regulating the moral and religious consequences of developing an historical consciousness. The critical scholarships on the poems usually focus on exploring their political and post-colonial dimension, that is to interrogate Landor's and Southey's patronizing or ambivalent imperialist discourse. In contrast, this chapter illustrates the poems' general moralism in the context of the Arabic and Islamic knowledges and relate it to the poems' reformative perspective on the contemporary political event of the French Revolution and its social and political aftermaths.

Landor's *Gebir* and Southey's *Thalaba* interestingly expose different religious and literary layers of interactions with knowledges from the Arabic and Islamic world. They peculiarly re-engage the more traditionally and religiously-oriented Arabic and Islamic knowledges, religious prophecies in particular, in discussing, negotiating and reforming their immediate secular political realm. However, recent readings of the poems' political dimension tend to maintain their religious and secular contexts as distinct opposing realms. This is brought by the problematic decontextualization and allegorization of the poems' religious and moral

characteristics, their Arabic and Islamic components, and their civilizing perspectives for the sake of their secular and revolutionary arguments. While this way of reading might supply the reader with information about the actual material circumstances the poems have emerged in and interacted with, allegorizing the poems, nonetheless, culminates in producing inaccurate and prejudiced understanding of the poems' Arabic and Islamic side and their contemporary critique on their pertinent political conditions.

The first section of this chapter discusses that *Gebir*'s engagement with the Islamic narrative of the decedents of Ad's people yields a civilizing prospect that mandates the moral regulation of one's political ambitions. Landor convenes the apocalypse upon Gebir's, the Iberian king, colonial expedition in Egypt because Gebir fails to consider and observe how destructive, excessive and morally unregulated political and secular ambitions are. According to the Islamic narrative, Ad's people, Gebir's alleged ancestors, and their city, Irem, were totally ruined by the divine because of their insolence, pride and their refusal to submit to God. Therefore, I argue that the poem's recuperation of the fate of Ad's people and their city serves as comparative text that Gebir is expected to consciously "consider," self-reflect on and self-internalize the moralism behind it. However, he defies this civilizing principle as he insists on restoring the vanishing glory of his ancestors.

Both the Islamic and Arabic context and *Gebir*'s secular and political context intersect in emphasizing the Iberian King's conscious engagement with his ancestors to gain religious, moral and civilizing prospects necessary to self-regulate and self-correct his moral and political endeavors. His defiance of the religious and moral principles such as submission and moderation and the secular codes of observation, self-regulation, and self-internalization yielded by the history of his ancestors germinates of his apocalypse. However, the allegorical reading of the

poem tends to redefine the poem's perspective on defiance as an integral segment of Landor's radical revolutionary politics against the corrupted Napoleonic regime and its extension in Egypt. In this light, readers then might misconceive the Islamic narrative of Ad's people as a corrupted counter-text against which Landor asserts Gebir's defiance of its prophecy as essential in reforming his morals and politics. In his reading of *Gebir*, Garcia contests such a reading by holding that the poem's engagement with the Islamic narrative of decedents of Ad's people reinstates the role of religious prophecy in regulating the public political discourse. The poem in this sense, to quote Garcia, responds to "the secularist obsession to treat 'religion' as a *sui generis* concept existing outside history and politics" (16). Garcia also defines the incentive behind this anti-secularist shift as Landor's, Southey's and others' "return" to the "original," "primitive," "unorthodox," and "inner light" of Christianity to counter "orthodox Christocentric" understanding of history (Garcia 18). This does not entail moving backward to the assumed uncivilized world, but it is part of the search for alternative knowledges that express and disseminate what the poets consider reformative and civilizing. However, Garcia's argument does not explicate the religious and moral civilizing substance that the story of Ad's people articulates in *Gebir*. Rather, he conceives its effectiveness in being a different political rhetoric that vehicles Landor's revolutionary standpoint against contemporary religious and political establishments.

Part of this chapter's political engagement with *Gebir* is to explain how problematic allegorical reading is in this arena. It is so, because it limits and condenses the politics of the poem to the politics of imperialism, whether the poem endorses or indicts imperialism. This ends in the fact that we miss much of the poem's political critique and perspective on political reformation, part of which is either the marginalization or deformation of the Islamic and Arabic

part of it. In *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxiety of Empire* (1992), Nigel Leask judges *Gebir* as an imperialist text, though he consents that it does not hold a conspicuous and consistent ideological disposition in relation to imperialism. He argues, "The poem indicted British imperialism whilst obliquely praising the American colonialists and the Napoleonic intervention in Egypt" (Leask 26). In contrast, Garcia holds the belief that the poem ostensibly criticizes internal imperialism and its external associations. He argues that "*Gebir* offers a salient Islamic-hermetic critique of a resurgent Anglican imperialism in which, as Rowan Strong points out, 'the Church of England was now seen as a support for British colonial rule'" (Garcia 129). In my analysis of *Gebir*, I show how the poem problematizes establishing direct reference and allegorical matching to Napoleon Bonaparte and his expedition in Egypt. Moreover, the revised 1803 version of the poem that I quote from in this chapter manifests Landor's disillusionment with the Napoleonic cause. In one of the new notes he added to his 1803 poem, Landor declares, "Great hopes were raised from the French revolution, but every good man is disappointed. God forbid that we should ever be impelled to use their means of amelioration, or that our arms should be attended by theirs,—internal external subjugation" (47). Therefore, this chapter emphasizes the crucial premise that Landor's revision underscores his political realignment based on his observations of the unfolding material and political circumstances of the French Revolution and the truth of Napoleonic colonial expedition in Egypt. Overall, my discussion in this chapter ascertains how *Gebir* and *Thalaba* challenge this limited historiography. The poems explore broader questions than imperialism. In the case of *Gebir*, the question of imperialism seems not to belong to the poem's intellectual and political immediate inquiry. Rather, the poem digs deeper in exploring the grounds of all ideas and acts such as pride, audacity, self-delusion, and self-interestedness that incite secular imperialist and tyrannical behaviors and acts.

My discussion outlines how Landor and Southey make use of sophistications circulated in religious and literary texts from the Islamic and Arabic world such as redemption, damnation, Destiney, and submission to articulate their political stands toward political corruption and reformation on the individual and public and state levels. In this area, Landor, according to Garcia's argument, engages with the notion of Islamic damnation as a political revolutionary rhetoric to counter the Christian notion of redemption (Garcia 152). Conversely, while this argument seems to fit Landor's revolutionary perspective, it, nonetheless, troubles our understanding of the Islamic prospects Landor engages with because it picks one side of the issue and develops it as an essential paradigm. The Islamic narration of the fate of Ad's people deploys damnation as a civilizing rhetoric. However, Southey's *Thalaba* unveils the other side of redemption as an Islamic principle that is also capable of effecting moral, religious and political reformation.

Therefore, this chapter argues that *Thalaba*'s engagements with notions of redemption and the notions of Destiney, submission, individual will and ambition in the story of the two angles of Babel, Harut and Marut, and the poetry of Tarafa articulates Southey's conservative political outlook. I shall clarify the point that we need to understand this outlook not as Southey's endorsement of total resignation to the political status quo. Rather, my notion is that Southey calls for shaping a noncompromising and active political consciousness that considers the political realm and regulate one's political quests and convictions from a realistic and moral point of views. In contrast to William Beckford's apocalyptic and anarchist treatment of submission in *Vathek* (1786), which Carol Bolton in *Writing the Empire: Robert Southey and Romantic Colonialism* (2007) labels as one of crucial "creative progenitors" of *Thalaba*, Southey's poem stresses the role of Destiney and submission in regulating life and revitalizes the

importance of the individual's submission to the religious and moral codes. As I argue in the section on *Thalaba,* these percepts are vital for understanding the quest of Thalaba, Southey's Arab youth hero. For instance, my reading discusses the idea that Thalaba's decline of revenge in the final scene when he pardons Okba, the sorcerer who has murdered his father, needs not to be read as an act of defiance but as one of the possible predestined turns that the reader and Thalaba himself could not predict to happen until his journey draws to its end. Thalaba's resolution does not entirely disorient his strong cause and command his resignation to the corrupted political power of the sorcerers. Still, the incentive of his pardon, I argue, derives from a solid and empowering conservative moral platform, which, in the meanwhile, emphasizes his intellectual active engagement with, not "retirement" or retreat from, politics.

On the other hand, my argument explains that taking Thalaba's quest out of its Arabic and Islamic context redefines it as a secular revolution against the Islamic prophecy as a corrupted political institution and discourse. Again, such a reading stems from treating *Thalaba* as a text in which Southey encrypts his revolutionary politics. Garcia and Bolton hold that the poem does not yield a genuine conservative outlook. Rather, the poem, as Bolton writes, "came into existence on the cusp of his changing views" (167). Garcia believes that the poem still advocates a revolutionary standpoint and regards Southey's political disillusionment as a tactical move "that rescues radical politics by situating the 'Unitarian' Reformation in the Islamic Orient rather than Napoleonic Europe (or Egypt). In this case, radical Protestant politics is safely disassociated from the looming dangers of French revolutionary excess" (187). Bolton, on the other side, maintains that Southey's hope in political enlightenment was evaporating as he was writing the poem, which instead manifests his "growing political orthodoxy" (167). In the light of these arguments, we are then obliged to read Thalaba's pardon of his father's murderer at the

end as a demonstration of his revolutionary defiance of the religious and moral codes, which are presented in the poem, according to this perspective, as catalyzers of his revenge quest.

This reading, as I argue in the last section of my discussion of *Thalaba*, results from the inability to understand the poem's plot. Critics and reviewers of the poem such as Francis Jefferey, a contemporary of Southey, and Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch tend to sever Thalaba's confrontation with Okba that happens at the end of the poem from the proceedings of the story and its Islamic and Arabic elements. They instead regard the unfolding of the confrontation as a separate and interpolated twist. For them, *Thalaba*'s plot is entirely crammed with "disjointed" and irrelevant episodes. In contrast, my argument supports the notion that the plot effectively supplements the articulation of the poem's conservative moralism and politics. The poetry that Southey quotes from *The Poem of Tarafa* teaches us how to read the plot. In brief, it tells us that solid expectations on the proceedings of Thalaba's quest are difficult to make. Though the reader might occasionally feel that Thalaba goes through insignificant and arbitrarily constructed and sequenced incidents and stages, the poetry of Tarafa emphasizes that these incidents and stages are all pertinent to the development of the story, yet they are linked in complicated relations that are difficult to decipher in their immediate time or at all.

2. Walter Savage Landor's 'Gebir'

Gebir, drafted in 1796, first published in 1798, and revised in 1803 enacts an earlier textual cornerstone for the literary and intellectual interactions between writers from late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth century England and textual and contextual knowledges from the Arabic and Islamic world. Critics and readers of *Gebir* usually quote how contemporaries of Landor such as Robert Southey, Thomas De Quincy, William Wordsworth, and Percy Bysshe Shelly have recognized and emulated the poem's literary merits and its

impact on their later literary Orientalism. We read in Jonathan Wordsworth's introduction to *Gebir* 1798 edition that Southey acknowledges its influence on *Thalaba* in a letter he dedicated to Anna Seward in 1808, in which he states, "'*Gebir* is the only contemporary poem to which I am, as a poet, in the slightest degree indebted'" (qtd. in Wordsworth). In addition, we get to know that Southey has introduced *Gebir* to Walter Scott and William Wordsworth. Adam Roberts presumes that "*Gebir's* influence is felt directly in *The Prelude, The Revolt of Islam,* and *Thalaba the Destroyer*" (33). Also, Percy Shelley showed an avid interest in the poem. Thomas Jefferson Hogg, a Romantic fellow and biographer of Shelley, writes, "'I often found Shelley reading *Gebir*'" (qtd. in Wordsworth). Shelley, Hogg adds, "'would read it aloud, or to himself sometimes, with a tiresome pertinacity. One morning, I went to his room to tell him something of importance, but he would attend to nothing but *Gebir*'" (qtd in. Wordsworth). What is interesting about these testimonies is that they outline the formation of a literary history and tradition of East-West textual and contextual interaction, which *Gebir* stands as an early leading and provocative avant-garde.

The Arabic and Pre-Islamic Sources of *Gebir*

Critics bring *Gebir* to the fore when they discuss Landor's attitudes on the Arabic and Islamic world but not what the poem says about his intellectual and literary interaction with that world. Almost all the explorations on the informative source of the poem on this world points at Clara Reeve's eighteenth-century Romance, *The History of Charoba, Queen of Egypt* (1785). On that, John Forster, a biographer of Landor, writes that Landor "came close to the description of an Arabian tale. This arrested his fancy, and yielded thee germ of *Gebir*" (50). The apparent influence of Reeve's romance on Landor's poem might be discerned in his choice of Egypt as the material context of his poem. However, *Gebir* discerns much more about the conceptual

literature and knowledge Landor engages with from the Islamic and Arabic world in versifying the story of the apocalyptic fate of Gebir's colonial expedition in Egypt.

In this arena, the story of the pre-Islamic Ad's people, or the "Gadites" as Landor names Gebir's ancestors, provides the immediate knowledge that informs Landor's story as critics such as Mohammad Sharafuddin and Garcia and others demonstrates.[3] Landor in the poem emphasizes this connection as he traces the Iberian king's lineage back to the ancient disciples of Sidad, son of Ad. Aroar, the last survivor of the Gadites, and who accompanies Gebir in his journey to the underworld to observe the fate of his ancestors, confirms this history to him: "Thou knowest not that here thy fathers lie, The race of Sidad" (iii. 35-36. 17), who have peopled the city of Irem.[4]

Landor does not stick to the right context of the Gadites, or Adites, that is Yemen, and he resituates his story in Egypt. This might cause a twofold consequence. First, Landor's revision boldens the poem's contemporary political allusions, which is the Napoleonic expedition in Egypt as argued in many recent readings of *Gebir*. Second, and most importantly, it underscores the poem's core investment in the fate of Gebir's ancestors, which might have global application and significance. The strong claim the poem makes in this place is that knowing, contemplating, observing, and self-internalizing the fate of his ancestors is vital for his moral and political reformation, part of it is the abdication of his colonial expedition in Egypt. Moreover, the reader is also required to analyze and self-reflect on how Gebir reads and identifies with the history of his ancestors that helps in understanding the poem's civilizing prospects.

In its Islamic context, the destruction of Ad's people and others must be constantly circulated, so listeners and readers keep themselves acquainted with these stories to derive a useful knowledge from them on how to self-regulate and self-correct their moral, religious and

political principles. The Quranic narrative is clear on that issue as it calls people to deduce lessons from the fate of Ad's people: "Hast thou not considered how thy Lord dealt with Ad, the people of Irem, adorned with lofty buildings, the like whereof hath not been erected in the land" (Sale 488-489).[5] The should-be end of knowing about the fate of Ad's people is to inculcate faith, submission, moral, religious and political righteousness. It is not solely intuitive; developing faith and submission should also result from an active and rational learning process. This happens by observing the ruins of Ad's people, self-reflecting and, consequently, self-internalizing their cause: pride, audacity, and insolence.

At this point, Landor's poem intersects with its Islamic knowledge subtext in replicating this educating and moralizing method. Both advance Gebir's critical and conscious reading of and identification with the history of his ancestors as instrumental in civilizing his moral and political undertakings. However, he fails in developing a self-correcting process as he insists on imitating his forefathers. If read in its Islamic context, Gebir's act will be attributed to his failure to retain faith and submit to the divine order due to his pride, insolence and impiety. On the other side, *Gebir* resituates the religious and moral implications of Ad's people story to fit its political and secular context. The moral, religious, and political dimensions of the poem demonstrate the vitality of one's conscious participation in reading and understanding history. However, to advance this notion, the poem's secular agenda needs to be situated within its Arabic and Islamic backdrop. The poem itself enforces this synthesis. In commenting on Gebir's ancestors' "primeval wrongs," Landor clarifies the point that they are not the "possession, as it appears his ancestors had, the throne of Egypt" (2). So, what apparently concerns Landor in the fate of Ad's people is not whether they were colonialists or imperialists, but their moral corruption that breeds their political corruption. As well, the Islamic narrative connects the political corruption

of Ad's people to their morally and religiously unregulated behaviors and actions. If *Gebir* is severed from its Islamic and Arabic context, it turns then to ratify, sustain, and proliferate exclusionary, expansionist and imperialist politics, while the poem edifies a moral and political self that challenges compromising to these labels.

The Political Subtext of *Gebir*

From my point of view, recent postcolonial readings of *Gebir* fall short from accentuating the political perspective of the poem's engagement with the religiously oriented and moralizing knowledge of Ad's people. The problem arises as postcolonial critics condensate the poem's public intellectualism to a one-sided and ethnocentric discourse that ignores the Arabic and Islamic part of it. Ineffectively integrating this part while exploring the poem promotes inadequate assumptions on the poem such as taking it as an epitome that canonizes Landor's "xenophobic Orientalism" and manifests his imperialist ideology.

From a postcolonial perspective, *Gebir* solely reproduces and discloses Landor's encoded revolutionary outlook, or his wavering patronizing politics. At one point, this exploration helps the reader get a sense of how Landor's public intellectualism was interacting and responding to the political atmosphere and how he has facilitated the poem to disseminate the political critique and civilizing mission he was after.[6] However, taking the allegorical side of *Gebir* to the front becomes less supported or justified in the republished 1803 edition of the poem. In this revised edition, Landor's newly inserted "Arguments" as brief introductions to each book of the poem (besides the footnotes and endnotes) articulates candid and direct critique of the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte. Nonetheless, critics, such as Jonathan Wordsworth, Nigel Leask, Alan Richardson, and Garcia, usually quote from the 1798 first edition to vindicate Landor's pro-French Revolution politics. They identify the hero that Landor commends whom

"From Tamar shall arise, 'tis Fate's decree, / A mortal man above all mortal praise" (vi. 191-193. 44) as Napoleon Bonaparte. Leask reads in these lines Landor's "contemporary political allusions, notably [his] praise for Napoleon" (26). He extends on that that by underscoring Landor's backing the Napoleonic expedition in Egypt. Leask writes that *Gebir* "obliquely prais[es] the American colonialists and the Napoleonic intervention in Egypt" (26).

However, what concerns me here is how to read Landor's revision in relation to the "ill-fated" colonial expedition of Gebir in Egypt. My point is that the revised edition of the poem demonstrates Landor's changing perspective on the revolution, but it in the meanwhile underwrites his clear-cut abhorrence of the excessive outcomes of the revolution on the external spheres. On the other hand, Leask believes the revision uncovers Landor's ambivalent imperialist politics. This is because *Gebir*, as Leask sees it, "takes a more specifically partisan line, attacking in the course of a complex and elliptical narrative Britain's 'colonization in peopled countries' whilst lauding Napoleon's inauguration of 'liberty and equality' in his Egyptian expedition of the same year" (93). What might become a potential problem in this argument is that it builds on a "paradigmatic assessment" of the poem, to use Garcia's words. In other words, the poem for Leask does not entirely distance itself from its culture that is understood to entirely support British overseas imperialism. However, while Leask and others believe that *Gebir* complies with and fuels the cultural and material subjugation of the 'Other', they tend to ignore Landor's conspicuous efforts in the revised poem to clear and disengages himself from that accusation.

Another major problem this argument puts forward is the conflation of the poem's perspective that results from its geopolitical engagement with the other world with its perspective on England's internal politics. In contrast, while Garcia reads *Gebir* as encoded

political revolutionary manifesto, he invests more on the poem's recuperation of the story of Ad's people to explain how Landor's critical perspective on England's internal and external politics converge. For Garcia, *Gebir* in this sense invokes a plural and humanistic historiography that seeks to recirculate

> cyclical stories and religious epics [to] promote a syncretistic account of 'Universal History,' a medieval Islamic tradition of writing history that relies on the romance narrative genre in order to tie together the mythic pasts of the pre-Adamites and the descendants of Noah with the rise of Muhammad in the early seventh century. (128)[7]

As far as I am concerned, the intellectual substance of the story of Ad's people lies in its dissemination of an alternative moral, religious and political worldview to its immediate audience. This worldview has a critical value; it posits knowledge that disturbs and challenges existing public political and religious mindsets. Landor and other English radicals, according to Garcia, identify with "Islamic Republicanism" as they "saw Islam as the pinnacle of a long tradition of seventeenth-century hermetic thought that located the 'light' of the original Christian republic in Arabia" (130). Landor's intellectual engagement with the story of Ad's people goes beyond being a passing interest. Rather, it predicates on civilizing undertakings, that is to look for other intellectual options to civilize and improve social and political practices at home.

Overall, *Gebir*'s dissemination of what Landor considers as "original" historiography as a counter-text also supports a non-exclusive and nonethnocentric way of reading and interpreting history. The poem makes it clear that Gebir's apocalypse is partly brought by his single and limited apprenticeship on the history of his ancestors. Thus, Landor suggests that Gebir's should have been taught differently about this history. The poem deploys the Islamic prophecy of the story of Ad's people as an informative source of that history. Garcia builds on this point to mark

the poem's religious broad pluralist historical scope that makes it inevitable to "treat the prophetic tradition as continuous with Judaism, Christianity, and Islam" (18). However, Garcia tends to obscure this valuable insight as he limits *Gebir*'s engagement with the Islamic prophecy to the political and revolutionary dimension, and he explains it exclusively from the poets' perspective. This approach also makes Garcia's outlook less enduring. Based on Garcia's argument, Landor's disillusionment with the revolutionary zeal as he overtly declares in the 1803 mandates his disengagement with the Islamic and Arabic knowledges. However, the 1803 poem sustains the story's main plot, Gebir and his excavation of his ancestors' ruined city, unaffected by the transition in Landor's political affiliation.

In my point of view, the preservation of the story of Ad's in the revised poem heightens Landor's consistent moral perspective on reforming the ensuing antithetical post-French Revolution political crisis. This, on the one hand, problematizes Leask's skeptic reading of the poem's critical and civilizing moral undertaking in the poem. On the other hand, it emphasizes Landor's committed moral and intellectual ethos, which might be thought waning or disappearing as one might get from Garcia's reading. At the beginning of "Book VII," Landor declares that the argument of this book is "against the colonization in peopled countries. All nature dissuades from what is hostile to quality" (48). He also adds clarifying endnotes to "Book VI" and "Book VII" in which he explicitly denounces of the unfolding of Napoleonic regime. At the end of "Book VI," he states, "Great hopes were raised from the French revolution, but every good man is disappointed. God forbid that we should ever be impelled to use their means of amelioration, or that our arms should be attended by theirs,—internal and external subjugation'" (Landor 47). Landor here exposes and characterizes the intellectual drive that has invoked him to revise his political thinking, which is apparently grounded on a practical and reasonable

platform. The erupting circumstances and realities after the French Revolution, Europe's internal chaotic conditions and the colonial overseas expedition of Napoleon have foregrounded the change in Landor's political affiliation that requires him to redefine his public intellectualism responsibility according to his moral and political ideals.

Landor's political revision engenders the argument that *Gebir*'s does not limit, but not exclude, its political critique to Napoleon's colonial expedition in Egypt. What is more likely to be argued then is that Landor has realigned his political and intellectual alliance because the potential enlightening and positive outcomes of the revolution he has presaged at the time when he drafted the 1798 version of the poem have come, to his dismay, untrue or impossible. Alan Richardson's opinion makes the claim on *Gebir*'s disengagement with Napoleon's expedition in Egypt further robust. Richardson highlights the fact that,

> Landor could scarcely have known about Napoleon's designs on Egypt in 1796, when *Gebir* was mostly drafted; the Egyptian destination of Napoleon's invasion force (which had been initially assembled with England in mind) remined secret until well after its departure in May 1798, and *Gebir* was apparently published the same month (July) that Napoleon landed near Alexandria. (274)[8]

However, the potential argument one can make here is that Landor might make loose expectations of unwanted or feared aftermaths of the revolution upon writing the first draft of *Gebir*. Among these expectations is the reproduction of tyrannical rulers, to which Landor reacts with the apocalypse of Gebir. His fears have come true as he indicates in the revised poem. The post-revolution has deceived the intellectual and political aspirations and ideals that *Gebir* registers, which were not pertinent to Landor alone, but to a large "*sect* of poets" and

intellectuals including the public opinion, a notion I will revisit later in my discussion of Percy Shelly's *The Revolt of Islam*.

The Moralizing Subtext of *Gebir*

The argument so far outlines how reading *Gebir* as an allegory strips its story from its core moral and political critical perspective on one hand and constricts its civilizing percepts to very limited conceptual and geographical entities on the other hand. Most importantly, allegorizing the story severs it from its Islamic and Arabic context. This produces a knowledge that distorts and misrepresents that context. In the light of Leask's and Garcia's arguments on the poem, Landor convenes apocalypse upon Gebir due to his imperialist endeavor, which goes in line with the poet's critique of Britain's external politics. Gebir's destruction might also be due to his deception of Landor's enlightening and republican regime. These allegations still do not address the more pertinent question of what to get from the poem's recuperation of Ad's people fate. To answer this question, we need to integrate the main text of the poem, the story of Gebir, with its informing subtext, the story of his ancestor's and their city. Both texts, as I argue, intersect in their didactic and moralizing incentive; they seek to prepare a self-conscious and mindful individual who reflects on his existence and disassociates himself from intellectually and physically destructive convictions and deeds. However, the moralization of each text might be defined and described using alternative words as each text interacts with a different rhetorical situation and derives from a certain ideology and system of thought.

In its Islamic conservative moral and religious context, the abortive fault of Gebir that effects his apocalypse by being poisoned can be linked to his insistence on restoring the ruined city of his damned ancestors. In other words, he does not "consider" God's word and decree, but he defies them by excavating the ruins of Irem.[9] The poem sets this knowledge as a backdrop

against which Gebir's incentive and fate are situated. Knowing that they cannot subdue the mighty Gebir and his warriors, Dalica, the Egyptian nymph councils her Egyptian queen, Charoba, on persuading him to rebuild Irem, which will vouchsafe his self-destruction. We read,

> a city stood
> Upon that coast, they say, by Sidad built,
> Whose father Gad built Gades; on this ground
> Perhaps he sees an ample room for war.
> Persuade him to restore the walls himself,
> in honor of his ancestors, persuade—. (i. 42-47. 2-3)

Dalica's plot works successfully. Gebir and his warriors have started excavating the ruins of Irem for six days. On the seventh day, the Iberians find "all their labours were destroyed" (ii. 36-37. 9). Gebir realizes that their work is apparently not ruined by a mortal. He instead resolves to furtherly agitating God's "wrath" by resuming the excavation of the city. He addresses his men, "Let us arise /On these high places, daily, beat our breast, // Prostrate ourselves, and deprecate his wrath" (ii. 60-62. 10). In its Islamic context, Gebir's audacity and pride transgresses the religious codes. He, replicating his ancestors, commits a sin by insolently, arrogantly and "knowingly" disobeying and challenging the divine order and ignoring the warning call articulated in the Islamic narrative to "consider' his ancestors' fate and make it a text for religious, moral and political self-edification.

The Islamic interpretation of Gebir's act contributes to the understanding of the poem's more contemporary political critique. Reading the story of Gebir in the Islamic context unveils the nonconforming and oppositional perspective it holds against Gebir's expedition in Egypt. In *Islam and Romantic Orientalism: Literary Encounters with the Orient* (1994), Mohammad

Sharafuddin argues that the story of Ad's people serves as an anti-imperialist rhetoric in *Gebir*. Commenting on the excavation of Irem by Gebir and his warriors, Sharafuddin maintains that the Islamic context of the story gives "darker colouring to this act of rebuilding. There is something dangerous, if not impious, about it" (14). He builds on the Arabic etymological meanings and derivations of Gebir's name '*tajabor*', which translates as acting insolently and audaciously, or '*Jabbar'*, the equivalent of *Almighty* (one of the God's characteristics) to describe Gebir as "being tyrannical." Therefore, Gebir's colonial act and his behavior is considered blasphemous in the Islamic context. In addition to this general assessment, Gebir is condemned from an Islamic point of view because he replicates his ancestors who responded to their messenger's warning words by boasting, "Who is more mighty than we in strength?" (Sale 390). In Islam, these words manifest deluded, hazardous, and excessive insolence and audacity. Politically speaking, insolence and audacity and other material traits and acts define political tyranny. The point where the more traditional critique of Gebir meets with Landor's perspective is that insolence, pride, audacity or tyranny reiterate the roots, "nature and consequences of imperialism" (15), as Sharafuddin argues.

The traditional understanding of Gebir's fate promotes the belief that his moral and religious deformation seeds his political corruption, tyranny and imperialism. It also connects to the formation of excessive material and political undertakings and ambitions. In addition, the mere deployment of the story of Ad's as an alternative knowledge in the poem has a counter political agenda as well. Garcia builds on and extends on the Islamic traditional critique of Gebir's acts and attitudes to characterize his secular and political impiety. Garcia clearly explains the dangerous and threatening thing about Gebir's excavation of Irem's ruins, which he attributes to "imitating God's role in the biblical story of creation; he rebuilds the city in six days" (150).

