

THE ORIENT AND THREE VICTORIAN TRAVELLERS:
KINGLAKE, BURTON AND PALGRAVE

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY IN THE VICTORIAN STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER.

FEBRUARY

1989

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PREFACE

The majority of Victorian travellers to the Middle East viewed Orientals through their ideology which was influenced by the idea of the Empire and a European feeling of racial superiority. They wrote at a time when science, in general, and social sciences, in particular, and their military power endowed them with an articulated sense of themselves and "Others". They were writing under the spell of the Empire; Christianity and its zeal for missionary endeavours; and science and its new theories.

This thesis is concerned with the travel writings of three Victorian travellers to the Middle East, Alexander William Kinglake, Sir Richard Francis Burton and William Gifford Palgrave. Its main aim is to show how the three travellers viewed the Orient through their own ideology which was tainted by the idea of the Empire and the European feeling of racial superiority and how such ideology limited their actual observations to the extent that they expressed in their literary works on the Orient more of their own ideology than the reality of the Orient. The thesis will, therefore, argue that their works were not so much knowledge of the "reality" of the Orient, as an expression of their ideology in relation to non-Europeans and of the writers themselves and their unique sensibility. It will also show how their writings reveal more of their inner conflicts and psychological reaction to certain happenings and become more literary to the extent that they wrote a species of "fiction"; how they did much to create a blurred image of the Orient in the nineteenth-century British mind; and how they added practically nothing to the European knowledge of Arabia, though certainly to the literature on Arabia.

The thesis consists of two parts comprising in all five chapters and a conclusion. The first two chapters are introductory ones dealing with the Europeans' image of the Orient till the nineteenth century and the main factors which encouraged travel and exploration in the Victorian era, a period characterized by constant and rapid changes in economic circumstances, social customs and intellectual atmosphere, and of much interests in the East. The three other chapters deal respectively with Kinglake's *Eothen*, Burton's *Pilgrimage*, and Palgrave's *Central and Eastern Arabia*. These chapters analyze the way the nineteenth-century European ideology directed and limited the three travellers' observations in relation to the Orient.

My interest in this topic started with my first reading of Montesquieu's *Persian*

Letters. That was in 1984 when I was doing my diploma course in cross-cultural studies at Essex University. With my reading of Said's *Orientalism*, Foucault's notion of discourse, and Fanon's analysis of the white/black relationship, while I was doing my M.A course in sociology of literature at Essex University in 1985, my interest developed and established itself. At this stage I wish to acknowledge with thanks the efforts of Dr. Peter Hulme for his advice and encouragement which helped me in drafting my proposal for this thesis. I wish also to thank Elaine Jordan of Essex University who encouraged me on my topic. I am also indebted to her course on the nineteenth-century novel and poetry.

I wish to acknowledge with special gratitude the efforts of Dr. W.H.Brock, my thesis advisor, who helped with concrete criticism to widen the scope and references of this work. I also wish to thank the other advisor, Dr. Allan Strachan, for his suggestions and for being a sounding board to my ideas. I am also indebted to Dr. J. Shattock's lectures on Victorian bibliography and to Dr. John Scott's and Dr. Christopher Dandeker's lectures on Victorian social structure. I wish also to thank Henriette Donner, a Canadian church critic, with whom I had fruitful discussions on missionary work and whose suggestions contributed to my knowledge of missionary theorizations. My thanks are also due to the members of the Islamic Foundation at Leicester who let me feel free in using their library. My thanks are also due to efficient staff of the inter-library loan service; to Mr. David Welding and Mr. Rashid Siddiqui of the Library of Leicester University; and to Mr. Richard Mobbs and Miss Pam Gibson of the Computer Centre.

Finally I wish to thank Aleppo [Halab] University and the Syrian Government for a financial scholarship.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ORIENT: A CHANGING IMAGE

Over a century ago, in *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*, R.L. Stevenson coined one of the most treasured quotations in the English language:

"I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move." (*Travels* (1879))

Such purposeless travel speaks much more of some English travellers to Europe (though arguably Stevenson travelled because of his health). But for most Victorian travellers to the Orient before and after Stevenson, although movement could be both an attraction or deterrent, travel was made purposefully. The factors which motivated travellers to journey the Orient in the nineteenth century, to be discussed in the next chapter, varied from one traveller to another. The three Victorian travellers Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave, who will be studied in detail in this thesis, toured the Orient, "not to go anywhere, but to go", for different reasons. Kinglake, a gentleman whose travel was part of the gentry's practice to widen his experiences, was escaping momentarily the industrial European society; Burton's initial travel was made for scientific purposes, aiming at exploring the Empty Abode, a plan which he abandoned and replaced for a pilgrimage to Meccah and a visit to Al-Madinah; and Palgrave travelled with a religio-political mission.

By the time Kinglake, Burton, and Palgrave made their journeys, the scene of a European and an Englishman touring the Orient or writing on the Orient was not something unfamiliar to European and English readers. Many Europeans had preceded them and described in details most aspects of Oriental life, thus spoiling them from the opportunity of making novel contributions to Oriental life. But rare were those who wrote in a subjective, personal and literary style as Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave did, and rare were those who expressed in their literary texts on the Orient their European ideology as Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave did.

The three Victorian travellers to the Orient, as most others, disclosed more of

nineteenth-century treatment of non-Europeans and Oriental populations than the "reality" of the Orient. They were highly influenced by imperialism and a sense of European racial superiority. They also, produced literary works on the Orient in which they expressed more of their ideology or world-view than their actual observations. An author, according to Goldmann, expresses in his work the world-view or ideology of his social group, rather than reality.

Lucien Goldmann, the founder of 'genetic structuralism' who wrote both on philosophy and literature, developed specific concepts and analytical terms for the study of artistic, literary or philosophical texts. His main thesis concentrates on the idea of the writer's 'world vision'. He believes that certain privileged social groups, in our case the European traveller, possess a superior form of ideology he calls a 'world-view'. This world-view is, according to him, the expression of such a group in society "whose thought, feeling and behaviour were oriented toward an overall organization of interhuman relations and of relations between man and nature".¹ He also found world-views to be "social facts", while "great philosophical and artistic works represent the coherent and adequate expressions of these world-views".² Goldmann regards all cultural products as social, rather than individual, products. The author, according to him, does not create the world vision or mental categories of the group, but brings to the point of maximum coherence the collective thought of the social group to which he belongs. Thus Goldmann is not concerned with the thought of one individual, but with the collective mental structure of the group of which the particular author or philosopher is a member, and which the individual expresses in his work. The structure of a work, as such, appears to Goldman to express the mental structure of the author's social group rather than reality.

An unswerving theorem of Goldmann's statements on the social analysis of culture is that the subject of research, that is the author, is both social and individual or what he calls 'transindividual'. The subject of all Goldmann's studies is both individual and social. It is individual in the sense that he takes individual works as the starting point of his analysis, but his criticism of those works is always designed to result in further understanding not merely of the works themselves but of the society from which they derived. He is not concerned with the author *per se*, but only with the *author as a member of a social group*, and in a wider sense *as a member of a society*. Nevertheless, Goldmann does not deny that a literary or philosophical work expresses an individual's thought and feeling, but he regards any detailed account of an author's personal views or biographical circumstances as irrelevant to his analysis.

Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave, as was the case with the majority of Victorian

¹ Lucien Goldmann, *Cultural Creation in Modern Society* (Oxford, 1977), p.76.

² Lucien Goldmann, *The Human Sciences and Philosophy* (London, 1969), p.120.

travellers to the Middle East, viewed the Orient within their own ideological concept of non-Europeans which was influenced by the idea of the Empire and a feeling of European racial superiority. Man in Britain in the nineteenth century had a precise and an articulate sense of his superiority over men of other races and of women and children of his own race.³ With the rise of race science and imperialism, the Orient was viewed as a place to which European rule was to extend and the Arabs were approached as a *race*, a non-European race inferior to the Europeans. Burton's mania with race science, for instance, made him criticize Burckhardt for not producing a physical portrait of the Arabs and apply the race science of phrenology to account for the physical structure of the Arab-Bedowins. He also found them to be "half-naked bandits" and suggested subjecting them as well as the city dwellers to the British iron rule of law and order.

Unlike eighteenth-century Orientalists, scholars and travellers, who approached the Orient under the influence of nationalist thought and the spirit of academic research and produced an appealing picture of the Arab, the Victorians were writing under the influence of Christianity and its zeal for missionary endeavours; science with its new theories; and the spell of the Empire. It was this idea of the Empire which made Said argue that Orientalism in the nineteenth century, or writing on the Orient, was at the service of imperialism.

Taking roughly the late eighteenth century as the starting point of modern Orientalism, that is, the period of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, Said argued that Orientalism became more than a field of study in the Western world, but rather a "corporate institution"⁴ for dealing with the Orient, encompassing a set of generalizations, structures, relationships, texts, the whole forming a discourse, which defined the Orient and Oriental for the West. He also found that the British in India, and Napoleon in Egypt, recognizing the potential in employing Orientalists for their empire-building programme, linked the Orientalist intellectual tradition with outright political domination. Orientalism, in the nineteenth century, appeared to him to have been subjected to imperialism and later to "positivism, utopianism, historicism, Darwinism, racism, Freudianism, Marxism, Spenglerism".⁵ Orientalism, according to him, tended to establish a distinction between the Orient and the Occident with certain shared assumptions (or discourse) such as Eastern inferiority and Western superiority. This discourse imposed limits upon thought about the Orient: "no one writing, thinking, or acting on the

³ For more details on the impact of racial theories on the Victorian man see William Frederick Bynum's *Time's Noblest Offspring: The Problem of Man in the British Natural Historical Sciences 1800-1863*, (Ph.D, Cambridge University, England, 1974).

⁴ E.W.Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin, 1985), p.3. First published, 1978.

⁵ Ibid, p.43.

Orient could do so without taking account of limitation on thought and action imposed by Orientalism". It is "because of Orientalism", Said argued, "the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought or action". He also made it clear that one should not "say that Orientalism unilaterally determines what can be said about the Orient, but that it is the whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that particular entity 'the Orient' is in question".⁶ The relation between Orientalism and imperialism made most European travellers view the Orient as a European colony and limit their observations to the part of Eastern life which could be put at the service of imperialism.

By the time Alexander William Kinglake came to the scene of the Orient, the idea of Oriental inferiority and the image of the Arabs as derived from the *Nights* was already in circulation among imaginative writers. Moreover, the theme of the Orient as a European colony had already been hit upon. The French travellers Chateaubriand and Lamartine, who were of great influence on him, had already eyed the Orient as a likely place for the realization of the French colonial ambition which was cut short by the British after Napoleon's expedition to Egypt in 1798. Sir Walter Scott's *The Talisman* recalled the medieval scene of the struggle between Muslims and Christians and put forward the evil image of the Arab, the Saracens, who were traced back to Eblis, the Muslim Lucifer. Disraeli's *Tancred* established the idea of an Oriental desire to be annexed to the British. Kinglake subsequently found this to be a strong desire in the Syrian and predicted the occupation of Egypt. Warburton found the same desire in the Egyptians, and Burton believed the British destined to occupy not only Egypt but Arabia as well. Doughty concurred with this line. Palgrave's imperialism was even more practical in that he exported the idea of Arab nationalism to separate the Arabs from the Turk as a first step to secure the European imperial interest. Blunt, who came to the scene in the 1880s with an anti-imperialist zeal and enthusiasm for Arab nationalism, nevertheless found himself in a tradition which obliged him to suggest the British presence in Arabia as a protectorate of the Caliphate, which he recommended to rule there. With such a huge tradition in the literary field only, in the twentieth century Lawrence came to take from Palgrave and Blunt the idea of Arab nationalism and Philby the idea of the charismatic Arab leader which he claimed to have found in Ibn Saud.

Most nineteenth-century writers on the Orient, whether travellers, imaginative writers or politicians expressed in their texts more of their ideology in relation to non-Europeans than the reality of the Orient. It was this ideology that made the representation of the image of the Orient in the nineteenth century so very different from that of previous ages. The British and European reactions to the East, represented in the Arabs and Islam, had its roots in the early Middle Ages, represented by the

⁶ Ibid, p.3.

Crusaders. Since then the West had formed a tradition of its own and had its own characteristic views of the Orient and Oriental populations. This tradition had a natural variety within itself and had been modified from one historical period to another in accordance with the ideology which shaped that particular era. This change or modification was almost always related to the changes and developments in European society, rather than the changes in Oriental society itself. It is worth mentioning here that we are concerned with the general changes or modifications during a certain period or periods rather than individual cases and exact dates. At any time and everywhere the old and the new merge inextricably while changes take place at different pace with varying intensity. It is also worth mentioning that some individuals could live in a certain age and yet belong in their attitude to a previous one.

In the Middle Ages, and immediately before the rise and consolidation of the idea of nationalism in the eighteenth century, when man's loyalty was to his church or religion, the Western attitude towards the Orient was formed through Christian ideology. The Orient was looked at as the world of Islam and a deformed image of Islam as the enemy and the antithesis of the Christian world was established in the conscious European mind. In the eighteenth century when the idea of nationalism originated and consolidated itself, and with development of the spirit of academic research, the Orient came to mean to the European the homeland of the Arab *nation* whose religion happened to be Islam. The Arabs were approached as a nation characterized by independence and liberty while Islam itself was approached academically. It was the European ideology, rather than the reality of the Orient, which had the largest role in constructing the image of the Orient since the Middle Ages.

EARLY EUROPEAN TRAVELLERS ON THE ORIENT

The medieval representation of the Arabs and Islam as portrayed in the chroniclers of the Crusaders dominated European thought till the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It was influenced by the religious spirit of the age and was shaped by religious bigotry and prejudice against Islam. Islam was expounded as an Antichrist, an invented religion falling short of Christianity, a sum of heresy and a sensual religion with laxity in sexual matters. Muhammad was pictured as a licentious deceiver, fraudulent, hypocrite, an ambitious schemer, a bandit and a lecher. There was a widespread belief that the Muslims were idolators who were used to the worship of idols. And the Scriptural picture of the Arabs as wild men of the desert who sprung from Ismael was entrenched in the Westerners' mind. Many legends about Muhammad were in circulation ranging from his sexual promiscuity to him being a God and worshipped by the Muslims.⁷ The early travellers' conception of the Islamic

⁷ For more details on the image of Islam in the West in the Middle Ages see
(Footnote continued)

world was that of the Saracenic world. A world forged out of a relation of bitter enmity, of fear and aggression protracted over centuries, and the European myth of the Saracenic world as the dark shadow-world, the anti-world to the Western Christian world of light, was widely in circulation. The accounts of the sixteenth-century traveller, Varthema, and the seventeenth-century traveller, Pitts, express some of the Medieval conception of the East.

As early as 1503, the Italian traveller Ludovico Varthema took leave from Rome. He made for Venice, whence he sailed to Alexandria and then to Cairo. After a few days he took leave for Syria where he visited some cities. In Damascus he decided to join the pilgrimage caravan and thus visit Mecca and Medina, the cities whose secrets and physical characteristics had been mysterious since the advent of Islam. He began to mix with the Damscene and speak Arabic. He described Damascus in some detail, especially in relation to its past Christianity. He set out from Damascus on the March to Al-Madina and from there to Meccah by forming one of the voluntary Mamluk escort of the Hajj caravan. He succeeded in reaching there by way of land. Other later European travellers, Joseph Pitts, Ali Bey, Giovanni Finati, Burckhardt and Burton, went and returned by the Red Sea. Varthema was not a geographer; he was rather an adventurer whose main interest was in telling his personal story.⁸ Nevertheless, he recorded a detailed description of Al-Hijaz and of the differences between Eastern and Western populations.

On entering Al-Madinah, his principal object of interest was the tomb of the Muslims' Messenger. His description of its interior as well as its exterior was verified by Burton whose comment was: "Nothing can be more correct than this part of Barthema's description (II, 339). Varthema was the first European who corrected the widely believed legend at that time that Muhammad was buried at Mecca rather than Madina and that his tomb was made of metal and hung amid the air by the attraction of a powerful magnet. He assured his readers that this was neither true nor had any likeness to the truth: "there is no coffin or iron or steel, nor loadstone, nor any mountain within four miles".⁹ From Al-Madina he resumed his journey to Meccah and made the Pilgrimage.

⁷(continued)

Norman Daniel's *The Arab and Medieval Europe*, (London, 1975) and *Islam and the West: The Making of an Image*, (Edinburgh, 1960). See also D.A.H. Al-Jubouri's *The Medieval Idea of the Saracen, as Illustrated in English Literature, Spectacle and Sport*. Ph.D thesis, Leicester University, 1972.

⁸ For a full account of Varthema's adventures see his *The Travels of Lodovico di Varthema*, translated by G. P. Badger (Burt Franklin Publisher, New York, 1863). Varthema's *Travels* was translated from Latin and published in English by Richard Eden in his *The History of Trauayle* (London, 1577).

⁹ *Travels of Ludovico Di Varthema* p.31; see also p.25.

Varthema's account of his journey discloses the simplicity of the Europeans' view of the Orient and a lack of interest in conveying the spiritual meaning of Islamic practices. This was caused either by lack of knowledge or by the fact of his being a non-Muslim. In Al-Madina he was exhausted by the "vanities of Mohamet" and too tired to go to Meccah, the city "the curse of God has been laid upon... for the country produces neither grass nor trees, nor even one thing".¹⁰ Varthema's report in relation to the differences between the Orient and the Occident was too simplistic in comparison with that of the nineteenth century. One of the most easily observed differences between the peoples of the West and the East was the tendency of the latter to wear little or no clothing. The Bedowins he met were naked, and had no other arms than stings, and the Jews also "go naked, and are in height five or six spans, and have a feminine voice... They are circumcised, and confess that they are Jew; and if they can get a Moor into their hands, they skin him alive".¹¹ Another difference noted here was that the Orientals lacked an adequate system of justice and governmental structure which Europeans had. A third difference exposed by Varthema was the dark colour of the Oriental as a result, he thought, of the heat of the sun.

Unlike Varthema who was an adventurer with little knowledge of Islam, the seventeenth-century English traveller Joseph Pitts published his *A Faithful Account of the Religion and the Manners of the Mahometians* in 1704 professedly to enlighten the "Christian world on the full deformity of Islam", and he hoped that his reader would "take the hint, and learn thereby to "bless the Goodness of God" that he had "continued his *Gospel* to them, while such a vast part of the *Globe* is devoted to a vile and debauched imposter."¹²

Pitts was a sailor born at Exeter in 1663. In the course of his travels he was captured at sea by Muslim pirates of Algerian origin. He was sold as a slave and was forced to convert to Islam in Algiers. This enabled him to gain access to the mosques and study the religious ceremonies of the Muslims. He was sold many times. His last owner was to make a pilgrimage to Mecca and decided that Pitts was to accompany him. They set off to Alexandria and from thence to Cairo. In the latter city he described the debauchery of the Egyptians and the Turks and the latter's habit of being addicted to "the cursed and unnatural sin of sodomy". He also described the whores of the city plying their trade from doorways, and parading along the thoroughfares. From Egypt he sailed to Jiddah and then to Mecca and Al-Madina. Burton found Pitts' description of Meccah and Al-Madinah to be "accurate in the main points, and

10 Ibid, p.37.

11 Ibid, pp.23-24.

12 Joseph Pitts, *A Faithful Account of the Religion and Manners of the Mahometians*, (London, 1810), preface. First published 1704.

though tainted with prejudice and bigotry, he is free from superstition and credulity".¹³ Bidwell concurs with Burton's judgement saying that Pitts' tale is "that of an honest Englishman, full of prejudices and distrust of foreigners but is accurate and truthful."¹⁴ Al-Islam did not appeal to Pitts; he called its Messenger a "bloody imposter" and accused the Muslims of worshipping idols in Meccah.¹⁵ Nevertheless he gave the first detailed account of the Muslim pilgrimage through Western eyes.

Like Varthema he dismissed the idea of Muhammad's tomb being suspended by force of loadstone magnets. Among the current myths which Pitts felt himself to dispel was the Story of the *Pigeon*, which is said to have been taught by Mahomet to pick corn out of his ears, and which the vulgar took to be the whispers of the Holy Ghost.¹⁶

Although Pitts and Varthema were not interested in Islam, they nowhere expressed any European material interest in the Oriental-Arab world or any theorized racial attitude towards the non-Europeans; nor were they agents of any governmental institute whatsoever. They expressed a religious feeling of prejudice against Islam inherited from the Middle Ages. This feeling predominated in European and British society till the early eighteenth century when British scholars and Orientalists initiated their academic studies with the aim of understanding Eastern culture free from prejudices and religious bigotry.

SOME EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ORIENTALISTS, SCHOLARS AND TRAVELLERS ON THE ORIENT

With the development of nationalist thought and academic approach in the eighteenth century,¹⁷ the European view of the Orient underwent considerable changes. The study of Arabic and Islamic history by British scholars and Orientalists, who depended on authentic information and followed academic ways of research, began to

¹³ Burton's *Pilgrimage*, I,358, Appendix V, Vol.II, pp.358-389., cites the "Pilgrimage of Joseph Pitts" as annotated by Burton.

¹⁴ Robin Bidwell, *Travels in Arabia* (London, 1976), p.27

¹⁵ Pitts, *A Faithful Account*, p.435 & 404.

¹⁶ Ibid, Preface, p.x.

¹⁷ The full manifestation of modern nationalism occurred in seventeenth-century England. This nationalism became identified, to a degree unknown anywhere else, with the concept of individual liberty which found its greatest expression in the writing of John Milton (1608-1674). With him nationalism was not a struggle for collective independence from an "alien yoke", it was the affirmation of individual freedom from authority, the self assertion of personality in face of its own government or church, "the deliverance of man from the yoke of slavery and superstition". See Hans Kohn, *Nationalism: Its meaning and History*, (London, 1955), pp.16-17.

distance and free itself from the blast of religious bigotry which had pervaded since the Middle Ages. A knowledge of Arabic became, for the Orientalists Simon Ockley, George Sale and Sir William Jones, an instrument of scholarship in its own right. Their works began to show a real interest in, and sometimes enthusiasm for, Arab history and culture

Nationalist thought, with its enthusiasm for liberty, its humanitarian character, and its emphasis upon the individual and his rights as above all national divisions, influenced the European attitude towards the Orient. Nationalism expressed the spirit of the eighteenth century in "its emphasis upon the individual and his rights and in its participation in the humanitarian character of the age of enlightenment".¹⁸ In its purest form nationalism does not recognize a subject called race; every nation, according to this theory, has 'a genius' all its own. National pride, as such, which leads to national independence, is a sentiment appropriate to any group of people which might legitimately be said to constitute a nation. Burckhardt found the "Arabian" to be "a very proud nation, high spirited nation"¹⁹ and found many good consequences resulting from this pride "without which a people cannot expect to sustain its rank among nations. It has prevented the people of Mekka from sinking so deep into slavery".²⁰

Nationalism had, indeed, marked the beginning of an unprecedented refinement in human relations, especially the feeling of the unity of mankind. "If I knew something useful to my nation but ruinous to another, I would not propose it to my prince, because I am a human being before I am a Frenchman, because I am by necessity a human being, whereas I am a Frenchman by chance," said Montesquieu; and followed it up with a similar statement: "If I knew something useful to my fatherland which were prejudicial to Europe, or something which were useful to Europe and prejudicial to mankind, I would consider it a crime".²¹ European thought in the eighteenth century was crystallized around the concepts of liberty, humanity and patriotism, and writers laboured hard to prove the existence of such virtue even in ancient Greek and Arab civilizations. They searched Arab history and culture with a new ideology and produced an attractive picture of the Arab.

The eighteenth-century Orientalists and Arabists such as Simon Ockley, George Sale, Sir William Jones, and the historian Edward Gibbon, as well as travellers such as Niebuhr and Burckhardt tended to produce a rather appealing portrait of the Arab. Their works reduced the prejudices of the Middle Ages to the extent that in the closing decade of the eighteenth century there was a gradual consolidation of the Arab's

¹⁸ Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, (New York, 1951), p.17.

¹⁹ J.L.Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, (London, 1968), p.51. First published 1829.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p.202.

²¹ Quoted in Hans Kohn's *The Idea of Nationalism*, p. 228.

literary reputation for independence, liberty, hospitality and faithfulness. But such ideas were to make less impression on nineteenth-century travellers.

Simon Ockley (1678-1720) and George Sale (1697-1736) were the two most influential English Arabists of the eighteenth century. The former's *History of the Saracens*, published in 1708 and 1718, affirmed that Arab History was a legitimate study in its own right and made it attractive to the general reader and stimulated the student to further research. It formed for generations the main source of the average notions of early Muslim history. For example Edward Gibbon used it freely. In his preface to the *History of the Saracens*, Ockley criticized those writers who were insufficiently acquainted with the Arabs and who entertained a mean opinion of them "looking upon them [the Arab] as mere barbarians". He considered this mistaken notion to have hindered all further inquiries. Ockley found that the understanding of Arab affairs to be "no less if not necessary than a knowledge of the history of any people whatsoever, who have flourished since the decline of the Roman empire". Such understanding was necessary, he noted, not only because they "had as great men, and performed as considerable action, as any other nation under heaven; but what is of more concern to us Christian, they were the first ruin of the eastern Church".²² His preface to his translation of *The Sentence of Ali* (1717), contained a spirited eulogy of the Arabs and their literature. He found the Arabs to "have wisdom by inheritance, derived from their forefathers through numerous generations" and to be "tenacious of their ancient customs, and to retain the precepts of their ancestors; they couch more solid wisdom under single aphorism, than some European writer would put into a system".²³ He also added that some people were of the opinion that the "wisdom of a nation may be judged of by the sententiousness of their proverbs and sayings in common use among them: in this the Arabs excel all nations".²⁴ Arberry, a historian of orientalism, noted that Ockley's historical writings "revolutionized the treatment of Islamic civilization in Europe" and that his attitude towards Muslims shocked readers painfully", and added that "his decision to allow an Arab to tell the story of the Arabs gave Europe its first authentic and substantial taste of the Arab viewpoint touching the wars with Byzantium and Persia."²⁵ The Introduction to the recent *Cambridge History of Islam* takes Ockley's *History* and Sale's "Preliminary Discourse" to be highly important in widening the new understanding of Islam and conveying it to

²² Simon Ockley, *History of the Saracens*, (London, 1848), 5th. ed., p.xvi. First published 1708.

²³ Ockley, *Sentences of Ali*, in the same volume of *History of the Saracens* (London, 1848), p.337.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p.338.

²⁵ A.J.Arberry, *Oriental Essays: Portrait of Seven Scholars* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1960), pp.12, 31.

a less academic readership.²⁶

George Sale, another eighteenth-century orientalist, tried to deal with Arab history in terms of Arab sources; moreover, he let Muslim commentators on the sacred text speak for themselves. The sole authority for facts, according to him, must be the Muslims themselves. He cited a wide range of Muslim authors such as Al-Zamakhshari, Al-Baydawi and Jalal AL-Din, all of whom were Quoranic commentators.

At an early period Sale turned his attention to the study of Arabic. In 1734 he published a translation of the Quoran, and had prefaced this with a "Preliminary Discourse". Sale's "Preliminary Discourse" and notes displayed a remarkable acquaintance not only with the works of European writers upon the Arabs and their history, but also with native Arab literature. It also displayed to Europeans such a sympathy with the Arabs and Islam that he earned the reputation of being "half a Musulman". Voltaire stated that he spent twenty-five years among the Arabs, though he did not leave his country according to *The Dictionary of National Biography*. In his "Preliminary Discourse", Sale offered an academic study and showed encyclopedic knowledge of the Arabs and Arabic language. In his preface he made it clear that "if the religious and civil institution of foreign nations are worth our knowledge, those of Muhammad, the lawgiver of the Arabians, and founder of an empire which in less than a century spread itself over a greater part of the world than the Romans were ever masters of, must need be so." He adopted an impartial attitude as he said and avoided what was "vulgarly imagined in a religion [Islam] which has made so surprising a progress".²⁷

It is clear here that Sale approached the Arabs as a nation. He found them to be a very remarkable people who had "preserved their liberty... with very little interruption, from the very Deluge" and that "though very great armies have been sent against them, all attempts to subdue them were unsuccessful".²⁸ Sale also found the European image of the Muslims as worshiping idols to be faulty and defended them. The Muslims, he said, were "far from being idolaters, as some ignorant writers have pretended".²⁹ He was also convinced with the sincerity of Muhammad whose "original design of bringing the pagan Arabs to the knowledge of the true God", according to

²⁶ P.M.Holt, Introduction to *The Cambridge History of Islam*, ed. P.M.Holt, Anne K.S.Lambton and Bernard Lewis, (Cambridge, 1970), p.xvi.

²⁷ George Sale, *The Koran*, (London, 1975) reprint from the 1896 ed, published by K.Paul, London. First published as *The Koran, translated into English immediately from the Arabic, to which is prefixed a Preliminary Discourse*, (London, 1734). p.4.

²⁸ Ibid, p.33.

²⁹ Ibid, p.37.

Sale, was "certainly noble, and highly to be commended".³⁰

Sale's work on the Arabs and Islam most probably affected Edward William Lane and made him travel to the Arab world to gain first-hand knowledge of the Arabs, a point which will be discussed later, and produce a translation of the Quoran. It may have prompted Carlyle to declare that Muhammad was by no means necessarily an imposter, thus reversing the medieval world-picture of Islam. "The rude message [Muhammad] delivered was a real one", Carlyle noted, and the "man's words were not false... no Inanity and Similacrum; a fiery mass of life cast-up from the great bosom of Nature itself".³¹ Watt described Carlyle's lecture on Muhammad as "the first strong affirmation in the whole European literature... of a belief in the sincerity of Muhammad".³²

In Sale's own days, scholars and travellers agreed on some points and differed on others. The former tried to be scientific to weigh evidence and establish facts, the latter drew his conclusions from his own limited but vivid experience. The African traveller James Bruce, for instance, took Sale as an enthusiast of Islam and accordingly criticized him with some disgust:

In my time, I have seen in Britain a spirit of enthusiasm for this book [Quoran], in preference to all others, not inferior to that which possessed Mahomet's followers. Modern unbelievers (Sale and his disciples) have gone every length, but to say directly that it was dictated by the Spirit of God.³³

Sir William Jones, a later eighteenth-century Orientalist gave an attractive picture of the Arabs in his "Discourse on the Arab". The Arabs had ever been his favourites. Of the genuine Arabs he met he wrote that "their eyes are full of vivacity, their speech voluble and articulate, their deportment manly and dignified, their apprehension quick, their minds always present and attentive; with a spirit of independence appearing in the countenance even in the lowest among them."³⁴ He admired the liberty the Arabs enjoyed and found in "the people of Arabia, both on

³⁰ Ibid, p.69. For more details on Sale and Ockley's treatment of Arab history see P.M.Holt "The Treatment of Arab History by Prideaux, Ockley, and Sale", in *Historians of the Middle East*, edited by Bernard Lewis and P.M.Holt, (London, 1962). See also P.M.Holt *The Study of Modern Arab History*, (London, 1965).

³¹ Thomas Carlyle, *On Hero and Hero Worship* (London, 1897), p.46. First published 1840.

³² W. Montgomery Watt, "Carlyle on Muhammad", *The Hibbert Journal*, 53, April, 1955, p.247.

³³ James Bruce, *Travels to Discover the Sources of the Nile, in the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772 and 1773* (London, 1813), Vol.II, p.436. First published 1790.

³⁴ Sir William Jones, "Discourse on the Arabs", in the *Works of Sir William Jones* (London, 1799), Vol.I, p.37.

plains and cities, in republican and monarchical states" to be "eminently civilized for many ages before their conquest of Arabia".³⁵ *Almoalakat*, the seven pre-Islamic odes, which he translated into English, show, according to him, the virtue and vice of the Arab, "their wisdom and their folly" and "what may be constantly expected from men of open hearts and boiling passions, with no law to control, and little religion to restrain".³⁶

The eighteenth-century historian, Edward Gibbon, produced in his the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* an elegant summary of all that was known and thought about the Arab, Arabia and Islam. Gibbon studied ancient literature, especially that of the Latin writers. As for Arabic he expressed his "total ignorance of the Oriental languages", and professed his gratitude to the "learned interpreters, who have transfused their science into Latin, French, and English language".³⁷ Gibbon approached the Arabs in his study as a nation and admired their independence. He found the "perpetual independence of the Arabs" to be "a praise among strangers and natives", and freedom to be "inscribed on the character and country of the Arabs".³⁸ He even produced one of the finest eulogies of Arab liberty when he says:

The slaves of domestic tyranny may vainly exult in their national independence; but the Arab is personally free, and he enjoys, in some degree, the benefit of society, without, forfeiting the prerogatives of nature.... Their spirit, their steps are unconfined, the desert is open, and the tribes and families are held together by mutual and voluntary compact.... In the more simple state of the Arabs the nation is free, because each of her sons disdains a base submission to the will of a master.... The gravity and firmness of the mind is conspicuous in his outward demeanour; his speech is slow, weighty, and concise.³⁹

Gibbon's idea of the Arabs came mainly from Simon Ockley, Greek sources and Niebuhr whose *Travels in Arabia* was an articulate account of Arabia, its people and their way of life. This Dane was the first European traveller to penetrate the interior of the Arabian peninsula.