However, the danger in Gebir's act goes beyond his sacrilegious replication of God's power on earth as Garcia believes it. Rather, his case embodies the culmination of misleading and false religious instruction that ensues moral, religious and political corruption. He argues that Gebir "assum[es] the role of a false prophet or antichrist figure. For Landor, Gebir and his people are emblematic of the political and ecclesiastical authorities who corrupt the truths of religious history" (Garcia 142). What we get from Garcia's reading is that Gebir's colonial quest is epistemologically self-sufficient; Gebir's writes down his own history that legitimizes and sustains his cause and expedition, which at the same time corrupts his religious, moral and political endeavors. In the meanwhile, the poem, as I argue in the upcoming paragraphs, reveals that Gebir's historical consciousness is distorted by an externally imposed corrupted knowledge. Overall, the poem's retelling of the story of Ad's people critically addresses both cases. The moralistic purpose of this act is not to endorse a solitary and unconscious engagement with history but to debunk and challenge false historical consciousness that impedes moral and political self-correction and, thereby, propagates and ratifies his colonial secularist attitudes. Garcia writes,

> In repeating the tragic mistakes of his ancestors, Gebir overlooks Qur'anic warnings about the futility of establishing absolute political power on earth; he simply adopts the blind hubris of those responsible for corrupting the historical sanctity of a pristine, sacred religion. This Qur'anic myth underscores the lessons to be drawn from an abusive monarchical power that exploits religion for the purpose of legitimizing the growth of a great world empire. (150)

The poem's Islamic context and Landor's critical perspective intersect in their indictment of tyranny and tyrannical discourse. As the Islamic narrative calls for constant critical and self-

reflective engagement with the damned fate of Ad's people as a path toward moral reformation and inculcation of strong faith, Gebir is expected to do the same thing, but this act is grounded on a more "unorthodox" position, as Garcia would put it. Gebir must observe and then critically read and self-reflect on the history of his ancestors to disenchant himself from it. As the story of Ad's people symbolizes the certain corrupted religion and history that religious and political institutions preach according to Garcia's reading, Gebir's defiance of this narrative becomes inevitable to resist resignation to its power and distill the knowledge to inform his historical conscious.

From the Islamic and the poem's political point of views, Gebir's corruption ensues his destruction. In the context of the former, apocalypse is convened as a divine damnation because Gebir secularizes his historical, moral, religious and political consciousness. Concerning the later, Gebir's apocalypse is an inevitable consequence of his enchantment and containment by those religious and political knowledges that apparently have deterred his observation of the moral imperatives and instead cultivated his secularist, materialist, self-centered, and inhuman impulses and ethnocentric worldview. This is not to say that the poem favors entire disconnection with history, but it encourages us to pursue a careful, mindful, and critical interaction with it. In one of the notes to the 1803 poem, Landor himself states, "Gebir, the sovereign of Boetic Spain, is urged by an oath, administered in childhood, to invade the kingdom of Egypt" (344). Moreover, while Aroar attempts to teach Gebir of the fault and fate of his ancestors, he asserts that his version of the story, unlike the one Gebir has been probably introduced to, is reliable: "'I unfold/ No fable to allure thee--rise, behold // Thy ancestors! And lo!'" (iii. 169-70. 20-21). The poem does not make a precise and specific reference to the informative source that catalyzes Gebir's education on his ancestors. It rather presses on his

enchantment and delusion by that "oath" to avenge himself and restore the glory of his forefathers. What the poem conveys to the reader, in this sense, is that Gebir knows and boasts his ancestors' high physical statures and strength that have enabled them to erect the unprecedented and high-walled city of Irem. The Gadites' disciples, Gebir and his companions, we are told, are "Men of gigantic force, gigantic arms" (i. 29. 2), and they could work for six days excavating the ruins of their ancestors' city. As well, Aroar tells Gebir, as we read in the poem, that his ancestors' "pleasure was in war" (iii. 37. 17). At the very beginning of the poem, the poet demonstrates how this knowledge still fuels Gebir's impetus to launch and proceed with his war. We read that he,

> How, incens'd
> By meditating on primeval wrongs,
> He Blew his battle-horn, at which uprose
> Whole nations: how, ten thousand of most might
> He called aloud; (i. 16-20. 2)

The result of Giber's contemplation on Irem that "now lies ruin'd in the dust" (ii. 22.12) defies the moral principles and expectation behind it. Instead of ceasing the excavation of Irem, he persists on restoring what he reads as the lost glory of his ancestors by rebuilding of their ruined city. We read that he "resolved his native country to forgo— / Ordered, that from those ruins to their right // They forthwith raise a city" (i. 249-51. 8). This incident has not sparked any change in Gebir's mindset at this stage. Thus, Landor gives him the chance to travel to the underworld where he eyewitnesses his ancestors' "crimes, or faults" that night help him know his ancestor's mysterious fault that conferred their total obstruction.

Gebir's visit to the underworld that happens in "Book III" of the poem lays before him a more reliable and tangible version of his ancestors' fate, which would hopefully bolster his consequential and self-reflective judgment. In this journey, Aroar urges Gebir, "Observe these horrid walls, this rueful waste! / Here some refresh the vigor of the mind /// With contemplation and cold penitence" (iii. 44-46. 17). Aroar confirms to him that had his ancestors privileged with this chance of observing actual scenes and signs of God's gruesome punishment, they would have had behaved themselves properly. He claims,

> … Such penitence,
> Such contemplation, their! thy ancestors
> Bear up against them, not will they submit
> to conquering Time th' asperities of Fate:
> Yet, could they but revist earth once more,
> How gladly would they Poverty embrace,
> How labour, even for their deadliest foe! (iii. 64-70 24).

Unexpectedly, Landor does not take Gebir back to the real history of Ad's people to consider but to the more recent and contemporary history. In this short historical journey, Gebir observes and contemplates on scenes that do not portray or relate to the real and true faults of Ad's people, but he beholds wretched and disfigured shapes of men, who are commonly read by critics of the poem as encoded references to contemporary political figures. Stephen Wheeler, the editor of *The Complete Works of Walter Savage Landor*, firstly published in 1927, relies on Forster's notes in his biography of Landor to identify those names. Wheeler writes, "Forster thought it would be easy to recognize, among Gebir's ancestors, the wretch with while eyebrows as George III; the giant next him as William III; another wretch how 'sold his people to a rival king' as

Charles II; and one whose spectral body showed space between purple and crown as Charles I" (347). Aroar explicates the "crimes, or faults" of these people as they,

> … tortured Law
> To silence or to speech, as pleased themselves;
> Here are also those who boasted of their zeal,
> And lov'd their country for the spoils it gave. (iii. 283-286. 24)

Landor apparently does not stick to the original Islamic narrative in his discussion of the fault and fate of Ad's people. The afro-mentioned crimes and others Aroar numerates do not belong to the ancient Adites as the Islamic and Arabic sources attribute the devastation of Ad's people and their city to their insolence, audacity and pride, which all lure them to submit to divinity.

However, Landor's revision does not harm or distort the civilizing essence of the original story, that this revision still criticizes audacity, insolence and pride as crimes and instigators of other crimes. Sharafuddin reads in this revision a rhetorical maneuver that could enable Landor to evade censorship. He points out, "Gebir's discoveries in the underworld are also Landor's, except that Landor, in the reactionary Britain in which he was writing, had to conceal his meaning under narrative allegories. Gebir sees the shadowy shapes of his ancestors as his own past and present; but to Landor they are the figures of a later history" (39). As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is a critical consensus on *Gebir*'s encrypted allusion to the Bonaparte regime. So, if we tend to regard this epoch of time as the poem's immediate informative history, the pressing question then is to fathom Landor's intellectual perspective behind the retrieval of later political figures like George III and William III and their "crimes" in relation to his political commentary on the French Revolution and Napoleonic cause.

The poem's moral critique centers on Gebir's unconscious and isolated reading and observation of the ruins of his far-reaching ancestors or those rulers from most recent times. Landor criticizes Gebir's failure in engaging these histories in regulating his moral and political undertakings, a thing is evident in his colonial quest in Egypt. If taken as an allegory, I can say then that the poem condemns Napoleon Bonaparte because his unfolding regime, including his expedition in Egypt, has deceived the post-revolutionary ideals. While liberal promise was casted on Bonaparte's model, he turns, to Landor's dismay, to follow the steps of despotic and tyrant rulers. In his endnotes to the poem, Landor points out that Bonaparte

> unhappily thinks, that to produce great changes, is to perform great actions: to annihilate antient freedom and to substitute new, to give republics a monarchical government, and the provinces of monarchs a republican one; in short, to overflow by violence all the institutions, and to tear from the heart all the social habits of men, has been the tenor of his politics to the present hour. (349)

The Islamic context of Gebir's story and the poem emphasize that Gebir should be different from his ancestors. Thereby, the moral critique Landor directs toward Napoleon is his similar failure to be positively different from fading regimes. He apparently does not "mark" and observe, self-reflect on the failure or destruction of contemporary monarchies. Rather, his consciousness, like Gebir, is obsessed by the pursuit of glory and "great actions," part of which is colonizing Egypt as Landor might want to tell us.

However, as Gebir's colonial enterprise is never realized in the poem, one might suppose that Landor could be more positive and optimistic in resolving his fable instead. He could let Gebir marry the Egyptian queen and abscond his pride, arrogance and his colonial project in Egypt as well. Gebir could show his penitence and remorse that might work out his redemption if

he is offered another chance. According to Garcia, Gebir's apocalypse is a religious counter-text Landor strategically borrows from Islamic tradition to negotiate his anti-Church standpoint. Garcia argues that the fable of Sidad's race in the *Gebir* "dislodges the history of the British monarchy from the Christian narrative of redemption and situates it within the Islamic narrative of damnation" (152). Based on this argument, the apocalypse of Gebir might retain a reformative political discourse against the texts and discourses that tolerate his intentions and actions. In this arena, Garcia maintains that "*Gebir* offers a salient Islamic hermetic critique of a resurgent Anglican imperialism in which, as Rowan Strong points out, 'the Church of England was now seen as a support for British colonial rule'" (129). However, by looking at it from an overall point of view, it limits our understanding of Landor's engagement with the story of Ad's people because it tells us that what captures Landor's attention in the story is the notion of apocalypse. According to the Islamic narrative, Ad's people were damned because of their disobedience and audacity. But, this notion defines domination as exclusively and predominantly Islamic. Other literary experiments like *Gebir* such as Frances Sheridan's *The History of Nourjahad (*1750) and Robert Southey's *Thalaba The Destroyer* (1801) put forward a different perception the Islamic view of damnation and redemption. In both tales, Nourjahad and Thalaba are lured by magic, and both pursue it. However, there comes a moment when the heroes' retraction and penitence vouchsafe their moral improvement and their salvation from damnation. Landor's apocalyptic view is due to the political circumstances he writes in and his ideological affiliation. The deception of his revolutionary ideals and his subsequent disenchantment from the revolution have all ingrained a pessimistic attitude in Landor toward the revolution and political reform.

3. Robert Southey's 'Thalaba The Destroyer'

Though Robert Southey's *Thalaba* is believed to build upon the literary heritage that Landor's *Gebir* has made available, the poem apparently draws upon and develops a significantly different literary Orientalism.[10] The poem also articulates another layer of political engagement between Southey and the Arabic and Islamic world. Whereas critics Garcia and Carol Bolton tend to qualify Southey's conservatism in *Thalaba* as unoriginal and transitory, the notions of submission, redemption and the divine order that Southey engages with from the Arabic and Islamic literary and non-literary knowledges demonstrate the poet's conservative and traditional perspective and recipe on reforming and improving the individual's political endeavors as well as the political condition of the revolutionary Europe.

Besides the Quran, Southey's engagement with knowledges from the Arab and Islamic world happens through literature and poetry. In this sense, Southey, as well as William Wordsworth and Percy Shelley as I discuss in the next chapter, treats literature as an essential and effective medium to foster the trafficking of knowledges between the East and West. Emphasizing William Jones's outlook in "Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nation" (1772), Southey delves into the conceptual mindsets and percepts that Arabic poetry disseminates as one can get from his quotation from *The Poem of Tarafa*. *Thalaba* in this arena surpasses *Gebir* in popularizing diverse knowledges about and from the Arabic and Islamic world and making them available for further intellectual and literary exploration.

While I might say that Landor is eclectic in his engagement with the Islamic and Arab world, Southey's peculiar "diffuse" and "scholarly" engagement, as Sharafuddin and other critics describe it, reveals to us new religious, political and literary undertakings and concepts such as Thalaba's political deployment of the Islamic notion of redemption. The reader of the heavily-

annotated poem of *Thalaba* can easily mark the huge and various literary and non-literary translated sources from the Arabic and Islamic world Southey has drawn upon in writing the poem.[11] Critics, seemingly old and new, use the poem's simple theme and its crowded information to degrade its the literary significance. In the "Preface" to the 1873 version of the poem, Southey defends the value of his scholarship by claiming, "this poem was neither crudely conceived nor hastily undertaken. I had fixed upon the ground, four years before, for a Mahommedan tale; and, in the course of that time, the plan had been formed, and the materials collected. It was pursued with unabating ardor at Exeter, in the village of Burton, near Christ Church, and afterwards at Kingsdown …" (4). As I explain in the following discussion, *Thalaba* proves Southey's diligent and mindful work on Islamic and Arabic sources as he makes every aspect of the poem bear a conceptual value that contributes to the understanding of its multi-layered and convoluted story and its unfolding moral and political notions.

Most importantly, Southey's scholarship in *Thalaba* produces a knowledge that is more "faithful" to its original Arabic and Islamic sources. This is important as Southey's engagement imports concrete knowledges from those sources to his readers that requires us to move away from reading the poem as a political allegory into a text that expands a world of global literary history that takes in both English literary history and the literary history of Arabic scholarship. This shift is key to unravel *Thalaba*'s historical contribution to the internal civilizing mission that Southey and other writers cited in this dissertation were involved in. For instance, Southey, like Landor, incorporates the story of Ad's people that he gets from Sale's translation of the Quran. However, the Southeyan version of the story is more detailed and consistent to its original sources,[12] which consequently supplements the understanding of Lander moralism to backbone his political critique of Gebir or his contemporary allusions.

What matters more here is how *Thalaba*'s use of the story of the two angels of Babylon and the poetry of Tarafa yields and vehicles Southey's traditional and conservative civilizing prospects on the individual's moral and political commitments and undertakings. Though these knowledges work in different conceptual contexts (the religious and literary), they supplement each other and collaborate in disseminating a recipe for the individual on how to live and understand one's moral, religious, and political commitments. According to the Islamic narrative, the story of the two angels of Babel moralizes on inculcating faith and submission to the divine order, part of which is to disbelieve the power of sorcery as equivalent God's. Harut and Marut, emphasizes this premise as it reads in the Quran, "but the devils believed not, they taught men sorcery, and that which was sent down to the two angels at Babel, Harut and Marut: yet those two taught no man until they had said, Verily we are a temptation, therefore be not an unbeliever" (Sale 13-14). On the other side, Southey quotes the most well-known lines from *The Poem of Tarafa* that advances practical understanding the moralization articulated in the story of the two angels and the quest of Thalaba. The verses are the following: "*Too much wisdom is folly*; for time will produce events of which thou canst have no idea; and he to whom thou gavest no commission, will bring thee the unexpected news" (Jones 211).[13] This poetry remarkably sets the motto of "Book III" as Thalaba sets out in his journey to get the talisman from the Babylon cave and destroy the sorcerers who have murdered his father. The moral principle it disseminates is that life proceedings and the divine manifestations on earth effectively continue revealing seemingly irrelevant and disjointed incidents and experiences, but, with time, it might be revealed to people how they are significant and carefully designated.

Southey perfectly weaves these premises into Thalaba's quest. The long journey the Arab youth goes through to fulfil his goal and the way it draws to its conclusion is expected to

cultivate Thalaba's capability in self-reflecting and engaging the emerging morals from his journey in undertaking morally-regulated ambitions and quests. Thalaba's adventure teaches him the divinely-instituted limits of human's power and aspiration, but not to quell ambition and will. He has believed for a moment that the talisman or magic that he should seek in the cave of Babel is what enables him to defeat the magicians. However, destiny defies his expectations. As he reaches his destination, the talisman he turns to be "Faith" as the angels of the cave assure him.

In its Islamic and Arabic context, the fable of Thalaba reads as a moralizing text on the abandonment of morally and religiously unregulated egoistic ambitions. In the meanwhile, it indoctrinates submission to the divine order and the consequentiality of internalizing submission as a way of life vital to self-regulation, self-preservation, and self-improvement. Thalaba proves an innate absorption of this principle. On one occasion, Abdaldar, one of the magicians' league, is blasted by the divine element, "Simoom," strong and sandy winds, as he tried to kill Thalaba. The Arabian youth snatches a magical ring from his hand and decides to wear it. However, he, against our expectations, professes the supremacy of the divine will and power, that nothing can benefit nor harm him unless God permits: "In God's name, and the Prophet's! be its power / Good, let it serve the righteous; if for evil, // God, and my trust in Him, shall hallow it" (iii. 1.73). Thalaba also invokes another moral maxim that defies secular speculations. Anything, either positive or negative, the ring seems to effect as one might falsely think is determined and pre-planned by the divine for a greater regulating moralism. At the end of the story, and before he encounters Okba, Thalaba gets rid of the ring and emphasizes its impotency in disentangling his situation.

The Moral Subtext of *Thalaba*

Southey's scholarship in Arabic and Islamic knowledges in *Thalaba* and its impact on his discussion of the questions of submission (political and moral), self-determination, individual will and ambition illustrates an alternative public intellectualism and literary experiment the poem articulates in its context. William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) provides an earlier literary experiment on the same questions addressed in Southey's poem. The reason why I mention Beckford's Oriental tale here is that it lends a cultural, literary, intellectual and ideological backdrop that enhances our understanding *Thalaba* moral and political prospects. Both texts negotiate nontraditional and unconservative quests, the use of magic to fulfil unregulated earthly ambitions. Thalaba seeks magic to avenge himself against the murderers of his father, and Vathek seeks it to attaint excessive wealth and power. In both cases, Southey and Beckford endorse an ambitious and self-determined individual. However, their moral ethos diverges in the way each negotiates his different conception of how to facilitate will, agency and ambition and what imperatives and principles that should guide their perusal.

The Islamic context of *Thalaba* articulates a conservative perspective against de-secularizing the perusal of ambitions by emphasizing regulating or checking them by moral and religious principles. In contrast, Beckford insists on severing his tale from its Islamic rhetorical context to secularize the figure of Vathek and give him more space and freedom to defy moral and religious constricts while pursuing ambitions. Vathek's political and moral model represents and embodies the essence of civilization, self-developmental civilization, or what it means to be civilized for Beckford. The Arab prince is civilized because he, according to Beckford, "succeeded the better as his generosity was unbounded and his indulgencies unrestrained: for he did not think . . . that it was necessary to make a hell of this world to enjoy paradise in the next"

(80). The liquidation of the moral and religious regulations, as Beckford would argue, is a prerequisite to the formation of a knowledgeable, self-assertive and self-determined individual in contrast to the "humble and ignorant" (158) individual that religions and morals produce.

Thalaba, on the other hand, puts forward a different understanding of the individual's material and conceptual self-improvement. First, the moral constricts do not necessitate being "humble and ignorant" and unambitious, but they emphasize distilling ambitions and regulating the paths and the tools to gain them. Thalaba's quest is entirely built on the impulse to learn, but this should happen in a different way. He reaches the last point in pursuing his ambition to avenge himself. Unexpectedly, he is told to reorient its moral incentive and end, that is to preserve strong faith in God instead of seeking magic. His quest for revenge is also replaced by his forgiveness of Okba at the end of his quest.

In addition, whereas Beckford urges his readers to reject and ridicule Vathek's devastation, the course of Thalaba's journey seeks to affect an alternative reception of the resolution of his story, his death. My notion is that both resolutions seek to cause different reactions in the reader. On the fate of the Arab prince, Beckford writes, "such was, and such should be, the punishment of unrestrained passions and atrocious deeds! Such shall be, the chastisement of the blind curiosity, which would transgress those bounds the wisdom of the Creator has prescribed to human knowledge" (158). Beckford's cynical tone and the blackened scenario he depicts here seek to arouse a resistant reaction in the reader against the illegitimization of what he considers legitimate; being curious, and pursuing knowledge and satisfying passions. On the other side, Southey's narrator appears more lighthearted. He announces the death of Thalaba in this way,

Then suddenly was heard

The all-beholding Prophet's voice divine,

Thou hast done well, my Servant! 471

Ask and receive thy reward! (ii. 31. 341).

One might read in the narrator's words an imbedded irony toward this resolution. It might be thought that Thalaba's death comes as a fatal reward because his forgiveness of Okaba defies the prophecy that elicits his revenge. While Beckford is clear and candid on that, the way Southey constructs Thalaba's quest and its Islamic and Arabic context challenge reading his fate as an apocalyptic damnation. Rather, the narrative processes his death as natural, inevitable and a predestined resolution. Thalaba's death should not be solely seen contingent to a sin or misdeed he commits, but its time, place and condition would be unknown and pre-planned by divinity. Even if we read it as an artificially designated resolution of his adventure, Thalaba's fate turns what he yearns for. We read, "In the same moment, at the gate / Of Paradise, Oneiza's Houri form // Welcomed her Husband to eternal bliss" (xii. 36. 342). In addition, as Thalaba's forgiveness of Okba appears to the reader impossible to happen, and it is difficult to expect death, literary and artificially speaking, as the resolution of his quest, or as his immanent reward. Once the Angel of Death, Azrael, claims the soul of Zeinab, Thalaba urges the Angel to claim his soul, too, to which the Angel reply's, "Son of Hodeirah! the Death- Angel said, / "It is not yet the hour," (i. 54. 35). However, the angel of death ascertains earlier the inevitability of his death without indicating any further information on when, where and how he will die.

In opposition to Beckford's decontextualized perspective on submission to moral and religious constraints, the morals that define and keep redefining Thalaba's quest are meant to teach him to take full notice of the world he lives in, especially what to do, what not to do, or

what he can or cannot do. Also, he should know that there are some things that he encounters in life some of which are answerable and others which do not instantaneous answers. However, everything that surrounds him or happens to him has a significance that might be omniscient to him in its immediate time. For instances, Thalaba questions what seems to him as his mother, Zainab's, passive resignation to divinity upon the murder of her husband when she accepts it by saying, "'He gave, he takes away! // The pious sufferer cried; /// The Lord our God is good!" (i. 4. 11). Thalaba doubts God's plan behind conferring such a predicament on the believers and the pious. Like the many questions and intrigues that occur to Thalaba in his journey, this question has no answer, or at least no instantaneous one. However, his mother clarifies that everything happens to the human being, including the loss of the beloved, is to test and strengthens his faith. She also adds that the death of his father might have greater significance and meaning, which he might realize, know or discover later. She addresses him with these words,

'A day will come, when all things that are dark
Will be made clear: then shall I know, O Lord!
Why in thy mercy, thou hast stricken me;
Then see and understand what now
My heart believes and feels'. (i.7.12)

Thalaba could not self-internalize what it means to submit to destiny till the moment he discovers the talisman that he seeks to fulfil his mission of destroying the sorcerers is faith. This twist then urges him to observe and reflect on how other twists and stages through which he has been going to reach that conclusion have been all carefully designated and executed to get this point.

On the other hand, Beckford might require us to re-qualify Zainab's and Thalaba's submission as their unwilling and enforced resignation. Therefore, part of his responsibilities is to civilize them by demystifying what he might consider as the myth of submission that is indorsed by "useless admonitions," to use his words. The rational excuse Beckford backups his stand with is the misbelief that the submission to the moral and religious codes quenches one's agency, limits and diminishes material progression and improvement. Therefore, Vathek determines that "deem not that I shall retire" (148), the words he answers the angels who order him to "abandon thy atrocious purpose: return" (148). Contrary to this, Thalaba's submission does not preclude his action and agency, but it rather turns to be functional in regulating his acts and ensuring positive outcomes out of them.

The mixing between submission and resignation in *Thalaba,* I argue, and picking the later as an essential Islamic principle, which Southey criticizes, is problematic. Recent criticism on *Thalaba* usually highlights Southey's interrogation of resignation as the core of his patronizing politics of Orientalism on Islam. I shall add that Southey himself also conflates between submission and resignation and removes the latter from its simple, traditional and religious context and politicizing it. In return, it appears to me that Southey here attacks resignation as a political stigma rather than a religious one. This is explicit is his commentary on Zienab's wholehearted acceptance of her husband's death saying, "Resignation is particularly inculcated by Mahommed; and, of his all percepts, it is that which his followers have best observed: it is even the vice of the East" (Southey 36). This judgment conflicts with the moral and religious associations of Zienab's act. It ignores these associations and instead facilitates them to propagate a more culturally and politically affiliated judgment that encompasses aspects of her life other than religion. We read that Thalaba and his mother voluntarily accept the religious and

moral limitations and constricts, which they knowingly cannot defy, but Southey's notion of resignation directs us to redefine their submission as an externally unwanted imposed compliance to a system of governance political possible to be rejected and defied.

On the other side, Southey's paradoxical critique of Zeinab's submission as the "vice of East," not of Islam, might fit Beckford's more political secular commitments if Thalaba's quest is removed from its Islamic and Arabic context and read as an allegorized revolt against the secular political institutions that dictate resignation and obedience. Vathek's resistance to submit to moral order of the world he lives in is conveyed to the reader as a legitimate refusal to resign, as this order is depicted as an oppressing imposition that Vathek inherently rejects. In other words, Vathek defies the call for his resignation. Though this layer of allegorical reading apparently remains external to the conservative core of *Thalaba*, Southey indirectly draws attention to a possible reading of the poem as a political commentary. In his *Common-Place Book* (1851), he writes,

> Cannot the Dom Danael be made to allegorize those systems that make the misery of mankind? … Can the evils of established systems be well allegorized? Can Thamama[14] see them in the realms where Magicians govern? . . . How can the mental murder of half mankind be presented? Can the extremes of wealth and want be shown equally fatal to virtue and happiness[?] . . . I do not think this can be done in a manner fit for poetry. (183)

Southey and the Islamic narrative of the story of the two angels of Babylon represent sorcery as a deceptive and corrupting secular knowledge and practice. The Islamic narrative is more encompassing in this critique. It warns against any beliefs that maintains the possibility, no matter how much knowledge and skill one knows and masters, of challenging or imitating the divine order or what is destined. Thalaba then embodies and acts out a revolutionary rhetoric

against the mundane systems and ideas that impose material and mental torture and resignation upon humanity.

Therefore, we need to emphasize the point that Thalaba's revolution, by which I mean his refusal to resign the lure and power of sorcery, still obtains its momentum from the more conservative quest of life he takes. He would not be able to develop and supplement "intuitive faith" and a more free and spontaneous relationship with the divine unless he first submits to and absorbs the divinity of his existence and quest. His submission does not impede his conscious understanding and interaction with his milieu, but it rather acts out the maxim that says, "Man proposes, and God disposes." Thalaba predestined journey instead helps him cultivate an independent moral, religious and political zeal from the more particular epistemological context he lives in, the desert and the Bedouins' life. The value Southey finds in the life the of Bedouins, as Bolton writes, is that it cultivates "private and personal relationship with God, that imposes no intercessors or intermediaries between individuals and their faith – except in the pious, benign example of their patriarch, Moath – that part of Quakerism that he was particularly drawn to" (189). Moath, the father of Thalaba's beloved, Oneiza, does not intermediate the Arab youth's faith and submission, but he, like other incidents and people Thalaba encounters, manifests and carries out the work and plan of the divine in guiding his quest. The poem underlines this notion in the way Thalaba has been cultivated in the desert of Arabia as the narrator says,

It was the wisdom and the will of Heaven,
That in a lonely tent had cast
The lot of Thalaba:
There might his soul develop best
Its strengthening energies;

There might he from the world

Keep his heart pure and uncontaminate,

Till at the written hour he should be found

Fit servant of the Lord, without a spot. (iii. 16. 79-80)

In practice, Thalaba's faith and submission sharpens his rejection to resign to the corrupted and misused power of the magicians. In "Book IX," Mohareb, one of the magicians, attempts to dissuade Thalaba from continuing his mission. He uses an anti-revolutionary rhetoric to normalize what appears to the Arab youth as unnatural and unoriginal. Mohareb ascertains to him the inevitability of the reign of powerful over the powerless, that "… In the strife / Of Angels, as of Men, the weak are guilty: // Power must decide. …" (ix. 14. 246-247). For a moment, it might come to us that Thalaba might yield to the "sophistic speech" of the sorcerer, as the narrator describes it, but, he remains unmoved and unaffected. What he has learned so far in history, especially in through his introduction to the story of Ad's people, that Mohareb's "creed," though appears visible and dominant in life, does not reflect the original and true course of life. It is an anti-truth fable that, as Thalaba puts it, "… lie[s] against the Sun, and Moon, and Stars / And Earth, and Heaven! Blind man, who canst not see // How all things work the best!" (ix. 15. 248). Thalaba affirms to the magician that injustice and despotism cannot be perpetual, and the unjust and cruel will not eternally reign. He defends this conviction saying,

… Who wilt not know,

That in the Manhood of the World, whate'er

Of folly marked its Infancy, of vice

Sullied its Youth, ripe Wisdom shall cast off,

Stablished in good, and, knowing evil, safe. (ix. 15. 248)

Thalaba's and the sorcerer's dispute encodes the post-French Revolution public intellectual and political controversy that Southey has been caught in as critics Sharafuddin, Garcia, and Bolton discuss. The dispute encompasses two conflicting perspectives on making a "safe" world out of the turbulent and chaotic post- revolutionary Europe. The established systems represented by the sorcerers believe that resignation to the political status quo must be a public and political norm and solution. On the other hand, Thalaba develops a deeper and noncompromising conservative perspective as a recipe to ease political rivalry and ensues positive change. This debate reveals Southey's political shift from the revolutionary cause the time he was writing *Thalaba* to a more conservative agenda as critics would read it. However, there is a strong belief on the revolutionary and confrontational standpoint Southey articulates in the poem because its conclusion comes to ascertain the intolerance toward despotic systems. Sharafuddin writes, "*Thalaba* is ultimately a story of apocalyptic destruction. It is in this sense that it is a product of the French Revolution, that great event which, to its sympathizers, sought to exterminate the tyranny of the *ancien re'gime* in order to make possible the regeneration of mankind" (54). While Sharafuddin sees that Southey follows and internalizes the revolutionary ethos that he casts on Thalaba, the poem seems to retract from that cause as it ends with emphasizing "regeneration," not by violent revolution, but by reconciliation suggested by Thalaba's forgiveness of Okba.