Carsten Niebuhr was the only survivor of a tragic expedition which set out from Denmark in 1761. This was the first official expedition to be sent from any country to explore the interior of Arabia. The leader of the expedition was Professor Friedrich von Haven, a Danish philologist, an indolent, arrogant and fearful Dane. The other members of the expedition were Peter Forsskal, a Swedish botanist; Christian Carl Kramer, a Danish doctor who was recruited as the party medical officer; George

³⁵ Ibid, p.37.

³⁶ Ibid, p.43.

³⁷ Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (London: Methuen & Co, 1932), p. 311. First published 1776-88.

³⁸ Ibid, pp.318-319.

³⁹ Ibid. pp.320-322.

Wilhelm Baurenfeid, a 32 years old German artist and engraver; and Niebuhr whose duty would be to survey the land they were to explore and make maps- which he did very well. His map of Yemen was one of the remarkable achievements of the Arabian expedition and was to be praised for its accuracy a hundred years hence.

The expedition, which was scientific, aimed at exploring Arabia inland as well as along the coast. The members of the party were instructed to look out for and buy oriental manuscripts on natural history, history and geography, as well as early biblical texts in Hebrew and Arabic. They were selected from different fields and interest to gain as much information as they could. Von Haven was to observe the customs of the Arabs in relation to Scripture, to research into pre-Islamic religion in Arabia, and to search for possible variant versions of the Bible among ancient manuscripts; Dr. Kramer was to report on the diseases of the region, and Arab medical practices; Forsskal was to make collections of natural history specimens, in particular things mentioned in the Bible; and Niebuhr was to map the areas they visited, and to record information on climate, antiquities, population, agriculture, and the economy of the country.

On January 1761 the party sailed from Copenhagen to Alexandria. They stayed there for awhile and in October 1762 they left for Jidda. They disembarked at Jidda and stayed there for six weeks during which Niebuhr investigated the imports and exports of the town, drew a plan of the city and did some surveying outside the town walls. Contrary to their expectations, they found the Arabs friendly. From Jidda they set off to explore of Yemen. During their expedition the members of the party began to drop away one by one victims of malaria. Van Haven died in Mocha, Forsskal in Jerim.

The surviving members of the expedition left Arabia and sailed to India. On the way Baurenfeid and Berggren, the servant, died. By the time they reached Bombay in September 1763 only Niebuhr and Kramer were still alive, and Kramer died in Bombay. Niebuhr stayed in India for about a year, until December 1764, when he embarked again on a small East India Company boat for Muscat to pursue his study of the land and the people. From November 1765 to June 1766 he went underground, adopting Arab dress and changing his name to Abdullah. Then he made his way through Iraq and Syria to Aleppo. He spent another year travelling in Asia Minor and returned via Poland and Germany to Copenhagen where he arrived on November 1767, an almost forgotten man. His *Travels in Arabia* secured for him his reputation as the first traveller to produce a coherent, articulate and detailed report of Arabia.

Niebuhr was not a scholar, but having been on a scientific expedition he tried to be as scientific as he could. He made it clear that since he had time to travel through only a few provinces of Arabia, he sought information concerning the rest from different honest and intelligent Arabs. He also distinguishes clearly between things observed personally and things learned from others. The latter are dealt with in a

section of his book entitled 'Of Arabia in General'.

Niebuhr's image of the Arabs agreed to a large extent with the academic works of his age and his method was closer to the spirit of academic research. As a Dane of the eighteenth century he had none of those racist and imperialist preconceptions which tended to bias and shape the judgement of some nineteenth-century travellers against the Arab. He was rather a nationalist to whom man "is still fond even of the shadow of that liberty, independence, and simplicity, which he has lost by refinement, although they are so congenial to his existence".⁴⁰ He accordingly produced a rather appealing image of the Arab. The Arab, in his account, were ancient people who had preserved their ancient customs and they displayed certain characteristics such as independence, liberty, and simplicity, things which appeared to Niebuhr to illustrate man's natural tendency to goodness:

If any people in the world afford in their history an influence of high antiquity, and of great simplicity of manner, the Arabs surely do. Coming among them, one can hardly help fancying one's self suddenly carried backwards to the ages which succeeded the flood. We are here tempted to imagine ourselves among the old patriarchs, with whose adventures we have been so much amused in our infant days.... Having never been conquered, Arabia has scarcely known any changes, but those produced by the hand of nature; it bears ⁴¹none of the impressions of human fury, which appear in so many places.

The antiquity of the Arabs was also observed, according to Niebuhr, in the primitive form of government which had subsisted among them and which had preserved in all its purity among the Bedouins whose "spirit of liberty" rendered "them incapable of servitude" and whose poverty is "plainly voluntary" because "they prefer liberty to wealth".⁴²

Niebuhr also corrected many European misconceptions in relation to the Orient which he experienced from first-hand knowledge. He denied the existence of eunuchs in Arabia and corrected the idea that the Arab woman was treated like a slave and found her to enjoy a great deal of liberty and power in the family. He also shed light on her right of possessing her own property. On the question of polygamy Niebuhr said:

Polygamy is permitted, indeed, among Mahometans and the delicacy of our ladies is shocked at this idea; but the Arabian rarely avail themselves of the privilege of marrying four lawful wives, and entertaining at the same time any number of female slaves. Non but voluptuaries marry so many wives, and their conduct is blamed by all sober men. Men of sense, indeed, think of this privilege rather troublesome than convenient. A husband is, by law, obliged to treat his wives suitably to ⁴³their condition and to dispense his sources among them with perfect equality.

He also denied the allegation that Muslim force Christians to apostatize from their

⁴⁰ C. Niebuhr, *Travels in Arabia*, in *General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, by J. Pinkerton (London, 1811), Vol.10, p.79.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p.79.

⁴² *Ibid*, pp. 84, 86.

religion and declared that the Arabs preserved the spirit of toleration.⁴⁴

Like Niebuhr, Burckhardt admired the Arabs as a free, hospitable and independent nation. Like him also, and unlike Burton, he was not afflicted with the nineteenth-century obsession with race and imperialism.⁴⁵ Accordingly he approached the Arab, especially the Bedowin who are in his view the pure Arab, as a nation. As a nation they are a noble nation, and one of the noblest nations with whom he ever had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with.⁴⁶ They were seen by him to have been endowed with a collective identity and independence which differentiated them from other nations. This identity and independence will stay pure so long as they keep away from mixing with other nations (of these other nations Burckhardt had in mind the Turks, whom he hated, as well as some other Orientals). "The complete independence the Bedouins enjoy", Burckhardt observed, "has alone enabled them to sustain a national character".⁴⁷ He also found that public spirit and patriotism to be universal among the Bedowins and their sentiment for liberty made them prefer their miserable tents to the palace of the despot; the latter in his mind is the Turk.

John Ludwig Burckhardt was a Swiss of Basle; born in 1784, he studied in England and joined the African Association of London. In 1809 he was engaged by the association to explore the interior part of West Africa from the north. His travels took him from the Upper Euphrates valley and the Syrian Desert fringe to the Sinai Desert; and in Africa up the Nile valley, eastward from Shendi to Suakin; from there he made a pilgrimage to Meccah, returning by way of Madina and Suez to Cairo. His journey to Arabia was one of his long digressions from his proposed plan. He became fascinated by the Oriental-Arab life and stayed there until he died of dysentery in 1817.

He began his preparation for his journey in England by studying Arabic, medicine, astrology and other sciences. In 1809 he set out for Malta and from there he made for Aleppo to perfect his Arabic. He made long journeys to the interior of Syria disguised as a convert to Islam under the name of Sheikh Ibrahim Ibn Abdullah. In 1812 he left Syria for Egypt where, finding no immediate chance of his going to

43 C. Niebuhr, *Travels in Arabia*. In *A General Collection of the Best and most Interesting Voyages and Travels in all Parts of the World* (London, 1810), Vol.x, p.149.

44 Ibid. See p.142.

45 Although Burckhardt travelled to the Arab world in the first decade of the nineteenth century, his thoughts in relation to the Orient belonged to the eighteenth century.

46 J.L.Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys* (London, 1831), Vol.i, p.359.

47 Ibid. Vol.i, p.359.

West Africa, he decided to make a pilgrimage to Meccah.

In 1814 he accomplished the Muslims' pilgrimage to Mecca and visited Al-Madinah. In his journey he travelled as a European claiming to be a Muslim proselyte. Nevertheless, he underwent the danger of being discovered. He took his notes in secret sometimes while squatting in the Arab fashion to urinate and other times while pretending to sleep. One day he was discovered by his guide, but he was so shrewd that he persuaded him that he was writing down prayers. Examined by the Cadi (Judge) of Meccah in his Knowledge of the Quoran, he passed the examination and was invited to join the Cadi in his evening prayer. Burton passed similar trials and adventures in his pilgrimage but never was he as at peace and as productive as Burckhardt. The latter testified that he was never more at peace than in Meccah where he investigated the actual state of commerce and its future possibilities and examined the economic state of Jidda and Meccah. His works *Travels in Arabia* and *Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabys* were taken to be a reliable account of Oriental life in the West. They were written in English and published posthumously in 1829 and 1830 respectively.

Burckhardt was one of the pioneer Europeans to produce a detailed eyewitness account of Meccah and Medina and his works were widely viewed as reliable on the Muslims' pilgrimage and life in Arabia. He said little that had not been said before about the Arab character, religion and life. His opinions were accompanied by a mass of unprecedented details about life in the Arabian peninsula where he had a good experience. He died there and was suspected to have been become a Muslim at heart.

The eighteenth-century orientalists, scholars and travellers approached the Orient during the age of nationalism, an age preoccupied with the idea of man's liberty and independence, an age of refined human relationships, an age accepting the unity of mankind, and as such they were able to locate such virtues in the Orient. Influenced by the nationalist thought the travellers, Niebuhr and Burckhardt, approached the Arabs as a nation through their colourful and positive experiences which they had in the East. The orientalist and scholars started an academic approach and found in their libraries the books which asserted the humanity of the Arabs and their independence. This image of the Arabs slowly disappeared in the nineteenth century when racism and imperialism began to develop and consolidate.

VICTORIANS ON THE ORIENT

Race, which was "a characteristically nineteenth century phenomenon",⁴⁸ and the idea of the empire, rather than nationalism, came together in the construction of the image of the Orient in the Victorian era. Most Victorian travellers to the Orient had

⁴⁸ George W. Stocking, Jr. *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (London, 1968), p.14.

an articulate sense of their racial superiority over non-Europeans and were concerned with the imperial prerequisite. And most of them appeared on the scene of the Orient as Europeans and Britons first, and as individuals with a certain ideology, second. They were well aware of themselves as belonging to a certain power with definite interests in the Orient. They were also aware of the idea of a European and British empire and the waning power of the Ottoman's empire, and they had definite views on race, European racial superiority and imperialism. Such views were expressed in their writings together with their world-views.

Britain in the nineteenth century became an imperial power, a situation which made its political society impart to its civil society a sense of urgency where and whenever matters bearing on its imperial interests abroad were implicated. The traveller's identity and nationality as "British" involved him, consciously or unconsciously, in the imperial project. Warburton, Burton, Palgrave, Doughty and others coloured the image of the European occupation of the East. Kinglake, the gentleman, the least experienced in affairs Oriental, and Warburton, believed they had discovered a desire in Eastern populations to be ruled by Europeans. The latter found himself, by and large, an English conqueror in the Orient. "Onward!", he cried, "with the eager horses that bound forward at thy voice! Onward with thy gallant ship, that lies straining at her anchor! Onward! over the wide, deep, dashing sea, that owns thee for its master, to the boundless desert that soon shall be thy slave".⁴⁹ Kinglake expressed the necessity of the British occupation of the East and discovered a desire in the Syrian to be occupied by the English. Warburton assumed this desire to be an overwhelming power in Egyptian society. "There is an evident expectation in the public mind of Cairo that England must, sooner or later, take a leading part in Egyptian politics; and not only here, but all over the East". "When are the English coming?" was a question that all Egyptians were asking, Warburton reported, and accordingly he predicted that "England is expected in the East".⁵⁰ Burton shared with Warburton his imperial attitude and found Egypt as the "most tempting prize which the East holds out to the ambition of Europe", and envisaged the British rule in Arabia, looking forward to the day of their occupation of the "mother city of Al-Islam".⁵¹ Warburton and Burton were not only the representatives of imperial ideas, who predicted the inevitability of the British occupation of the Orient, but they even tried to instruct how to deal with the Arab. Doughty called on the Christian countries to take the necessary steps whatever they be, including the occupation of "the Islamic heat of Mecca", to fulfill their mission which was, in his opinion, the stamping out of the Arab slave

⁴⁹ E. Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross* (London, 1845). Vol.I. p.x.

⁵⁰ Ibid. Vol.I, pp. 384-385.

⁵¹ Burton's *Pilgrimage*, vol.i, p.114 & vol.ii, p.268.

trade and in ensuring the safety of the Christians of Arabia. Palgrave was financed by the imperial power, now the French, in his travels in central Arabia. Disraeli's imperial imagination visualizes the British presence in the East. In *Tancred or the New Crusade*, the Arab Emir Fakredeen urges Tancred to persuade Queen Victoria to "transfer the seat of her empire from London to Delhi" and in the meantime he will make arrangement with Muhammad Ali in which the latter will rule over Bagdad and Mesopotamia while Fakredeen will take care of Syria and Asia Minor. And they will "acknowledge the Empress of India as our suzerain, and secure for her the Levantine coast" and "if she likes she shall have Alexandria as she now has Malta".⁵² The writings of most Victorian travellers to the Arab world, even that of the anti-imperialist Blunt himself, implied the necessity of British presence in the area.

The Victorians' schematization of matters Arab and Islamic occurred in the imperial period and was formed in a way so as to justify the imperial ideology. Their accounts were scarcely related to observations verifiable by facts. They defined everything Oriental in terms of contrast to reason, freedom and progress. They laboured hard to find the motivations which man, according to new scientific theory, shares with animals and ascribed them to Arab populations portraying their political and social movements as directionless and utterly wild. This can be seen most clearly in Palgrave's approach to the Wahhabi Movement. This religious and socio-political movement, whose main objective was the termination of the Ottomans' corruption and misrule through an Islamic revival, was portrayed as a tribal, aimless, fanatic uprising led by despotic Arab rulers whose history is no more than an absurd succession of events and wandering in the desert. The Wahhabi were depicted as a tribe or an ethnic group, an entity which refused to be subdued by higher principles of order such as the state. The connection of the members of such a unit or group to each other was seen as irrational but obligatory and therefore despotic. The political movement of such people accordingly is void of any human motive. Dissociating facts from their historical, cultural, social and other contexts the Victorians saw Islam and Arab history as anomaly and anarchy. Everything Islamic or Oriental was endowed with changeless and ageless characteristics even if they were themselves neither Islamic nor Oriental. Their conception was that of an essentialist⁵³ to whom the East was stamped with an unchangeable reality dominated by primitivity, religion, sex, despotism, unreason and superstitions.

Every culture thrives on establishing differences from other cultures. The establishment of primitive and backward differences with the Orient was pursued by

52 Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred or the New Crusade in Novels and Tales* (London, 1882), p.263. First published 1847.

53 See Anwar Abdel Malek, "Orientalism in Crisis", *Diogenes*, 44 (Winter 1963) pp. 103-40. The article explores the ideological and political ramifications of Orientalism.

Victorian travellers to help to define Britain as its contrasting image. It also highlighted British industrial and civilized society rather than describing the "reality" of the East. By giving anarchy and disorder the supremacy in ruling all aspects of Oriental life and concentrating on sexual frankness, which Victorian travellers assumed to dominate there, and by exposing Oriental society, especially the Bedowin, as a society in which the stronger always rules by strength and power, they embodied the image of the Orient as a primitive society based more on instinct than mind, a simple and unsophisticated society which stood in sharp contrast to that of the complex and self-conscious West. Their description centred on the Oriental society as primitive mostly through the attributes which they laboured to highlight, particularly the refusal to govern by administrative fiat.

The travels of the Victorians to the Orient generates a confrontation with the different "Other" who possesses different religion, culture and all walks of life. This confrontation makes the Victorian traveller more aware of himself as European and English, apprehending himself as he passes through other imposed limits and boundaries. As soon as this traveller enters the Orient he suffers, to use Sartre's phrase in his *Being and Nothingness*, "The Look of the Other" whose result is that of alienation.⁵⁴ This "Look of the Other" makes the traveller look upon himself as two entities corporated in one. He is an individual self and a national one; an individual human being and a representative of his nation. It also makes his journey to the "Self" essential to define himself and restore his confidence in himself and his nation. To solidify his acquired concept of himself he resorts to the ideology he already had and makes it a fact for himself and his reader.

Almost all Victorian travellers present us with familiar Oriental themes but with variations supplied by the authors' different inclinations, psychological crises and class rank in society. They used the East as a means of self-expression, a means of making heroes out of themselves, a mirror through which they see their superiority, and a means of giving credibility to their narrative. They went to the East with European ideological concepts of themselves and "Others" which they confirmed with the slightest contact with Oriental populations. They, instead of revising and correcting their information, coloured and decorated it so as to be easily accepted by their society. They presented it through certain conceptions which were instinctively called forth and readily produced even by the most ignorant of affairs Oriental such as the gentleman Kinglake, whose generation, the travellers of the first four decades of the nineteenth century to the Holy Land, was described deliciously by Tuckwell as "a procession of Oriental pilgrims variously qualified or disqualified to hold the gorgeous East in fee, who, with *bakshish* in their purse, a theory in their brain, an unfilled diary-book in

⁵⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, trans. Hazel Barnes (London: Methuen, 1956), pp.264-65.

their portmanteaus, sought out the Holy Land... and returned home to emit their illustrated mapped octavos".⁵⁵

Kinglake's *Eothen* as well as Burton's *Pilgrimage* and Palgrave's *Central Arabia* have, indeed, revealed more of their author's ideologies or their worldviews than the social life in the Orient. Their works were and are to be read more for what they tell us about Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave over and above their knowledge of the Orient. They produced a literature on the Orient, rather than knowledge of the Orient, in which the reality of the writer, that is, the way the writer realizes Oriental life through his ideology predominates to the extent that one becomes more and more aware of the absence of the actual social reality of the Orient, that is, the way people were living their experiences and beliefs.

THE ACTUAL SOCIAL REALITY AND THE REALITY OF THE WRITER: A SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY APPROACH.

The task of studying a foreign society and its culture, the way the people live their experiences and beliefs, is a very difficult and complicated process. Its prerequisite is the writer's or visitor's detachment, disinterestedness and complete alienation from his zone of familiarity, that is, from his cultural and ideological values. No doubt this is very hard and almost impossible, but that it can be approached is shown by the nineteenth-century orientalist Edward William Lane who offered a scientific and encyclopedic account of the actual social reality of Arab society in the early nineteenth century. In his *Modern Egyptians*, which was the result of two periods of residence in Egypt (1825-1828 and 1833-1835),⁵⁶ Lane followed the ideal method of modern anthropology in the sense that he described the value system of Egyptian-Arab society as expressed in what its members tell about it. To perform this task he studied Arabic language and literature, lived among the Arabs and lived as an Arab himself. "I have associated, almost exclusively, with Muslims, of various ranks in society", Lane wrote in his preface to *Modern Egyptians*, and "I have lived as they live, conforming with their general habits; and, in order to make them familiar and unreserved towards me on every subject, have always avowed my agreement with them in opinion whenever my conscience would allow me, and in most other cases refrained from the expression of my dissent, as well as from every action which might give them disgust; abstaining

⁵⁵ Rev. W. Tuckwell, *A.W. Kinglake: A Biographical and Literary Study* (London, 1902). p.1.

⁵⁶ Lane's first residence in Egypt between 1825-1828 was undertaken to study Arabic. The outcome of this period was his *Description of Egypt* which did not find a publisher. In 1833 the Committee of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge suggested developing his work and engaged him to complete it. The result was another residence in Egypt between 1833-1835 which resulted in his *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London, 1836).

from eating food forbidden by their religion, drinking wine, &c.; and even habits merely disagreeable to them". It is clear here that Lane considered his residence as a form of scientific observation and was aiming at producing scientific material; accordingly it was natural for him to detach himself from his text.

Lane defined Egyptian society as the latter defined itself in the terms that it was practised; he described it in the terms in which a member of that culture experienced it. At the same time Lane refrained from obtruding as an author committed to a different culture and its different scheme of values. Lane's work had no connotations and no implied judgement of Western values. Even the prose of his *Modern Egyptians* is transparently free from all devices that draw attention to the author, to the author's society and values, or to anything other than the world that the work was concerned to make real for the reader. Arab culture and religion were presented not as a set of beliefs to be intellectually apprehended, analysed, rejected, or as an assortment of social and political modes to be defined and criticised, but as a lived experience. In *Modern Egyptians* the authorial identity is subordinated to the demand of the subject matter. Its style, with its plain and simple description, and its intelligent and brilliant details, made it a classic of historical and anthropological observations.

Lane's scientificity and detachment from his text in accounting for the Orient stands in sharp contrast to the literariness and involvement of other nineteenth-century travellers such as Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave. Lane's personality went underground to allow the Orient to express itself and his style was far from being literary and far from being entrenched with imaginative language. "Lane had a vehement hatred of 'fine writing'", Arberry noticed, "and often expressed his dislike to those authors who are credited with the habit of sacrificing the truth of their statement to the fall of the sentence. He always maintained that the first thing was to find the right word to express your meaning, and then to let the sentence fall as it pleased."⁵⁷ Lane was aiming at the production of knowledge and went to the Orient to learn and instruct. Kinglake, on the other hand, went to the Orient, the romantic Orient, to escape industrial Europe momentarily. He went for recreation and produced *Eothen* to be read for recreation. Burton and Palgrave went with a definite mission, but sacrificed the truth for the word and, like Kinglake, produced literary works which viewed the Orient through their interests and ideologies. Unlike Lane, they did not seek scientific reality but an exotic and subjective one, subordinating the Orient to their identity. They described Oriental customs and beliefs not as these were practised by the member of their society, but as they viewed them from their own world-views or ideologies. Kinglake viewed Islam and the Arabs from the vista of a pagan and gentleman; Burton through racist and imperialist perspectives; and Palgrave through missionary and

⁵⁷ A.J. Arberry, *Oriental Essays*, p. 92.

imperialist ideologies. Their descriptions were embedded in a prose which constantly implied the value by which such customs were to be judged. Such values were those of the author's native and superior culture, disclosing the author's commitment to a belief in the value of his own culture as absolute. Cairo in Lane's account was the city where the Egyptian-Arab lived, while in Kinglake's short-lived experience it was the city of the plague and in Burton's short residence, which was about a month, it was a stage where he made his preparation for the pilgrimage and passed some amusing adventures. Islam in Lane's account is described as practised by Muslims, while in Palgrave's *Central Arabia* as a Jesuit Christian missionary viewed it, in Burton's *Pilgrimage* as a man closer in his attitude to a positivist looked at it, and in Kinglake's *Eothen* as a pagan understood it. The Arabs in Lane's work were Oriental people experiencing their life in a certain way, while in Kinglake's, Burton's and Palgrave's they were a race, an inferior one to the European.

Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, as such, can be read as a source of knowledge about the Orient, that is, a source of knowledge concerning the actual social reality of the Arab world in the nineteenth century, whereas the literary works of Burton, Palgrave, and Kinglake, when seen in the light of Goldmann's theory, they are to be read more for what they tell us about European ideology toward the Orient and non-Europeans, the personalities, and the mental structure of Burton, Palgrave and Kinglake, who were first and foremost members of the British and European society, over and above their knowledge of the Orient. They are also to be read as works where the reader can find recreation and enjoy the scene of the Orient. From this perspective, they not only differed from Lane, but also from Niebuhr and Burckhardt whose writings were simple and unrheterical, aiming at imparting new knowledge with admirable clarity, and whose unliterary style and the sheer density of factual information made them dull to the average reader

The literary aspect of the writings of Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave made a novel theme out of a well-known subject and gave the three writers advantages over their predecessors who were concerned with factual information. This made Kinglake's *Eothen* more popular than Lane's *Modern Egyptians* and pre-nineteenth century travel-writing on the East. It also made Burton's *Pilgrimage* and Palgrave's *Central Arabia* assume supremacy over the works of their predecessors Burckhardt, Niebuhr, Wallin and Welsted. Instead of giving a faithful picture on Eastern life, Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave brought the European ideology in relation to the Orient, rather than the reality of the Orient into an unprecedented coherence and, as such, relished a wide popularity among their Victorian readers. Their works were designed for the Victorian readers and were the outcome of the Victorians' interest in the world abroad, an interest stimulated by politics, science, religion, commerce and the social structure of the Victorian age itself.

CHAPTER TWO

VICTORIANS ABROAD

"Au siècle de Louis XIV on était helléniste, maintenant on est Orientaliste"

Victor Hugo, *Les Orientales* (Paris, 1882). 7. First published 1829.

"In the age of Louis XIV, all the world was Hellenist, now it is Orientalist", Victor Hugo wrote in his preface to *Les Orientales* in 1829.

As Victor Hugo perceptively commented nineteenth-century Europe had, indeed, witnessed the discovery of Oriental culture and an increasing interest and fascination in the Oriental world. The Victorians left no corner in the darkest places of the globe unreached,¹ no culture or literature unobtained, and no living language unstudied or untranslated or untranslatable. And they viewed non-Europeans within the framework of the ideological and material interests of Britain, applying their own standards as a means of comparison and asserting their superiority.

The East was not only accessible to the Victorians, but was gradually included in the 'Grand Tour', which had hitherto been confined to Europe, and gradually became part of British material interest in the world beyond the oceans. Explorers, seeking new facts and advancing new theories; travellers, in search for new themes; linguists, with new concepts of language and its relation to its speaker's mentality and culture; scientists, with new race theories; missionaries with religious zeal; and politicians with different motives, crossed the sea to acquire first hand knowledge of the East, especially, the Arab-World. At home, Oriental literature became popular and influenced literary taste to the extent that most Victorian writers made some allusion to it, especially, *The Arabian Nights*,² which was translated and retranslated with annotations and anthropological studies. In the later part of the nineteenth century the translations of eastern literature multiplied and coincided with the British occupation of Egypt, the first step towards British imperial rule in the area. The bringing of the Oriental-Arab World into the focus of the Victorians, and their repeated journeys, which were financed by different sources with different perspectives, were not casual, but the outcome of the moving wheel of Victorian society whose rotation extended to almost all fields of life and inspired the Victorians with various motives to bring home the world abroad by means of their travels and explorations.

The most distinct turning-point in the British history of travel and exploration might be located in the Victorian era. Exploration in that period followed naturally from the religious spirit of the age, the political and commercial circumstances and, most

¹ In her article "Travel Writing Victorian and Modern: A Review of Recent Researches" Joanne Shattock states that Victorians' journeys into "little-known continents, travels to the remote corners of the globe, and latter-day equivalents of the Grand Tour are obvious material for travel books". See *Prose Studies*, 5, 1982, p.152. The article contains a useful bibliography of travel writing and surveys research and critical approaches to it since 1970.

² Margaret Cecelia Annan, *The Arabian Nights in Victorian Literature* (Northwestern University, Doctoral Dissertation, 1945) shows the extent and nature of English imitation of Oriental tales in the nineteenth century. For the same purpose see Marrie E. de Meester's "Oriental Influence in English Literature of the Nineteenth Century", *Anglistische Forschungen*, Heft 46 (1915) pp.1-80. See also *The Arabian Nights in English Literature to 1900*, by Adel M. Abdullah (Ph.D dissertation, Cambridge, 1962); and *The Oriental Tales in England in the Eighteenth Century*, by Martha Pike Conant (New York, The Columbia University Press, 1908).

distinctly, from the preliminary work in the field of science that had been done in the first half of the nineteenth century. The revival of geography, with geographers equipped with new theories to be investigated, and the formation of new geographical institutions, were largely responsible for much exploration. "When geography was revived", Baker observed, "it was as a popular subject concerned largely with travel and exploration".³

In the first half of the nineteenth century, new geographical theories were at work; in 1830 the Royal Geographical Society was founded and in 1831 the African Association or The Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa⁴ was incorporated in it; Mungo Park, the Scottish explorer of Niger, and Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, one of the pioneers of European explorers in the remoter parts of the Arab world, made their travels under the auspices of the African Association. The Hakluyt Society in England and the Imperial Geographical Society of St. Petersburg were founded in 1846; Mary Somerville produced her *Physical Geography*, first published in 1848 in two volumes, and to her contact with explorers she owed much of her geographical information;⁵ Henry Walter Bates, who in 1864 became an assistant secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, sailed with Alfred Russel Wallace for Brazil in 1848. He collected thousands of species of insects, the majority of which were new to science, and spent seven years and a half in exploring in detail the valley of the Amazon. He returned to England in 1859 to publish in 1863 his *The Naturalist on the River Amazon*, which was introduced by Charles Darwin; and it was in the year 1848 that the Franklin search expedition sailed from England. Livingstone's most important geographical work in Africa dated from 1849, and in 1850 Heinrich Barth, the German geographer, historian and linguist and one of the greatest explorers, joined James Richardson in an expedition to Africa supported by the British government. After his return Barth published the result of his journey in English and German in five volumes entitled *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa* (1857-58). In the academic sphere recognition of geography was achieved at Cambridge, London and Oxford.⁶

The revival of geography was also accompanied by the increasing interest in mineralogy and archaeology. During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century

³ J. N. L. Baker, *The History of Geography* (Oxford, 1963) p.63.

⁴ For detailed information on the history of the African Association, formed in 1788, see *Records of the African Association 1788-1831* (London, 1964) edited by Robin Hallett for the Royal Geographical Society.

⁵ Five more editions appeared in her life time and a seventh in 1877. In all some sixteen thousand copies were sold. See Elizabeth Chambers Patterson's *Mary Somerville and the Cultivation of Science, 1815-1840*, Dorderchet, (Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, the Hague), 1983, p.194.

⁶ For more details see Baker's *The History of Geography*, pp.56-7.

archaeological interest was confined to local remains and led to the formation of societies such as the British Archaeological Association and the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland in 1843. In the second half of the nineteenth century archaeological interests were extended to the world abroad.

Interest in geography, archaeology, mineralogy and allied science contributed to the great movement of travel and exploration in Victorian Britain and made the expeditions of Sir Richard Francis Burton and some other explorers possible. Geography was behind one of Burton's travels in Arabia which resulted in his *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah*. The Royal Geographical Society financed him to explore the Empty Abode of Arabia, while the Indian government provided him with a year's leave of absence from his military duties in order to pursue his "Arabic studies in the land where language might best be studied". Burton's expedition, made in 1853, was turned into a pilgrimage, and did not fulfil its objectives and was not productive of much that was new. The Blunts' journey about twenty years later, on the other hand, was more productive and its contribution to geographical science cannot be disregarded, as Hogarth pointed out.⁷ They corrected previous maps of the country along the pilgrims' route as well as of Northern Arabia from Jauf to Hail, and brought back information on rock formations and new altitude measurements of the plateau of Hail and Jabal Shummar. Wilfrid Blunt added to the second volume of *A Pilgrimage to Nejd* an appendix containing information which they had gathered concerning the physical geography of Northern Arabia, and the Euphrates Valley Railway and its kindred scheme of railway communication between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf.⁸ The Blunts' tour was made with the main purpose of obtaining new information about Arabian horses to build their stud in England. It was not subsidised by the Royal Geographical Society and was not initially done in the interest of science as that of Burton's *Pilgrimage*, which was followed by many other scientific expeditions. His Somali's expedition was sponsored by the Royal Geographical Society and made possible through pay, expenses and equipment provided by the East India Company and his expedition to explore the sources of the White Nile was also made under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society and was much concerned with geographical investigations. In 1856 Burton, accompanied by Speke, reached Zanzibar to set out on their expedition whose primary purpose was scientific, that is, of ascertaining the limit of the Sea Vjiji (Lake Tanganyika):

The great object of the expedition is to penetrate inland from Kilwa or some other place on the east coast of Africa, and make the best of your

⁷ D.G.Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, (London, Lawrence and Bullen, 1904), p.254.

⁸ For more details see Lady Anne Blunt's, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd* (London, 1881). The preface (vol.I, pp, ix-xxviii), Chapter XI of vol.I (pp.257-73), and the appendix of vol.II (pp.251-68) are by Wilfrid Blunt.

way to the reputed Lake Nyasa... Having obtained all the information you require in this quarter, you are to proceed northward toward the range of mountains marked upon our maps as containing the probable⁹ source of [the Nile], which it will be your next great object to discover."