As far as I am concerned, the poem's resolution is more puzzling and intricate than the way Sharafuddin construes it. As the destruction of tyranny in the poem is conferred by an external power, not by the Arab youth, we need to reexamine the poem's alleged "militant" pro-revolutionary politics. Garcia and Bolton take notice of this notion. However, Garcia tends to argue that the poem and its Islamic and Arabic context does not yield a genuine conservative

perspective but a revolutionary rhetoric. Thus, the poem does not exhibit a real and tangible change in Southey's politics as much as his tacit political maneuvering to re-accommodate his revolutionary intellectualism. Garcia writes,

> *Thalaba* offers a compensatory narrative that rescues radical politics by situating the 'Unitarian' Reformation in the Islamic Orient rather than Napoleonic Europe (or Egypt). In this case, radical Protestant politics is safely disassociated from the looming dangers of French revolutionary excess … Southey's *Thalaba* posits a militant proto-Protestant hero who destroys idolatrous worship under the conviction that he is restoring the ancient "covenant with Ishmael." The Unitarian-Islamic ethos of the tale foregrounds the antisectarian iconoclasm of dissenting Protestantism, but without the danger that the Ali-Bonaparte analogy will implicate Unitarian dissent in French imperialist ambitions, especially after the failed expedition in Egypt and the Holy Land. (178)

Thalaba's forgiveness of Okba, in the light of Garcia's argument, ascertains his repudiation to resign to the divinely predestined ethos of his mission, that is, to destroy the abode of sorcerers. Garcia likens this ethos to "revolutionary excess" that Southey gets to behold in the Napoleonic expedition in Egypt. In consequence, as Southey tries to distant himself from that cause, Thalaba's decision to pardon Okba needs to be understood as a welcomed revolt against and defiance of a apparently erroneous and misleading cause. Therefore, while Garcia's reading unfolds the Islamic context of Thalaba's mission as positively supplementing Southey's republican cause, it deforms it as a morally and politically corrupted rhetoric that instigates violence and destruction. Such a notion resurfaces as readings of the poem encapsulate the Islamic context of Thalaba's fable to the encoded revolutionary politics of Southey.

In addition to obscuring much of the poem's original civilizing knowledge, reading the poem as an allegory leads one to rethink Southey's engagement with the Islamic and Arabic world. Southey's disenchantment with the revolutionary cause and espouse of conservatism might be read as a rejection or fundamental revision of the percepts he engages with from Arabic poetry and Islam. In this sense, I shall say that Southey revises his political use of these knowledges, not his belief on their political meaning. Bolton situates *Thalaba*'s intellectualism in a critical conjuncture torn between the failure of Southey's progressive political enlightenment and his "growing political orthodoxy" (167). Between these two poles, we are then lured to surmise that the poem registers an anti-revolution and anti-Islamic manifesto. The good thing about such arguments is their consideration of the material circumstances in explicating Southey's political revision. However, Southey apparently wants his audience, especially those who might feel deceived by this change, to be open-minded and conscious judgers of this change.

My notion is that *Thalaba*'s plot greatly enhances Southey's defense of his political revision as well as our understanding of the grounds of it. Replicating the Arab poet Tarafa, Southey responds to this potential critique by using a simple and more human explanation of the revision, that any observant and conscious person who actively and consciously interacts with emerging circumstances should do that. The poem's plot, as I argue, enhances our understanding of this logic. As the reader finishes reading the fable, it becomes apparent that Thalaba's quest, the desire to avenge himself, has been destined to stimulate his agency to internalize faith, submission and forgiveness. His edifying journey is designed in a certain way to test his ability to make such a decision of pardoning Okba in such a situation. In other words, the mission and its resolution provoke Thalaba to realize and internalize Trafa's philosophical maxim that "for

time will produce events of which thou canst have no idea; and he to whom thou gavest no commission, will bring thee the unexpected news" (Jones 211). The Arab youth seems to reach this principle when he addresses Okba in the last scene, saying, "Old Man, I strike thee not! / The evil thou hast done to me and mine // Brought its own bitter punishment" (xii. 30. 341). This makes the argument that Thalaba's quest highly obtains its drive from a conservative context and produces an active conservative intellectualism. But, it is important not to explain Southey's conservatism in the final scene as an abdication of his public intellectual responsibility brought by the failure of the revolution nor from a desperate feeling on the impossibility of reformation that we read in Shelley's *The Revolt of Islam*. Rather, Southey preaches forgiveness to block further bloodshed to make the world safer.

What enhances Thalaba's decision to quit his revenge is his retrospective survey of his journey. By looking back at the things that have happened to him, including his introduction to the divine fate of the tyrannical king of Ad's people, he realizes how they are edifying, though not linked in rational and feasible links. Therefore, the problem in reading Thalaba's forgiveness as his refusal of the apocalyptic and suppressive principle of moral and political resignation endorsed by the Islamic rhetoric stems from reading the plot as a disjointed, separate, instant and disruptive moment. Technically speaking, this might be justified. The fable's plot challenges and disrupts continuity and consistency as it takes the reader from one episode to another without obvious clues that ensures a smooth transition. It also defies expectations and complicates making foreshadowings because of the incompatible and illogically and irrationally sequenced incidents laid in Thalaba's journey to the cave of the sorcerers. Critics and reviewers of the poem argue that these objections against the poem's plot and its simple and traditional topic demerit its

literary significance. For example, in his disparaging review of the poem, Francis Jefferey, a contemporary of Southey, criticizes *Thalaba* as it

> openly sets nature and probability at defiance. In its action, it is not an imitation of anything; and excludes all rational criticism, as to the choice and succession of its incidents. Tales of this sort may amuse children, and interest, for a moment, by the prodigies they exhibit, and the multitude of events they bring together: but the interest expires with the novelty; and attention is frequently exhausted, even before curiosity has been gratified. (81)

However, the unfolding of Thalaba's quest and poetry of Tarafa help us conceive the poem's conceptual *omniscient* plot and full-fledged theme. They instruct us to read the story's incidents as carefully organized and placed, though they appear not. All incidents matter, and they provoke further, not obstruct, conceptual, moral and material progression in Thalaba's quest. The seeming arbitrariness of his journey does not impede his moral progression. Ernest Bernhardt-Kabisch in *Robert Southey* (1977) does not take head of this contextual precepts of the story. Instead, he maintains the plot "eddies and meanders without any firm principle of progression as the hero posts from stage to mysterious stage" (Bernhardt-Kabisch 92). Two things obstruct the smooth and coherent progression of the Thalaba's journey, according to Bernhardt-Kabisch. The first point is that "Southey pays little heed to structure and economy" (91), and the second fault is that the poem is crammed with "irrelevant" details and episodes such as the story of Irem (92). We might need to justify Jefferey's and Bernhardt-Kabisch's objections against the plot because it makes it challenges the reader's attempts to keep a sequenced track of Thalaba's journey, which in turn diminishes the reception of the whole poem. However, *Thalaba*'s plot does not seem to be literary or conceptually ill-crafted. It artificiality even tends to be original. The plot effectively

collaborates to articulate and posit the fable's moral lesson. In accordance with Tarafa's later and mature reflection on his life proceedings, those incidents that he has failed to comprehend the time they occurred turn to yield constructive values and lessons. Therefore, a linear and rationally-sequenced plot might not efficiently convey this moralism. Southey wants us to accept the "conflicting expectations" brought by his story's plot. It is the reader's mission then to realize how to link these episodes. For instance, the episode of Ad's and Irem, according to Bernhardt-Kabisch, does not relate to the story. However, after finishing the whole story, Thalaba, as well as the reader, realizes that the "warning tale" of Ad's people supplements and enforces the moral lesson: the fatal reward of those audacious and disobedient people and the importance for Thalaba to maintains a strong faith in divinity and submit to its will.

4. Conclusion

The discussion of *Gebir*'s and *Thalaba* reformative perspectives so far bolsters our self-reflection on current individual and personal concerns as well as the broader social, political and intellectual ones, both on the internal and external levels. The poems often constitute rich material for high and vigorous intellectual debates on recent controversial intellectual and literary debates such as Orientalism and postcolonialism. In the last section of *Islam and the English Enlightenment, 1670-1840* that he entitles "Postcolonial Reflections," Garcia demonstrates that the poems' interaction with the Arabic Islamic thought provides a substantial material for postcolonial studies to demystify "Anti-Islamic Orientalism." Whereas Islam has been always treated as incompatible to enlightenment ideals, the knowledges articulated in the poems, as Garcia argues, debunks this argument by presenting "Islamic law as compatible with English republican ideals" (224). My notion is that Garcia insightful scholarship articulates important material that is usually not highlighted and invested on. However, his arguments

reproduce knowledge that might be understood as reactionary, temporal and limited because it ties the poems' intellectualism to a specific historical epoch and political perspective. We might then dump the poems' intellectual heritage as arcane and short lived, and, thus, there is no point of teaching or reading them now.

As far as I am concerned, the worldview of *Gebir* and *Thalaba* presents a valuable source of reflection on recent public knowledges and practices including the political and non-political. The reason behind this is that the poems encompasse different ethnographies, diverse literary traditions, religions and moral and political systems in one pot, which offers us the opportunity to move between these choices and pick up what fits one's personal orientations. Generally speaking, the poems address the formation of the individual as the cornerstone of the wider social civilizing mission back then and now. In this arena, they provide a recipe for the individual on how to live and set moral and political priorities. This should go hand in hand with a conscious and active engagement with one's moral, social and political commitments and responsibilities.

As part of these priorities and commitments, *Gebir* and *Thalaba* explicates an alternative political process, in which the moral and religious are observed on the individual, public and state levels. This alternative understanding, as I argue, is not just a rhetorical tool Landor and Southey employ to mark their resistant to and dissent from their immediate religious and political establishments, but it contains acquaintances that historicize more practical conceptualizations of how politics should be executed. The first one unveils how secularizing the individual's political endeavors ends in a deluded and corrupted political consciousness. The other one integrates moral and religious codes to bolster the individual's involvement in a careful and conscious reading and formation of political history and political participation. The reader of the poems is

expected to move between the two discourses and self-reflect on how political reform should be predicated firstly on moral reformation.

In addition, *Gebir* and *Thalaba* underscore the common principles that diverse religions share. This percept constitutes a hot commodity for intellectual debates to dismantle the everlasting anachronistic binary that demarcates the relations between different cultures and religions. In the meanwhile, this percept should reach out the public mindset. What might be an interest for the public reader is to know about the other countries, religions, and people and what amalgamate all these fractures. I think that Landor and Southey were not appealing to the public mindset to accept or acknowledge Islam as an Abrahamic religion besides Christianity and Judaism, but they make further steps to explore how this religion provides an alternative explanation of the political and non-political realities they lived in. Southey's scholarship on Islam is a vibrant case in point here. Sharafuddin states that "Southey's orientalism is committed to the life of Islam for its own sake, and thus for the sake of the human values it may contain … [his] purpose is to discover the common ethical denominator between Islam and Christianity" (49). Southey's commentary on Zeinab's submission, "He gave, he takes away," upon the murder of her husband, invokes this conviction. He writes, "I have placed a Scripture phrase on a Mahommedan; but it is a saying of Job, and there can be no impropriety in making a modern Arab speak like an ancient one … It had been easy to make Zeinab speak from the Koran, … I thought it better to express a feeling of religion in that language with which our religious ideas are connected" (Southey 36). Southey's perception results from his "scholarly," not solely interrogative, exploration of the Islamic world. This perception would not be available to the public now unless intellectual engagements that explore how texts promote binaries and divisions move to aggregate knowledge to bridge culturally-oriented gaps and conflicts and

endorse amalgamation and mutual understandings. What matters to Southey are those principles, undertakings and understandings Abrahamic religions share, which present an alternative mood of understanding and conception of man's relationship to and interaction with his universe as in the case of Thalaba.

CHAPTER THREE

WHAT POETRY SHOULD TEACH: TRADITIONAL PROSPECTS OF KNOWLEDGE PRACTICES IN PERCY SHELLEY'S *THE REVOLT OF ISLAM* AND WILLIAM WORDSWORTH'S "DREAM OF AN ARAB"

1. Introduction

Of the four poets this dissertation engages with, Percy Bysshe Shelley and William Wordsworth significantly interact with the literature and literary traditions from the Arab and Islamic world. This is not to belittle the work of Landor and Southey, but the point is: these poets do interact with historical and religious texts, besides literature, but Shelley and Wordsworth bring into practice an interest in Arabic poetry as an alternative literary form. These engagements advance the role of literature in mediating the importation and exportation of these knowledges. Not only this, the poets and the novelists whom I engage with in the next chapter partake in accommodating these imported knowledges to fit and articulate their ideological and philosophical concerns and their public intellectualism responsibilities as well.

Shelley's and Wordsworth's engagements with Arabic and Islamic literature and literary traditions, mystical poetry, and oral poetry in *The Revolt of Islam* and "A Dream of an Arab" in "Book V" of *The Prelude* are best to be construed as an intellectual intervention to revitalize and re-circulate alternative traditional moods and sets of learnings to act amongst what they might consider as the unwise and uncivilized literary, humanistic and political knowledge their public had access to. In other words, what the poets would say is that existing public knowledges and mindsets defy any civilizational expectations and agendas in the political, educational, social and intellectual lives of the people.

In the case of *The Revolt*, Shelley's public intellectualism derives from Islamic mystical poetical and philosophical sources. Critics who read the poem and its antecedent, *Alastor, Or the Spirit of Solitude* (1816) take them as manifestations of the impact of mystical sources on Shelley's poetry. Shelley does not engage himself with Arabic poetry in *The Revolt* as Wordsworth impressively does. Rather, Shelley in particular engages with Persian mystical poetry and poets. While we might suppose that Shelley through this interest gets introduced to poetical principles that prevail in Arabic poetry such as it metaphoric language and lively imagination, *The Revolt* instead reflects his use of mystical modes and knowledges, union, love, and self-annihilation, from Persian poetry and poets to explain the overwhelming political, intellectual and social realities. Postcolonial studies and readings of *The Revolt* often ignore engaging this premise when interrogating Shelley's Orientalist discourse. Most of the time, this ends in producing knowledge on the poem that disfigures its overarching synthetic and globalizing philosophy.

Different from the unusually spiritually and religiously oriented Islamic mysticism, Shelley secularizes it. Unlike common Islamic mystics who experience mysticism to obtain the divine truth, Shelley revises the end of his mysticism and utilizes it to intellectually and philosophically engage with the post-French Revolution political chaotic condition. He claims that public knowledge, revolutionary and anti-revolutionary, falls short from disseminating true and genuine diagnosis of that condition. Shelley boasts that his deep philosophical and intellectual training enabled by his mystical experience fosters his better understanding of that condition. In *The Revolt*, the pacifist and bloodless revolution led by Laon and Cythna against the tyrannical Othman seeks to establish a realm in which "liberal and comprehensive morality" reigns. This becomes unavailing because despotism could regain its power, quell the

revolutionaries and wither up the hopeful quest for spreading justice, democracy, mutual love, and political reform.

Shelley's mystical experience substantiates and gives shape to his uncommon and desperate intellectual perspective on the impossibility of attainting that "*beau ideal*," in which reform appears unattainable and far-reached, realistically speaking. Shelley replicates the true mystic who self-obliterates himself and severs his attachment from the material world to reach new truth. Whereas mysticism should connect the mystic to their material world at the end, Shelley takes it too far. His mysticism transforms his intellectualism from being realistic. It rather takes him back to the first point he starts from; there is nothing promising but reform is impossible. While mystics practice mysticism to earn satisfaction, happiness, spiritual abundance, and strong commitment to the world they live in, Shelley's mysticism rather stresses his unproductive public intellectualism.

On the other side, "The Dream of an Arab" reveals Wordsworth's deep engagement with both the textual and contextual knowledge literature and literary tradition from the Arabian Peninsula. He exhibits substantial knowledge of oral Arabic poetry and its context, the desert of Arabia. He apparently has had access to that literature and read about its context from his antecedents, Sir William Jones and Robert Southey. In contrast to Shelley, Wordsworth's premise in "Book V" of *The Prelude* asserts the role of the poet and poetry in educating people and disseminating civilization. "The Dream of an Arab" relates to this argument because it presents an alternative model of knowledge and knowledge's circulation to be implemented besides that knowledge brought by "patient exercise / Of study and hard thought" (v. 9-10. 93), which is only recorded in books.

The declared topic of "Book V" is "Books," or the immanent destruction of books. We mistake or miss the poet's notion if we take his words literally. What concerns Wordsworth is that knowledge mainly circulated in books might perish because of loss or destruction and, most importantly, if that knowledge does not sustain itself to pass to other generations. Books, or reading from books, as tools to educate children do not effectively enhance knowledge and education to be "enduring and creative." Therefore, Wordsworth contends that it is the mission of public educators to make sure that the knowledge they teach and the way they teach it cultivate active learners and inculcate transmittable knowledge.

"The Dream of an Arab" that Wordsworth attributes to himself later helps the reader to comprehend these notions. The dreamer unveils a different set of literature and literary tradition. It is poetry from the desert of Arabia, orally transmitted from the "shell.'' This shell is held by an Arab and Bedouin, as the dreamer confirms, who possesses an "erring skill" in poetry and geometry that he gets from Arabic poetry. The dreamer easily identifies with this poetry and translates to the reader the prophecy of the "deluge" it tells. What is at stake here is the extent to which this knowledge can preserve itself in the minds and memories of the receivers, though not recorded in books. Wordsworth is positive in this case. He proves to have an active and highly receptive memory. He himself succeeds in retrieving the past experience of his dream to his present audience. Not only this, what enhances his memory is the simplicity of its knowledge, as it derives mostly from nature that does not surpass the processing capacity of the human mind. Wordsworth claims that he himself has been secured from the "evil. . ., a pest // That might have dried me up, body and soul" (v. 230-331. 99) engendered by contemporary education by being educated in his childhood by different texts and knowledges, including the *Arabian Nights*. Based on Wordsworth's claims, his interest in poetry reads as his attempt to transmit a true

understanding of human nature and improvement and draw to his contemporary knowledge-seeker to other sources such as poetry that has been overweighed by the current obsession with experimental science.

Shelley's and Wordsworth's engagements with literature and literary tradition from the Arabic and Islamic world encourage us to ponder on their trans-historical pertinency. *The Revolt* and Wordsworth's "Dream" provide new insights on the state of public intellectualism across the world now in relation to debating critical political issues. They also provide conceptual frames to reflect on and debate teaching and theorizing on World Literature or literature that builds mostly on engaging diverse literary traditions, texts and contexts. Arab intellectualism in the Arab Spring era poses the same dilemma Shelley has been caught in. The fluctuating circumstances in the Arab region put a challenge in front of Arab intellectuals on how to fit their intellectual production according to their personal convictions and public needs. Shelley, unlike Landor, seems not to admit revision of his personal political dogma to fit the emerging material circumstances. Therefore, the similarity between the context of his intellectualism and that of the Arab intellectuals in the present day does not mean that his model proves practical in the Arab Spring context. On the other side, Wordsworth's expertise touches on incorporating world literary traditions and texts in our course syllabi and argues for a paradigm shift in how they should be taught and theorized on. By suggesting that, he, following Sir William Jones, supports the impetus to explore other literatures as depositories of alternative systems of thoughts and formal practices that innovate and improve what his peer poets and learners pursue. In his "Essay on the poetry of Eastern Nation" (1772), Jones insists that the study of Arabic poetry means that "*a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should have a more extensive insight into the history of human mind; we should be more furnished with a new set of images*

and similitudes, and number of excellent compositions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate" (336). As well, Wordsworth's "Dream" underscores studying Arabic oral poetry as a different literary tradition that derives from different textual and contextual sources. Therefore, applying different theoretical and explanatory frames on this poetry might generate inadequate understanding of it.

2. Percy Bysshe Shelley's 'The Revolt of Islam'

While Southey doubts that poetry can engender an effective of political imaginative discourse, Shelley strongly concedes the opposite. He underscores the efficacy of poetry's political rhetoric in fomenting a revolutionary mindset in the public.[15] However, *The Revolt of Islam* paradoxically underlines Shelley's declining faith on the extent to which poetry institutionalizes and publicizes the "unmingled good," liberty, justice and love, as the should-be alternative public knowledge to counter or relive the "panic" that prevails in the post-revolutionary Europe. It is not that partial or total failure of the poem in achieving its intellectual agenda. But, *The Revolt* posits a clear statement: that "unmingled good" and "excellence" or moral and political perfection are impossible to attain. The ideal revolution of Laon and Cythna fails to replace the tyranny of Othman with liberty, love and justice. The piercing thing is that they carry out "bloodless" revolution and decide to pardon Othman after they have peacefully dethroned him. However, the despotic Othman regains his power and inflects death upon the revolutionary heroes. The poem renders liberty, justice and mutual love as unrealistic and utopian, but it tends to disturb us as it presents unrealism and utopia as a possible option to espouse. Laon and Cythna abandons their realistic realm, as they are burned alive at the stake by Othman, reunite and experience their love at Paradise.

The Revolt dramatizes the failure of both the revolutionary or anti-revolutionary politics. It also considers and draws the attention to subsequent failure of their intellectual pulpits, the poet and poetry. The central point of argument this chapter puts forward is that this failure constitutes the informing germ of Shelley's unpopular philosophical intellectual perspective in *The Revolt*. Shelley's mysticism reciprocally reflects and self-internalizes it. In other words, Mysticism turns to be a mean and an end for Shelley. At one hand, it is a "self-illumination" tool, a way of getting an unpopular and nonexistent public knowledge, neither revolutionary or anti-revolutionary. As love, union and forgiveness that Shelley seeks to popularize turn to be unreachable, mysticism nevertheless is his last choice to recourse to.

The Revolt displays a critical trajectory in Shelley's political thought. His mystical experience he goes through in the poem demarcates, not only "the growth and progress of individual mind aspiring after excellence, and devoted to the love of mankind," (vi) as we read in the poem's "Preface" but also a transformation in the poet's philosophical and political convictions. It is possible to come at this conclusion if we compare the nature and end of Shelley's mysticism in *Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude* (1816) to *The Revolt*. While Shelley's mystical journey in the former ends with a hope for a more enlightened future, the mystical poet in the latter recluses to spiritual solitude that is not religiously oriented, but it signals his loss of faith in reaching "the equalitarian society,"[16] or "dying [or impractical] politics,"[17] and retreat from politics.

The Revolt does not only follow the mystical experience structure, but it internalizes its philosophy of "self-annihilation," love, and union. The story of Laon and Cythna mostly illustrates a mystical experience, with little revisions Shelley conducted that I will clarify later. In the meanwhile, it links its intellectualism and civilizing mission to the popularization of mystical

notions as love, union, and abandoning all material deterrents such as selfishness. The entire narrative of *The Revolt* builds on a Manichean polarity. In "Canto I," Laon amounts to a hill from which he observes an Eagle (the Evil) embattled with a Serpent (Good). The opposition rather persists as Laon's and Cythna's liberal and egalitarian regime is suspended again by Othman. However, the poem desperately dissolves this polarity by uniting Laon and Cyhtna in the other word. This synthetic frame and philosophy of the poem problematizes any other readings that approach it in terms of oppositional East-West categorizations. The poem treats despotism, tyranny, and injustice as global phenomena, and it, in the meanwhile, presents love, though mystical, as a binder of all human beings.

Postcolonial Connections

Postcolonial readings of *The Revolt* always use the poem's title, context, and narrative form to vindicate Shelley's patronizing Orientalism. 'Islam', the Golden City in Constantinople where Laon and Cythna's revolution takes place, and the Turkish despotic ruler, Othman, besides the allegorized Manichean opposition between Good and Evil are obvious clues for a postcolonial reader to underpin the poem's discourse of Othering. *The Revolt*'s plural approach and language on discussing religion, despotism, and political chaos, from a postcolonial perspective, renders the poem as Shelley's attempt to forge and universalize his ethnocentric and monolithic *beau ideal* history of the revolution that originates in Europe and prevails over the other world.[18]

However, *The Revolt*'s specific historical reference that Shelley makes bold many times in the "Preface" to the poem does not dissuade readers from stressing the poem's universalist appeal. Other readings maintain that this specificity does not secure the poem from being Shelley's podium to dispense demeaning attitudes toward Muslims and Islam. Garcia believes

that *The Revolt*'s title should not be read as a "red herring." For Garcia, Shelley's discourse on the East derives mostly from Constantine Velony's *The Ruins of Empire* that is evident in his deployment of "Mahometanism as the prototype of a despotic state religion—an eastern ancien régime that needs to be reformed, or colonized, by the Western poet-prophet—'the unacknowledged legislator of the world' as hailed in his *Defense of Poetry*" (200). But, as the poem does not draw a clear path of the civilizing history that Shelley demarcates, his argument needs to be requalified as the reader starts to ponder if Shelley's more civilized history moves from Constantinople to Europe or vice versa. What the poem makes obvious to a certain extent is that both regions are not yet politically civilized. Most importantly, Shelley, as he writes in the "Preface," reveals that his mission is to popularize liberal thought that Europe has not secured yet. The opposite is also hard to vindicate as Laon and Cythna fails in eradicating the reign of Othman and rescue the liberal notions of justice, love and forgiveness in the Golden City.

The Revolt capitalizes on parallels rather than hierarchical differences between the historical conditions in the post-French revolution and Constantinople under the reign of Othman. This notion might impel Garcia and others to revise their reading of the poem's Orientalism. Garcia then argues that Shelley does not actually attack Islam nor Muslims, but he criticizes England's foreign policy that seeks "to secure the sultanate for the sake of promoting their imperialist aspirations in the Near East" (206). It is understandable from Garcia that Shelley is not condemning or criticizing Britain's imperialist endeavors as much as wishing his civilizing history to be realized in the East. Again, *The Revolt* problematizes and challenges such a reading. When it comes to the poem's civilizing history and knowledge, Shelley de-historicizes them. Love, forgiveness and union are unhistorical. They are not practiced in the world of the poem. Thus, Shelley confirms to his audience that the poem's intellectual moral and political prospects

are unearthly and not pertinent to a specific nation. Therefore, we might argue that by collapsing the historical referents of Shelley's arguments, *The Revolt* sets in motion an alternating system for generating new knowledge in which one pole never dominates the other.

Garcia builds his own reading of Shelley's political critique by allegorizing Laon and Cythna as representatives of the revolutionary spirit in post-French revolution Europe. If so, we are then compelled to vision Othman as an anti-revolutionary European icon. Nigel Leask tends to substantiate this move by proposing that the ebb and flow between the revolutionaries and anti-revolutionaries in *The Revolt* is European in soul, for which Shelley unsurprisingly chooses a non-European context to depict. This context, according to Leask, serves a double purpose. Leask writes, "Revolution in the east was more than a dislocation of frustrated political idealism, however, it was also a *cure* for vitiated European nerves" (109). *The Revolt*'s malady is European and that the remedy should be undertaken in Europe. But, what makes Shelley export them outside Europe? To suppose and accept the assumption that Shelley does that as a strategic move, the Eastern context of the poem then needs to be viewed as unhistorical and unreal, or an antithetical reflection of the West. However, Leask still grounds the poem's rhetoric on constructed historical dualism between the 'Self/Other', or colonizer/ colonized. The new aspect Leask adds here is that he portrays an over flipped dualism. He argues that *The Revolt* is "a poem of inverted imperialism in which … the colonial subject is represented as a tyrant and the colonizing power as a heroic martyr to its own idealism in struggling to enlighten the dark places of the earth" (Leask 118). The poem again does not easily reconcile this suggestion. First, Leask's reading retains the dualism that the poem dismantles. Second, by describing Laon's and Cythna' case with Othman as reversed imperialism, it is improbable that Shelley presents his heroes as colonizers. If so, the reader might not hail them as selfless, ideal heroes who risk their

lives for the sake of others, keeping in mind that their civilizing attempts are proved not availing at the end.

My overall argument is that Shelley's perspective does not highlight external or internal polarities but "common sympathies" and mostly identical political and moral dilemmas. Shelley appears to develop this premise from his mysticism, a philosophy that primarily anchors on union and infusion.[19] Thus, *The Revolt*, instead of investing in the dynamics of East-West historical difference and endorsing universalist claims, reflects on a history of revolution, anti-revolution, and despotism that it renders as a global phenomenon.[20] What is problematic in the postcolonial understanding of the poem is its accommodation of *The Revolt* to a cultural pattern the poem primarily seeks to disrupt and alternate. Shelley has a clear word on that viewpoint. He writes to a friend, "The Scene is supposed to be laid in Constantinople and modern Greece, but without much attempt at minute delineation of Mahometan manners. It is, in fact, a tale of such a revolution as might be expected to take place in a European nation" (qtd. in Garcia 200). Shelley would refuse any attempt to condensate the poem's sole concern to the interrogation of Islam or the politics of the Islamic world. Rather, he makes its conspicuous that he is interested in explicating the idea of revolution that might take place either in the East or Europe. However, he chooses Europe as the epistemological context of his discourse and the object of his political critique. This national context and concern, in the meanwhile, derives from his philosophical, literary and intellectually-grounded engagement with knowledges from the Islamic world as I explain in the next section of the discussion.

Shelley: The Mystical Poet

Alastor, Or the Spirit of Solitude (1816) is often cited by critics as a demonstration of Shelley's influence by Islamic and Persian mystic and Sufi literature, especially poetry.[21] But, *Alastor* should not be alone in this arena, *The Revolt* as well potentially exhibits this influence, and explicates how Shelley's engagement with mystical philosophy informs and acts out his nihilist perspective on the idea of revolution and political reform.