With the help of the Sultan of Zanzibar, the expedition started off from Bagamayo in 1857 to follow the caravan route of Lake Tanganyika which they reached in February 1858, but missed Lake Victoria. On the return journey Speke left Burton in Tabora and struck northward discovering the Victoria Nyanza; but Burton rejected his evidence and they quarrelled.¹⁰

Back in Britain Sir Roderick Murchison, the president of the Royal Geographical Society, arranged for Speke, now accompanied by J.A. Grant, to undertake a second expedition to confirm and amplify his discovery and to ascertain the connection of Victoria Nyanza with the Nile system. They set out from Zanzibar in 1860, reached Karagwe to the west of Victoria Nyanza, entered Uganda and some other African places. The expedition performed its functions and Speke saw the Nile rising from Victoria Nyanza which he considered the great source of the Nile.¹¹ The geographical dispute on the source of the Nile had confounded explorers and theoretical geographers for hundreds of years.¹² Many expeditions followed Speke's and the problem of the Nile was not absolutely resolved until 1875 when Stanley had thoroughly explored Lake Victoria. It was with the conclusion of Stanley's work in 1889 that the main problem of African geography was solved.¹³

Murchison's geographical theory concerning the sources of the Nile enlisted Dr. Livingstone for a long career of exploration in Central Africa. Murchison discarded the mountain theory and expressed his conviction that the Nile was supplied from a great central basin, the water of which, supplied by the annual rains belonging to tropical countries, filtered through the soil and formed the sources of all rivers between the equator and 20 degrees south latitude.¹⁴ Livingstone went there to investigate the validity of Murchison's theory and asserted that it was correct.¹⁵ It was a scientific expedition,

⁹ *Journal of Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XXIX, p.5.

¹⁰ For an account of Burton's journey see his *Lake Regions of Central Africa* (London, 1860).

¹¹ See John Hanning Speke, *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (London, 1864).

¹² For detailed survey of the exploration of the Nile see Sir Percy Sykes, *A History of Exploration* (London, 1950).

¹³ For an account of H.M. Stanley's journey see his *In Darkest Africa* (London, 1890).

¹⁴ See David Livingstone, *Narrative of the Expedition to the Zambesi and its Tributaries* (London, 1857), chapters xxiv & xxv .

originated by science, and made under the auspices of the Royal Geographical Society.

Science and interest in Antiquity also encouraged Burton to roam through Syria and to explore its ancient ruins. His *Unexplored Syria* (1872) is a collection of geographical, archaeological and anthropological information. In Damascus, Burton's passion for archaeology and geography made him visit the famous Syrian ruins, and the temples of Baalbek and Palmyra. He spent a long time in search for inscriptions, mapping ruins, and trying to correct geographical errors on the local maps.¹⁶ His two books on Midian: *The Gold Mines of Midian and the Ruined Midianite Cities* (1878) and *The Land of Midian Revisited* (1879) demonstrate his interests in archaeology and geography, and are full of details of archaeological, botanical, zoological, geological and geographical data. In 1877, financed by the Khedive of Egypt and accompanied by Haji Wali, whom he once met while on his pilgrimage to Mecca, George Marca, a French mining engineer, and three other Europeans, Burton set out for his first Midian expedition which was followed by another one. The "primary objective" of his expedition was "mineralogical".¹⁷ They returned with samples of green stones, porphyry, metalliferous quartz and basalt that contained traces of gold and silver but in quantities too minute to make mining operations possible. Burton's failure in finding gold or in developing mining activities was compensated by his achievements in the field of geography. He succeeded in identifying certain ruined cities mentioned by Ptolemy, and the "Harras" or volcanic centres scattered over the seaboard and the interior. He also mapped a 600 mile route, noting the sites of eighteen ruined cities in the north and thirteen in the south and sent topographical details and itinerary of the expedition to the Royal Geographical Society.¹⁸

Arabia, the 'land of gold', as Burton put it, and a land with very old civilizations and great archaeological wealth, attracted many Victorian explorers who surveyed almost every place in Mesopotamia. Austin Henry Layard was one of the first British archaeologists whose Mesopotamian excavations did much to reveal the ancient civilization of Babylonia and Assyria. He made two excavations of the ancient cities of Nineveh and Nimrod between 1845 and 1851. Layard's archaeological inclinations seem

15 Ibid, pp.5-6.

16 Burton's "Scientific Knowledge", observed Penzer, "was vastly above the average. He was in varying portions a geologist, botanist, conchologist, zoologist, folklore student, beside being an artist, linguist, and poet". Norman M. Penzer, *An Annotated Bibliography of Sir Richard Francis Burton* (London, 1923), p. 7. For more details on Burton's expedition in Syria see *Unexplored Syria*, by Sir Richard Francis Burton and C.F.T. Drake (London, 1872).

17 Burton, *The Land of Midian Revisited* (London, 1879) Vol. I, p.x.

18 Ibid, p.xii. For a full account of Burton's two expeditions see *The Gold-Mines of Midian and the Ruined Medianite Cities* (London, 1878), 2 vol. and *The land of Midian Revisited* 2 vols.

to have arisen from his desire to explore "the ancient seats of civilization"; a desire, more or less, political, for he was a politician and diplomat. It was his "irresistible desire to penetrate to the regions beyond the Euphrates, to which history and tradition point as the birthplace of the wisdom of the West"¹⁹ that made him an archaeologist. He became an archaeologist by chance, in the same way that T.E. Lawrence came to be a politician. Lawrence was an archaeologist whose circumstances alone drew him from the ruins of Asia Minor and Syria to the battlefield. He worked as a political mediator between the Arabs and the British in the First World-War and produced a documentary book on the war and the attributes of the Arabs as viewed by twentieth-century European society.²⁰ Thirty years earlier, Charles M. Doughty's archaeological interest also drove him to the East. The carved and ancient monuments of Madain Salih, some 300 miles to the south on the pilgrim route, not previously visited by any European scholar, created a burning desire in him and prompted his Arabian journey.²¹

Science and antiquarian interests had been, indeed, the originator of many exploring expeditions in the Victorian era,²² but they had directed their attention mainly to the physical structure of the world abroad. A topographical survey of the Middle East which was made in the 1860s paved the way materially for the twentieth-century European colonization of the area. In 1864 an accurate survey of Palestine was the first object of the expeditions of the Royal Engineers. This enterprise was a great success and led to the formation of the Palestine Exploration Fund for the purpose of investigating the archaeology, geography, geology and natural history of Palestine. Jerusalem was mapped and measured with accuracy and a special survey was made of the two hills in the Sinaitic peninsula. A survey of other parts of Palestine, Syria and the parts of Arabia was also made. Edward Henry Palmer, the English Orientalist and traveller, took part in the survey of Sina and his *The Desert of the Exodus* (1871) is

19 Sir Austin Henry Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains* (London, 1849) Vol. I, p.2. This work accounts for Layard's discoveries in the years 1845-46. For an account of his second expedition in 1849 in which he investigated the ruins of Babylon and the mounds of Southern Mesopotamia refer to *Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (London, 1853).

20 For detailed information see T.E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London, 1935).

21 For detailed account of Doughty's travels, see his *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (London, 1936) 2 vols. First published in 1888.

22 "Scientific interest", M. Cary and E.H. Warmington argued, "was not wholly lacking in ancient explorers". Solon of Athena, they stated, was one of the first Greek travellers who visited Egypt for the sake of its sight, but in a later age Greek pioneers in Arabia made a point of seeking out its archaeological remains. They also stated that among the Roman men of arms both Julius Caesar and Septimius took advantage of their campaigns in Britain to measure the length of a midsummer day in high latitude. *The Ancient Explorers* (London, 1929) p.2.

an account of his journey undertaken in connection with the English ordinance survey of Sinai. This survey was made, under the pretext of science, for political imperial interests. Palmer's status as an agent of the imperial power is clear from the fact that in 1882 he was asked to return to Sinai to enlist the Sheikhs' support for the proposed British occupation of Egypt and to take measures to ensure the safety of the Suez Canal. In the same period Laurence Oliphant occupied himself with a plan for Jewish colonization in Palestine. In 1878 he offered his proposal to Disraeli and Lord Salisbury, and then in 1882 he and his wife journeyed to the East and settled in Haiffa. Their Eastern project was "to obtain a concession from the Turkish Government in the northern and more fertile half of Palestine, which the *recent survey of the Palestine Exploration Fund proves to be capable of immense development*".²³ In the year 1879, Oliphant began his expedition in the Middle East from Beirut seeking a site for his colony; and in the following year his wife joined him in a journey to Egypt.²⁴ Oliphant made use of science in his exploratory career in the Arab-World, but it was motivated mainly by politics and religion; here were two other principal factors which helped in bringing the world-abroad into focus. They were also behind Palgrave's travels in Central and Eastern Arabia. He went there as a missionary and an agent of the European imperial power. His main object of research was "the men of land rather than the land of men" and his attention was directed to the moral, intellectual, political, and religious conditions of "living Arabia".²⁵

Religion took an essential part in the proceedings of exploration, for missionary zeal sent the Victorian all over the globe.²⁶ Missionary work was a perennial tradition which played an important role and was a very effective element in the history of travel and exploration. The Victorians' concern in the Arab-World was in no small measure due to missionary societies and the religious interest in the East as the Holy Land of Christianity. The modern protestant missionary movement, with the aim of reaching the Muslims in the area, began its activities before the beginning of the

23 Mrs. Margaret Oliphant, *Memoir of the Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, His Wife*, (London, 1891) vol. II, p. 170, my emphasis.

24 Laurence Oliphant described his expedition in the Middle East in his *The Land of Gilead, with Excursions in the Lebanon* (London, 1880); the record of his journey with his wife in Egypt can be traced in his *The Land of Kherni: up and down the Middle Nile* (Edinburgh, 1882).

25 W. G. Palgrave, *Narrative of A Year's Journey Throgh Central and Eastern Arabia* (London, Macmillan, 1865). p.vi.

26 Missionaries sometimes contributed something to geographical discoveries: In East Africa the German missionary Rebman discovered the snow-covered mountain of Kilimanjaro in 1848, and in the following year Krapf saw Mount Kenya. It is also worth mentioning that religion, as a motive of travel and exploration, can be traced from the time of Marco Polo who set out with a commission from the Pope to explain the Christian doctrine to the emperor of Cathay.

nineteenth century. The first organization to undertake this work was the Church Missionary Society through its Mediterranean Mission which operated from 1815 to 1850 with headquarters usually at Malta. The early nineteenth century was a propitious time for the growth of foreign mission work and by the 1820s the British were established in Palestine and Mount Libanon, where Catholic missionaries had been working since the 16th century. The English came as representatives of the Church Missionary Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society, The Society of Friends, The London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews (known as the London Jews' Society), and the Church of Scotland as well as a number of lesser known organizations. In Damascus, the Presbyterians of Scotland and Ireland began their missionary work in 1843. In Palestine the London Society for Promoting Missions among the Jews began its work in 1826. In Egypt the Church Missionary Society began its missions in 1861;²⁷ it also worked in South Arabia in 1886 through the activities of Ion Keith Falconer. Falconer's religious background and passionate interest in Arabic made a Christian pioneer out of him. He was professor of Arabic at Clare College, Cambridge with a tendency to master not only the standard Arabic, but the colloquial accents as well. In 1885 he went to Aden on an exploratory visit which resulted in his decision to start a mission among the Arab. In the following year he was recognised formally by the Free Church as her honorary missionary. However no sooner had he laid down the lines on which the mission was to run, when he died in May 1887.²⁸ Palgrave, who in 1857 was sent to the Jesuit residence at Bikfaya in the neighbourhood of Beirut to begin his missionary activities, undertook a journey across Central Arabia which he accomplished in 1862-63. One of his main objectives was to ascertain how far missionary enterprise was possible among what he thought of as pure Arab. After his Arabian tour he went to Cairo and laid down the foundation for a future Jesuit mission in Upper Egypt, an Arab country in the African continent which became the focus of missionary work.

The missionary movement was not confined to the land from which Christianity emerged, but burdened itself with the land which did not know Christianity, that is, Africa, whose opening up was in no small measure due to the missionaries, to Rebmann, to Krapf and the greatest of them all, David Livingstone, the Scottish missionary and explorer who exercised a formative influence upon Western attitudes toward Africa. In 1838 he was accepted by the London Missionary Society. His initial aim was to become a medical missionary in China. Accordingly he began to study medicine:

In the glow of love which Christianity inspires, I soon resolved to devote

²⁷ John Aberly, *An Outline of Missions* (Philadelphia, 1945) p.212.

²⁸ For more detail see James Robson, *Ion Keith. Falconer of Arabia* (London, 1923).

my life to the alleviation of human misery. Turning this idea in my mind, I felt that to be a pioneer of Christianity in China might lead to the material benefit of some portions of that immense empire, and therefore set myself²⁹ to obtain medical educations, in order to be qualified for that enterprise.

The opium war (1839-42) put an end to his dream of China. In the year 1840, Livingstone set out from London to the Cape Colony to meet and link his own efforts to those of his father-in-law, Robert Moffat, who was stationed at Kerouman or Lattakoo, and was convinced that Africa should be his sphere of service:

The Opium war was then raging, and it was deemed inexpedient for me to proceed to China... as another inviting field was opening out through the labour of Mr. Moffat, I was induced to turn my thought to Africa, and... I embarked for Africa in 1840, and after a voyage of 3 months, reached Cape Town. Spending but a short time there, I started for the interior by going round to Algoo Bay, and soon proceeded inland, and have spent the following sixteen years of my life, namely, from 1840 to 1856, in medical and missionary labours there without cost to the inhabitants (ibid, p.8).

It is clear that at this period Livingstone's travels were conducted solely with the idea of extending the mission field; his aim was the extension of the Gospel and the abolition of slave trade on the East African Coast,³⁰ the latter being the outcome of the emergence of the Anti-Slavery Movement.

Originating at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Anti-Slavery Movement encouraged further explorations of Africa. English philosophers, men of letter, poets and religious enthusiasts began to initiate their attack on the slave-trade during the middle of the eighteenth century. In the last quarter of the century and especially in the year following Thomas Clarkson's publication of *Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* in 1786, the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was formed by people such as Clarkson, Granville Sharp, James Ramsay, and William Wilberforce. English Quakers joined it in large numbers. The success of this movement was a turning point in the history of the world, for it led to the abolition first of the slave-trade and then of slavery itself under the British flag in 1833. Froude stated that "slave emancipation was the special glory of the English people".³¹ This glory was felt and enjoyed by the negroes of the island of the West Indies, but the African stayed away from it. The British intention to generalise

²⁹ David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London, 1857) p.6.

³⁰ Livingstone's discoveries rendered great service to commerce as well. They opened up a vast productive field to it; the countries he visited abounded with ivory and wax and were capable of producing oil, wine, tropical fruit, sugar and coffee to an unlimited extent. "The promotion of commerce", observed Livingstone, "demolishes that sense of isolation which heathenism engenders". *Missionary Travels and Researches*. p.28.

the abolition of slavery all over the world stimulated them to explore Africa³² whose ties with the Arab world were very strong and in which some of the Arab countries are situated. The Arabs of Africa were not slaves but were known to the West as slave-traders and, as such, they were brought to the attention of the Victorians as people who lacked morality. The abolition of slavery became a moral pretext for further explorations of Africa. Richard Burton, for instance, who held the negro to be a sub-human, claimed to have been moved by the conditions of slaves in the slave-market in Jeddah and decided to give slavery a stunning blow in Africa. In his Somali expedition he aimed at opening up Harar, "the headquarter of slavery" to Europe, and the principal purpose of his mission to Gelele, the King of Dahome, was to discuss with him the problem of slavery in his kingdom. The Anti-slavery Movement was motivated by moral religious values in its infancy and acquired commercial and political³³ aims in its maturity.

Science and religion sent the Victorians to the East and Africa, and commerce, the desire to increase trade and to obtain commodities, which permeated the history of exploration, strengthened the Victorian political interest in the East and was itself a means of bringing the Orient into focus. In his "The Connection of Oriental Studies with Commerce, Art, and Literature during the 18th-19th century", Naish found that with "the eighteenth century the post-Renaissance change in the relations of East and West came to commercial fruition" and that the middle of the eighteenth century "saw an extraordinary revival of interest in, and of real knowledge of, the East. This was primarily due to the establishment of regular political and commercial relations with India, on the one hand, and with Egypt and the northern littoral of Africa, on the other hand".³⁴

The earnest British political interest in the Arab-World, which was occupied by the Turk, began with the closing years of the eighteenth century and the opening years of the nineteenth century when their political and commercial relations with India were

31 James Anthony Froude, *Oceania, or England and her Colonies* (London, 1898) p.35.

32 For more detailed information on the motives behind the exploration of Africa see Robert I. Rotberg, ed. *Africa and its Explorers Motives, Methods and Impacts* (Cambridge, 1970).

33 With the Industrial Revolution in Britain, it became apparent that by the abolition of slavery Britain could find a way to work against the interests of its rivals who were still heavily involved in colonial slavery and a plantation economy. Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill, N.C. 1944) deals with the correlation between abolitionism and industrialisation.