Building on this premise, the discussion here explores and delineates these dynamics, but it is necessary to rview some of the mystical concepts and moves that a reader might find in Shelley's poem. This is what Elham Nilchian does in her analysis of Shelley's *Alastor; or The Spirit of Solitude* (1816).[22] Nilchian outlines the literary and intellectual interaction between Sufism and British Romantic poets, Shelley and Byron as cases in point. On that interaction she writes, "the Romantic subject, in search of a perfect self, showed a keen interest in the other side of the Orient [Sufism] which dealt with a spiritual unity of the self with the ideal Other" (Nilchian 2). This argument, with a minor modification, informs Shelley's intellectual quest in *The Revolt* that seeks to articulate self-liberation, self-perfection, love and union as philosophical and intellectual antidotes to political dogmatism and antagonism on the public level in the post-revolutionary Europe.

Mysticism lends a literary and rhetorical medium to Shelley to negotiate his politics and intellectualism. This does not mean that he fully adopts mysticism as a spiritual and religious way "that seeks to find the truth of divine love and knowledge through direct personal experience of God" (Nilchian 14). Shelley rather adapts it to his own secular orientations. As one can get from Nilchian's definition, Sufism, though has spiritual connections, is a path that a knowledge-seeker follows to acquire true and pure knowledge. In *Alastor* and *The Revolt*,

Shelley rejects any external mediators that are essential to the Sufi to connect to the divine soul. Instead, he presents *The Revolt* as a mediator that articulates the truth that it contains. Thus, he does not subdue himself and "give up all material belongings in favour of gaining a more spiritual abundance" (Nilchian 14), as any mystic is expected to do.

What is central to the Sufi doctrine as Nilchian discusses it is the quest for pure knowledge necessary to acquire spiritual self-perfection and excellence by practicing "'*fanaa*' or annihilation of the self in the ultimate Being" (18). The mystic then develops this practice into a higher sublime, "becoming God." This doctrine was first introduced by the tenth century Persian Sufi Hossein ebn Mansur Hallaj, known by his daring utterance in which he declares, "*ana l-Haqq*," which translates as, "I am the Truth" (18). For a mystic, this is the ultimate stage one aspires to reach. By reading it in its religious and philosophical context, Al Hallaj's statement does not mean that the Sufi seeks to act as God, but to metaphorically indicate the total and deep spiritual immersion in the divine in which "the Sufi announces his servanthood. Accordingly, the mystic or Sufi experiences such states as desire, contemplation, intimacy, insight, purity, travelling, gnosis, love, yearning, extinction (*fanaa*), and permanence (*baqaa*)" (Nilchian 49). *The Revolt of Islam* reflects these mystical stages. However, Shelley secularizes the object and end of his mysticism. He does not seek spiritual union with divinity. Also, his main interest is not to attain spiritual ecstasy or "abundance." Rather, he practices mysticism as tool to acquire knowledge that he considers rare and known just by him. Thus, he tries to lose himself to get that knowledge and simultaneously propose to the public to lose its self-centered endeavors and highlight "common passion" and love to unify the divided self and public.

Shelley's Mysticism: *The Revolt of Islam* and *Alastor, Or the Spirit of Solitude*

While *Alastor* is often cited as the most representative and illustrative of Shelley's mystical philosophy. *The Revolt of Islam* discloses mysticism as a piercing need for Shelley that enables him to conceive and deal with the social and political circumstances he lives in. This development corresponds to the poet's transformation in viewing political reform and the extent to which his argument as an intellectual and a poet can effectually foster reform.

Shelley's poets in *The Revolt* and *Alastor*, Laon and Alastor, articulate their dissatisfaction and discontent toward the existing public knowledge as unpromising and an incompetent reformative discourse. This is evident in the failure of that knowledge to partake in truly describing and analyzing the existing circumstances and, thereby, produce misleading civilizing discourses. Subsequently, Shelley's poets, in the fashion of the Muslim Sufi Al Hallaj, present themselves as articulators of that alternative and true knowledge. Perhaps they, unlike others, are amongst the "few" endowed with the ability to reach the truth. Laon claims,

> Thus the dark tale which history doth unfold,
> I knew, but not, methinks, as others know,
> For they weep not; and Wisdom had unrolled
> The clouds which hide the gulf of mortal woe:
> To few can she that warning vision shew,
> For I loved all things with intense devotion; (2. xxxviii. 20).

In another place, he maintains the same attitude that he is privileged with the ability to acquire knowledge that is not available to many. He relates the story,

> In lonely glens, amid the roar of rivers,
> When the dim nights were moonless, have I known

Joys which no tongue can tell:

…….

That after many wondrous years were flown,

I was awakened by a shriek of woe;

And over me a mystic robe was thrown,

By viewless hands, and a bright Star did glow

Before my steps. … (xlvi. 24)

Laon confirms his position as receiver of that knowledge of wisdom. He gives up and "annihilates" his self and becomes vulnerable to that knowledge dispensed by "viewless hands," which he intends to communicate with his readers.

However, in *Alastor*, the knowledge the poet circulates is an earthly knowledge, part of which the poet gains from his observations, and he retrieves the other part from the past. But, it is not a sociable knowledge. Alastor disengages himself from the real world he lives in and acquires knowledge in a moment of his temporal and spatial solitude. His observations therefore lack any social significance in that they do not interact with nor respond to his social milieu. We read that "he lived, he died, he sung, in solitude" (60. 178). Alastor turns "self-destructively inward" (319) as Kenneth Neill Cameron explains in ***Shelley: The Golden Years*** (1974). Alastor immerses his self in himself, and in his "self-centered seclusion," to use Nilchian's words, he retrieves, not creates, images from an idealized past. We read,

The fountains of divine philosophy

Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of great,

Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past

In truth or fable consecrates, he felt

And knew. …….. (71-75. 179)

The knowledge that Alastor envisions seems to be common and real. It apparently belongs to a certain time and place as well, while Laon's does not. This knowledge might be known and practiced by others, but the issue is that the poet does not see it as a public mindset in his time anymore. So, Alastor's vision takes the form of shaking memories and going back to the past to recover and re-articulate that knowledge. This is why he converses with nature as a replication of that desired past untouched by catastrophes. This does not require that much "devotion" Laon needs to obtain that potentially unknowable and inexpressible transcendental knowledge.

In a true mystical experience, "self-illumination" does not entail "self-annihilation" for nothing, but it should end by an infusion into the Other or intermediary such as nature of man. Intermediaries connects the mystic to the infinite divine. Laon attains that spiritual union with Cythna. He loses himself in her, and they become one. His union with her, as he declares, enables him to reach knowledge of wisdom,

In me, communion with this purest being

Kindled intenser zeal, and made me wise

In knowledge, which in her's mine own mind seeing,

Left in the human world few mysteries: (2. xxxii. 48)

Shelley enacts Laon's and Cythna's eternal fusion as they, materially speaking, reunite in Paradise after their death. On the contrary, Alastor acts differently in his visionary mystical moments. He rejects anything to intermediate between himself and that knowledge he seeks. He dreams of the Arab maiden poet, and on her he writes, "Knowledge and truth and virtue were her theme, / And lofty hopes of divine liberty, // Thoughts the most dear to him, and poesy" (158-

160. 181). However, he fails to access to those "lofty" themes because he fails to annihilate himself and unite with the Arabian woman poet. He rejects to have that intimate love necessary for their spiritual union. Later, Alastor wakes up from his dream, and "Now blackness veiled his dizzy eyes, and night / Involved and swallowed up the vision" (188-189. 182). This does not preclude Alastor from sustaining a positive view of the world and articulating it to his audience, which is part of his inevitable mission as a poet. He insists,

> Let not high verse, mourning the memory
> Of that which is no more, or painting's woe
> Or sculpture, speak in feeble imagery
> Their own cold powers. … (707-710. 196-97)

The language Alastor uses here hyperboles high and "slavish" national and revolutionary feelings. According to Jones's argument in "Essay on the poetry of Eastern Nation" (1772), Shelley might get this verbose spirit from his reading of Persian poetry. While describing the Persians' life and climate, Jones writes, "This delicacy of their lives and sentiments has insensibly affected their language, and rendered it the softest, as it is one of the riches, in the world" (330). In this context, the sentiments of Alastor are to be rejected and demeaned by his Western reader. Jones points out that Western readers misapprehend Persian language as a pot of "mean sentiments" expressed in "pompous language" (333). However, Jones maintains an aesthetic beauty and political rhetorical effectiveness of Persian poetry's sentiments, or Alastor's in particular. After quoting lines from *Al Bustan*, or *The Garden* by the Persian poet Sadi, Jones exclaims, "Are they not rather worthy of our most spirited writers? And do they not convey a fine lesson for a young king? Yet *Sadi*'s poems are highly esteemed at *Constantinople*, and at

Ispahan. Though; a century or two ago, they would have been suppressed in Europe, for spreading, with too strong a glare the light of liberty and reason" (333).

Shelley, on the contrary, could not sustain Alastor's highly motivated endeavor and end in *The Revolt of Islam*. In other words, the poem does not come to eventualize his early vision of the ideal and free-of-decay world. Rather, *The Revolt* alienates Shelley's vision further, and he uses his spiritual mysticism as a tool to cover or mitigate his newly emerging, mainly pessimistic, vision. Laon and Cythna do not realize liberty, hope and justice on earth, but they abstractly do in Paradise. There, Laon and Cythna stops talking about these ideals as public demands and instead boast the individualistic yearnings they truly enjoy in Paradise. Cyhtna joyfully declares, "And ever as we sailed, our minds were full / Of love and wisdom" (12. xxxvii. 268). She consoles herself and Laon by adding, "… we did know, / That virtue, tho' obscured on Earth, not less // Survives all mortal change in lasting loveliness" (12. xxxvii. 268).

In summary, the ideal perfect world that Alastor's mysticism renders possible turns to be far-reached and impossible to Shelley a year later. Thus, in the more historically informed *The Revolt*, he attempts to desperately capture the reader's hope and optimism in his abstract '*beau ideal*' to the last minute. As he becomes sure that the post-revolutionary condition of Europe does not support nor enforce a more practical resolution, arousing sincere feelings, "common sympathies," love, in the reader appear to him the least desirable thing to accomplish.

This transformation in Shelley's mode of understanding his world uncovers his high mysticism in *The Revolt of Islam*. Mysticism, as one might postulate, turns for Shelley as his inescapable and last possible intellectual and philosophical camp. *Alastor*, contrary to Nilchian's point of view, does not show that intensity because Shelley's poet rejects to self-lose himself and infuse with the other, which are prerequisite for any mystic. Therefore, his mysticism in the

poem does not reach the extent we read in *The Revolt*. This is not to vindicate the argument that Shelley becomes in the later poem a true or genuine Islamic-like mystic or Sufi. My notion is that though his influence by the philosophy is self-evident, Shelley's mysticism does not entirely replicate the Muslim Sufi mystical experience. The Sufi mysticism has spiritual and religious undertakings. Any mystical experience must end by connecting with the divine. So, it is an alternative, highly individualist, way for the Muslim mystic to worship God. This way has a practical end, whereas Shelley's mysticism ends nowhere. While a Sufi Muslim practices self-loss to strengthen his connection with the world he lives in or to reach "permanence," Shelley loses himself and never regains it. He severs his connection with his real world. Moreover, while a Sufi goes in his mystic al experience seeking happiness, spiritual ecstasy and abundance and self-satisfaction, which he normally reaches, Shelley's mysticism does not avail him; despair and spiritual obliteration persist over him. Naji B. Oueijan would support Shelley's deviation from the religious orientations of mystical philosophy. In, "Sufism, Christian Mysticism, and Romanticism," Oueijan argues that British Romantic poets identify with Islamic Sufism as "a literary movement more than a religious order, because of common themes, concerns, purposes and goals that were not of primary concern to the Christian mystics" (127).[23] It follows then that Shelley, the mystic poet, finds in mysticism a literary mode and vehicle to dispense his understanding of the social, political and intellectual circumstances of his time to his readership. This uncommon mode and vehicle enables him to articulate what seems to be publicly unpopular and unaccepted, or an "entirely contemptible" perspective as John Gibson Lockhart, a contemporary reviewer of *The Revolt*, puts it.

The Material Germ of Shelley's Mysticism in *The Revolt*

Casting Shelley as a mystic poet and *The Revolt* as his "mystical experience" does not strip poem's intellectual perspective from its historical significance, but it might negatively influence the rigor of its reformative discourse. The poet rather emphasizes in the first lines of the poem and in his prefatory notes in the "Preface" the post-French Revolution material and intellectual condition as the germ of his intellectualism in *The Revolt*. The French Revolution informs Shelley's mysticism in the poem as well. Laon makes explicit the origin of his poetic inspiration and the source of his poetic narration as he says, "WHEN the last hope of trampled France had failed / Like a brief dream of unremaining glory, // From visions of despair I rose, … (1. i. 1).

The narrative takes a different turn after this moment. The narrating poet stops being specific and precise in delineating that historical condition. He instead continues the narrative by allegorically re-constructing the everlasting mythological war between the good and evil. The poet tells us, "For in the air do I behold indeed / An Eagle and a Serpent wreathed in fight" (1. viii. 5). The battle between that Eagle (evil) and the Serpent (good) is endless. This transition from the specific to the general and abstract in return normalizes or generalizes the cause and essence of The French Revolution and strips it from its historical and epistemological specificity. The poem in this way typifies the Revolution to the original conflict between good and evil. At this moment, Shelley's mysticism resurfaces as it reciprocally drives and is driven by this "uncommon" perspective on the revolution. In "'Common Sympathies': Shelley's *Revolt of Islam*," Elisabeth Brocking explains that the French Revolution for Shelley,

> was more than an inspiration and ideal to Shelley: it was a warning. It did not fail only because of the interference of external despotic powers, but through its own passionate

> intensisty. And while the revolutionaries of the Golden City, unlike those of Paris, at no time use or advocate the use of violence, even their attempt fails. The difficulty of successful revolution, rather than simply substitution of one tyrant for another, is the central issue of *The Revolt of Islam*. … Shelley demonstrates a sophisticated and thorough understanding of the difficulties of reform. (19)

As we place this perspective in its political and intellectual milieu, it turns that it certainly does not compromise to either the revolutionary or the anti-revolutionary voices as the common prevailing public rhetoric in the post-revolution Europe. As the reader might deduce from his mysticism, Shelley does not compromise to that rhetoric, and he takes deeper and more comprehensive intellectual and philosophical way to negotiate the revolution or the post-revolution condition. Though apparently neutral, Shelley alienates himself from all and discards any faith in any possible successful revolution, reconcilement and reform. One can read the impact of this attitude in Shelley's complex, daring, waning and depressed politics and public intellectualism.

Shelley's depression emanates from his observation of the unpromising antithetical post-revolution condition. As *The Revolt* dramatizes it, neither the revolutionaries nor reconciliatory attempts could uproot chaos, hate and rivalry among people. Rather, old despotic political regimes could regain their power and wither up any hope in reformation. This is what happens with Laon in Shelley's story. Laon represents that revolutionary bard poet who commissions himself to maintain the hope to The Golden City and its people toward liberation. He addresses the "multitudes" of his city saying,

> It shall be thus no more! too long, too long,
> Sons of the glorious dead, have ye lain bound

In darkness and in ruin.—Hope is strong,

Justice and Truth their winged child have found—

Awake! arise! ... . (2. xiii. 38)

Laon's poetry proves to be an impressive revolutionary public rhetoric. It awakens the people's revolutionary ardent zeal toward liberation from their oppressor, Othman. Consequently, the thronged "multitude" could peacefully dethrone the tyrant. Here comes the turning point when the victorious gather to judge the fate of Othman, and controversy and discord in opinions ensue between the revolutionaries; "Shall Othman only unavenged despoil? … // [Shall he] Perish for crime, while his foul blood may boil, /// Or creep within his veins at will?" (v. xxxii. 109). Laon thinks pardoning Othman is a good choice to end chaos. Thus, he uses his poetical rhetoric again to persuade the revolutionaries to approve that,

… if your hearts are tried

In the true love of freedom, cease to dread

This one poor lonely man …

……..

…, let him go free; until the worth

Of human nature win from these a second birth. (v. xxxiii. 109).

Shelley complicates the scenario when he fails Laon's pacifist revolution because it endangers the revolutionaries including Laon himself. Tyranny could re-establish itself and blast the "last hope" of erecting a democratic, just and liberal Golden City. Othman, aided by external powers, launches a "ghastlier" avenging war against those who dethroned him and re-captures his power. This confers many deaths amongst Laon's people and later the death of Laon and Cythna themselves.

This paradox appears to be a common attendant to Shelley's poetry, especially which discusses and negotiates his outlook on revolution and political change. In "Shelley's First 'Pythian'" Michael Erkelenz argues that Shelley's "Ode to Naples" conveys a confusing and intricate revolutionary view. Similar to the way Shelley fates the revolt in *The Revolt*, Erkelenz discusses Shelley's "problematic" choice of the antithetical literary model of the Greek poet Pindar's *Pythian 1* to celebrate the revolution of the Italian city of *Naples* against the external threat of Austria. What fosters Shelley's imitation of Pindar's poem, according to Erkelenz, is the potential historical and material correspondence between conditions of Naples in the late summer and autumn of 1820 and the Greek city of Aetna that Pindar hails in his poem. Erkelenz writes,

> As a proponent of the liberal cause Shelley found in *Pythian 1* a valuable resource, A Pindaric ode celebrating revisionary Naples for resuscitating the political order of the Greek city-states in Italy necessary presents revolutionary Naples in a conservative light. An Ode invoking *Pythian* 1 in particular associates Naples not just with the aristocratic values expressed in Pindar's odes generally but with the specific political value of a particular city-state, Aitna. Pindar celebrates Aitna as a bastion of Greek civilization, as a consummate expression of political civility in the 'god-built freedom' afforded the Aitneans by their ancient Dorian constitution. (410)

However, Shelley's obsession with the liberal political model that Aitna yields is just one side of the truth. The other one constitutes a "historical embarrassment" (412), to use Erkelenz's words, for Shelley and confusion for the reader as well. The reader might attribute this to Shelley's ill-chosen political model to disseminate liberal thought. First, Hieron, the once-seen hero, turns to be something else. He, Erkelenz writes, "displaced thousands of people from their homes largely

for the purposes of self-aggrandizement" (412). In addition, Shelley deepens and manifests confusion as the reader gets to know that the liberal revolution of Aitna, like that of The Golden City of *The Revolt* collapses within six years of the death of the "tyrant" Hieron in 1467 (412). These contradictory historical facts on the condition of Aitna that Shelley surprisingly recuperates in his "Ode to Naples" forces Erkelenz to conclude that "however enthusiastically he greeted the advent of constitutional monarchy at Naples, he was not, of course a monarchist of any kind. Perhaps he expected the … (the wise), for whom he, like Pindar, sometimes saw himself writing, to draw the appropriate inference" (413). Erkelenz as any reader of the poem who knows about the history of *Pythian* 1 would certainly interrogates Shelley's appeal to this model. The same question can be applied on Shelley's choice of the revolutionary model of the Golden City and of Laon and Cythna to depict the post-French Revolution condition.

The way Shelley concludes the story of Laon and Cythna in *The Revolt* defies anarchy and the whole premise of the poem, to raise hope among the public, that he and his poet hail. In this way, Shelley tries to be "all things to all people" (416), as Erkelenz puts it, and open-minded in his political perspective. Besides bemoaning the failure of the revolution, he might speculate on the potential tyranny of Laon and Cythna like the Hieron of Aitna. Practically speaking, this takes us back to the first point Shelley raises in the poem, that is the moment of despair and confusion that arouses in him the energy to write this poem. Paradoxically, the poem fails to produce an alternative to that despair and hopelessness.

Therefore, Shelley's mysticism can been read as his attempt to escape that despairing world. But, readers are prone to resist this resolution especially if read as an intellectual argument responding to a historical and political material context. Shelley's belief on the impossibility of reform and liberty, as Brocking would put it, might be accepted, negotiated or

debated. However, readers, especially contemporaries to Shelley, might reject Shelley as he tells them that mutual love and forgivingness, or to be mystics, is the only thing they can do to resolve the political dilemma and halt chaos and heal a society that is torn by political division and rivalry. Shelley maintains that existing public knowledge does not propagate this mindset that he seeks to dispense. His critique in relation to this point takes a broader scope to include contemporary poets, intellectuals, and literature. On that, he is resolved that, "the French Revolution may be considered as one of those manifestations of a general state of feeling among civilized mankind, produced by a defect of correspondence between the knowledge existing in society and the improvement, or gradual abolition of political institutions" (ix) as Shelley writes in the "Preface." As literature and public intellectualism have a hand in the failure of the Revolution and civilize the ensuing chaos after it, Shelley seeks mysticism to acquire or construct alternative knowledge that he believes best describe and fit the present historical condition. This mystical knowledge as Shelley deploys it does not end in spiritualizing the world of the poet and the audience, but to mark its strangeness and rarity. Mysticism, therefore, presents itself for Shelley as the way to intellectually and politically deal with that world. Shelley, like all mystics, gives up and retreats from the politics that is brought by a persistent gloomy and pessimistic perspective and overwhelming doubt toward political change.

3. William Wordsworth's '"Dream of an Arab"' in '"Book V"' of 'The Prelude'

It is not a coincidence that this chapter brings both Wordsworth and Shelley together under scrutiny. A reader of Wordsworth's "Book V" of *The Prelude* and Shelley's *The Revolt* will easily point at their concern toward the sense of **"**precariousness" the poets' exhibit toward their public intellectualism and intellectual achievements**.** Shelley is preoccupied with the deterioration or deviation of public opinion in not espousing "liberal and comprehensive

morality" (13), as Shelley claims in the "Preface" to *The Revolt*. As well, he professed theme of Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab" is the immanent destruction of books and the impermanence of man's intellectual achievements. However, Wordsworth's prophecy is not totally apocalyptic as that of Shelley. He speaks of his anguish toward a serious problem in public education and intellectualism, but he appears not that much spiritually "self-annihilat[ed]," as does Shelley. Wordsworth, as a poet, envisions the imbedding "deluge," that obliterates man's "palms achieved / Through length of time by patient exercise // Of study and hard" (v. 8-11). Nonetheless, he does not give up to that fear, but he instead dispenses "a loud prophetic blast of harmony" (v. 95).

What is dismaying to critics such as R. D. Havens and Geoffrey Hartman, to mention the most cited scholars in this arena, is that "Book V" does not disentangle this tension. It rather ends without emphasizing neither the destruction brought by the deluge nor the reign of harmony over that apocalypse. The problem rises as the Arabian Bedouin knight and poet whom the dreamer in Wordsworth's tale meets in "the stretched a boundless plain / Of sandy wilderness, all black and void" (v. 71-72)[24] disappears leaving the readers pondering on whether he succeeds in burying the "stone" and the "shell," which are in fact books as Wordsworth tells his readers, to protect them from the deluge. Criticism on the book usually qualifies Wordsworth's mission in this book, to speak of the value of books and their influence on him, as a "failure."[25]

However, Wordsworth's mission in "Book V" is apparently not that simple and straightforward. It is not the poet's quest to tell his readers on what books he has read, and how books have shaped his intellectualism. Rather, Wordsworth directs his speech to the more specialized people in the education of children, "The guides and wardens of our faculties" who

"manage books, and things" time and draw their attention to the fact that "they have fashioned would confine us down, / Like engines" (360. 103), and reminds them,

> That in the unreasoning progress of the world
> A wiser spirit is at work for us,
> A better eye than theirs, most prodigal
> Of blessings, and most studious of our good,
> Even in what seem our most unfruitful hours? (361-65. 103)

Wordsworth founds his educational theory on the importance of integrating an effective alternative educational practice to what these "sages" are practicing in upon leaners. The fault in contemporary educational practices and Wordsworth's reformative perspective are not explicitly stated yet. However, one thing can be clarified before proceeding with the narrative. The problem that Wordsworth touches on is not books, and the "wiser spirit" he calls to educate children is not to abandon reading books as might be understood. Rather, Wordsworth "sadness" intensifies as he observes and envisions the approaching catastrophe upon the "palms," or "garments," knowledges, human beings have achieved so far. The poet poses this question: "Where would they be?" He puts forward his own answer to the question: "That they must perish. …" (v. 22. 94). The apocalypse is encroaching, but that it is not decreed by the divine. Wordsworth's audience have a hand in this fate and makes himself "survive, / Abject, depressed, forlorn, disconsolate" (v. 28. 94). The fault of man is not that he stops being "Earth's paramount Creature" and avoids "patient exercise / Of study and hard thought" (v. 9-10. 93) that halts exploring new knowledges. Or, that he favors pursuing a certain knowledge upon the other. But, what the poet objects is the inefficient way man decides not to find "Some element to stamp her image on / In nature somewhat nearer to her own?" Man instead, to the dismay of the poet,

preserves knowledge "in shrines so frail," books. Materially speaking, Wordsworth's fear derives from a justifiable rationale. Books cannot outlive the danger of "inward throes" or "fire." He also fears that reading from books and not training to the children's memorizing faculty would make their learning experience less effective in producing creative and long-lasting knowledge.

"The Dream of an Arab" gives shape and substance to Wordsworth's alternative intellectual and educational theorization that he posits after the diagnostic, mainly sadist, prologue.[26] By focusing on the poet's encounter with the Arab knight, the symbolic significance of the "stone" and "shell" the knight holds in his hands and their natural and broader literary context, it becomes apparent then, as I argue, that Wordsworth's public intellectualism does not communicate fear on the inescapable destruction of books in the material sense, nor acknowledge the influence of reading books on the development of the poet's mind. Wordsworth's fear stems from his general assessment of knowledge, only circulated and transmitted to learners through books, as less "enduring" but vulnerable to loss and destruction. Knowledge in books are also not self-innovative, generative, and does not sustain "organic development" because it cannot ensure its conveyance to other generations.

Wordsworth helps the reader get such notions as he deploys "The Dream of an Arab" as an alternative model of learning and circulating knowledge. The learner, the Arab Bedouin knight, does not get his education in the desert from books but from oral poetry. This model, according to Wordsworth, enhances the production and circulation of a creative knowledge, and, most importantly, a long-lasting, sustainable and dynamic knowledge. Therefore, Wordsworth's educational perspective relies on improving the learner's, the child in Wordsworth case, memorizing and remembering faculty, or the capacity of knowledge to long live in the minds and hearts of people. This is what Wordsworth himself replicates in "Book V." The allegedly

disjointed themes in the book are things Wordsworth's memory can retrieve and rearticulate. His childhood days and the books he has read and the knowledge he has acquired all prove "enduring and creative." He demonstrates that all these substances have had a capacity to survive in his mind till the later time he composes "Book V."

Another demonstration that can be brought here is that Wordsworth narrates "The Dream of an Arab" in retrospection. The narrating poet draws the picture of his dream based on how much his active memory brings to life incidents from the past. His memory is provoked by a reading experience that might include clues to past readings and observations. We read, "While I was seated in a rocky cave / By the sea-side" reading "The famous history of the errant knight / Recorded by Cervantes, …" (60-61. 95). Then, he closes the book, and his memories are provoked to "travelling back among those days" in which he has probably read a book on Arabic poetry. But we are certain that he has read and possessed a volume of the *Arabian Nights* as he recapitulates from his memories. Interestingly, the act of retelling the dream is an act of recollecting knowledge from previous memories, which Wordsworth reads, interprets and sees how it might yield a different perspective and meet an emerging need, though in a different context.

The Dream Itself

As discussed in the previous part, Wordsworth articulates his "philosophical meditation," to use Havens' words, concerning the apocalypse of man's intellectual and scientific knowledges, if action is not taken to defy this unpromising fate. After setting his argument, the poet introduces the "Dream of an Arab." That intellectual action Wordsworth proposes can be traced in this new episode. This is not an easy thing to claim and accomplish as the poet seemingly discusses this action in a new geographical and epistemological context. Three vital

components here comprise this context: the poet, the Arabian Bedouin knight, Arabic poetry that Wordsworth hears from the "shell," and the material context the poet and poetry emerge in, the desert of Arabia. Each of these elements compliments the other and vouchsafes its continuity. In return, the three elements should be dealt with as one pot from which the reader can deduce Wordsworth's alternative and relieving perspective to the problematic prologue. The poet describes these elements based on his remembrance of how they look to him. He relates,

> I saw before me stretched a boundless plain
> Of sandy wilderness, all black and void,
> And as I looked around, distress and fear
> Came creeping over me, when at my side,
> Close at my side, an uncouth shape appeared
> Upon a dromedary, mounted high.
> He seemed an Arab of the Bedouin tribes:
> A lance he bore, and underneath one arm
> A stone, and in the opposite hand a shell
> Of a surpassing brightness. (v. 71-80. 95)

The poet encounters the same "fear and distress" he experiences at first in the prologue, but this time it is because of the fear of getting lost in in the "boundless plain" desert of Arabia. However, once he sees the Bedouin night and poet, his anguish transforms to joy. This encounter relievs the mind of the poet because he believes in the knight's knowledge and skill to guide him amidst desert. On this, he tells us,

> At the sight
> Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide

Was present, one who with unerring skill

Would through the desert lead me. (v. 80-82. 95).

What would dismiss the wanderer's distress is that the Arab knight, like all the Bedouins of Arabia who inhabit the desert, possesses an "unerring skill" in tracing paths in the vast desert using the stars. The knight also represents the intellectual "guide" to the poet. He later identifies him with Cervantes's hero as he gets to know his mission and what knowledge he possesses in his hands.