34 John P. Naish, "The Connection of Oriental Studies..." *Journal of Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society*, 15, 1930, pp. 33-34. This article focuses on the commercial factor as one of the important reasons behind the rise in interest to write on the Orient.

threatened by the Napoleonic occupation of Egypt. In 1798 the French forces arrived at Egypt with the ostensible purpose of cutting off the communication of Britain with India. This made the British aware of the importance of their monopoly of power and trade in the Middle East. It was in this period that their imperial ideas originated initially informally and later formally. The informal period can be roughly generalised as the years between 1815-1870 and the formal period the remaining years of the century and up to the end of the first World War. The former period was characterized by commerce, and the latter by actual rule. The formal period was an extension of the informal one, or as Robinson and Gallagher put it- "The formal empire of rule was but a part of the informal empire of trade and influence".³⁵ The formal British empire in the Arab-World began with the occupation of Egypt when, in 1882, the British troops destroyed Arabi's revolutionary army by storming his camp in the desert of Tel-al-Kabir and in Disraeli's initiative in purchasing a large holding in the Suez canal share from the Khedive of Egypt. These were the first actual steps towards the British imperial rule in the Middle East. The East, in this period, was not only a means of securing the British monopoly in India, but it was itself to be monopolized and colonized.

In the period of informal empire, the British conscious or unconscious awareness of the theory of knowledge and power,³⁶ opened the door for unrestricted and sometimes organized travellers and explorers to the Arab world. Burckhardt, Lane, Warburton, Palgrave, Blunt, Doughty, Oliphant, Palmer and others provided Britain with the required information concerning the Arabs and Islam. Such information of the East facilitated the shift in the British interest to the colonies beyond the oceans at a time when Britain was becoming less interested in Europe and more interested in the Arab-world. Burckhardt made a voluminous study of the Arab civil and Bedowin society, and Lane offered a remarkable account of Arab society in Egypt. The accounts of travellers found their echo in the political sphere in the period in which British society was undergoing a rapid change in almost all fields of social life.

In the nineteenth century, travel, stimulated by both external and internal

35 Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians* (London, 1961) p.8.

The growth of the empire and its expansion can also be followed in three stages . "The first stage from the time of the 15th century explorers to the victorious end of the seven year war in 1763". This "was an empire of strategic islands, little trading-stations in India or along the coast of West Africa and a narrow stretch of settled territory along the Atlantic Coast of North America". The second was "the stage from 1763 to 1870s". The third stage was "from 1870 to the treaty of Versailles (1919) and the Statute of Westminster (1937)". See "History of the British Empire and the Commonwealth", in *Chambers' Encyclopaedia* (New Revised Edition, Pergamon Press, 1967) Vol. 3, pp. 791-805.

36 For a detailed analysis of the theory of knowledge and power, see "Knowing the Orient", in *Orientalism*, by E. Said (Penguin Books, 1985) pp. 31-49.

circumstances, became part of the Englishmen's daily life. The course of the Napoleonic war, which made the opening and closing of European markets under the vagaries of diplomacy and war, prompted Britain, now with a new military power controlling the sea, to direct her monopoly to other markets in America, Africa and the Far East. The social situation of the post-war circumstances with its economic and social trouble, the plight of the English working-class at home and the preaching that emigration was the true relief of their miseries, the over-population of Great Britain,³⁷ and the resentment felt by the freer spirits against the rule of squire and farmer, encouraged the spirit of going abroad, not now for exploration but for settlement. Accordingly, Canada, Australia and New Zealand were filled with British people.³⁸

The expansion of travel was largely due to the internal social structure of the Victorian Age and the great movement of travel inside and outside Britain. The changes in the modes of transportation left its impact on every field of human activity. The eighteenth century witnessed road building and by the early nineteenth century an efficient and fast system of stage-coaches had been built. Then the railway, as a method of transport for the Victorian man, replaced horse-drawn coaches and carts for long distance haulage and developed rapidly across the country in the eighteen thirties and forties. It improved the efficiency of the transportation of goods, the delivery of mail and the conditions of travel in general. This brought revolutionary changes in the lives of the people, on the one hand, and the economic structure of the country on the other hand.

By 1850, the railway system and other means of transport which made travel secure; the wealth accrued during the age; the peaceful relationships between the European countries; and the establishment of political relationships with Turkey (the latter being the product of the nineteenth century),³⁹ encouraged travel and made it

37 G.T. Griffith studied this phenomenon in his *Population Problems of the Age of Malthus* (Cambridge, 1926).

38 Before the end of the nineteenth century, the population of Great Britain grew from 10 to 37 millions and the pressures exerted within the country led to a great folk-wandering. By 1867, the populations of British North America had grown to 3,350,000; in the same year, the Australian colonies had reached 1,200,000; between 1858 and 1867, New Zealand increased from 60,000 to 218,000. "The History of the British Empire and the Commonwealth," *Chamber's Encyclopaedia* (1967) vol.3, p. 797.

39 The beginning of the political or diplomatic relationships between Britain and Turkey were the result of commerce rather than politics. This can be traced back to the sixteenth century when a commercial treaty regulated the trade between the two countries. Sultan Soliman, the great Turk, granted a safe conduct to M. Anthony Jenkinson, the merchant of London, at Aleppo in Syria in the year 1553. Then an exchange of letter between Sultan Murad of Turkey and Queen Elizabeth resulted in the 'Levant Company Charter;' a league between Turkey and
(Footnote continued)

possible and easy within and outside Britain, in Europe and the Levant. Europe and the East were made a playground of the English travellers who went abroad in thousands to spend their newly gotten wealth and see the new sights of Switzerland, the Netherlands, Italy, France, Greece, Turkey and Egypt.⁴⁰ Most of the travellers to Europe were desirous to see strange lands and sights; to experience the sensation of being in different surroundings and have different everyday experiences. Borrow travelled widely, both in Great Britain and on the continent and his writings were full of information on the subjects which he loved.⁴¹ Edward John Trelawny, the English traveller and adventurer, is another example of the British traveller in Europe who recorded his experiences as a midshipman in his *Adventures of a Young Son* (1831). He also accompanied Byron to the Greek War of Independence in 1823 and recorded his experience in *Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron* (1858). Kinglake's travel in the East was, in fact, an extension of such travellers to Europe. He was not an explorer and was not concerned with exploration in any sense. He was one of the monied English who were used to the practice of the Grand Tour; one of those who wanted to take a few months off to wonder in foreign parts; one of the gentlemen who wanted to escape the industrial society and the post-war situations for awhile. Kinglake left England with a cynical disdain for the "stale civilizations" of Europe and an eager anticipation of the freedom of the exotic East. He was fleeing the complexity of modern society and trying to escape, albeit momentarily, from impersonal industrial civilization.⁴² His book *Eothen* was to reflect his personal experience in the romantic Orient as such.

The narrative of Kinglake and other travellers; religion and science and their

³⁹(continued)

England in respect of traffic, in June 1580. As a result M. William Hareborne was appointed by Queen Elizabeth as an ambassador in Turkey in 1585. He, in turn, appointed Consuls. See Richard Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations Voyages* (Glasgow 1903-5) vol. V, pp, 109-10; 168-9; 70-71; and 176-77.

⁴⁰ Chew observed that "travel in the Levant was not comparatively speaking, so arduous and strenuous an undertaking in the Elizabethan period as it became in the nineteenth century. So long as the roads at home were unimproved, swamps not drained, and the amenities to which modern Western people are accustomed were unknown, the inconvenience of travel in the near East...did not differ in kind from the inconvenience of travel in England." S.C. Chew, *The Crescent and the Rose* (Oxford, 1937) p. 53.

⁴¹ For more details on George Henry Borrow see *George Borrow: The Man and His Books*, by E. Thomas, (London, 1913).

⁴² The idea that the East offered a refuge from the western world had long existed in European thought some time before it became an explicit motif in the lives and writings of Victorian travelers. Numerous works of European literature had imaginatively projected the Oriental world as an alternative to the Western: Voltaire's *Zadig*, Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, Johnson's *Rasselas*, Beckford's *Vathek*, Southey's, Moore's and Byron's Oriental narrative poems.

role in creating a fascination for the Arab-world-old civilization; and the British imperial interest in the Arab-world, created a great demand for books on Eastern and Islamic manners, customs and mentality. Scholars, travellers and explorers crossed the Mediterranean under various pretexts to acquire first-hand information of those countries they wrote, or intended to write, about; others, particularly novelists, poets, and the writers of fiction, were content with second-hand and sometimes third-hand knowledge, and frequently invented stories of their own.⁴³ Accordingly a cultural awareness of the Orient began to appear in the literary field and a great movement of translation began to flourish in the mid and later part of the century.⁴⁴ Knowledge of Arabic was cultivated because it was thought that an understanding of the Arab character and culture could be best achieved through real understanding of their literature and language. This attempt began in the later part of the eighteenth century with the activities of Sir William Jones. As a linguist and Orientalist, Jones established the taste for studying Eastern literature and language. In 1764 he began his study of Arabic to which he soon added Persian and in 1783 he published the *Moalakat*, or seven Arabian poems, which were suspended on the Temple at Mecca, with a translation and argument. His works stimulated an interest in Oriental literature and added to the knowledge of it. He also instituted the Asiatic Society which was formed in Calcutta in 1784 to promote Oriental studies. A similar activity related to Oriental studies continued in the nineteenth century with the foundation of the Oriental Translation Fund in 1828 under the patronage of King George IV with the aim of advancing Oriental studies and translating valuable works on Eastern history, science, and belles-lettres which were still in manuscript form in the libraries of the universities and the British Museum.

Interest in Oriental literature and language coincided with the interest in the study of philology in Europe, where a decisive turn in language study occurred with the activities of Sir William Jones in Britain and his discovery of the affinity of Sanskrit with the European languages.⁴⁵ This led to the reclassification of languages, and the displacement of the religious conception of language with a secular one; that is,

43 Sir Walter Scott's *The Talisman* (London, 1825), and Disraeli's *Tancred* (1847) are two examples of pure literary invention in which their authors depended on travellers, Orientalist and historical information in their account of the East.

44 Jonathan Scott published *Tales, Anecdotes and Letters translated from the Arabic and Persian* (Shrewsbury, 1800); Terrick Hamilton translated *Antar* in 1820; Theodore Preston published *Maqamat Al-Hariri* in 1850; William Wright, the professor of Arabic in the University of Cambridge, published *The Travels of Ibn Jubair* (1852), *An Arabic Reading-Book* (1870); Edward William Lane published *Selection from the Kur-an* (1843), and the *Arabian Nights* with notes and illustrations in a way as to make it an encyclopaedia of Eastern manners between 1838-40; Edward Henry Palmer translated the *Qu'ran* (1880); Sir Charles James Lyall produced *Translations of Ancient Arabian Poetry, Chiefly Pre-Islamic* (1885); Wilfred Scawen Blunt translated the *Mu'alaKat*; and his wife translated *Abu zaid al-Hilali*, done into verse by him in 1892.

the notion of protolanguages (Indo-European and Semitic)⁴⁶ and the rejection of the divine origin of the language. The Indo-European languages were spoken by the Aryan race and the Semitic by the Semites. The anthropologists of the nineteenth century laboured hard to deduce from the relationship of language a relationship of race. The influence of linguistics on anthropology made a clear distinction between the Aryan race and its antithesis, the Semitic race, and led to the formalisation of a new historical conception whereby the Indo-European languages were considered biologically generative, whereas the Semitic languages were inorganic and a phenomenon of arrested development in comparison with the former.⁴⁷ Language was used to demonstrate, not only the differences in speech utterances and grammar, but the essential differences in mental constitution and therefore in cerebral organization between Aryans and Semites.⁴⁸ In fine, interest in Arabic language⁴⁹ was not just meant for the understanding of Arabic literature, culture or history as was the case in the eighteenth century,⁵⁰ but to analyse the way it operates and the extent of its productivity as well. Arabic was accessible to the Victorians and had been taught at Oxford since the appointment of Edward Pococke in 1636 as a professor of Arabic.

45 See Hans Aarslef, *The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860* (Princeton University Press, 1967), p.127. In this book Aarslef gives an historical account of the intellectual development that links the philosophically-oriented preoccupation of the 1780's with the philological concern of the 1850's.

46 The term Indo-European was suggested by the Englishman Thomas Young and used by most nineteenth-century European writers apart from the Germans who used the term Indo-German, a term coined by the Orientalist Julius Von Klaproch in 1823.

47 E. Said's *Orientalism*, p. 135 and 145. Said discusses in some detail the impact of philology in the nineteenth century on Orientalism as a discourse see pp. 123-148.

48 For a detailed account on the origin and the emergence of the idea of Aryans in Europe see *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, trans., by E. Howard (trans.), (Sussex University Press, 1974)

49 Edward W. Lane published *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, 5 parts, (1863-74); part six, edited by his grandnephew, S. Lane-Pole, appeared in 1877-4. The seventh and eighth parts appeared in 1885 and 1893, again edited by Lane-Pole. E. Palmer's *Grammar of the Arabic Language and The Arabic Manual* appeared in 1874 and 1881 respectively; and William Wright published *A Grammar of the Arabic Language* (2 vols., 1859-62) which was an edited and corrected translation of the German work of Caspari.

50 The two most influential English Arabists of the eighteenth century were Simon Ockley and George Sale. Edward Pococke, the English Orientalist and biblical scholar, who introduced the study of Arabic at Oxford and who was appointed as the first professor there, published in 1649 *Specimen historiae arabum* and some other works, and Sir William Jones *The Moallakat* (1783). For more detailed information on the translation of Arabic works into English in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century see *Some English Translations of Arabic Imaginative* (Footnote continued)

The accessibility of Arabic to the Victorians, who already had an ideological preconception of the Semitic languages, made Arabic culture (and Islamic culture) accessible as well. This did not happen through a real intercourse with the Orient, though many Victorians went there, but mainly through the *Arabian Nights*, their mine of the Arab culture. This appears in the writings of almost all the Victorians whether travellers or novelists or fictionists. Sexuality and its freedom in the East; the theme of the harem and polygamy; despotism and slavery; palaces, princes, princesses, and eunuchs; superstitious practices and beliefs; magic in the East; and the Orient as an exotic and romantic place were extracted from the *Nights*, put in a diary-book in the "portmanteaus of a traveller" and projected into his sight-seeing.

The story of translating the *Nights* is most interesting. It underwent many translations and annotations and was approached neither as imaginative tales which had nothing to do with reality (even when it had it signified the life of the people living in the palace), nor as a criticism of the luxurious life of the people in power in an exaggerated fictional way rather than a representation of Islamic or Arabic manners and customs. Nevertheless, Europe was willing to accept the tales of the *Nights* as a real source for the understanding of Oriental culture. In his preface to *Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians*, Lane states that the *Arabian Nights* presents the most admirable picture of the manners and customs of the Arabs. He also suggests that a close translation of the *Nights* with sufficient illustrative notes might almost have spared him from undertaking his account of the customs and manners of the Egyptians.⁵¹ The tales of the *Nights* "were found to convey a more perfect picture of manners than the work of any traveller, however indefatigable and accomplished, and to comprise in themselves a store of Eastern information so illustrative of feelings and customs".⁵² Indeed, the Victorians' concept- an ideological concept- of the Orient was formed through the *Nights*' tales and they were seriously taken to comprise in themselves a store of Eastern information. It follows that a complete and literal translation directly from Arabic was required to provide the Victorians with a "real" knowledge of the Arab-World. A translation, a very literal and accurate one, it was believed, would portray the civilization of the Eastern people and would give a real picture in the great age of realism where literature was believed to reflect reality.

The first European version of the *Arabian Nights* was the French one of Antoine Galland in 1704. Galland's version is incomplete; it does not contain all the stories of the *Nights* and omits the verses which are scattered in the original. Most of

⁵⁰(continued)

Literature (1704-1833), by Mahmoud Manzalaoui, B.litt thesis, Oxford, 1947.

⁵¹ E.W.Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, (London, 1954), p.xxv. First published in 1836 in 2 vols.

⁵² *Foreign Quarterly Review*, XXIV, October, 1839-January 1840, p. 141.

the English versions which appeared after Galland's translation till the mid-nineteenth century were founded upon his text. Scott's version, the first not to be made from French but corrected immediately from Arabic, was not free from Galland's impact and even Lane's version depended to a large extent on Galland's. With the progress of the century Galland's version was dismissed for its omissions and inaccuracy. He was seen to have reduced the fundamental disparities between Eastern and Western civilizations by focusing on the artistic and romantic elements of the *Nights* in his translation. Galland, in fact, did not work with the intention of bringing about such a reduction, but was working within a certain moral context to make his version of the tales acceptable to French and European society.