In addition to his skilled "acquaintance with the stars," the Arab Bedouin also possesses an "erring skill" in literature, poetry in specific. He combines these skills in the "shell" and "stone" he carries and seeks to protect them from the deluge by burying them. Wordsworth asserts two times that the shell and stone are in fact "books." This might be understandable once the reader can discern the poet's interest in the stone's and shell's contents. He describes them,

The one [stone] that held acquaintance with the stars,

And wedded soul to soul in purest bond

Of reason, undisturbed by space or time;

The other [shell] that was a god, yea many gods,

Had voices more than all the winds, with power

To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe,

Through every clime, the heart of human kind. (v. 104-110. 96)

The content of the first book, the stone, is "Euclid's Elements" as the Arabian knight tells the wanderer. But, the shell mostly captures his attention and yields more interest in him because it produces poetry. This is expected from a poet who can easily identify with and understand poetry than science. Therefore, he tells us more of the content of the "shell,"

In colour so resplendent, with command

That I should hold it to my ear. I did so,

And heard that instant in an unknown tongue,

Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,

A loud prophetic blast of harmony;

An Ode, in passion uttered, which foretold

Destruction to the children of the earth

By deluge, now at hand. (v. 92-99. 96)

The "shell" produces poetry in a foreign language that the poet, to our surprise, understands it. What fosters this successful interaction between the poet and the foreign poetry coming out from the "shell" is that it happens through hearing, not reading. In addition, the poet's reception, internalization and remembrance of this poetry becomes feasible since it is transmitted to him as an "Ode," a sung poem, which provokes his passion and mind. The determinant factor in the extent to which the poet can absorb this poetry is the extent to which the poet's memory is trained. The much memory is honed by training, the greater it stores and is capable to restore that storage. When it comes to the poet of Arabia and Wordsworth's poet, the talk is of their skills, not the amount of knowledge they read or possess. It is mainly their capacity to receive, store, retrieve and transfer that knowledge to others.

The significance of the Arab's context of Wordsworth's dream unfolds an alternative and different literary experience in which he finds his lost guide to illustrate these lines of thought and dispense them to his public reading. In this arena, before Wordsworth, the scholarship of Sir William Jones comes to the fore. Jones postulates the poetry from Arabia as a site from which theoretical assumptions can be derived.[27] This comes after he has done extensive translations of

Arabic poetry, including the *Mullaqat,* to mention the most significant. Jones underlines the need to study the textual and contextual differences of Arabic poetry to innovate and diversify the form and content of English poetry. In "Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nation," he maintains,

> *European* poetry has subsisted too long on the perpetual repetition of the same images, and incessant allusions to the same fables: and it has been my endeavor for several years to inculcate this truth, that, *if the principle writings of the Asiaticks, which are reposited in our public libraries, were printed with the usual advantage of notes and illustrations, and if the languages of the Eastern nations were studies in our places of education, where every other branch of useful knowledge is taught in perfection, a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should have a more extensive insight into the history of human mind; we should be more furnished with a new set of images and similitudes, and number of excellent compositions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate*. (336)

It is not to exaggerate that Wordsworth comes across this paragraph from Jones. The informative element in "Dream of an Arab" in "Book V" is the poetry from the Arabian Peninsula, where Jones has spent great time studying and translating it. Jones's scholarship in poetry from Arabia, which relates to Wordsworth's argument, integrates and underpins the role of the natural context, the desert climate, on the excellency of poetry of Arabic poets. He states, "The poets of Asia [including *Arabs*] have as much genius as ourselves; and, if it be shown not only that they have more leisure to improve it, but they enjoy some peculiar advantages over us, the natural conclusion, I think, will be, that their productions must be excellent in their kind" (320). Genius and the ability to improve it strongly pertains to Wordsworth educational theory. For him,

reading from books, does not inhibit genius, but it might stumble it. This is because the mind is not given that impulse to generate and regenerate. To do so, the mind needs freedom and rigor that it can find in nature, as Wordsworth would argue. The poet commends nature as his best teacher. Therefore, he "pour[s] thanks"

> …with uplifted heart, that I was reared
> Safe from an evil which these days have laid
> Upon the children of the land, a pest
> That might have dried me up, body and soul.
> This verse is dedicate to Nature's self,
> And things that teach as Nature teaches; (v. 228-333. 99)

In support to the previous argument, Wordsworth defines the "pest" in modern education against which he articulates intellectual argument in "Book V" is not books, but it is that educating way that "drie[s] …up" the "mind and soul" of the learner. In other words, modern education does not observe the learner's natural capacities, but it instead surpasses them. He himself was secured from this ill, because his education was more natural in terms of its content and way. Wordsworth here replicates Jones's note on the "genius" of poets from Arabia and the excellency of their poetry to nature, on which Jones writes,

> it is certain that the genius of every nation is not a little affected by their climate; for, whether it be that immoderate heat disposes the Eastern people to a life of indolence, which gives them full leisure to cultivate their talents, or whether the sun has a real influence on their imagination …it has been always remarked, that the Asiaticks excel the inhabitants of our colder regions in the liveliness of their infancy, and the richness of their invention. (324)

Jones attributes the richness of Arabic poetry to the high extent Arab poets employ natural scenes and phenomena in their poetical diction. Most importantly, Jones realizes how these elements invoke the poetical imagination of poets of Arabia. Jones does not mention books when he discusses the peculiarity of Arabia's poetry and the genius of its poet. This might help understand Wordsworth's description of the Arab's knowledge as an "erring skill." Readings books do not necessarily hone an everyday skill in the reader, and this is evident in the sense that the poet in the dream narrative does not mention anything about what books the Arab knight read, what books and writers have cultivated his skill, or if he has been exposed to reading books at all. Wordsworth, and Jones before him, argue that the Arab poet's skill and knowledge develops from his close and spontaneous intercourse with nature as a "perpetually conversant" with "natural objects," to use Jones's words. (322-23). Listening to, composing and reciting poetry also fosters the development of his skill.

In addition to the influence of Jones's work in this area, we might claim that Southey's *Thalaba* also has had a marked touch on Wordsworth. As discussed in the previous chapter, Southey hails the desert of Arabia as the educator of his Arab youth hero. He tells us on the cultivation of Thalaba in the desert, "There might his soul develop best / Its strengthening energies" (iii. 16. 79-80). Most importantly, it "Keep[s] his heart pure and uncontaminated" (iii. 16. 79-80). In similar way, Wordsworth finds that intellectual shelter in nature during his childhood. Both Nature and his mother, as she teaches like nature, have saved him from being ignorant, and they have instead invigorated his mind and soul. He outlines the characteristics, endeavors, and ways of her teaching that have significantly contributed to his intellectual growth and the distillation of his educational philosophy. She, like the way the desert raises us Thalaba,

Had no presumption, no such jealousy,

Nor did by habit of her thoughts mistrust

Our nature, but had virtual faith that He

Who fills the mother's breast with innocent milk,

Doth also for our nobler part provide,

Under His great correction and control,

As innocent instincts, and as innocent food;

Or draws, for minds that are left free to trust

In the simplicities of opening life,

Sweet honey out of spurned or dreaded weeds. (v. 271-280. 100).

Of the traits the poet ascribes to his mother's education simplicity is the most vital. It is that simplicity that mark her conception of her world and her mission, and the simple atmosphere where she mentally grows. However, the poet remarks that simplicity belongs to an age past to him that had its finger prints on his mother. That age, in contrast to the current age the poet describes,

Was not puffed up by false unnatural hopes,

Nor selfish with unnecessary cares,

Nor with impatience from the season asked

More than its timely produce; rather loved

The hours for what they are, than from regard

Glanced on their promises in restless pride. (v. 284-288. 101).

What makes his mother's education surpass contemporary education is it was more natural. Though contemporary education presses much on innovation and creativity, it does not raise that

mental and intellectual in learners because it has gone astray from the natural and the simple to the more complicated and exaggerated perusals of knowledge

By not mentioning the role of books in fertilizing the imagination and intellect of poets from Arabia, Jones or Wordsworth downgrade the position of Arabic literature in comparison with their own. They rather show their understanding of its site of production. *The Suspended Odes* Jones has primarily engaged with were commonly and originally orally recited and only kept in parchments, not in organized books. In fact, Arabic poetry in the Arabian Peninsula was commonly and originally circulated orally. When it comes to Wordsworth's "Book V," he defines the "shell" and "stone" the Arabian poet holds in his hands as books. Once, we read that the knight "was going then to bury those two books" (102). The poet dreamer also confirms that, "Nor doubted once but that they both were books" (113). By treating the "shell" and "stone" as books, Wordsworth gives their knowledge content a substantial and authorial significance. In other words, he canonizes them among "all books which lay / Their sure foundations in the heart of man" (v. 200-201. 98), which is enough for his audience to acknowledge, integrate, and recognize their "rights" and "honours." On that he states,

> That I should here assert their rights, attest
> Their honours, and should, once for all, pronounce
> Their benediction; speak of them as Powers
> For ever to be hallowed; only less,
> For what we are and what we may become,
> Than Nature's self, which is the breath of God,
> Or His pure Word by miracle revealed. (v. 218-224. 99)

Besides, the “shell” and “stone” possess a symbolic significance that effectively relates to the value of their knowledge content. Following the words of Jones, Wordsworth carefully picks these symbols from nature or the actual context of Arabia and lodge in his metaphoric images and meanings. A general statement can be said about these objects; Wordsworth deploys them as cases of knowledge like books, in which one is written and the other is spoken. When it comes to the poet’s judgment on them, the poet does not assess them not only by the kind of knowledge they possess, but also the extent to which both improve, protect, and transmit that knowledge. On the “shell,” the poet quotes the Arab knight saying, “‘Is something of more worth.’” What makes it so the knowledge that the shell contains and the shape of that container. The “shell” dispenses a basically orally recited poetry. Its shape effectively contributes to its efficient protection of that knowledge. In “Spirit and Geometric Form: The stone and the shell in Wordsworth’s Arab Dream,” Theresa M. Kelley discusses how the content and shape of the two objects interrelate, a thing if considered, makes it easy for readers to decipher their symbolism. On their content, Kelley writes, “[the stone] represents not science in general but that traditional knowledge which is sustained by rigid logic and resists change. However, the “shell” represents a new kind of knowledge which is at once geometric and poetic” (565). In other words, the stone contains static and one-dimensional knowledge, while the shell’s knowledge is more inclusive and takes many forms. The multiplicity of its content is a point of advantage. The poet tells us that it produces “voices more than all the winds, with power / To exhilarate the spirit, and to soothe, // Through every clime, the heart of human kind” (v. 108-110 96). It has the capacity to speak many translatable and communicational languages, one of which is that the poet listens to. These multiple voices increase their potential audience and their ability to fit any place or any “clime.” Kelley likens this “plurality of voices” that comes out of the “shell” to a “universal language”

(574). It can be so, but in the strong "passion" its "articulated sounds" arouse in the listener. Thus, it is preferable to call it a world language; its aesthetics can cross epistemological and geographical borders to be translated, interpreted and understood.

The shape of the "shell" confers this value upon its knowledge. More precisely, it is its inherent ability to adapt, "assimilate," change and develop that makes its contained knowledge sustainable and transmittable. Unlike the stone "whose geometry can describe only static figures" (565), to quote Kelley, the shell self-evolves. Most importantly is that its evolution and growth is continuous and goes in a "spiral" form. While it grows and stretches, it retains its center. Along this way, the shell, as Kelley writes, "has the power to preserve itself without being buried because it can create and inhabit other forms and voices when old ones disintegrate. Whereas the stone looks backward to traditional knowledge and its preservation, the shell projects itself forward and seeks new options for self-preservation" (565). The continuous proliferation of the shell secures its non-stopping assimilation and integration of new knowledges. In this way, that knowledge, figuratively speaking, cannot perish. The sustainability of this knowledge can be attained by connecting knowledges from the past, present and extend them to the future in an endless process. If we look at "Book V" as a case of knowledge of multiple texts, it resembles the shell in its "organic development" as it gathers knowledges produced in a present time and from a current perspective, retrieves knowledge from to the past and articulates a new one for the future. The act of invoking memories and retelling and transmitting them to different audience is a "self-preservation" tool.

What concerns us here is to outline the connection between Wordsworth's educational perspective in "Book V" and Arabic poetry. It can be said that he understands Arabic poetry as an alternative site where he observes a dynamic, transferrable, enduring, creative, self-preserved

and organically developed knowledge. What ensures these traits to the poetry from Arabia is the way it is orally circulated and transmitted. It becomes a skill rather than a frozen knowledge registered in books, a thing multiplies the options and possibilities for its improvements and adjustments. It is also an effective learning substance that requires constant active engagement on the part of the learner. Wordsworth sets this perspective as an alternative to the contemporary educational practices in his later life. Because of these practices, Wordsworth demonstrates that minds are no longer the creative receivers, keepers and vehicles of knowledge. Wordsworth does not attribute the entire cause of this problem to the emphasis on reading books as prime sources of knowledge and learning, but he also criticizes the way educators get use of books in the educational process that does not "teach as Nature teaches" as the poet puts it. Therefore, he emphasizes spontaneous, simple teaching pedagogy and content.

4. Conclusion: Trans-Historical Connections

What do we now get from Shelly's *The Revolt* and Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab?" To put it in a different way, do the poems' intellectual, literary and political perspectives and illuminations extend beyond their historical moment to teach us on our current literature and politics? This project is endeavored to promote an affirmative answer to such a question, that we need to read the two poems as a literature that breaks with all temporal, spatial and ethnographic confinements or excluding categories. Shelly's intellectual and political dilemma that he negotiates, which also traps him at the same time, is reproduced in nowadays political and intellectual spheres of the Arab Spring world. On the other side, the old questions that Wordsworth's "Dream" potentially raises resurface as we contemplate on our profession as teachers of and writers on literature. "The Dream of an Arab" expands literary theory, especially that which pertains poetry, to reach out non-Western canon, Arabic poetry, and affirms it as, to

quote Krishnaswamy, "a site of theory" (400). By making practice of this premise, Wordsworth's "Dream" opens new literary venues that encompass "alternative ways of conceptualizing and analyzing literary production" (408). The "Dream," thus, encourages us to rethink the literary map in terms of what we should include or exclude in reading, theorizing on and teaching literature such as Gebir, *Thalaba*, *The Revolt* or "Book V" of *The Prelude* itself.

The intellectual germ of *The Revolt of Islam* emerges in and engages with the turbulent post-French Revolution historical condition. As well, it stresses Shelley's strong dedication to public intellectual responsibility as a writer and an intellectual. The poem, Shelley writes in the "Preface," "now presented to the Public! occupied little more than six months in the composition" (x). Nonetheless, *The Revolt*'s specific historical context and targeted audience do not preclude reading the trans-historical reflections it brings to the fore on the intellectual's public responsibility and the role of public intellectualism, literature and literary criticism amidst political unrest and division. Shelley's concerns on these factors are replicated nowadays, a thing that impels readers and intellectuals to come up with currently workable and pertinent answers.

As an observer of The Arab Spring and a reader of Shelley's *The Revolt*, it is easy to see how their historical and intellectual conditions enriche one's meditation on and understanding of the other. This is not to say that Shelley's poem has anticipated and prophesized the future political uprising in the Arab region, which has come true.[28] Reading Shelley's "Preface" to the poem reveals how this perspective is easily to be refuted. However, other connections can be made between *The Revolt* and the current condition of the Arab region without limiting ourselves to condemning or commending Shelley's orientalist quest.

The position of the poet as a public intellectual in the post-French Revolution Europe is replicated now in the Arab world intellectualism amidst public mobilization and the ensued

political unrest in the Arab Spring era. In such a condition, Shelley assumes that the role of the intellectual is to produce a kind of rhetoric that dispenses hope and steers public energies to what makes it happier and fosters its solidarity. In the "Preface," he declares the intention of *The Revolt* as, "an experiment on the temper of the public mind, as to how far a thirst for a happier condition of moral and political society survives, among the enlightened and refined, the tempests which have shaken the age in which we live" (v). To his dismay, such an experiment is encountered by abortive public opinion that he has anticipated before. Not only on that level, Shelley's experiment and the way it unfolds to its end underlines an intellectual controversy and lack of intellectual consensus on deciding the good knowledges and practices for the public to articulate; revolutionary thinking, conservative endeavor, or noninterventionist on the public and state level.

The public, intellectual and political temperaments all set the unavoidable contours for Shelley's intellectualism back then and for Arab intellectuals today. Thus, one of the preliminary major questions that wearies intellectuals in as such condition is to determine the targeted audience of their intellectualism; the state, the revolting public, or the silent people. In Arab countries where public mobilization has not accomplished its declared cause, this question becomes more critical and answering it becomes intellectually intriguing and dilemmatic. The answers to the question might deepen the dilemma because they uncover changes and switches in the intellectual perspectives and alignments. Thus, the intellectual becomes torn between the new circumstantial imperatives or revelations that make these changes necessary on one hand and the public opinion on the other hand. If the intellectual is once viewed by the public as a hero, he/she might appear then as a traitor or coward. This leads us to pose the question: how should Arab

intellectualism and literature interact with public opinion? Should it "follow" it, or "precede" it, or even go past it, to use Shelley's words?

The readers of *The Revolt* discover how rigid and troubling these questions are as they witness Shelley's optimism, who is commonly-known as the "protest poet," gradually evaporates, and that his revolutionary intellectualism turns to preach impractical, idealist "excellence." As well, the disappointment of Arab intellectuals including the revolutionaries or the more conservative ones heightens as they eyewitness the antithesis of the revolutionary hope that unfolds hatred, bloodshed, division and the reproduction of oppressive regimes. However, this should not lead to that entire loss of hope that in return hinders the perusal of a more active work on sustaining hope by thinking on what to do next based on the material and real prevailing conditions.

The persistent question then is how much the public in the Arab world needs to read Shelley's *The Revolt* and think of his brand of progressive idealism. The poem's politics of "liberal and comprehensive morality" is not availing in the pre-protests nor the post-protests stages of the Arab Spring, while Shelley's quest for pacifist revolution appears a wanted political and moral choice. The revolts in Tunisia and Egypt replicate Shelley's model to a high degree, but those protestors in these regions, after the reverse of their quests, would be left in stinging disappointment and absence of that practical intellectualism to guide them afterword. What alternatives would Shelley or other intellectuals who follow his steps lay to them? Action, not abstraction is needed at such a stage. *The Revolt* apparently resists to act, but it tends to retract after the failure of Laon's and Cythna's revolution. This resolution is not brought by a sophisticated meditation, but it appears that the literature for Shelley is primarily to fuel protest and dissent. If not, literature for him has no political or social significance then. We might

understand the poet turning to hermitic idealism or retiring from revolutionary politics, but not becoming conservative, as an alternative public opinion and political strategy.

This shift indirectly mummifies total loss of public hope that Shelley's protesters, and Arab Spring ones in fact revolted against. At the edge of intense public need, Shelley refuses to revise his political intellectual paradigms to meet emerging needs and undertakings. In contrast, Landor thought at a certain political trajectory that reconsidering his political and intellectual affiliations in accordance emerging circumstantial realities is a must. The post-Arab Spring stages requires public intellectualism that both enlighten, awaken and illuminate the public mind on liberty, justice and hope, and most importantly, disseminate intellectual praxis that lubricates the movement forward and repair the loss on the psychological and material level at the individual and public levels.[29]

On the other side, Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab" does not yield explicit revolutionary or anti-revolutionary politics contemporary to us, but this might not be applied to the whole *Prelude*. What might be of a considerable significance is the relevance of the book's intellectual and educational standpoint to contemporary debates in our profession of teaching and theorizing on literature. Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab" and Shelley's *The Revolt* takes on an expansive, encompassing and inclusive literary tradition scope, that necessitates rethinking what is sanctioned as solely English or Western. Wordsworth acknowledges the "rights" of literacy, "books," and oral literature form Arabia, while *The Revolt* agglomerates both secular and Islamic mystical literary traditions. The amalgamation of different knowledges that move across different epistemological, geographical, and ethnographic demarcations enhance their worldly reception in terms of the content and readership.[30]

When it comes to teaching them, none of the diversely-informed literary traditions in *The Revolt* or "The Dream of an Arab," should be excluded. Revathi Krishnaswamy emphasizes this premise as vital to the practice of teaching or theorizing world literary theory. The value this move adds to our teaching quality is the multiple readings and interpretations of the texts it yields, which are brought by each writer's way of engaging with these knowledges. For instance, Shelley does his own revision to the mystic tradition he engages with from the Muslim world to make more secular and suit his views toward religion. In contrast, Wordsworth, replicating Southey, sticks to the form and content and context of Arabic poetry he engages in putting forward his theory and philosophy on education. Such revisions do not belittle these knowledges informative element in each text. They instead collaborate to the understanding of the texts and articulate meanings that underscore the texts' reformative perspectives.

In addition, Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab" draws attention to the vital historical migration of literatures and literary traditions beyond their original sites of productions. We need to acknowledge, and invest on, the role of translation in making this thing possible and a reality. Wordsworth himself got introduced to Arabic literature through the translations of Sir William Jones. He also confirms to his readers that he has owned a copy of the translated *Arabian Nights*. Practically speaking, "Book V" delineates the poet's translation of his experience with Arabic poetic tradition in a way to make it accessible to and recognized by his contemporary audience. He listens to an Arabic Ode, understands it, and translates it as a book to the audience. His translation remarkably combines both the style and knowledge substance, which the poet presents as another option of a set of social, intellectual theoretical paradigms. First, it is poetry that grows amidst nature. Second, it is orally recited and circulated, a thing requires uncommon skills from the poet to keep circulating it and the receiver to grasp. Wordsworth theorizes on

balancing reading books and training the children's memories to sustain durable and creative learning process. Children should possess knowledge they can get from books and a skill that comes up out of practice.

CHAPTER FOUR

FROM EXPOSURE TO ENCLOSURE: CIVILIZING THE PERSONAL AND DOMESTIC IN JANE AUSTEN'S *MANSFIELD PARK* AND CHARLOTTE BRONTE'S *VILLETTE*

1. Introduction

This chapter discusses how Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* (1814) and Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*'s (1853) engage with conceptual mindsets from the Arabic and Islamic world and the East in general such as self-regulation, self-denial, enclosure, propriety, strategic, or self-restorative confinement and careful exposure to civilize their personal and public spheres. *Mansfield Park* and *Villette* include textual evidences that support this identification. For instances, Fanny Price reads Samuel Johnson's *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (1759) and Lord Macartney's account of his *Embassy to China* (1793-1794) in the "East room" of Mansfield Park estate. Lucy Snowe also engages with the portrait of the Egyptian queen Cleopatra and the fate of the Persian queen, Vatshti. In the meanwhile, my notion is that Austen's and Brontë's arguments on woman's propriety, debilitating exposure, the recourse to confinement and enclosure to self-protect themselves from morally and materially dangers correspond to what Arab families and women ponder on and emphasize.

Austen's concerns on the value of familial solidarity, the parental authority, the sense of familial dutifulness, and the establishment of morally principled individual, family, and society potentially constitute vital components of social and intellectual debates in the Arab and Islamic world. These notions also come at the top of the parents' priorities while setting the scheme for their families' moral and material improvement. An Arab woman would reject the marriage of the morally unprincipled male as Fanny does when she resists the pressures exerted on her to accept Henry Crawford's marriage proposal. Such an identification also applies on the

experience of Lucy Snowe. Brontë's novel depicts how woman's exposure, the assertion on the woman's self-reliance and moral and material self-independence, can potentially cause dangerous moral and material outcomes. Fanny Price decision to move from Portsmouth to Mansfield estate and Lucy's journey from England to the French-speaking continental Villette and her marriage-like relationship with Mr. Paul Emanuel, the Spanish Professor of Literature at Madame Beck's Pensionnat in Villette, enable them to cultivate self-assurance, intellectual growth and improve their financial conditions. For an Arab woman, living in a material comfort is a primal concern. Therefore, marriage for her is a self-protecting choice from material and moral dangers. However, an Arab woman, as Lucy does, would insist on seeking intellectual growth and a good job to enhance her life's material stability and secure her life from any potential "wreck," including the dissolution of her familial life. In some cases, Arab women find themselves forced to emigrate to different countries to intellectually and materially self-define themselves.

Mansfield Park's and *Villette*'s engagements with these knowledges and mindsets from the Islamic and Arabic world attest to their authors' awareness of the vitality of open-minded and "open-ended," to use Revathi Krishnaswamy's word, exposure to diverse and alternative modes of understanding history. However, Austen and Brontë situate the knowledges they use from the Eastern world in a new discursive materialistic and epistemological history. Whereas Landor, Southey, and Shelley advocate the exposure to the revolutionary ideals of the French Revolution, Austen and Brontë endorse 'enclosure' as a new public discourse. This choice marks the novelists' disillusionment with the revolutionary, confrontational, dissent, and anarchist rhetoric, which might help us understand the popularity and wide readership of their novels compared to that limited and reluctant one of the Landor's, Southey's and Shelley's poems.

Austen's and Brontë's endorsement of enclosure can be read as the writers' personal decision. Nonetheless, their novels tackle enclosure as a public, social and political choice in a time where social and political instability was a serious intellectual concern, especially a time in which the spirit of revolution was still sweeping through England and Europe. What Austen and Brontë do in this domain is that they thread their public intellectual perspective on reforming the moral, social and political undertakings of the individual, personal and familial with the broader social, political and national. In "*Jane Eyre*'s Literary History: The Case for *Mansfield Park"* Katherine Sutherland discusses how Austen's *Mansfield Park* and Brontë's *Jane Eyre* as "subjects of analysis in history" (410) intervene in a "transgressive" way in discussing, historicizing and analyzing the role of private histories and women's experiences as inseparable and determinant in the collective social and political history of the nation. Sutherland argues that *Mansfield Park*, *Jane Eyre*, and *Villette*, as I suggest, "challenge … the traditional segregation of family history and political history … Austen and Brontë provide the conditions for a new historicization of family structures as they relate to the world of government, national policy, and serious history" (413). However, *Mansfield Park* and *Jane Eyre* disagree over their "historical management and interpretation" and "response to women's experience as formulated in history" (420). The objection Brontë expresses toward Austen is her enactment of enclosure. In a letter she wrote to George Henry Lewes in January 1848 to thank him for his review of *Jane Eyre*, Brontë writes, "I should hardly like to live with [Austen's] ladies and gentlemen, in their elegant but confined houses" (qtd. in Sutherland 419). Therefore, *Jane Eyre* comes to manifest what Brontë believes as the historically urgent and ideal women's experience. Jane Eyre, unlike Fanny Price, favors exposure and rebellion and independence as empowering tools to replace what

appears to her as Fanny's disempowering passiveness and compliance to the male-dominated world.

Therefore, I argue that *Villette* reviews and reassesses *Jane Eyre*'s rebellious model,[31] and it thereby, authorizes *Mansfield Park*'s argument on enclosure as a reconciliatory public rhetoric. I argue that Fanny's Price's self-regulation, self-denial, propriety, enclosure, careful exposure and Lucy Snowe's account of her life experience questions the unlimited applicability and consequentiality of the rhetoric of rebellion as always effective in the formation and advancement of the individual's experience. Instead, Fanny and Lucy observe the importance of order in regulating the individuals' lives. Fanny ratifies moral order at Mansfield Park estate. In the meanwhile, *Mansfield Park* magnifies the destructive outcome of unconscious disobedience of this order. Fanny does not resign to Mansfield's ways because she sees them as opponents to the moral order her "inner guides" or "conscience" mandates.

Mansfield Park and *Villette* encourage us to re-read enclosure as a positive principle, a thing they manifest in the happily resolved experiences of Fanny Price and Lucy Snowe. By enacting Fanny's marriage to her cousin Edmund Bertram, Susan Price's movement to Mansfield Park, and Lucy's establishment of her school, Austen and Brontë endorsement of enclosure invigorates the need for amalgamating public and social efforts to secure individuals, families and societies from moral and material disintegration and indulgence. Sutherland would see Austen's choice of closure to reflect her, like Southey and Shelley, developing post-revolutionary conservative outlook. *Mansfield Park,* Sutherland writes, "is one of three key conservative fictional texts to appear in 1814, the year which saw the Fall of Paris, Napoleon's abdication, and Britain's victory over imperial France" (412). However, *Mansfield Park* does not ratify severed and fenced conservatism to counter the revolutionary public rhetoric. Rather,

Fanny's engagement with enclosure, propriety, self-denial and self-regulation from her readings articulates public discourse that reconciles and balances between order and authority and the emphasis on a morally self-regulated liberty, between intellectual exposure and self-protecting confinement, and between propriety (virtue) as a moral duty, familial and social commitment, and a personal decision and choice. Fanny redefines Mansfield's notion of propriety as the preservation of virtue. Sutherland seizes the vitality of virtue in the sustenance and durability of Mansfield Park's circle, writing, "For Austen … the preservation and extension of family property, finds its justification in the observance of propriety. Without propriety, property falls into disrepair: the ethical domain exerts this perceptible influence over the material" (416). Austen's principle strongly voices any parents' worries on the regulation of their families. They know for sure and insist on their dependents to absorb the notion of how virtuous propriety is an individual asset. However, it is a shared familial concern as well. The preservation of virtue improves the moral and material conditions of the individual as well as the whole family or at least protects the material establishment of the family from a loss or destruction.