In the nineteenth century, the *Arabian Nights* (.....^٣ ألف ليلة وليلة.....) appeared under different titles and was translated from different sources by different writers. Jonathan Scott published his translation in 1811 as a version corrected directly from the Arabic. In the year 1838 both Torrens and Lane issued their translations of the *Nights*. The former began an accurate translation from the Arabic of the Egyptian manuscript, but produced in all only one volume and the latter produced a translation supplied with notes on the manners and customs of the people the work portrayed.⁵³ John Payne's translation of the *Nights*,⁵⁴ the first complete translation to appear in England, was followed immediately by Burton's translation with its annotations and "Terminal Essay" entitled *A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights Entertainment, Now Entitled the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night. With Introduction Explanatory Notes on the Manners and Customs of Moslem Men and a Terminal Essay upon the History of the Nights* (1885-1888). In the period between 1886-8 he published the *Supplemental Nights to the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night. With Notes Anthropological and Explanatory*. Both were printed by Kama Shastra Society for private subscribers only.

Burton's translation shows a Victorian scholarly thoroughness in the field of research; the progress of science and the growing spirit of scientific method which entailed the interest in the minute details and the exactness of the sources of the work under consideration; and the increasing interest in extracting the characteristics of the Oriental from the literature of the *Nights* in the age of realism. Praising the Smithers' edition, a reprint of Burton's translation, the *Westminster Review* declared that Burton

53 See Edward William Lane's *A New Translation of the Tales of a Thousand and One Nights, known in England as the Arabian Nights' Entertainments: with copious notes* (London, 1838). For more detailed information on Lane's annotation the reader can refer to the third part of chapter five, subtitled "Lane's annotated *Arabian Nights*: its achievement and its reception", in *The Works of Edward William Lane and Ideas of the Near East in England 1800-1850*, by Laila Nadine Abdel Aziz Ahmed (Ph.D dissertation, Cambridge, 1970) pp.175-216.

54 See John Payne, *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night*, (Villon Society Publication, 1882).

had put before the "English readers a speaking picture of the Mohammedans of the East, their manners, customs, modes of thought and expression and social organisation".⁵⁵ In his foreword to the *Nights*, Burton said that his work was a "faithful copy of the great Eastern Saga-book by preserving intact, not only the spirit, but even the *mecanique*, the manner and the matter (vol. I, X111). Wright, on the other hand, did not rank Burton as a translator with John Payne and laboured to prove that Burton had borrowed much of the material in his *Nights* from Payne.⁵⁶ Farwell, a biographer of Richard Burton, asserted that the value of Burton's work in translating the *Nights*,

lies not in the excellence of the translation- others have produced more technically accurate versions- but in the spiritual and intellectual qualities which he brought to the stories. The *Nights* enabled him to make use of the vast storehouse of knowledge tucked away in his retentive memory and his over-laden books, providing him with a vehicle to carry his ideas, opinions, prejudices, facts, fancies and a curio chest of anthropological oddities to a public that received them with astonishment and delight".⁵⁷

The intensive attempts to characterize Eastern customs were sometimes motivated by science, at other times by politics and yet others by religion. "Eastern manners", wrote Mary Wortley Montague from Turkey in 1717 to Alexander Pope, "give a great light into many scripture passages that appear odd to us".⁵⁸ This idea found a wide and general acceptance in the nineteenth century. Travellers began to labour hard to account for Oriental customs; Lane produced a reference book on the customs and manners of the East, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians*, in 1836 and supplied the translation of the *Nights* with notes on the manners and customs of the East; and Samuel Burder seemed to have taken Wortley's idea to be the basis of his *Oriental Customs, or an Illustration of the Sacred Scripture, by an Explanatory Application of the Customs and Manners of the Eastern Nations, and Especially the Jews, therein Alluded to. Collected from Eminent Critics* (London, 1807, 2 vols).

Biblical literalism was later in the century undermined by the use of historical criticism, and especially after Darwin's theory of evolution had found acceptance even among churchmen such as Charles Kingsley. Eastern customs, in this period of the

55 "History as told in the *Arabian Nights*", by J.F.Hewit, *Westminster Review*, vol.143, (1895), p.253.

56 Wright compared the two translations putting them in the same page in two columns and showed the extent of Burton's borrowing. See *The Life of Sir Richard Burton*, by Thomas Wright, (London, 1906).

57 Byron Farwell, *Burton: A Biography of Sir Richard Francis Burton*, (Longman, 1963) p. 364.

58 *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montague*, (ed.) R. Halsband, (Oxford, 1965) Vol. I, 333.

formal empire, were needed to help the British to rule Eastern populations. In annotating and translating the *Nights* Burton was writing with an imperial aim in mind.⁵⁹ Hughes compiles his *Dictionary of Islam* to help "the Government official called to administer justice to Muslim peoples...forty millions of whom are under the rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Empress of India".⁶⁰ In his foreward of the *Nights*, Burton made it clear that his translation was not done for reasons of entertainment as much as a guide to England in dealing with Orientals, "a means of dispelling her ignorance concerning the Eastern race with whom she is continually in contact" (I,xxiv).⁶¹

The interest in Oriental culture was also due to the intrinsic social and cultural situation of Victorian society. Medievalism, the nostalgia for romanticism, the interest in children and the rapid development of mass education made Oriental literature, especially the *Nights*, very popular. Education, as a result of government reforms and religious organisations, expanded and was reaching many more people. In the forties young people were learning to read and read for pleasure with sufficient ease. For those who were unable to get a good education in their youth, there were many 'mechanic's' institutes at which skilled workers could continue their technical education in the evening. Other middle-class youths continued their studies in classics. Classical education, which the Victorian reader enjoyed in the middle of the century, was considered a luxury and a sign that one could afford to turn to something not strictly to do with work. Victorian readers, both in reading the classics of the past and in producing classics of their own, acquired and enjoyed a great literary civilization. In the forties an enormous body of readers, drawn from every class in the country, increased rapidly and books of many types on almost all sorts of subjects were coming into existence.⁶²

The great changes in nineteenth-century social and political life provided writers with new materials. The seriousness of the age and its problems were absorbed by its members and reflected in their writings. In literature, novelists were in competition to produce realistic works to portray things as they really were. Accordingly a stream of social novels emerged and the conflict between religion and science dominated literature until the latter was made more rationalistic. Dickens, an eminent

59 See his preface to the *Nights*, vol.I.

60 Thomas Patrick Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam* (London, 1885), p. Vii.

61 Burton's attempts to emphasize the realistic setting of the fantastic events of the *Nights'* tales and relate them to Eastern life as he saw it had hardly succeeded in diminishing their literary side and the dominating impression of the East as a region of romance.

62 For more detail see Amy Cruse's *The Victorians and their Reading* (London, 1936); and *The Shaping of English Literature* (London, 1927).

Victorian, attacked the social conditions of his time in many of his works.⁶³ Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1848) was one of the greatest realistic novels of the age where the writer was less concerned to present a moral solution than to evoke an image of life as he saw it. Mrs Gaskell concerned herself with social reform: in *North and South* (1855) she explored the social and economic problems of mid-nineteenth century Britain; and in *Mary Barton* (1848) she exposed the conditions of the working-class and the cruelty of the industrial system as she had seen them in Manchester. Disraeli's *Coningsby* (1844) and *Sybil* (1845) offered a picture of Victorian political life. Darwin's scientific theory had shaken the faith of many people, because his ideas of evolution, that man descended from higher apes, was incompatible with the narrative of the early chapters of Genesis which were as much a part of the English Bible as the New Testament itself. George Eliot, whose writings reflected the philosophical, social and religious issues of the Victorian era, rejected the religious teachings of her childhood; and Charles Kingsley began to seek reconciliation between modern science and Christian doctrine, accepting Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection.⁶⁴

The Victorian novel, not only concerned itself with social problems and the conflict between religion and science but also became more scientific. It came to have a definition and a function; it is a piece of prose fiction dealing with daily life and imitating as closely as possible the psychology, events and setting of real life. Its characters and their problems were supposed to be realistic leaving no room for supernatural elements in the solution of the conflicts, problems and mysteries. Everything was required to run according to cause and effect. The hero, or heroine, was no longer a representative of mankind, or personification of virtue or vice, as was the case in the fiction of the period before the novel, but an individual. This individual has a name, a past, a future and a specific place and time in which he or she lived.⁶⁵

Writing, in brief, was rationalistic, scientific, religious and realistic. The reader was pressed with the seriousness of the age and its conflicts which were reflected in literature and began to look for a new style of recreation. He was no longer satisfied with the rationalistic literature and got bored with the reading and re-reading of the problems of daily-life. He wanted new stories and yearned for romances, for something that might take him to the world of fancy away from realism and away from

⁶³ Charles Dickens's attack of the social conditions was given a special emphasis in his *Hard Times* (London, 1854).

⁶⁴ Charles Kingsley's *The Water-Babies* (1863) was inspired by his thoughts on evolution.

⁶⁵ In this narrow sense we can trace the impact of the *Arabian Nights* on the realistic movement in Europe. Damascus and Baghdad are real cities; and Haroun Al-Rashid and some other ministers were real rulers who had got a specific place and lived in a specific time.

the dullness and monotony of his life. Consequently, he responded to the Oriental literature and in particular to the *Arabian Nights* which opened for him the marvellous realms of fancy, creating a brilliant mythology of fairies and genies and released him from the morality of Victorian society and the industrial society of Britain.

The Industrial Revolution caused many changes in Victorian society. The rise of the new rich and powerful merchants and manufacturing class accompanied the rapid development of the city. Many people moved from the country to cities to find work in the new factories. It was the change in the mode of manufacture, brought about by the Industrial Revolution whereby hand labour was replaced by machine production centred in the city, that helped the development of the industrial city, a new event in the history of the world. The nature of work itself also changed under the pressure of mass production and the division of labour. The division of labour which, owing to the large scale production of articles by machinery necessitated a factory worker's concentration on a single small task endlessly repeated, affected the psychology of the Victorian man and the psychology of Victorian society at large. This situation created a nostalgia and a wide spread longing for the pre-Industrial world, known as Medievalism. Medievalism, the protest against actual conditions, whether intellectual or physical, the cry of 'back to the Middle Ages', the reaction against the ideas and realities of the period, permeated much of the thoughts of the period.⁶⁶

Medievalism and its interest in the past and yearning for romanticism found in Arab literature its objective. The *Arabian Nights*, "the champion of romance in a scientific age",⁶⁷ for the follower of this movement achieved the victory of imagination over reason and science in a realistic and rationalistic age. The Arab world as a place of exotic beings and romance was established, and the Arabian desert as a place of freedom became an alternative to the industrial city. It stood as antithetical of industrialization, permitting peace and rest from the rigor of the city. With Burton and Kinglake, its meaning came to signify as much of their state of mind as a description of nature. It is the lure of a world without men and without restriction, not the sun, sand and hardship, that made the desert so attractive to them. It was a place of solitude, emptied of all aspects of the complexity of the European society, where they cast their unconscious repressed imagination and lived their fantasies for awhile. Their case is similar to that of Robinson Crusoe and the Prospero of the *Tempest* on their Islands. It also attracted Doughty, Burckhardt, Lady Hester Stanhope, Lady Ellenborough (Jane Digby) and most of all, Wilfred Scawen Blunt, who stands among all Victorians as "Arabian for Arabia's sake".⁶⁸ Nevertheless it was Blunt's own temperament and

⁶⁶ Alice Chandler explores and offers a detailed study of Medievalism in the nineteenth century in her *A Dream of Order: The Medieval Ideal in Nineteenth-Century English Literature* (London, 1970).

⁶⁷ *Cornhill Magazine*, XXXII, 1875, p. 732.

inner restlessness, the mood "to loath all things and pine for new" which stimulated him to seek Arabia and find a meaningful life in the Desert among the Bedouin. The 'stale civilization' of Europe made Kinglake travel in the Desert in a state of exultation; a state in which Burton set-out in his mineralogical expedition to Median "to escape the prison life of civilized Europe" and "to enjoy a glimpse of the 'glorious Desert, to inhale the sweet pure breath of translucent skies that the red stars burning upon the very edge and verge of the horizon".The Desert for Burton (as for many Victorians) was:

pre-eminently the Land of Fancy, of Reverie; never ending, ever renewing itself in the presence of the Indefinite and the Solitude, which are the characteristics of this open world. The least accident, the smallest shift of scenery, gives rise to the longest trains of thought, in which the past, the present, and the future seem to blend.⁶⁹

The Desert made Doughty realise the insignificance of man before the 'elemental' greatness of the universe and made Lady Hester desert Europe once and for all. The East repelled Eliot Warburton, yet he left England "as men leave a crowded room, to breathe awhile freely, in the open East".⁷⁰ The East for him was a place of romantic escape where the European could find rest, so that he induced his reader to go there and follow his example:

reader! whoever you are, you may one day be induced to change the feverish life of Europe, with all its perplexing enjoyments, its complicated luxuries, and its manifold cares, for the silence, the simplicity, and the freedom of a life on the desert and the river. Has society palled upon you? Have the week-day struggles of the world made you wish for some short sabbath repose? Has our coarse climate chafed your lungs, and do they require the soothing of balmily breathing breezes?-Come away to the Nile! Has love, or hate, or ambition, or any other ephemeral passion, ruffled you up a storm in your butterboat of existence? Here you will find that calm counsellor Egeria-whose name is Solitude.... Here are sunshines that are never clouded, and fragrant airs as gentle as maiden's whisper.... Here are nights all a-glow with stars, and a crescent moon, that seems bowing to you in courtesy, not bent double by rheumatism. Here is no money to be lost or gained, no letters to disturb into joy or sorrow, none of the wear and tear, and petty details of life.... In a word, here is the highest species of monastic retirement. You stand apart from the world.... As you recede from Europe further and further on, towards the silent regions of the Past, you live more and more in that past; the river over which you glide, the desert, the forest, the very air you breathe, are calm... and, at length,⁷¹ even our island restlessness softens down into the universal peace around.

68 Bertram Thomas, *Arabia Felix* (1932), p. XV.

69 Richard Burton, *Gold Mines of Midian*, pp. 1 and 357.

70 Eliot Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross* (London, 1845) Vol.I, p.4.

71 E. Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, Vol.I, pp.157-59.

The Orient, for Warburton, sounds like a place of solitude, but solitude, for him, does not always import a total absence from the world, but the idea of dwelling in a country, or a village, or somewhere away from the tumult of civilization.⁷²

Most Victorian travellers went to the Romantic Orient which served as a place where one might voyage in reality in search of novelty and one's identity. They also identified the Orient with the past and made it an ideal place for a quest for the Self. Palgrave found in the East the Past of Europe. Arabia reminded him "of the European middle ages" and repeated "in a faint recollection the course of the Western Europe".⁷³ He travelled there, to the past of Europe, to the birth-place of Christianity to revive Christianity the religion of the European colonizer under the guise of bringing "the stagnant waters of Eastern life into contact with the quickening stream of European progress".⁷⁴ This bringing of Eastern life was necessary for Byron who found in it a mine for a new literary theme. "Stick to the East", Byron wrote to Moore in August 1813, "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 outrageous fictions".⁷⁵

By the close of the nineteenth century, the Victorians had brought the Arab world to the scrutiny of the West and had stored a bulky archive of the Eastern culture, and manners and customs. Most Victorian travellers presented them in terms that can be adopted to the anthropological, racial and imperial theorization of the age drawing most of the time on the *Arabian Nights*,⁷⁶ the Bible, and some other sources rather than their actual observations. Kinglake, Warburton, Burton, Palgrave and Doughty described the Orient and Orientals with implicit reference to the *Arabian*

⁷² Warburton seems to have been influenced by Zimmermann's concept of solitude. According to the latter, solitude enables man to live independent and alone; it gives fresh vigour to the powers of man's mind that he can hope for the situation of unbroken pleasure and never fading felicity. "Under the peaceful shades of solitude the mind of man", according to Zimmermann, "regenerates, and his faculties acquire new force; it is there [in solitude] alone that the happy can enjoy the fulness of felicity, or the miserable forgets his woe; it is there that the bosom of sensibility experiences its most delicious emotions; it is there that creative genius free itself from the thralldom of society, and darts forth the warmest rays of imagination". J.G. Zimmermann, *Solitude*, (London, 1792) 2nd edition.

⁷³ Palgrave, *Narrative of A Year's Journey*, Vol.I, p.119.

⁷⁴ W.G. Palgrave, *Narrative of a Year's Journey Through Central and Eastern Arabia* (London, 1865) p. vii.

⁷⁵ *The Works of Lord Byron: Letters and Journals*, ed., R.E. Prothero, (London 1898-1901) vol. II, p. 255.

⁷⁶ In his *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo* (London, 1846) Thackeray confirms that the East really did resemble the *Arabian Nights*.

Nights; the works of poets and imaginative writers such as Scott, Disraeli, Beckford, Byron, Moore, Lord Lindsey, Lytton, and Southey; and the Bible.⁷⁷ The Biblical image of the desert as a place of suffering and the Bedowins as bandits and marauders, for instance, was elaborated and reproduced in a highly literary way in Palgrave's *Central Arabia*. The romantic image of the same desert, first issued by Byron, was reproduced in a reverse way in both Burton's *Pilgrimage* and Kinglake's *Eothen*. The latter became a classic of a European and English traveller dealing with the Orient in a literary way in which he described the Orient through his ideology and sentiments.