Related to Austen's argument on enclosure, we can read Fanny's movement from Portsmouth, her impoverished family house, to the materially affluent Mansfield Park, unlike the arguments that construe it as an enactment of "colonial appropriation" (Sutherland 419), or "domestic imperial culture" (Said 95), as an emigration or immigration. Her rejection of Portsmouth at the end of the story and her emigration to Mansfield Park and Lucy's emigration from London to Villette can be read as an enactment of their right to obtain a decent life and good education, which they could not find at home. At a different level, by Fanny's addition to Mansfield's circle *Mansfield Park* reasserts the significance of the extended family as vital in securing the stability of the society

On the other side, *Villette* explains Brontë's endorsement of enclosure as a historical and material need. Conversely, *Jane Eyre* develops the "revolutionary language of rights" in the wake of the turbulent year of Peterloo, 1819, which Sutherland describes as "the year beyond any other in that troubled decade when bloody revolution was a real possibility in Britain and the year that belies the historical conclusiveness of 1814" (18). Lucy Snows reasserts her disenchantment with the revolutionary France, "'Vive l'Angleterre, l'Histoire et les Heros! A bas la France, la Fiction et les Faquins!'" (429).[32] Thorough her engagements with the portrait of the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra, and the performance on the Persian queen Vashti, Lucy lays open new conceptual understandings and underlines the material challenges that recast the light on the model of the rebellious, self-reliant, independent Jane Eyre. Thus, she persists in engaging us and her public in an intellectually vibrant, historically conscious and self-reflective, but less radical and mutinous, conversation to negotiate her moral, material and intellectual rights. What Lucy demands from us is to acknowledge her quests and conceptually and materially assist her to overcome the limits imposed by her personal physical and intellectual abilities, social and cultural constraints and material challenges.

As Lucy does not explicitly and openly express her newly emerging concerns and aspirations, I argue that her engagement with the portrait of Cleopatra, her fine and well-nurtured physic and the material comfort and abundance she lives in, vehicles to us her own insights on her discomforting life's material conditions, underrated physic, and her wearies about her "life of thought," meaning her intellectualism. In contrast, in "Pasha to Cleopatra and Vashti: The Oriental Other in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*" Aimillia Ramli contends that Lucy identifies with Cleopatra to expose her sexual desires. Ramili demonstrates that "the Cleopatra episode offers an opportunity for Lucy . . . to become desirable to the male gaze" (123). Lucy believes that besides

material comfort and abundance, polishing her intellectualism and public assistance herald a secure and progressive path of life that protect her against “wreck” of any kind.

This chapter argues that Lucy’s reflections on her life experience enforce us to consider how consequential and safe regulated exposure is and the undeniable impact of circumstantial constraints on being independent and self-reliant. In her engagement with the fate of the Persian queen Vatshti, she reflects on the critical moment where one attempts to disrupt authority and change social and cultural norms. However, she knows that her confinement to her life’s lot can also be debilitating. Thus, she, like Fanny, ascertains her right to shape her own intellectual identity by exposing herself to other realms of knowledges and intellectualism that happens through her companionship with Mr. Paul. In this arena, Lucy conceives “propriety,” as her ability to sustain a knowledgeable and intellectual identity. Simultaneously, she supports Fanny’s position by not denying the need for “property” in this process.

The problem that concerns Lucy Snow is that the unsupportive social and public identification with woman’s material and intellectual rights. Rather, the culturally-determined and troubling “branding judgment” on women’s experiences that public discourses builds on obstruct women from gaining those rights. These discourses do not acknowledge these rights at all. Rather, what is usually expected from a woman, according to Lucy, is that “Beauty anticipated her in the first office … lovely, placid, and passive feminine mediocrity was the only pillow on which manly thought and sense could find rest for its aching temples” (443). Meanwhile, when it comes to talk on woman’s intellectualism, it becomes, as Lucy reflects on it, “a sort of ‘lusus naturae,’ a luckless accident, a thing for which there was neither place nor use in creation, wanted neither as wife nor worker” (443). The story of Lucy does not attempt to

preponderate each of the debates entirely over the other, but Lucy wants to demonstrate her right to be a "woman" and a "woman of intellect."

Brontë, unlike Austen, appears uncertain and oscillating at the end of Lucy's story. She leaves us with two different versions of history to read. At one time, it is apocalyptic because she refuses to enclose Mr. Paul in her civilizing process by imposing his disunion with Lucy. On the other hand, it is a more enlightened history as Lucy becomes an established teacher and owner of a school. Brontë in *Villette*, as she does in *Jane Eyre*, utilizes the scene of the colonial exploitation in Antigua to morally and materially enhance the apocalypse of either St. John or Mr. Paul. Their fates can connect with Brontë's moral and critical anti-colonial perspective. They can also underline her pessimism toward getting any positive and encouraging responses to the questions she raises on the social expectations on her experience as a woman. Overall, the case of Mr. Paul has its particular criticality. His apocalypse can indicate how Brontë's political and religious Protestant affiliations or personal choices would make her marriage of Mr. Paul, the Spanish "Romanist" impossible or, at least, uneasy to live with.

The conclusion of this chapter highlights the timely dimension of *Mansfield Park* 's and *Villette*'s public intellectualism. The novels insinuate us to qualify emigration or immigration as vindications of the individual's rights to obtain better living, including food, education and health. For a different angle, Fanny's movement to Mansfield Park and Lucy's emigration to Villette enacts social and national amalgamation to protect individuals as well as societies from falling apart. As well, we need to think about how global people emigration or immigration make possible various living opportunities and create a culture of universal amalgamation that highlights sharings as the expense of divisions.

2. 'Mansfield Park': Improvement and Fanny Price's Readings

Old and new response of *Mansfield Park* and its heroine, Fanny Price, has been uneasy.[33] This reception primarily results from the usually-applied ethnocentric way of reading Fanny. In practice, the underqualification of Fanny marks a failure in recognizing how her mindsets and moral codes are differently constructed and informed by her intellectual and readerly emigration and exposure to the external world, which happens through her readings of works such as the Oriental tales and works on overseas empires.

That being said, I suggest an open-minded reading of *Mansfield Park*'s civilizing mission, in which Austen and Fanny Price set a practical example of how exposure to the other world can be intellectually, morally and socially consequential. However, in terms of this mission's spatial and temporal history, the world of Mansfield Park's estate, Fanny prefers to be enclosed within the carefully drawn moral personal, familial and social boundaries. This decision stems from a strong belief that enclosure and careful exposure protect her, her uncle's family, and the entire society from falling apart. In endorsing this argument, Austen and Fanny would appear illogical to some readers. Sutherland points out that Brontë's *Jane Eyre* later addresses some of the concerns that Austen debates in *Mansfield Park*. Both novels, Sutherland writes, "examine the efficacy of women's submission of personal convenience and desire to social duty and conscience; in both, reason and passion, judgement and feeling, order and disorder, the relations of self and other are articulated in terms of psychologically charged spatial configurations rooms, houses, and, particularly, enclosed gardens" (420). However, Jane Eyre ascertains the need to break with these boundaries that enclosed places confer on women. What Jane Eyre disapproves in the resolution of Fanny's story is her marriage of her cousin, Edmund Bertram, which signifies her compliance the boundaries of Mansfield Park 's circle. In contrast,

Jane Eyre overturns Fanny's principle. Her narrative, Sutherland writes, "exaggerates and then neatly reverses the choice, discarding cousin- brother St. John Rivers's missionary ardor for the satanic charms of the womanizing Rochester. How safe and restorative are the gardens of Mansfield Park to those who stay within their moralized boundaries, how intrusively malign those of Jane Eyre" (420). Austen makes it explicit that Jane Eyre's model at the time of *Mansfield Park* was publicly unaccepted and envisioned as an act of defiance, ingratitude, and un-dutifulness. Near the end of the story, Sir Thomas decides to send Fanny on a "medicinal journey" back to Portsmouth because he doubts her refusal of Henry Crawford's marriage proposal as a rebellious act marked in her "willfulness of temper, self-conceit, and every tendency to the independence of spirit" (223). Sir Thomas considers this tendency in a woman as an alarming mark of disobedience and disorder.

So, what makes Fanny Price of the novel is not only the novelty of her character, but it is also the historical civilizing reconciliatory perspective she popularizes in a society that is still affected by the remains of the revolutionary ardor that has accompanied the French Revolution and the rise of a post-revolutionary reactionary strict and closed public discourse. According to Sutherland, Austen wants her readers to read history in a different way, that is to reread the common beliefs expressed on confinement, exposure and enclosure. Part of these beliefs is the reading of *Mansfield Park*'s argument on enclosure as an enshrinement of a history "in which the privileges of rank were remodeled as the rewards of class, and gender distinctions were further exaggerated by the enthusiastic enshrinement of women at the center of an invasive domestic ideology and an increasingly complicated system of moral government" (Sutherland 420). This might apply to the conditions of Mansfield estate before the introduction of Fanny Price, which Austen insists on their improvement. However, the plight of Mansfield estate, even before the

introduction of Fanny Price to its circle, is not gender division. Rather, it is, as Sir Thomas sums it, the lack of unmoderated and clear vision of improvement. The narrator conveys to us a moment of his later self-reflection as such: "how unfavourable to the character of any young people must be the totally opposite treatment which Maria and Julia had been always experiencing at home, where the excessive indulgence and flattery of their aunt had been continually contrasted with his own severity" (459). The novel's civilizing perspective does not attempt to abate the individual agency for the sake of an extremely enclosed conservative way. Rather, it conditions the moral and material improvement of Mansfield estate to the readiness of its regulators and members to reconcile between enclosure and exposure, to underpin the establishment of moral order without undermining the individual engagement in constructing and executing this order. *Mansfield Park* shows its readers the importance of watching out their manners and principles, and that they should be supervised by others as well. In other words, Mansfield's regulations should observe moderation because we become sure that its moral and material deterioration stems from either excessive external surveillance or indulgence and irresponsibility.

Mansfield Park Before Fanny Price's Improvements

Mansfield Park's lack of a regulating compass manifests itself in the certain knowledges and practices it espouses. Mansfield estate derives its own ethical and material codes and standards from a set of knowledges that ascertains the material over the moral, order over liberty, and unprincipled exposure over strategic confinement. Its members are shown to excel in geopolitical and materialist knowledges and quests, while they are negligent and unappreciative of everything lies beyond them. We see Fanny's cousins are good at using maps and naming countries that lie beyond England. To their dismay, Fanny "cannot put the map of Europe

together—or … cannot tell the principal rivers in Russia—or, she never heard of Asia Minor'" (48). The Bertrams are also trained in the political history of Europe. They know by heart the "'chronological order of the kings of England, with the dates of their accession, and most of the principal events of their reigns!'" (49). However, as the novel proceeds, Austen apparently reinforces a different model of education, in terms of content and pedagogy. The narrator comments on the education of Fanny's cousins and emphasizes that "they should be entirely deficient in the less common acquirements of self-knowledge, generosity and humility. In everything but disposition they were admirably taught" (50). Fanny's model draws the attention of Mansfield's regulators and its members to the observation of moral education besides other knowledge perusals. This kind of education does not exist at Mansfield. Instead, educators there impose on their dependents certain closed and strict models of interacting and conceiving their world as well as the external world. Therefore, Fanny's cousins, unlike Fanny, also fail to develop an individual intellectually active interaction with these worlds and get alternative mindsets that would enhance their self-understanding and crystalize their individual and social commitments.

Mansfield Park After Fanny Price's Improvements

Mansfield Park undertakes an open-minded and more encompassing "historical management and interpretation" of the more private history of woman's and family's experience to the larger one of society. Austen's intervention to redefine and renovate a special "system of moral government" by articulating alternative social percepts and practices to enhance social stability and foster its improvement. In this arena, the model of Fanny endorses intellectually and morally consequential exposure and confinement. Her model also reconciles between moral

order and self-rule or self-regulation. In relation to this, she bases material improvement on moral improvement, the preservation of virtue and "propriety."

The novel connects its alternative civilizing logic on the moral and material reformation of Mansfield Park to its capability to adopt a new educational system, or adapt its existing one to produces morally-principled knowledges and practices. Fanny makes this clear to Edmund when they debate the disposition of Mary Crawford. She stresses that Mary's imperfections are "the effect of education" (278) that she has been receiving. From Fanny's perspective, the problem in Mansfield Park's education lies on what knowledge Mansfield teaches and practices, and how external social, material and cultural norms negatively impact it. On the other hand, the novel wants us to recognize how Fanny is educated differently, and how this education shapes and supplements her constant and consistent improvement of her moral virtue. The reason lies in Fanny's self-education, which significantly exposes her to alternative mindsets and educating sources. Fanny's reading list includes books on "former times," morals, mostly related to eighteenth-century century England such as Samuel Johnson's *The Idler* (1758) and George Crabbe's *Tales* (1760). Fanny also reads and exposes herself to un-English mindsets such as Johnson's *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (1759) and Lord Macartney's account of his *Embassy to China* (1793-1794).

Knowing that either Austen or Fanny has read Johnson's *Rasselas,* I can argue that Fanny gets to learn about the principle of self-regulation and self-denial from this source. Far from Austen's blatant reference to the Eastern world here, the novel's perspective on self-regulation and virtue reinforces its match or corresponds it to what parents, women or social reformers from the East and the Arab world particularly underscore. Virtue is a woman's property, and nobody would take care of it as much as she would. This notion also ties to the idea that any moral and

material harm that might be caused by the inobservance of virtue will primarily affect woman in the first place and the whole family then, as we read in the moral fracas of Maria Bertram. That being said, Fanny's reading of *Rasselas* captures the attention of critics to explore how knowledges from the Eastern world circulated in literature informs the arguments of "domestic" fiction writers from the eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century on social reformation. In "Narrative Transmigrations: The Oriental Tale and the Novel in Eighteenth-Century Britain," Ros Ballaster argues that the Eastern tales were associated with the emergence of "domestic" fiction in eighteenth century that highlighted woman's agency. Ballaster states that out of British fiction's interaction with the Eastern tales "emerges a parable about the formation of modern Enlightenment subjectivity, self-regulating, subservient only to moral rather than arbitrary authority" (85-86). Ballaster extends on that by arguing that the Oriental tales were integrated in a more encompassing social discourse of reformation. She writes, "The Oriental tale is captured by an Anglicized version of revolution as domestic reform led by virtuous mothers, wives and feminized companionship" (Ballaster 86). Fanny's intellectual engagement with *Rasselas* manufactures her recognition and confidence in her internal self-regulating capacity. She makes a clear statement that "We have all a better guide in ourselves, if we would attend to it" (413) as a principle Mansfield Park's knowledge does not put much weight on. She apparently derives this philosophical norm from her reading of Johnson's tale. In his self-discovery journey, Rasselas, the son of the King of Abyssina, gets to meet Imlac, the hermit who lives near the Nile. The hermit teaches Rasselas that the way to pursue happiness is to live in accordance with the law of nature that is "infused at our nativity," and, to get this perception, all people have to "observe. . . [and] consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide and they are happy" (Johnson 45). The outcome of Fanny's engagement with

this piece of sophistication is evident. Her self-regulated virtue and set of morals have finally provoked Sir Thomas to revise his authorial role at his estate.

Fanny's philosophy of self-regulation forces us to consider how the notion of self-regulation derives from different sources, readings, observations of her external world, and self-consciousness of her inner guides or conscience. These sources work together in shaping her sense of dutifulness toward herself and others as well as recognizing her self-regulating capacity. Sir Thomas tends to deny and ignore any self-disciplining potentials in his dependents. Thereby, he thinks of regulation as entirely external supplied by him. In contrast, Austen's perspective returns to the simple and traditional understanding of self-regulation. It is that individuals innately possess those raw neutral, blank "inner better guides." We as human beings shape them according to the way we "attend to them." In the meanwhile, we make our inner guides less active in steering our actions, behaviors and decisions unless we maintain a conscious engagement with our milieu through our observations and self-reflections. Austen does not make explicit and straightforward statements on this notion. Examining the scenes in which Fanny interacts or responds to the others' speeches, acts and behaviors help grasp *Mansfield Park*'s "simpler" moralism and accept Fanny's characterization as simple, natural, human and genuine. In "The Difficult Beauty of *Mansfield Park*," Thomas R. Edwards believes that *Mansfield Park* has much to speak to us in those scenes about the individual's will, "meddling," "conscience," and "consciousness" in relation to regulation and self-regulation. People at Mansfield Park exert "self-conscious" engagements with the others. They are, as Edwards puts, "constantly watching one another, gauging their effect on their listeners, searching, as in a mirror, for signs of their own existence" (54). In contrast, Fanny Price consciously watches the others to regulate her inner self. To put it in a different way, the observant Fanny self-internalizes what she watches,

which in return maximizes her willed submission to her righteous inner "conscience," but not to resign to her human selfish desires. According to Edwards, what enables Fanny to resist resigning to her own will and the others' is her "conscience," or inbred reproaching or inspiring self and muse. Edwards states, "those who have a conscience, Edmund and Sir Thomas, work out their salvations in the quiet privacy of their own thoughts, while those who have none, like Henry Crawford and Mrs. Norris, or who cannot find the privacy to listen to theirs, like Mary and Maria, find no refuge from the desolations that the will insists on" (58-59). Building on Edwards's argument, the problem of Mansfield Park's members is not that they fail to cultivate conscience. Rather, human beings all possess conscience as Fanny states it, "we all have better guides in ourselves if we attend to them" (Austen 413). Therefore, it is formal or informal education that either keeps our inner guides as they are and enhances their command over our actions and behaviors or deforms them and detach us from them. Fanny is secured from the desolations that her own will or others' might impose by her attendance to her conscience.

Fanny's decline of Henry Crawford's marriage is a good case in point. It exemplifies one of her active civilizing moments where her consistent virtue revises Mansfield Park moral codes of propriety and property, especially those pertinent to marriage. In this arena, Fanny engages with a moral principle from Johnson's *Ressalas* that "Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures" (395). Fanny, as an Arab woman would do, blends propriety with virtue and prioritize them as morally self-preserving personal choices. For Fanny and an Arab woman as well, the pleasures that they might earn from marrying a material well-established man like Crawford becomes worthless when moral downs might accompany them. Austen tells us that these mindsets do not inform Mansfield Park's women's conception of marriage. Instad, Mansfield's ways measure woman's propriety according to the extent it ensures and sustains its

material reproduction and durability. The narrator tells us that Lady Bertram's "almost the only rule of conduct, the only piece of advice, which Fanny had ever received from her aunt in the course of eight years and a half [that] I could do very well without you, if you were married to a man of such good estate as Mr. Crawford. And you must be aware, Fanny, that it is every young woman's duty to accept such a very unexceptionable offer as this" (337). This is not to say that "self-denial and humility" cannot secure material improvement. Sutherland believes that,

> As a novel preoccupied with the conditions in which the family reproduces itself, *Mansfield Park* plays its part in this. For Austen … society's material dynamic, the preservation and extension of family property, finds its justification in the observance of propriety. Without propriety, property falls into disrepair: the ethical domain exerts this perceptible influence over the material. (416)

The ethical part of Fanny's rejection of marriage proposal is that it opposes her personal desires and affections. For her, lacking affection toward Henry is enough to assure her, "that she had done right: that her judgment had not misled her… how wretched, and how unpardonable, how hopeless, and how wicked it was to marry without affection" (329). While Fanny's reaction is mistakenly taken by her uncle as a sign of her ingratitude and perversion, she asserts that she rejects Henry she believes that his conscience and consciousness defy her moral expectations.

This case confirms to us that Fanny's sense of propriety and virtue informs her on how to reconcile between action and inaction. Fanny teaches us on taking actions or judging their value to the extent acting moves the individuals from our morally debilitating confinement in certain places and by certain knowledges and expose us to alternative material practices and abstract conceptualizations that ensures a "good life" for us. Lionel Trilling misreads Fanny when he believes that *Mansfield Park* idealizes inaction as a life-preserving strategy. He writes, "Perhaps

no other work of genius has ever spoken, or seemed to speak, so insistently for cautiousness and constraint, even for dullness. No other great novel has so anxiously asserted the need to find security, to establish, in fixity and enclosure, a refuge from the dangers of openness and chance" (127). However, *Mansfield Park* does not clearly endorse confinement over exposure or inaction over action. Rather, Fanny proves to us that spontaneity and naturalness cannot always be a bad choice. It is difficult to claim that by the combination of "conscience and brilliance," self-determination and an unabating will we master all our actions and their outcomes. Austen knows well, as Edwards writes, "Jane Austen does not forbid us to hope that integrity and liveliness of spirit may coexist in people, but she knows that when they clash, as they often will, the latter usually wins; if we are compelled to choose, *Mansfield Park* reluctantly admonishes us to opt for integrity" (67). So, as Fanny does not show that her reward at the end does not stem from her brilliance and practicality, but it is worked out by "virtually miraculous means," to use Edwards's words. Edwards puts forward the claim that, "In *Mansfield Park*, virtue is its own reward, and for once Jane Austen firmly insists that it may have to make do with itself" (67). At a different level, Fanny's model endorses thoroughly meditated and principled action. While most of Mansfield Park's inconveniences are brought by either its members' reckless or unthoroughly morally-regulated and contemplated on actions, Fanny still acts, but her actions are usually construed in different forms, including her abstinence from doing or accepting something. She does so because she knows that acting in certain circumstances ensues venal outcomes, especially if it is unregulated by moral principles.

Mansfield Park's "Enclosure" and The Extended Family

Whereas Fanny enacts enclosure as a personal choice, *Mansfield Park* values it as an effective decision to restore and strengthen the solidarity that extends familial bonds. Enclosure in this sense does not mandate Mansfield Park to shut its doors to prevent any interaction of its members with its external social milieu. Rather, what the novel does in this arena, as Sutherland puts it, is that it "contribut[es] to the centering of the family as the original political and emotional institution [and] privileging the extended family group beyond the nuclear core as the natural unit of social organization" (418). Thus, the ethics of *Mansfield Park* presses on integrating Fanny and Susan to Mansfield Park's circle as an inevitable ground for the "staffing" of the tiny social entity of the extended family to preserve the intactness of the entire social body.

Mansfield Park enacts the formation of familial and social solidarity by different means. Fanny's moral and intellectual codes are vital in this scheme. First, her marriage of her cousin, Edmund, sets the ethical and practical foundation for the preservation and reproduction of extended family ties. As well, Fanny acts out that model of "virtuous mothers" responsible for the moral health of the family. Her model of moral self-regulation also emphasizes the moral responsibility of each member of the family, a thing that would vouchsafe the moral and material durability of the family. Most importantly, Fanny's introduction to Mansfield ascertains the value of parental authority as vital in this arena. Though Mansfield estate is debilitated by moral and material downs under the supervision of Sir Thomas, neither Austen nor Fanny attempts to delegitimize his role in the moral scheme of Mansfield Park. However, they are careful in how his authority should be executed. The point is that he should balance it with liberty. This means that Sir Thomas, as the head of his estate, has the right to observe and watch out the improvement of his dependents, but he should also recognize the crucial role his dependents

have in this process. He later recollects how he has misconceived and mal-practiced regulation at his estate by dealing with his children by either "severity" or "indulgence."

Mansfield Park wants us to appreciate and recognizes the moral and material value of the figure of the father. Austen and Fanny preoccupy themselves with how to restore the position of the father to its traditional and righteous course, as the source of moral and material guidance and stability to his family. They at the same time underscore the moral and material internal interdependence between family members. Fanny seems to get this notion from her reading of Lord Macartney's observations on the Chinese family in his *Embassy to China.* What might be of a vital interest to Fanny is to read Macartney's observation that, "A Chinese family is regulated with the same regard to subordination and economy that is observed in the government of a state; the paternal authority, though unlimited, is usually exercised with kindness and indulgence" (223-224). Fanny might also attend to Macartney's note that a Chinese father exercises his role at home results in forming solid "respectable union" (224). This is common in Chinese families; however, this does not apply to the situation of *Mansfield Park*. To Fanny's dismay, her family's house, Portsmouth, does not enjoy those strongly familial ties, but Mansfield Park has the strong potential to espouse it.

In this scheme, Sir Thomas's role as a father is vital. He is "a truly anxious father," as the narrator tells us, but his problem is that he "did not know what was wanting, because … he was not outwardly affectionate, and the reserve of his manner repressed all the flow of their spirits before him" (50). Therefore, Fanny's "voice of moral revival" aims at drawing her uncle's attention to the fact that "something must have been wanting *within*" his children (Austen 459). However, the father's affection is not enough to vouchsafe "respectable union" at Mansfield

Park. Sir Thomas and his dependents should maintain a sense of responsibility and dutifulness. On this, Fanny might read from Macartney's reflections on how in the Chinese family,

> Affection and duty walk hand in hand and never desire a separation. The fondness of the father is consistently felt and always increasing; the dependence of the son is perfectly understood by him… According to the Chinese ideas, there is but one interest in a family; any other supposition would be unnatural and wicked. An undutiful child is a monster that China does not produce; the son, even after marriage, continues for the most part to live in the father's house, the labour of the family is thrown into one common stock under the sole management of the parent, after whose death the eldest son often retains the same authority, and continues in the same union with his younger brothers. (224)

The part where Austen, unlike Macartney, appears more logical is where she proves a very natural fact that families of all ranks, classes, and different religious and cultural backgrounds, including the Bertrams, might produce undutiful children. This constitutes a big worry for fathers and mothers back then and now. Therefore, Austen deploys Fanny to inculcate dutiful individuals. She in this regard supplements the moral position of Edmund Bertram as a dutiful child of Sir Thomas. In this sense, Edmund, but not his elder brother Tom, becomes the potential heir of his father. The responsibility of sustaining the moral and material conditions of the estate is thrown upon his shoulders. In the meantime, Fanny's marriage of Edmund fosters her position as the dutiful mistress of Mansfield estate and preserves the integrity of Mansfield's circle.

Broader Enclosure: Fanny's Emigration to Mansfield Park

Mansfield Park lays another layer of Fanny's engagement with the external world, mainly the questioning of Sir Thomas's overseas business in Antigua. This engagement ties with the novel's negotiation of the moral and material reproduction of Mansfield Park's internal

conditions. Fanny's incorporation of the idea of empire into the family's conversation enlivens the talk on how the "external corruption" represented by her uncle's colonial exploitation corresponds to the "internal corruption" at Mansfield. Therefore, both need to be simultaneously critically questioned and reformed.

This shift demands us to rethink and reassess *Mansfield Park*'s vision of the moral scheme that connects Mansfield Park estate to its external milieu as well. In this light, the assumption that Fanny's rejection of Portsmouth and appreciation of Mansfield Park's results from her internalization of a domestic imperialist rhetoric needs to be questioned. Austen, unlike Edward Said who sees the issue process of "uprooting" Fanny from Portsmouth to Mansfield (86), wants to say that Portsmouth is not that 'Other,' in the political sense of the word. Rather, it does not yield establishing and improving intellectual and moral order. Therefore, she enacts Fanny's emigration to Mansfield to advocate her rights to get better opportunities of intellectual and material improvements. Fanny wants us to acknowledge these rights as she ascertains to us that the "poverty and neglect" of Portsmouth do not foster the accomplishment of her quests, and she wants us to share her the belief that Mansfield Park offers many merits in this arena.

Austen clearly and candidly affirms the importance of moral order and material comfort in the development of the individual's moral and intellectual capacities. While Fanny might be reproached for her preference of Mansfield Park over Portsmouth as her desired "home," the narrator wants us to be just and realistic in judging her decision. The point is that her appreciation of Mansfield's "greater permanence, and equal comfort" (371) is justifiable. On the other side, the narrator appeals to the reader to support Fanny's cause by underscoring how unsupportive Portsmouth's conditions are. The narrator shares us Sir Thomas's ideas on Fanny's return to her family's house can then force her change her mind and accept the Crawford's

marriage proposal because, as he believes, "her father's house would, in all probability, teach her the value of a good income; and he trusted that she would be the wiser and happier woman, all her life, for the experiment he had devised" (372).

From a broader perspective, what concerns the narrator is to provoke the communal, social and national recognition and support of Fanny's rights and those who experience the same conditions. Fanny tries to make a strong case to defend her choice of Mansfield. Once she gets back to Portsmouth, she discovers that, "She was at home. But, alas! it was not such a home" (384). Fanny's acute pain stems from her observation of the "negligence and error" (399) that infects her family's house, especially her parents, which does not foster moral order and intellectual growth. Everything at Portsmouth, as Fanny tells us, is

> the very reverse of what she could have wished. It was the abode of noise, disorder, and impropriety. Nobody was in their right place, nothing was done as it ought to be. … On her father, her confidence had not been sanguine, but he was more negligent of his family, his habits were worse, and his manners coarser, than she had been prepared for. He did not want abilities but he had no curiosity, and no information beyond his profession; he read only the newspaper and the navy-list; he talked only of the dockyard, the harbour, Spithead, and the Motherbank; he swore and he drank, he was dirty and gross … he scarcely ever noticed her, but to make her his object of a coarse joke. … Her disappointment in her mother was greater: *there* she had hoped much, and found almost nothing. Every flattering scheme of being of consequence to her soon fell to the ground. Mrs. Price was not unkind; but … her daughter never met with greater kindness from her than on the first day of her arrival. … Her heart and her time were already quite full; she had neither leisure nor affection to bestow on Fanny. … To her she was most

> injudiciously indulgent … her time was given chiefly to her house and her servants. Her days were spent in a kind of slow bustle; all was busy without getting on, always behindhand and lamenting it, without altering her ways; wishing to be an economist, without contrivance or regularity; dissatisfied with her servants, without skill to make them better, and whether helping, or reprimanding, or indulging them, without any power of engaging their respect. (390-91)

As a result of of these dismaying observations, Fanny believes that Portsmouth's ways do not meet her newly shaped moral and intellectual standards and quests. The primal reason is not the poverty her family lives in compared to Mansfield Park's luxury, but Fanny expresses her uneasiness toward her parents' lack of moral and intellectual commitments and aspirations. In particular, the Prices fail to balance between their self-interests and preoccupations and their parental duties. Fanny does not get parental supervision that fosters the cultivation of individual responsibility. Also, she is quite sure that Portsmouth has no rooms for developing harmonious familial ties because her parents do not show affection toward their dependents, which is necessary to enliven union between them.

In addition, Fanny decides to emigrate to Mansfield Park to obtain better education. Her stay at Portsmouth makes her recognize and appreciate the suitable circumstances and good knowledges she gets at Mansfield Park. She precisely values the peace of mind she enjoys in those solitary moments she spends in "the East room" of Mansfield Park that were good for her to read. Fanny feels that "the early habit of reading was wanting" (418) as well at Portsmouth, but its "incessant noise" and tumult does not help that because there,

> everybody was noisy, every voice was loud (excepting, perhaps, her mother's, which resembled the soft monotony of Lady Bertram's, only worn into fretfulness). Whatever

> was wanted was hallooed for, and the servants hallooed out their excuses from the kitchen. The doors were in constant banging, the stairs were never at rest, nothing was done without a clatter, nobody sat still, and nobody could command attention when they spoke. (393-94)

In contrast, Mansfield Park provides an appropriate and supportive learning environment. As a reader and someone who sets decisive future intellectual goals, Fanny knows well how much stability, order, and support is needed. She praises its "elegance, propriety, regularity, harmony, and perhaps, above all, the peace and tranquility of Mansfield Park" (393). She also likes that "At Mansfield Park, no sounds of contention, no raised voice, no abrupt bursts, no tread of violence, was ever heard; all proceeded in a regular course of cheerful orderliness" (393). The most valuable thing for her is that she finds herself at Mansfield. There, she tells us that "everybody had their due importance; everybody's feelings were consulted" (393).

As I argue earlier, *Mansfield Park* reinforces the enactment of familial and social solidarity as a tool to improve the material and moral stability. If claims of racial, cultural, and material superiority were regulating the external world of the novel, Austen suggests amalgamation as the remedy. In so doing, Mansfield estate is saved from falling apart by reviving of "blood relations" in unifying the extended family. In a broader sense, Fanny's movement to Mansfield calls for an action of amalgamation at the national level. Austen is not alone in making this appeal and emphasizing its social, material and political dimensions. Brontë's *Villtte* also casts the light on emigration, even across Europe, as an alternative solution for securing intellectual and material opportunities for those individuals who deserve them and cannot attain at home.

3. Charlotte Brontë's 'Villette'

Whereas Austen's engages with the notions of self-regulation, enclosure and propriety from the Eastern world as alternative choices for the preservation of the self, family and society, Brontë infuses her engagement with the same mindsets into the discussion of the more particular and personal, that what constitutes the material and intellectual history of a woman. In this history, self-regulation, enclosure and propriety are essential, but they might be not enough. What makes *Villette* an articulate voice of Lucy Snowe's civilizing perspective, Brontë's heroine, back then and potentially of women now, is its call for establishing one's material and intellectual solid ground to pursue a stable and meaningful life. Remarkably, Lucy Snowe's vision on this notion revises and casts doubts on the workability of the revolutionary model of Jane Eyre. In *Jane Eyre,* Brontë's management of women experience, according to Sutherland, "offers its readers is not a new conjunction of women and history but a displacement of the struggles of history by an antihistorical ideal of female desire" (426). Interestingly, the experience of Lucy Snowe and the questions and conceptual imperatives she raises appear to build on her more historically and circumstantially informed consciousness. This new historical assessment complicates existing social and cultural attitudes toward the 'Other' on the one hand and challenges internal established norms based on which women's experience is understood and articulated on the other hand.

Brontë incorporates the two episodes of Cleopatra and Vashti from Arab and Islamic world through which Lucy Snowe engages her readers in exploring alternative material and conceptual realms of her experience. The episodes delineate two different woman's models and experiences: the un-rebellious Cleopatra and the vanishing rebellious Vashti.[34] However, what marks Lucy's interaction with these models in terms of her negotiation of her material and

intellectual rights is that it is overwhelmed by acute confusion. She apparently identifies with positive and encouraging premises both models yield, but she knows that she must come up with her own special blend that fits her context and her aspiration. Lucy does that by first reexamining the rhetoric of rebellion, which stems from what appears to be an escalating consensus of its devastating outcomes in the political and social spheres. Lucy Snowe's rebellious zeal is vociferous as she bombards Mr. Paul with these words, "Long live England, History and Heroes! Down with France, Fiction and Fobs!" (615). Lucy's disillusion from the revolution becomes more evident as we read her reflections on Vashti's rebellion does not avail her. The other model she identifies with is the material comfort that the Egyptian enjoys. But, she knows that either rebellion or money will not secure her from "wreck." Therefore, she becomes sure that what she needs, besides material comfort, is intellectual growth, and most importantly, open-minded public and social mindsets that assist her in accomplishing these ends.

'The Episode of Cleopatra'

The intellectual premises of Lucy's interaction with the portrait of Cleopatra articulate open-ended readings and interpretations of an important segment of literary Orientalism that move us from interrogating the discourse of sexual voyeurism to one that is built on and propagates a more active and critical epistemological basis. By reading Lucy's words on the portrait and her interaction with the public discourse practiced and produced in such a situation, we are able to underline Lucy's concern on being physically and intellectually pale and her quest to improve her intellectual and material conditions. Her engagement also introduces alternative percepts that re-qualify unrealistic preconceived cultural and social expectations and fixed roles assigned to women.

What complicates and troubles Lucy's negotiation of these notions is her excessive self-effacement and repression of her voice. Therefore, she, instead, puts faith in the reader's critical identification with her cause. She expects the reader to deduce, make connections and draw conclusions from her words on the portrait of Cleopatra in relation to what she wants to disclose about her real material life circumstances and quests as well as the public reception of them. As well, the reader hopefully shares her suggested alternative modes of engaging with all these issues. As she gazes on the portrait of the Egyptian queen, Lucy describes her and her harem as such:

> It represented a woman, considerably larger, I thought, than the life . . . She was, indeed, extremely well fed: very much butcher's meat - to say nothing of bread, vegetables, and liquids - must she have consumed to attain that breadth and height, that wealth of muscle, that affluence of flesh. She lay half-reclined on a couch: why, it would be difficult to say; broad daylight blazed round her; she appeared in hearty health, strong enough to do the work of two plain cooks; she could not plead a weak spine; she ought to have been standing, or at least sitting bolt upright. She, had no business to lounge away the noon on a sofa. She ought likewise to have worn decent garments; a gown covering her properly, which was not the case: out of abundance of material - seven-and-twenty yards, I should say, of drapery - she managed to make inefficient raiment. Then, for the wretched untidiness surrounding her, there could be no excuse. Pots and pans - perhaps I ought to say vases and goblets - were rolled here and there on the foreground; a perfect rubbish of flowers was mixed amongst them, and an absurd and disorderly mass of curtain upholstery smothered the couch and cumbered the floor. On referring to the catalogue, I found that this notable production bore the name 'Cleopatra.' (275-76)

In explicating Lucy's critical perspective on the portrait, I do not take her words on the portrait literally and at face value. I also emphasize that the confrontation between Lucy and Cleopatra should not be dissected from her overall narrative, the material and intellectual undertakings and realities of her journey from England to Villette. If we do otherwise, we usually get into the trouble of ignoring Lucy's voice, misunderstanding what she wants to speak to us about herself, and falling into anachronistic and prejudicing cultural interpretation of her encounter with Cleopatra. It is not an exaggeration to hold that Lucy Snowe insists on us to read her words on the portrait as alternative picture of a woman's world that has its own cultural, religious and social specificities that she wants to share with her readers. A part of what she wants to share is not only her sexual commodification of the queen or cultural disapproval of her harem but the material conditions the queen lives in. In "Pasha to Cleopatra and Vashti: The Oriental Other in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette,*" Aimillia Ramli that the Cleopatra scene attests to Brontë's compliance to the essential Orientalist misrepresentation of the Eastern harem as a disempowering trope. She states, "the association Charlotte Brontë makes between the harem and the prison-house in both *Jane Eyre* and *Villette* is in line with the general tendency in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European writing to emphasize the enslavement of women within Middle-Eastern and North-African societies" (119-20). Ramli also extends on a different dimension of Lucy's identification with Cleopatra. She points that it has been a traditional literary practice, including Brontë in *Villette*, that associates the harem and Oriental female with sexual desire and commodification of female body. Thus, Lucy's engagement with Cleopatra, within these conceptual boundaries, construes her desire to be sexually desired. Ramli demonstrates that "the Cleopatra episode offers an opportunity for Lucy . . . to become desirable to the male gaze" (123). However, Lucy's awareness paradoxically troubles this identification.

This is because she fears to be contaminated by the power implications of Cleopatra's harem. Ramli supposes that Lucy Snowe is "permanently destabilized by [her] encounter with the Orient, particularly its institution of the harem" (118-19). What Ramli does here is that she diminishes Lucy's reality-based and material consciousness to the anxiety on who shall win or assume power over her. While this might be applicable on *Jane Eyre*, Lucy moves beyond this anachronistic way of polarized conceptualization. Lucy takes care of and observes places. She does not construe them as "prison-house[s]" or confinements and configurations of male power over her. In contrast, Lucy wants us to share her the idea of how 'property' is vital for her intellectual propriety, and how it also protects her from endangering exposure. For instance, Lucy finds solace and shelter at Madame Beck's house, the first house she enters in Villette. There, she "felt at home and at ease; an advantage I should not have enjoyed in anything more brilliant or striking" (200). Later, as her material conditions improve, Lucy starts to feel it as a prison-like because she realizes that Madame Beck represses her mind from improvement, Madame Beck is her "rival, heart and soul." She describes that house as "So close under the dungeon, I can hear the prisoners moan. This solemn place is not what I seek, it is not what I can bear" (549). Lucy even accepts the house Mr. Paul rents for her to start her own school as well as his intellectual assistance that both remarkably boost her intellectual growth.

Cleopatra and Lucy Snowe's Thoughts on her Material Conditions

Lucy's reflection on Cleopatra's fine and well-nurtured physic and the material comfort she lives in boldens her dissatisfaction with her own material conditions. The claim that Lucy's words on the portrait underwrites her consciousness of being sexually "pale" as Ramli suggests possesses a very liminal part in her identification that is less dynamic in steering her actions and shaping her ideas. At the early beginning of her narrative, she emphasizes the financial motive

behind her emigration to Villette, that is to further her financial and living conditions. This is what the reader gets from her as she desperately meditates on her plans to leave England, "Now, *do* tell me where you are going.' 'Where Fate may lead me. My business is to earn a living where I can find it.' 'To earn!' (in consternation) 'are you poor, then?' 'As poor as Job'" (116). Moreover, she affirms the same cause to Madame Beck, her first headmaster at *Villette*, when she says, "I told her how I had left my own country, intent on extending my knowledge, and gaining my bread; how I was ready to turn my hand to any useful thing, provided it was not wrong or degrading; how I would be a child's-nurse, or a lady's-maid, and would not refuse even housework adapted to my strength" (127). From time to time, Lucy attempts to console herself by trying to accept her lot, and how hers has been troubled and made difficult by "circumstances." However, she cannot restrain herself from questioning that lot. She ponders, "why not I with the rest?" She means those women who live as "idle, basking, plump, and happy, stretched on a cushioned deck, warmed with constant sunshine, rocked by breezes indolently soft" (94). Lucy oscillates between submission and predestination. However, what matters to her is not how she would resolve this dilemma, but the extent to which her audience, her public, will understand her situation and, thus, justify and forsake her questioning and future decisions.

Lucy's minute attention to and description of the Cleopatra's physical profile reveals her awareness of her underrated physic and poor nourishment, which embeds her questioning for her right to get decent material and living opportunities. Her words on the "well-fed" queen with "wealth of muscle, that affluence of flesh" and "hearty health, strong enough" Cleopatra should be read in parallel with her vision of herself as a "'worn-out creature,'" "a faded," "thin, haggard, and hollow-eyed; like a sitter-up at night, like an overwrought servant, or a placeless person in

debt" (103). Lucy keeps profiling and observing the physical stature of the people she meets throughout her journey. She always connects the physical well-being of these people to food, starvation, money and comfort. For instances, Lucy appreciates the material affluence she finds of Madame Beck's school and its merits on the students. Madame Beck, with uncommon vigilance, takes care of the "physical and well-being" of her students and teachers. She maintains that, "After all, Madame's system was not bad - let me do her justice. Nothing could be better than all her arrangements for the physical well-being of her scholars … there was a liberty of amusement, and a provision for exercise which kept the girls healthy; the food was abundant and good: neither pale nor puny faces were anywhere to be seen in the Rue Fossette" (137). She adds then, "Here was a great house, full of healthy, lively girls, all well-dressed and many of them handsome" (137). Moreover, Lucy's words on the material abundance and wealth of Cleopatra and her "decent garments" should be read in correlation with her constant watching out on how women around her are dressed. For instance, she tells us that Madame Beck's "dress was decent garments almost as quiet as mine, except that she wore a bracelet, and a large brooch bright with gold and fine stones" (200). However, what might appear confusing to the reader is Lucy's alleged unappreciation of the material abundance the Egyptian queen enjoys. In particular, she does not articulate a vociferous call for her right to live decently, but she keeps watching out her voice to make sure that her feelings are not easily detectable. Again, Lucy's excessive "self-surveillance" over her acts, words, and inner feelings can be attributed to her awareness of the less flexible, open-minded and open-ended expectations and roles the public conceives her model according to. It might also be attributed to the legacy of Jane Eyre's model, Lucy does not wish people to know and discover that she defies or diverts from that rebellious, self-determined and self-reliant model and starts to see life in a different way.

The 'Episode of Cleopatra' and Lucy Snowe's "Life of Thought"

Lucy's engagement with the portrait of Cleopatra also articulates her own insights into the substance of her "life of thought," that is to define her intellectual identity and fomenting intellectual companionships. Highly conscious of life's needs, money and the intellect, and the narrow public understanding of her position as a woman in relation to this notion, Lucy believes that balancing her quests for material comfort with polishing her intellectual accomplishment fosters her to progress and protect her against "wreck" of any kind. Her awareness of the necessity of both is clear in her condemnation of Madame Beck's focus in bringing up children in her school who "robust in body, feeble in soul, fat, ruddy, hale, joyous, [but] ignorant, unthinking, unquestioning" (196). Lucy finds this fact as a reasonable justification to leave this school. In this respect, she conceptualizes her model of how to live that takes care of, and simultaneously prioritizes, her personal yearnings and needs on one hand and the public responsibilities and material circumstances on the other hand.

However, Lucy Snowe, through her engagement with the portrait of Cleopatra, does not make explicit statements on her intellectual growth as a woman and the challenges that hinder this growth. Instead, she surveys the existing public modes of understanding women's experience, conveyed to us through Mr. Paul's and Dr. John Breton's perspectives on the portrait, and engage with in an intellectual conversation where she lays her own alternative model of understanding this experience. Out of this conversation, Lucy reveals to us that existing public practices and knowledges that define her experience rely on and produce problematic "branding judgment[s]" (Brontë 342). These judgments disseminate polarized condensing premises. As Lucy tells us, they deem the idea of a "woman of intellect" as impossible or unreal at all. Exactly, Lucy says, "'woman of intellect,' it appeared, was a sort of 'lusus naturae,' a

luckless accident, a thing for which there was neither place nor use in creation, wanted neither as wife nor worker" (443). Simultaneously, these judgments render intellectualism as not a woman's sphere because, "Beauty anticipated her in the first office … lovely, placid, and passive feminine mediocrity was the only pillow on which manly thought and sense could find rest for its aching temples; and as to work, male mind alone could work to any good practical result - hein?" (443). What is troubling in these frames of thought is their perpetuation of fixed and close-minded modes of interpreting women's experiences, quests and outlooks. They so do by extending on a premise that limits itself to the womanish side of women while negating any practical and intellectual value to women's experience. On the Egyptian queen, Dr. John, for instance, claims that 'My mother is a better-looking woman. I heard some French fops, yonder, designating her as 'le type du voluptueux;' if so, I can only say, 'le voluptueux' is little to my liking. Compare that mulatto with Ginevra!" (282). What matters to Dr. John is how the queen looks like because he, as Lucy puts it, "judged her as a woman" (Brontë 342). For Lucy, the public perspective on judging women's experiences should instead free itself from being confined to destructive and insular stereotypes. As discussed earlier, Lucy discerns her undeniable concern on polishing her physical paleness, which means that she values beauty. However, this is not what constitutes the world of women; thus, women should not confine themselves by this belief.

In addition, Lucy emphasizes women's critical engagement with the world they live in. She knows that a woman is required to fulfil expected roles like being a wife, a sister and a mother. She is not trying to disapprove these roles, or the role that Fanny Price plays at Mansfield Park, but what concerns her is to make sure that their roles do not become sources of their miseries. In this sense, Lucy is told by Mr. Paul that Cleopatra cannot be a good mother,

sister or daughter. Mr. Paul replies, Cela ne vaut rien,' he responded. 'Une femme superbe - une taille d'imperatrice, des formes de Junon, mais une personne dont je ne voudrais ni pour femme, ni pour fille, ni pour soeur. Aussi vous ne jeterez plus un seul coup d'oeil de sa cote" (277-78).[35] Therefore, he asks her to watch a different model from Cleopatra. This model is construed in four pictures that depict the life cycle of a woman: a young lady, a bride, a mother, and lastly, a widow.[36] Her encounter with the four figures should yield alternative empowering ideas and decisions. What is availing to Lucy is not to internalize neither the commodification of herself as an object of others' interests and assessments nor her confinement by the depressing narratives that deter her intellectual progress or the perusal of productive life in general.

Rather, the moralization that Lucy persists to reach out is that possible alternative choices that would save her from "wreck" should be always available, part of which includes her intellectual as well as material growth. But, the vital thing here is to carefully expose oneself to these possible choices. It also requires public assistance in making these choices attainable. The question now, does Lucy endorse rebellion as a tool to engage the public attention in this domain? To put in different words, how much does the model of Jane Eyre inform Lucy of how to resolve this dilemma? Later, Lucy crystalizes her own vision of the answer. This vision considers a conscious engagement in understanding and evaluation of her experience and outlook that goes in the light of the material circumstances. We get this notion from Lucy as she attends the performance that acts the life and fate of Vashti, the "royal" Persian queen. Lucy's reaction to Vashti's performance and her reflection on Dr. John's judgment of her as "a woman, not an artist" (342) also advances our understanding of her insights on Cleopatra. What appeals to Lucy in the character of Vashti, and the thing Cleopatra figure does not lend to her, is her revolutionary and rebellious stance. Lucy tells us that the name of Vashti, "could thrill Europe"

(Brontë 339) She is also a "a mighty revelation" (Brontë 339). because she is the woman who has repudiated to submit and refused her body to be commodified as a site of male sexual gaze.

However, Lucy then appears to revise her qualification of Vashti's rebellion as she knows that her rebellion does not avail her. Instead, Vashti's rebellion ends in "being Fallen, insurgent, banished, she remembers the heaven where she rebelled. Heaven's light, following her exile, pierces its confines, and discloses their forlorn remoteness" (340). She is even more precise and clear in how this story unsettles and disturbs her vision of what she should do in her way toward self-accomplishment. Vashti, as we get from Lucy,

> astonished Hope and hushed Desire; which outstripped Impulse and paled Conception; which, instead of merely irritating imagination with the thought of what *might* be done, at the same time fevering the nerves because it was *not* done, disclosed power like a deep, swollen winter river, thundering in cataract, and bearing the soul, like a leaf, on the steep and steely sweep of its descent. (340)

This moment of self-reflection does not necessary signify Lucy's growing serious thinking of resigning to "power" and remaining entirely under someone's shadow or comply to the degenerating and suppressing public expectations and conceptions. Rather, she realizes the importance of reconciling between the realms of abstract thought and reality, the ideal and evident, and considering her personal desires in the light of the limits and constraints imposed on her by material circumstances. Her meditations enable her to decide what is needed, doable, and practical in her own quest for self-definition.

Therefore, Lucy realizes that what would improve her conditions is not rebellion but a public recognition of her intellectualism and assistance to handle any material and conceptual obstacles before her. Lucy realizes how Vashti's strong passion and solitary rebellious spirit have

not empowered her enough to withstand the complicated and harsh world she lives in. What Vashti's model might need to succeed, according to Lucy, are supportive intellectual companionships. She remarks on that saying, "Vashti was not good, I was told; and I have said she did not look good: though a spirit, she was a spirit out of Tophet. Well, if so much of unholy force can arise from below, may not an equal efflux of sacred essence descend one day from above?" (340). In Lucy Snowe's world, those companions who would wholeheartedly understand her concerns and reflections as well as acknowledge her intellectual and material rights are rare. This is what she indirectly and repeatedly wants us to consider. This identification is crucial for her because she wants us to recognize as well that she alone cannot effect any real changes. We read her pouring out her concerns in this arena, "As far as I recollect, I complained to no one about these troubles. Indeed, to whom could I complain?" (94). But, public indifference is not the sole thing that deepens Lucy's intellectual solitary but also those restrictions and limits that decide and predetermine what she is allowed to voice. She does not hesitate to confess this fact as she claims, "how very wise it is in people placed in an exceptional position to hold their tongues and not rashly declare how such position galls them! The world can understand well enough the process of perishing for want of food: perhaps few persons can enter into or follow out that of going mad from solitary confinement" (356). Lucy condemns intolerant and unrealistic public mindsets that, following Jane Eyre's model, demands her to unrealistically take up the challenge and be self-independent. Before that, she raises an important question: to what extent she is intellectually and material prepared to be self-independent. She complicates this norm as she remarks, "self-reliance and exertion were forced upon me by circumstances, as they are upon thousands" (95). Lucy is not optimistic toward how much her peers would tolerate and reflect positively on this fact. Her main worry is that if she fails to be

active and self-reliant, she wonders if the public would consider the harsh "circumstances" while judging her failure or just attribute it to her inner passivity.[37]

Interestingly, Brontë deploys Mr. Paul as Lucy's intimate, understanding, and intellectually vibrant companion. Lucy's intellectual growth owes much to his companionship in the sense it has cleared her vision and enhanced her ability to reconcile her material and intellectual quests: to be a woman and an intellectual. We see her at the end as a school master, an intellectual, and most importantly a woman of feeling and affection. Lucy develops an infatuation with Mr. Paul, but this love does not culminate in their real match. The whole story even challenges us to easily accept this resolution. The only explanation Lucy voices in this regard is vague and open-ended. She asserts that she "would not violate [her] nature" (566) by fostering her union with Mr. Paul. The novel keeps it open to decide how this marriage would then "violate" either Lucy's or Brontë's personal, cultural, religious or national convictions. However, the mere idea of Mr. Paul's involvement in the colonial exploitation might provide a clue to justify his apocalypse.

The West Indian Scene Revisited

Brontë's integration of the sub-narrative of the British Empire in *Villete* is not new. In this novel, as well as in *Jane Eyre*, she interpolates the scene of the British colonial exploitation in the West Indies in a way to foster a certain resolution to her stories, in which her heroines apparently win, and her men get their damned fate. In *Jane Eyre,* St. John Rivers, the Christian missionary, dies while being in mission in India. In the same way, Brontë's exiles Mr. Paul to do a service in Magliore Walravens' and Madame Beck's overseas business in Guadaloupe in the West Indies. None knows what happens to him, but the novel ends without crowning his companionship with Lucy Snowe by marriage.

The way and context in which Brontë resists their union might appease the audience's confusion out of the search for a reasonable explanation to her resolution of *Villette*. Lucy finds in him that real intellectual and passionate companion. Their different religious convictions do not deter the amalgamation of their moral and intellectual views as she repeatedly asserts. Vlasta Vranjes gets notice of Lucy's reconciliatory perspective in this respect. In "English Cosmopolitanism And/As Nationalism: The Great Exhibition, the Mid-Victorian Divorce Law Reform, and Brontë's *Villette*" Vranjes ascertains that *Villette*'s civilizing logic contravenes national, religious, and cultural polarities. Vranjes calls this logic as a "nonnationalist cosmopolitanism," that is predicated on a "more genuinely inclusive of another, not invested in the idea of the 'single axis of progress.'" (326). However, the way Brontë's concludes the novel is a problematic as Vranjes would qualify it. This is because the banishment of Mr. Paul from Lucy's world underpins what seems to be Brontë's inability to break with her cultural, political and public affiliations that perpetuate divisions of any kind with the 'Other'. The problem in Mr. Paul, as Vranjes believes it, is his non-Englishness,

> *Villette*'s alternative ending, in which M. Paul drowns on his way back from Guadeloupe, is more in accordance with the world of mid-Victorian England, the world in which national, religious, and gender divisions continue to exist. Regardless of how radical Brontë's gesture toward a (happy) marriage between a Protestant and a 'good Romanist' might be (396), M. Paul remains a figure of difference. (346-47)

However, *Villette*'s perpetuation of M. Paul as the Other does not entails its failure to ascertain its global encompass. Rather, Brontë might want us to recognize how our personal choices and convictions determine our decisions that relate to the 'Other'. This is not to say that our choices and convictions should ban our acceptance of each other, but we cannot ignore them while

making critical decisions that shape our personal and professional lives. Therefore, one possible reason why Brontë does not show that remarkable enthusiasm toward the marriage of Lucy and M. Paul is her vision of their marriage's short life because she knows well that as a family it might be difficult for them to have harmony at home. What Brontë might want to tell us regarding Lucy's acceptance of Mr. Paul's political and religious views does not ensure that they both can entirely ignore these differences when it comes to regulating their house and dependents.

Therefore, we can think of *Villette*'s resolution in a different way. St. John's and Mr. Paul's apocalyptic fate is not just a thing that allows more space for both Jane Eyre and Lucy Snowe to rise, but it can also connect with Brontë's moral and critical anti-colonial perspective. Like Jane Austen, Brontë is aware of her country's material interest in and exploitation of the overseas colonies. Her critique of this practice stems from her disapproval of self-interest, or those "self-seekers" who do not attend to anything except their selfish needs and desires. In *Villette,* we encounter the first material reference to the colonial overseas business at Madame Beck's penssionnat. Lucy Snowe, as she looks into Mrs. Sweeny's wardrobe, the nursery Lucy replaces at Madame Beck's house, finds "*a real Indian shawl*" on which she says,

> the spell by which she struck a certain awe through the household, quelling the otherwise scornfully disposed teachers and servants, and, so long as her broad shoulders *wore* the folds of that majestic drapery, even influencing Madame herself - *a real Indian shawl* - 'un veritable cachemire,'. . . I feel quite sure that without this 'cachemire' she would not have kept her footing in the pensionnat for two days: by virtue of it, and it only, she maintained the same a month. (133)

As Lucy tries to know where and why Mr. Paul is dispatched, she gets to know that Madame Beck, Magliore Walravens and Pere Silas to Basseterre sent him to Guadaloupe to run a lately-decaying business of the Walravens. Though their endeavors behind sending Mr. Paul, Lucy confirms that they all "sincerely interested in the nursing of the West Indian estate, which in turn will "bring them an Indian fortune" (Brontë 565).

However, Brontë, unlike Austen, entertains a more open-ended resolution on who to enclose in the civilizing process. Austen endorses an un-apocalyptic and positivist outlook. She offers Sir Thomas, though his external business is more villainous and cruel than Mr. Paul's, another chance to redeem himself, and he is most welcomed to reintegrate in Mansfield Park's circle. On the other side, Brontë banishes Mr. Paul from Lucy's world because he, like what Gebir does to Landor, deceives her desires and political ideals. However, Mr. Paul and St. John might attend to their consciences and self-correct themselves if they are given the chance. Therefore, we can make a different speculation on Mr. Paul's disappearance. It seems that Brontë, being aware of how those who read *Jane Eyre* would receive *Villette*, finds it a must to exile Mr. Paul forever, a thing that helps Lucy appear, like her predecessor, Jane Eyre, "paradoxically" triumphant and successful in his absence.

4. Conclusion

The discussion so far has shown that Austen and Brontë, unlike Landor, Southey, and Shelley, use, and encourage us to reread, ideas of self-regulation, enclosure, conscience, and propriety from the Eastern world to regulate and civilize those public tastes and mindsets pertinent to the more personal and social lives of people. What Austen and Brontë would say in this regard is that their public are divided upon itself by being caught in two choices: strict and cautious order or unconscious and indifferent indulgence. Fanny and Lucy teach us to take notice

of how dangerous unconscious and uncarefully-mediated self-exposure is. They also discuss how notions of self-reliance and self-dependence need to be carefully understood in context and practiced in the light of the material and social circumstances. These reflections result from Fanny's and Lucy's critical observations and conscious participation in understanding and shaping their positions in their political, social and material world.

Whereas Southey's *Thalaba* and Wordsworth's "Dream of an Arab," for instances, explicate how the importation and exportation of literary texts and traditions across the world produce new dimensions of literariness and disseminates different modes of conceptualizing, practicing and negotiating politics, Austen and Brontë add more public and practical dimension to their engagements with the other world. Their novels make an effective perspective on utilizing literature, then and now, in the migration of alternative public mindsets including different educational and social experiences across the globe. This fact highlights the making of theoretical and practical shifts and adjustments in teaching and writing about such a literature to effectively participate in the process of global give-and-take of knowledges and experiences. For instance, when teaching the model of Fanny Price, reading her in the light of what she reads, Johnson's *Rasselas* and Macartney's *An Embassy*, would make classrooms' discussions or research papers turn as circulators of alternative public modes of how to live. *Mansfield Park* opens to the reader new venues to differently conceive the nature, structure and value of family as a social unit. Moreover, Brontë makes extensive references to the *Arabian Nights* in *Villette*. This makes it possible for us as researchers and readers of literature to explore how studying the two texts together underscore interconnected literary and intellectual histories. Most importantly, as *Mansfield Park* and *Villette* have been always undervalued while compared with other works done by their writers, the study of the two novels in relation to their informative Eastern sources

enables us to trace how these sources have influenced the development of Austen's and Brontë's intellectualism and literary careers. In addition, I can also suggest comparing *Mansfield Park* and *Villette* with fictions written by Arab women writers to underline how similar or different they are in their discussions of self-regulation, exposure, propriety, enclosure, and woman's emigration and her intellectual and material rights.

In addition, what is timely about reading *Mansfield Park* and *Villette* now is their perspective on emigration or immigration. The novels do something special here as they address emigration and immigration from an ethical and moral commitment. They question the extent to which we conceive and endorse emigration and immigration as venues for those who live in impoverished places, among us and abroad, to acquire equal opportunities of education, health, security, and decent living. Another thing the novels might encourage us to value is how emigration or immigration foster a culture of amalgamation that saves us from falling apart on the local and broader international arenas. Fanny Price immigrates from the "neglect and poverty" of Portsmouth to the decorum and opulence of Mansfield estate. As well, Lucy affirms that "gaining my bread" is what forces her to seek jobs and good living in Villette. Fanny's and her sister Susan emigration to Mansfield enlivens the extended family ties and the notion of social cooperation. Lucy's emigration from England to Villette also suggests a possible broader intercontinental union and collaboration.

Moreover, the emigration or immigration of people partakes in the local and global exchange of mindsets and educational experiences. This process creates areas of vibrant and diverse acculturation. Lucy describes Villette as a "cosmopolitan city" and explains how fruitful this has been to her intellectual growth. She acknowledges the advantage of her work at Madame Beck's pensionnat in Villette as she says, "It was pleasant. I felt I was getting, on; not lying the

stagnant prey of mould and rust, but polishing my faculties and whetting them to a keen edge with constant use. Experience of a certain kind lay before me, on no narrow scale. Villette is a cosmopolitan city, and in this school, were girls of almost every European nation" (145). As well, Fanny Price makes an appeal that Mansfield Park's order, decorum, and the attention to the individual offer her a better chance to refine her mental growth. In both cases, Fanny's and Lucy's movements across different places carry with them prospects of public and national collaboration in securing the individuals' right to get better education. Emigration or immigration works so on the international level. Students' emigrants are constantly moving across the globe in order to seek better opportunities of educations. Interestingly, those few who get the chance also help extend it to others. This movement also enhances cross cultural dialogues. The crucial question arises, then, is, how public mindsets, official regulations and policies implement practical procedures to ensure the individual right in obtaining good life and underscore what unite us, not divide us.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: ORIENTALISM, READERSHIP, AND THE INTELLECTUAL DILEMMA

One of the pressing questions this dissertation highlights is the way the selected poets and novelists, conventionally known as literary writers, use literature to practice and articulate their public intellectual reformative perspectives that span from traditional and philosophical prospects to the more critical religious and political ones. My notion is that, drawing on the intellectual and public reception of the texts that I explore, literature, poetry and fiction, supplements the writer's untraditional and multilayered mission. Literature ensures a wider scope these intellectual arguments might reach to include public readership and philosophical, religious and political institutions. Concerning the latter, literature becomes for the nonconformists Landor, Southey and Shelley a non-politically and irreligiously-oriented, ambiguous, and encoded medium that vouchsafes the continuity of their intellectual production and offers them options to disseminate their disconcerted and discontented views about the need to civilize British culture.

However, another problem stems out of using literature in this way and for this end. The problem pertains the potential vulnerable, dubious, and fluctuating interaction between the writer and the reader. The contemporary or recent public and critical reception of the poems and novels explored in this dissertation vindicates how uneasy readership has been uneasy with them. Possibly with an exception to Wordsworth's "Dream," the other works have been received with unapplauding readership and labeled, socially and politically speaking, as problematic. We might understand and explain the disinterestedness in *Gebir*, *Thalaba*, and *The Revolt* due to their alleged ideological orientations, but such a reaction seems inexplicable with respect to *Mansfield Park* and *Villette*. Therefore, we might not be surprised to know that Landor, Southey and

Shelley have revised their poems. This revision is accompanied by a revision of the poets' personal political convictions. Both cases prove the poets' awareness of the challenging intellectual, social and political conditions they were writing in and the criticality of their views amidst these conditions at one hand and how to win the reader to their side on the other hand. Wordsworth was not different from his peer poets. For him, the reader and the extent to which this reader will engage with his argument is a prime concern. It might be said he chooses deluge and fire to make a stronger appeal to his reader's immanent identification with his concerns on the looming critical future of humanity's knowledge. Brontë also underscores the impact the reader audience occupies in composing the story of Lucy Snowe. Through narrating her life experience, we see that Lucy does not speak much of her own material and intellectual concerns and predicaments. By silencing those concerns, Lucy wants to appear strong and resolute in the eyes of those who surround her, but she, most importantly, lacks those intellectual and understanding companions who will listen to and acknowledge her concerns.

This tensed atmosphere results in a dilemmatic relationship that encumbers those writers, their intellectual public responsibilities, and their readership. This old and new intricate bottleneck manifests itself while intellectuals attempt to reconcile between their personal convictions and their public responsibilities and demands at one hand and the social, material and political realities they live in and interact with on the other hand. We might then read the poet's revision of their political allegations as an essential circumstantially-driven move to break out of this bottleneck. In contrast, we might need to read Shelley's mysticism as his insistence to stick to and prioritize his personal convictions over the public needs and political realities.

What seems more telling in inciting these revisions, as in the case of Landor and Southey, is a voluntary personal conviction on the inevitability of change. Landor and Southey teach us

here that bigotry is not an appropriate choice when newly emerging circumstances, those that unfold at the opposite of our ideals, require us to make our intellectual production should reflect our conscious' engagement with of these changes. As far as I am concerned, the texts I discuss in this dissertation underscore the value of order on the moral, individual, social and political levels. Their main point is not to render resignation to corrupted or mislead orders as normal, but they insist on the individual, public and social involvement in reforming them.

In most cases, the writers' revisions and arguments are misunderstood. I think that this links to or indicates strict conception of the function of the intellectual. We read in Garcia's book that intellectuals such as Landor, Southey and Shelley were accused by the public as well as the state as executors of anti-national external agendas. History repeats itself now. The same doubt and distrust expressed toward the intellectual resurfaces now in Arab intellectualism. Arab intellectuals who engage with the political situations of the Arab Spring are objects of the public and state's partial scrutiny. Those intellectuals who decide to be in the side of the Arab revolutionaries are usually seen and talked about by the state or its traditional intellectuals as treacherous of the national interest and cause because they are accused of performing external imperial models and agendas. On the other side, those intellectuals who have found themselves obliged to reconsider the role of their intellectualism as they witness how destruction has become unbearable realities and that revolution has further political unrest and corruption instead of reformation and progression in their countries have been a target of public smears. Torn between those intolerable poles, the intellectual might find in Shelley's mysticism, that is, to remain silent and retreat from the political scene, as the most appropriate option to apply. In the Arab region, this becomes a practical solution. Intellectuals start to believe that neither the public nor the state innovation is impossible. As far as I am concerned, a strongly committed intellectual who

possesses a clear intellectual vision should not give up. While real material circumstances prove that fundamental change seems far reaching, the door is still open for renovation, which is not just an option but an inevitable intellectual responsibility.

So far, my purpose is to underscore the notion that the intellectual reformative outlooks do not come up or exist in seclusion from the cultural, social, intellectual and political milieu it acts in. I can hold that those intellectual perspectives this dissertation discusses have not had friendly relationship with their milieu. In the meanwhile, these writers have not entirely ignored that milieu. Rather, they have attempted to find a way through this milieu to make and sustain their way to their audience. That being said, a critical question persists, that is, the impact of the readership on the final product of the writers' engagements with the Arab and Islamic world. I think this is a valid question in the previously discussed circumstances the poems in particular were composed. As Garcia tells us, Landor and Southey, as pertinent cases in point, had their own touches on the knowledges they engage with Islam to discard the looming suspicions toward their agendas. Lucy Snowe in *Villette* also uses disparaging words to describe the figure of the Egyptian queen to her audience while my discussion reveals that these words yield totally opposite meanings. In the often-cited letter that Lord Byron wrote to Tome Moore in 1813, he reveals Shelley's discontent that those writers' Orientalism were, in a way or another and to different extents, "following," or courting the readership's taste. In this letter, Byron urges Moore to

> Stick to the East;- the oracle, Stael, told me it was the only poetical policy. The North, South, and West, have all been exhausted; but from the East, we have nothing but [Southey's] unsaleables, - and these he has contrived to spoil, by adopting only their most outrageous fictions. His personages don't interest us, and yours will. You have no

> competitor; and, if you had, you ought to be glad of it. The little I have done in that way is merely a 'voice in the wilderness' for you; and, if it has had any success, that also will prove that the public are Orientalizing, and pave the path for you. (qtd. in Leask 13)

Following Sir William Jones's tenets, Byron emphasizes that the Eastern element, or writing about the East decides how innovative and successful his and others' poetry is. It is also clear that part of Orientalism's success is due to its newness as a literary genre. However, its literary and theoretical innovation is not the core point as much as the writer's use of Orientalism to stir up the public interest in the work and make them buy and read it. So, Byron's advice might remind the Orientalist poet to be eclectic in what to write about the East or adapt it in a way that appeals to the audience. My major concern is the impact of it on old and new judgements and understandings of those knowledges or perceptions from the East the writer uses in the work. The reason I pose these questions is my growing belief that critical engagements with Orientalism need to consider the influence of readership on the writer's choices, decisions and the way his or her use or explanation of the knowledges from the East.

What Byron's letter suggests on the British writers' engagements with the Arabic and Islamic world cannot fully explain their story. These engagements draw upon and yield more pertinent intellectual and knowledge-based ground. In contrast to the critical practice that studies Orientalism in relation to overarching patterns that suggestively dominate the institutional ideologies and practices of England's internal and external political spheres, the literature of Landor, Southey, Shelley, Wordsworth, Austen and Brontë provokes us to explore Orientalism, theirs at least, in the light of intellectual and knowledge dynamics, part of which is the writers' exposure to the external world and integrate it in the internal sphere of knowledge production. In *Oriental Renaissance: Europe Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1880* (1984), Raymond

Schwab describes the literary and intellectual heritage of British Romantic movement as “an oriental irruption of the intellect” (482). As the writers I engage with in this dissertation belong to that era, I think that we should explore the internal forces that have enhanced this “essential” correlation between the writers and knowledge. To this question, Schwab writes that “fate” and “human will” drives writers from that era to the other world (482). However, I think such an answer would not suffice our critical inquiry. There is a need for an exploration that produces concrete knowledges that help us better understand and explain these engagements. What might seem relevant in this area is to research into how the philosophical and literary paradigms of these engagements align with those ideas. More specifically, investigations should attend to how those writers have perceived their public intellectualism responsibilities and the knowledges they have pursued and articulated.

ENDNOTES

1 Joseph Dacre Carlyle translations from Arabic poetry in *Specimens of Arabian Poetry, from the Earliest Time to the Extinction of the Caliphate* (1796) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *West–Eastern Diwan* (1819) might have the same influence on Jones's work on the introduction of Arabic poetry to the Western reader and poet.

2 Garcia writes that the British government has attempted to defame the cause of the republican revolutionaries by emphasizing their Islamist anti-Christian agenda. As part of this campaign, the government has republished *Copies of Original Letters from the Army of General Bonaparte in Egypt, intercepted by the Fleet under the command of Admiral Nelson* (London, 1798). In these letters, Napoleon "grants toleration to all religions, accepts Islamic beliefs and practices, repudiates Catholicism, and dubs republican Frenchmen 'the friends of the true mussulmen'" (127) in an attempt to appeal to Egyptian Muslim clerics in attempt to ward of resistance against the French invaders. According to Garcia, the British government popularizes Bonaparte's proclamation "as antiradical propaganda" that "confirmed British suspicions that 'Jacobin' republicanism was founded on Islamic principles" (127). Therefore, the William Pitt ministry uses the tract as "a beating stick with which to deprecate Bonaparte's Islamic republic—his 'new solon'—and, closer to home, to condemn radical authors and deist freethinkers allegedly implicated in a Franco-Ottoman conspiracy to eradicate Christianity" (141). Garcia adds that *The Life of Mahomet, or the history of that imposture, which was begun, carried on, and finally established him in Arabia . . . To which is added, an account of Egypt* (London, 1799) in the same way and for the same purpose. Garcia writes, it "is meant to inflame public resentment against domestic radicals. Due to their deist leanings, they are automatically branded enemies of the British Constitution and friends of Islamic republicanism" (142).

3 Landor obtains the story of Ad's people from George Sale's 1734 translation of the Quran. It is also probable that Landor obtains the story from Sir William Jones's works. The influence of Jones's works on Landor is clear in his publication of *Poems from the Arabic and Persian* (1880), which is said to be a pastiche of Jones's *Poems Consisting Chiefly from Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To which are Added Two Essays* (1772), according to Sharafuddin.

4 The ruined city that Aroar and Gebir visit that "Sidad built" where Gebir's ancestors used to live is Irem, or, Aram. Sale, Garcia and Sharfuddin refer Sidad to Sheddad, the Son of Ad, a disciple of Noah. Some historians locate Irem in Egypt and the majority hold that the desert of Arabia, between Yemen and Oman, as its true location.

5 In his note to this verse, Sale suggests "pillars" as another suitable substitute of "lofty buildings" of Ad's people. Literally speaking, pillars correlates to how the works of Adites, Sheddad's descendants, are described in Quran. However, the two translations fit as they denote the uncommon physical stature of those people.

6 Garcia sheds light on the hostile and uncompromising response to Landor's poem. According to Garcia, *Gebir* was subject of state's censorship because it was considered as an example of "seditious writing," and that Southey has described Landor as "a mad Jacobin," (144). Also, Thomas De Quincy, upon reading the poem, thinks of Landor as "'a poet with whom the Attorney-General might have occasion to speak'" (qtd. in Leask 26). We also get to know that Landor has paid for Sharpe's of Warwick, a provincial publisher, to publish the poem as London publishers had refused to do anything with it, and Cadell and Davies "strongly advised him 'to relinquish the idea of publishing it'" (Mahmoud 69). Landor could be best described as a "turncoat" poet, to use Garcia's words.

7 Garcia states that Landor's *Gebir* is influenced by Murtada ibn al-Khafif's *The Egyptian History* that he gets to know from Clara Reeve. Garcia writes that "not much is known about the life and works of Murtada ibn al-Khafif, except that he was an Islamic historian from Cairo who lived between 1154/55 and 1237" (128) His only known book, *The Egyptian History*, is translated to French and English (128).

8 In "Imagining Egypt: Walter Savage Landor's *Gebir*," Michael Bradshaw supports this notion as he marks the "anti-historical strategy" that characterizes *Gebir*. Bradshaw argues that the poem works in a "historical vacuum" that is created because of "the complete absence of any references to recent events in Egypt" (59).

9 The Quran includes many references to Irem, its people, their fault, and their divine chastisement. Ad's people's pride has tempted them to defy the call for submission to God that is passed to them by his messenger, Hud, who is generally believed to be Heber. It is narrated in the Quran that, "The tribe of Ad charged God's messengers with falsehood: when their brother Hud said unto them, Will ye not fear God? Verily I am a faithful messenger unto you; wherefore fear God, and obey me" (Sale 305). Ad's people have thought their exceptional might and uncommon achievements could help them forsake God's punishment and secure a safe and prosperous life for them. Hud addresses them, "Do ye build a landrmark on every high place to divert yourselves? And do ye erect *magnificent* works, hoping that ye may continue in *possession* for ever?" (Sale 305). Ad's people have not considered the message, and they, as the Quran narrates, "behaved insolently in the earth, without reason" (Sale 390). The qur'anic narrative also emphasizes that Ad's people were conscious of the divine plan and prophetic warnings against their extreme deeds, but they, out of their arrogance and bigotry (not ignorance) "knowingly rejected our signs" (Sale 390). This culminates in God executing his punishment

over them by sending a severely devastating wind that has demolished their entire civilization. The Quran narrates, “Wherefore we sent against them a piercing wind, on days of ill luck,’ that we might make them taste the punishment of shame in this world” (Sale 390). In another place, it is also mentioned that, “Ad were destroyed by a roaring and furious wind; which God caused to assail them for seven nights and eight days successively” (Sale 462-63). The wind was extremely destructive as the Quran narrates, “thou mightest have seen people during the same, Iying prostrate, as though they had been the roots of hollow palm trees and couldest thou have seen any of them remaining?” (Sale 463).

10 Southey himself acknowledges the intellectual influence of Landor’s poem on *Thalaba*. In his “Preface” to the 1835 version of the poem, Southey writes that while in Lisbon, “I walked on the beach, caught soldier-crabs, admired the sea-anemones in the ever-varying shapes of beauty, read ‘Gebir,’ and wrote half a book of ‘Thalaba.’” (Southey 4-5). This impact can be traced in *Gebir*’s style and substance. Southey, like Landor, also involves the “occult” in the poem. Moreover, *Thalaba*’s “abundance of picturesque” is apparently indebted to *Gebir*. Southey himself writes, “‘it was certainly from *Gebir* that I learnt ever to have my eye awake—to bring images to sight, and to convey a picture in a word’” (qtd. in Sharfuddin 44).

11 Southey reads a translation of the *Arabian Nights* by Antonio Galland. Sharfuddin states that the French translation of the *New Arabian Tales* by Henry Webers is “the immediate source of *Thalaba*,” and that Southey obtained his motif from “The History of Maughraby and the Magician,” a part of those tales (50). In the “Preface” to the fourth edition of the poem, Southey describes *Thalaba* as, “In the continuation of the Arabian Tales, the Domdaniel is mentioned,—a seminary for evil magicians, under the roots of the sea. From this seed the present romance has grown” (Southey 6). Moreover, Southey draws on George Sale’s translation of the Quran and

explanatory notes. Sharfuddin writes, “no other Romantic writer had absorbed George Sale’s excellent translation of the Koran to the same degree” (49).

12 Besides indicating the precise location of the ancient civilization of Ad’s people, “The tents of Ad were pitched; // Happy Al-Ahkaf then” in Yemen, which Landor relocates to Egypt, *Thalaba* delineates a more accurate account of Ad’s people’s fault. Those people were worshiping idols, disbelieving God’s messenger and, most importantly, their king’s, Sheddad, perusal of the “work of Pride,” that is, the erection of the ‘Stately Palace’ by which he aims at abrogating divinity as Aswad, the last survivor of Ad’s race, tells whom Thalaba meets in the Paradise Garden of Irem.

13 The italicized phrase is found in *Sir William Jones: Selected Poetical and Prose Works* (1995) edited by Michael J. Franklin. In *Thalaba,* Southey does not include the same phrase, but I retain it as I believe it strongly fosters and supplements understanding *Thalaba*’s moralization. The *Poem of Tarafa* belongs to a poetic sub-genre commonly known in the pre-Islamic *The Moallaka’t* as *Al Atlal*, which translates as “The Remains.” Literally speaking, the title means the remains the Arab Bedouins leave once they change their residency. Literary speaking, this poetry usually communicates the material and emotional remains and memories associated with the places where the poet’s beloved maiden used to dwell or they meet each other. From a later retrospective point of view, the poet enlivens the emotions and conversations used to occur between him and his beloved in those places as he revisits them. In the case of Tarafa’s experience, he defends himself against his relatives who deserted him because of his drinking and spendthrift. He claims that one day these people will realize how they have been mistaken.

14 *Thamama* is the title of the poem Southey intended to use before he changed it to *Thalaba*.

15 In *A Defense of Poetry* (1840), Shelley strongly underpins the role of poetry in disseminating revolutionary thinking. He once declares that, "We [poets] have more moral, political and historical wisdom that we know how to reduce into practice; … We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life: our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest" (74). In the "Preface" to *The Revolt*, Shelley aligns his purpose in the poem with this premise. He asserts that the poem is "an experiment on the temper of the public mind, as to how far a thirst for a happier condition of moral and political society survives, among the enlightened and refined, the tempests which have shaken the age in which we live" (iv). However, he reveals his doubt on the success of the poem. He declares that the poem "is an attempt from which I scarcely dare to expect success, and in which a writer of established fame might fail without disgrace" (iv).

16 In *The Magic Plan: The Growth of Shelley's Thought* (1936), Carl Grabo argue that Shelley's transitional politics makes the poem lose its intellectual rigor and turn to be "emotional" (224).

17 In a letter Shelley dedicates to Godwin, he writes, "I felt the precariousness of my life and resolved to leave a record of myself. Much of what the volume contains was written with the feeling … [of] a dying man" (qtd. in Brocking 2).

18 In "The Shelleys and the Idea of 'Europe,'" Paul Stock discusses the poem's commentary on the post-revolutionary Europe as well as its definition of an ideal future of the continent. The poem, Stock writes, underlines Shelley's "universal vision" of this ideal future that is applicable in the West and the rest of the world.

19 Contextual information about *The Revolt* gives further proofs on the un-dualistic world it depicts. The poem's title, 'The Revolt of Islam', is not its original one but a second one Shelley uses after he has revised the poem. The poem was firstly published on November 21, 1817, as *Laon and Cythna; or, The Revolution of the Golden City: A vision of the Nineteenth Century.* In a letter to Tom Moore on Dec. 19, 1817 Shelley writes,

> The present edition of *Laon and Cythna* is to be suppressed, and it will be republished in about a fortnight under the title of *The Revolt of Islam* with some alterations which consist in little else that the substitution of the words 'friend' or 'lover' for that of 'brother' and 'sister' … that peculiarity, contrary to my intention, revolts and shocks many who might be inclined to sympathize with me in my general views—As soon as I discovered that this effect was produced by the circumstance alluded to, I hastened to cancel it." (qtd. In Brocking 13)

20 In *Radical Orientalism: Rights, Reform and Romanticism* (2015), Gerard Cohen-Vrignaud believes that *The Revolt* does not yield East-West oppositional paradigms. Rather, the poem's world, as Cohen-Vringuad writes, is "freed from all class and ethnic markers, the raced, impoverished bodies of the Ottoman Empire here attain a generality that will appeal to the broadest readership. As we have seen, this effacement of sociocultural specificity was intentional" (86).

21 Naji Oeijan and Elham Nilchian, who I engage with in this arena, and Naji Parvin Lolio in "Hafize and the Language of Love in Nineteenth-Century English and American Poetry" (2010) mention *Alastor* as example of Shelley's influence by Persian mysticism.

22 Nilchian mentions some of the Persian poets' names, Nezami Ganjavi (1141-1209), Jalal ud-Din Mohammad Balkhi (1207-1273) known in Iran as Maulavi and in the West as Rumi,

Shams ed-Din Mohammad Hafez Shirazi (1325-1389), and Nour ud-Din Abd ur-Rahman Jami (1414-1492) whom Shelley has read and influenced by their mystical philosophy.

23 Oueijan argues that what increases British Romantic writers' interest in Islamic mystical notions of individualism or "self-illumination" and resistance to organized dogmas in Islamic mysticism other than Christian mysticism is their political associations. He writes, "Much Like the romantics, almost all of Sufi mystics represented a spiritual revolution against orthodox religious authorities, which accused them of being heretics" (128). Oueijan ends his discussion by proclaiming that "if Romanticism is a spiritual revolution against orthodoxy, then one could coin Sufism as an early form of Eastern Romanticism; or, even better. one may consider Romanticism as a moderate form of Sufism" (135-36).

24 All the versions of "Book V" before 1839 refer the dreamer in Wordsworth's tale to a "studious friend," but in the 1850 version, that I quote from in this chapter, Wordsworth scribes it as his own experience. Some readers have taken the dream as an authentic "autobiographical" account of the poet himself. But, in "Wordsworth's Dream of Poetry and Science: *The Prelude*, V," Jane Worthington Smyser contends that Wordsworth's friend is Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In contrast, in "Robert Southey and The Prelude's Arab Dream," David Chandler thinks of Robert Southey as Wordsworth's friend.

25 In *The Mind of A Poet* (1941), Raymond Dexter Havens, as well as Hartman in *Wordsworth's Poetry: 1787- 1814* (1964) whose reading of the book owes much to Havens, maintains that "Book V" "confessedly gives no adequate consideration" of its subject, "Books" (376), and it is instead impeded by thematic "drifts" and fluctuations that, according to Havens, incurs disunity upon the narrative.

26 Such correlation between the prologue and the subsequent “Dream of the Arab” leads use to hold that the “drifts” the poet undergoes in “Book V” retain a sort of organization. In “A Reading of *The Prelude*, Book V,” W. G. Stobie, contrary to Havens’ objection, argues that “Book V” is not an “autobiographical” account of the poet himself. Rather, “The subject of Book V, then, is books, not William Wordsworth. Its thesis is that books form a second nature, that for the realization of man’s potentialities they constitute a force inferior only to nature itself-and, as he added in a late correction, God’s “pure Word by miracle revealed” (366) as Stobie puts it.

27 In his “Essay on the Art, Called Imitative” (1772), Sir William Jones also makes many references to Arabic poetry, poets and context to supplement his theory on poetry as an imitation of passion, not actions” and how passion comes from the poet’s intercourse and description of the “*sublime* and *beautiful”* natural objects.

28 Some writers find in *The Revolt* rich and dense political and intellectual insights to comment on the Arab Spring. In a newspaper article entitled, “Shelley’s Arab Spring” published in 2011, the writer contends that Shelley’s *The Revolt* “strangely foretold” the situations in Cairo, Tripoli and Bahrain in 2011.

29 Shelley’s “Preface” to *The Revolt* reveals his discomfort toward the general temperament of his public and political opinion. In commenting on literary criticism of his time, Shelley condemns that fact that it “never presumed to assert an understanding of its own: it has always, unlike true science, followed, not preceded the opinion of mankind” (xvii). Shelley poses important questions: should the writers and intellectuals write what the public really likes to read or hear? Or, should they “fearlessly write[s],” to use his words, on what he or she feels content about without considering the needs, aspirations or circumstances of his public audience? In his review of *The Revolt* that appeared on Edinburgh Magazine on January 1819, John Gibson

Lockhart censures what he calls the poem's "pernicious purposes," which derives its impulses in Lockhart's view from, "A pernicious system of opinion concerning man and his moral government, a superficial audacity of unbelief, an overflowing abundance of uncharitableness towards almost the whole of his race, and a disagreeable measure of assurance and self-conceit" (115). As well, in his review of *The Revolt* that appeared on The Quarterly Review, April 1819, John Taylor Coleridge describes the poems' experiment as "hazardous and daring" because it, Taylor writes, "perverts all the gifts of his nature, and does all the injury, both public and private, which his faculties enable him to perpetrate" (124).

30 Shelley's *The Revolt*, for instance, tackles political division and the impossibility of reformative revolts as a global issue that speaks and relates to the East and West, happens in the past, has replications in the present and possible repeats itself in the future. This flexibility problematizes John Taylor Coleridge's narrow conception of the poem's social civilizing perspective in his review when he writes, "We are Englishmen, Christians, free, and independent; we ask Mr. Shelley how his case applies to us?" (129).

31 It is possible to read Brontë's *Villette*, like Southey's *Thalaba,* as an autobiography in which she self-defends and explain the grounds of her revision of *Jane Eyre*.

32 Lucy's words translate as, "Long live England, History and Heroes! Down with France, Fiction and Fobs!" (Brontë 615).

33 In his chapter on *Mansfield Park* from *The Opposing Self; Nine Essays in Criticism* (1955), Lionel Trilling states that *Mansfield Park* is "the most cited novel by Austin antagonists" (125). He explains the reason behind this by making his well-known statement that, "Nobody, I believe, has ever found it possible to like the heroine of *Mansfield Park*" (129).

34 Vashti was a Persian queen renowned for her beauty. She has rebelled against her husband, King Ahasuerus, who ordered her to appear before princes and people, so they can see how beautiful she is during a feast he served. She did not comply to her husband's request. The King then has ordered a decree entailed "every man should bear rule in his own house" (Brontë 610).

35 "That does not matter. A superb woman – an imperial figure, Junoesque, but a person I would not want in a wife, daughter or sister. You will not cast even one more glance in that direction" (Brontë 608).

36 The narrator, Lucy, describes to the reader the model of four women that Mr. Paul directs her to observe as the following:

> The first represented a 'Jeune Fille,' coming out of a church-door, a missal in her hand, her dress very prim, her eyes cast down, her mouth pursed up - the image of a most villanous little precocious she-hypocrite. The second, a 'Mariee,' with a long white veil, kneeling at a prie-dieu in her chamber, holding her hands plastered together, finger to finger, and showing the whites of her eyes in a most exasperating manner. The third, a 'Jeune Mere,' hanging disconsolate over a clayey and puffy baby with a face like an unwholesome full moon. The fourth, a 'Veuve,' being a black woman, holding by the hand a black little girl, and the twain tudiously surveying an elegant French monument, set up in a corner of some Pere la Chaise. (277-78)

37 In their chapter on *Villette* entitled, "The Buried Life of Lucy Snowe" from *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (2000), Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar agree on the point that *Villette* is "Charlotte Brontë's most overtly and despairing feminist novel" (399). They also agree that the story of Lucy Snowe "is perhaps the most moving and terrifying account of female deprivation" (400). However,

Gilbert and Gubar believe that Lucy is the most blamed for her crisis. This is because she, unlike Jane Eyre, fails to handle her life's hardships and misfortunes she went through. Gilbert and Gubar attribute this failure to Lucy's internal defect. Lucy, as Gilbert and Gubar put it, "to some extent . . . is bound by the limits of her own mind-- a dark and narrow cell" (401).

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