⁷⁷ It is worth mentioning, here, that the image of the East in the writings of those poets was mostly derived from the *Arabian Nights*. In his preface to *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), Southey, for instance, declared that he "began with the Mohammedan religion as being that which I was then best acquainted myself, and of which everyone who had read the *Arabian Nights Entertainment* possessed all the knowledge necessary for readily understanding and entering into the intent and spirit of the poem".

CHAPTER THREE

KINGLAKE'S *EOTHEN*

The popularity of *Eothen* is a paradox: it fascinates by violating all the rules which convention assigns to viatic narrative. It traverses the most affecting regions of the world and describes none of them: The Troad- and we get only his childish raptures over "Homer's Iliad"; Stamboul- and he recounts the murderous services rendered by the Golden Horn to Assassin whose *serail*, palace, council chamber, it washes; Cairo- but the Plague shut out all other thought; Jerusalem- but Pilgrims have vulgarized the Holy Sepulchre into a Bartholomew Fair. He gives us everywhere, not history, antiquities, geography, statistics, but only Kinglake, only his own sensations, thoughts, experiences.

¹ Rev.W.Tuckwell, *A W Kinglake: A Biographical and Literary Study* (London, 1902) P.27.

Eothen is Kinglake's discovery of his own culture and of his own self; the discovery of the East as it was needed by the West; and the discovery of his ability to produce literature on the East. All this was more significant than what he found abroad. He found the Orient as a place of romance, of exotic beings, of haunting memories and landscape; he found in the East a means of expressing his superiority and defining Europe as its contrasting image, the dimension of the "Other" which helped him to produce a colour image of Europe and of himself; and he found that the East had a desire to become a European, even an English colony.

Eothen relies upon the sheer egoistic power of Kinglake's consciousness, a non-Oriental consciousness, a European one, at its centre, rather than upon the East itself. Kinglake's *Eothen* owes its achievements to the fact that it broke with the inherited forms and ideas of travel-writing and paved the way for the opening up of new possibilities for literary and intellectual experiment in relation to the Orient. It has largely contributed to the development of "Oriental-style European literature very frequently based on personal experience in the Orient."²

Kinglake falls into the third category of Said's division of European travellers to the East in relation to the intention of their consciousness: that category for whom a real or metaphoric trip to the Orient is the fulfillment of some deeply felt and urgent project; the writer's text, therefore, is built on a personal aesthetic, fed and informed by the project. In this category as well as in category two Said finds a considerable space for the play of the personal non-orientalist consciousness. Category one includes the writers who intend to use their residence for the specific task of providing professional orientalism with scientific material, and consider their residence as a form of scientific observation. Said's example of this category is Lane's *Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians*. Category two includes the writers who intend the same purpose as category one, but are less willing to sacrifice the eccentricity and style of their individual consciousness to impersonal Orientalist definition. Such writers appear in their works, but they are disentangled from personal vagaries only with difficulty. Burton's *Pilgrimage* is taken by Said as an example of this category.³

Kinglake finds himself by far the most interesting part of the landscape, so that he writes about himself and his country rather than the East. What remains of his prose, accordingly, is not very substantial in relation to reality. As a narrator, Kinglake is a mediator between his own experience and his reader, providing him with the means of enjoying the experience of travel and places. Like a fictionist, Kinglake has selected and ordered things in advance of his writing and shaped them so that the reader can find recreation. He does not seek a scientific reality so much as an exotic

² E.W.Said, *Orientalism*, p.157.

³ E.W.Said, *Orientalism*, pp.157-8.

and attractive one, giving his consciousness a very large role to play breaking with conventional English travel narrative. Warburton perceived this break in his review of *Eothen* when he says:

There is this wide difference, however, between the book before us, and almost all our Oriental importations of late years: the latter, for most part, furnish us with names of places and of things; the former represents the things themselves: the latter supply facts and statistics relating to the East; *Eothen*⁴ gives us the very East itself in all its own gorgeous or gloomy realities.

Centuries before Kinglake made his tour to the Holy Land, the area was swarming with European travellers who had almost hardly left anything novel for him to describe. "Kinglake", to use Fedden's expression, "was treading well-worn ground and could add little to earlier accounts".⁵ To invent some thing new out of an old tradition, Kinglake did not concern himself with the description of the landscape and the sites which he saw, but with his state of mind on seeing them while he was journeying and their impact on his sensation. Kinglake has probably taken his clue from Sherer who made it clear in his preface to *Scenes and Impression in Egypt and in Italy* that the ground over which he would conduct his reader has been trodden and described by hundreds of travellers, and is well known as any road or province in England and that his "humble aim is to give an aspect of what I saw, and the impression it produced".⁶

Sherer's narrative was more direct and his prose was more descriptive than impressional. He unconsciously tried to break with the past, but his attempt was not as successful as that of Kinglake who made a conscious and deliberate break. In distancing himself from conventional travel narrative, Kinglake was, in fact, approaching, or influenced by, the French travellers Chateaubriand and Lamartine, who made their Middle Eastern travels in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Although Chateaubriand's voyage was a pilgrimage intended to complete the circle of studies which he had always promised himself to accomplish, and although he tried to add some reflections on the nature of religious tradition and on the local situation of Jerusalem, his work was a subjective Middle Eastern travelogue. In his preface he made it clear that he went in "quest of images and nothing more" and begged the reader not to expect a conventionally informative travel book:

I must, therefore, request the reader to consider this work rather as a memoir of a year of my life, than as a book of travel. I pretend not to

4 Eliot Warburton, "Eothen or Traces of Travel Brought Home from the East", *Quarterly Review*, Vol LXXV, December 1844 and March 1845, p.54.

5 "Toward the Dawn and the Sun-Rising", by Robin Fedden, *Nineteenth Century*, August, 1948, p.101.

6 Moyle Sherer, *Scenes and Impressions in Egypt and in Italy* (London, 1824), pp.iii-iv.

tread in the step of a Charolne, a Tavernier, a Chandler, a Mungo Park, a Hummboldt; or to be thoroughly acquainted with people through whose country I merely passed, a moment is sufficient for landscape-painter to sketch a tree, to take a view, to draw a ruin, but whole years are too short for the study of men and manners, and for the profound investigation of arts of science.

The subjectivity of Chateaubriand was developed by Lamartine whose *Voyage en Orient* was a novel literary invention in which the traveller's consciousness transgressed the normal bounds of traditional travel narrative and concentrated on the personality of the traveller and his reflections. Chateaubriand went to the Holy Land as "a pilgrim and a knight, with the Bible, the Gospel, and the history of the Crusaders in his hand", Lamartine went as "a poet and a philosopher", recounting "the profound impressions made on my heart, and the deep and mighty transports produced in my spirit."⁸ Kinglake went there as a gentleman with a professed paganism, which differentiated him from both Chateaubriand and Lamartine whose journey "often became a continued prayer". Lamartine's journey to the Holy Land was initially an account of a religious crisis. In 1822 he had a vision of the spirituality of all matter, striving to become one with God. In 1833, approximately two years before Kinglake travelled to the East, he began his journey in search of a conclusive religious revelation. In writing *Eothen*, Kinglake was highly instructed by Lamartine's view of the duty of travel-writer. The writer, according to Lamartine, should speak and give his generation his thoughts either under the form of a philosophical treatise or of a poem, only when "he has collected, classed, and luminously summed up the innumerable multitude of impressions, images and reflections", when he "has matured his mind and drawn his conclusions."⁹

The new generation of travellers such as Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Kinglake, and even Burton himself, equate the East with their fantasy and personal experiences. The more the traveller's consciousness directs his narrative, the more the East disappears, allowing the traveller to express his feeling, impressions and what is going on in his mind more freely; and the more the traveller's consciousness submerged the more the East emerges, as it is the case with Lane.

Lane's account of Eastern populations in his *Modern Egyptians* is free from all devices that draw attention to the author's personality or his society. His prose concentrates only on the world that it is concerned to make real for the reader. His

⁷ F.D. Chateaubriand, *Travels in Greece, Palestine, Egypt, and Barbary during the Years 1806 and 1807*. Translated by Frederic Shoberl (London, 1812), Vol. I, p.vi.

⁸ Alphonse de Lamartine, *Visit to the Holy Land or recollection of the East*, tran. by Thomas Shipson (London, George Virtue, 1832). 2 vol. in one. Vol. I, p.iii.

⁹ Ibid. p.iii.

conduct is like that of the French traveller Comte de Volney. The latter's *Voyage en Egypte en Syrie*, which appeared in 1787, is viewed by Said "as almost an oppressively impersonal document". "Volney", Said observes, "evidently saw himself as a scientist, whose job it was to record the 'itat' of something he saw".¹⁰ Lane's technique of detaching his consciousness from his text and accounting scientifically for the manners and customs of Eastern populations stands in sharp contrast to that of Kinglake, but both of them mark a new stage in dealing with the Orient. Lane's method in accounting for the Eastern peoples also constitutes a real break with English travellers of the previous centuries, mainly, those who went to Egypt and the Holy Land.

The works of the eighteenth-century travellers such as Pococke, Norden, Shaw, Browne, and others show more interest in the physical description of the area than the people. What enhanced the value of Norden's account was his "ample collection of designs and sketches, made on the spot, to which were joined the necessary explications and remarks. The author had every where noted the dimensions, drawn views, and taken plans". Norden's knowledge of architecture enabled him to represent "justly those magnificent monuments of Egypt", and his mathematical studies "furnished him with the means of drawing with success... the great chart of the Nile".¹¹ The work of Pococke is more valuable for all that concerns antiquities rather than the Oriental social life.¹² Shaw described "the situation polity, and customs of various nations" but his work "was presented to the reader as an essay towards restoring the *ancient geography*, and placing in a proper light the *natural* and some times *civil history* of those countries, where the author has travelled". Shaw's "principal design and intent" was not barely to amuse and divert, but to inform and instruct the curious reader".¹³ Browne, another eighteenth-century traveller, was very much concerned with the authenticity of his geographical information and proud in his account of Dar-Fur which filled up a gap in the geography of Africa. He also laboured hard to extract from his journal the principal occurrences during his residence in the East and Africa "omitting nothing that could in any way contribute to the state of the country, or the character of the inhabitants".¹⁴ The similarity between Shaw and Kinglake begins and

10 Said, *Orientalism*, p.81.

11 Frederick Ludvig Norden, *Travels in Egypt and Nubia*, translated by Peter Templeman (London,1757), vol.I p.xx.

12 See Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and some other Countries* (London, 1743-1745) 2 Vols;

13 Thomas Shaw, *Travells or Observations Relating to Several Parts of Barbary and the Levant* (London,1738), pp iv-vi.

14 W.G. Browne, *Travells in Africa , Egypt , and Syria from the Year 1792 to* (Footnote continued)

ends with the process of selection, that is, each of them has selected certain happenings and accounted for them.

In *Eothen* Kinglake has no intention of supplying the reader with an Oriental guide-book.¹⁵ He has endeavoured to discard "from it all valuable matters derived from the works of others". He made it clear in his preface to *Eothen* that his work was thoroughly free from "all details of geographical discovery, or antiquarian research- from all display of "sound learning, and religious knowledge"- from all historical and scientific illustrations- from all useful statistics- from all political disquisitions- and from all good moral reflections."¹⁶

Kinglake's attitude towards the Orientals is fashioned as much by his preoccupations, and what he has to say about them is almost always interesting- but as much for what it tells about Kinglake himself as about his subjects. His ability to feel situations and transmit their effect by his own personality, rather than the accurate or real description of those scenes and situations, is what makes *Eothen* break with its predecessors. Kinglake takes "no antiquarian interest in ruins," and cares "little about them unless they are either striking in themselves, or else serve to mark some spot very dear to my fancy" (103).

The authorial experience and sensibility, not the information on the country he visited, are the crux and the actual theme of *Eothen*. It, as such, marks a real break with almost all travel-writings and influences most travel writers of the nineteenth century. There are wide differences between *Eothen* and all other travel-writings before the 1830s. Traditional travel writers furnish us with names of places and of things and supply us with facts and statistics related to the East. Information on and the description of the country visited were the subject of their writings and part of their responsibility. They were obsessed with geographical description of the Orient, the routes leading to the Holy Land, the detailed description of the religious practices, the Temple and the Sepulture, and the ancient monuments. Their prose was functional, its main concern being to define the object and supply the reader with the necessary information concerning their description. *Eothen*, in no way,

¹⁴(continued)
1798 (London, 1799), p vii.

¹⁵ Sir John Mandeville, a fourteenth century European traveller, mostly likely English, provides us with the earliest account of a tour such as that of Kinglake. His work *Mandeville's Travels*, probably completed in 1366, was set out to be a guide to the Holy Land with the element of entertainment penetrating it; see his *Mandeville's Travels*, (London, 1953). Lithgow's *The Total Discourse* (Glasgow, 1906) can be taken as a guide book as well. Lithgow made his journey in the first half of the seventeenth century visiting Egypt, Syria and some other kingdoms.

¹⁶ A.W.Kinglake, *Eothen* (London & Edinbrugh, 1844) pp.v-vi. Subsequent references will appear parenthetically.

tries to present the East but represent it in all its gorgeous realities.

Representation in *Eothen* is the outcome of the free play of the ego and hence the subjectivity of the writer and the domination of the authorial experiences and sensibility. The incident of travel and the self perceiving and recording them, that is, the external world of the Orient and the traveller, a European consciousness, are fused together indissolubly in *Eothen*. The happenings of the external world are subordinated to the sensibility of the traveller and their importance become a necessary part of the literary whole inasmuch as the traveller's consciousness is disclosed. The traveller, according to Kinglake, is

"a creature not always looking at sights- he remembers (how often !) the happy land of his birth- he has, too, his moments of humble enthusiasm about fire- and food-- about shade, and drink; and if he gives to these feeling anything like the prominence which really belonged to them at the time of his travelling, he will not seem a very good teacher; once having determined to write the sheer truth concerning the things which chiefly have interested him, he must, and he will sing a sadly long strain about the Self; he will talk for whole pages together about his bivouac fire, and ruin the Ruins of Baalbec with eight or ten cold lines" (viii).

The actual scenes and things which Kinglake encounters are of little interest in themselves unless they are described as reflected in, and affecting, the perceiving consciousness and unless they are a means of revealing the traveller's personality. The pyramid in Egypt recalls his memory to his childhood's occasional nightmare. He invokes that moment of childhood just to describe the pyramid as something whose greatness is not an imaginative but real. All that we have from Kinglake's description of the pyramid is that the latter's impact on him is like that of his nightmare with the difference that the former has a real existence:

Well, now my eyes saw and knew, and my hands and my feet informed my understanding that there was nothing at all abstract about the great Pyramids,- it was a big triangle, sufficiently concrete, easy to see, and rough to the touch; it could not, of course, affect me with the peculiar sensation which I have been talking of, but yet there was something akin to that old night-mare agony in the terrible completeness,¹⁷ with which a mere mass of masonry could fill, and load my mind. (319).

17 A comparison of other travellers' account of the pyramids, will show a great difference with that of Kinglake's. Wittman's description reads:

The pyramids of Giza are situated about ten miles to the south-west of Cairo, on an elevated and rocky ground, the surface of which is covered with white sands, forming the ridge of the Lybian mountains by which inundation of the Nile is bound to the westward. Their planes are directed towards the four quarter of the globe

William Wittman, *Travels in Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, and across the Desert during the Years 1799-1801* (London, 1803) pp. 322-3. See also Lane's *Modern Egyptians*; William Hamilton's *Remarks on Several Parts of Turkey, Part I: Aegytiaca, or some Account of the Ancient and Modern State of Egypt, as Obtained in the Years, 1801, 1802* (London, 1809); *Mandevill's Travells*; and others.

Kinglake wrote a full account of Jerusalem- a full account, that is, of his impression of what he saw. This is done through Dthemetri; instead of giving a detailed list of shrines, for example, he says that Dthemetri "was almost distracted by the temptations that surrounded him; there were so many stones absolutely requiring to be kissed, that he rushed about happily puzzled, and sweetly teased, like "Jack among the maidens"" (217). It is also worth mentioning, here, that Kinglake's description is not completely lacking in accounting for the physical structure of the places he visited. His description of the Holy Sepulchre begins in a traditional way. It reads:

The Holy Sepulchre is not in a field without the walls, but in the midst, and the best part of the town under the roof of the great Church which I have been talking about; it is a handsome tomb of oblong form, partly subterranean, and partly above ground; and closed in on all sides, except the one by which it is entered. You descend into the interior by a few steps, and there find an altar with burning tapers (218).

None, but Kinglake has ever described the pyramids and even the East in such a subjective way. They were depicted as they responded to his mood, rather than as they appeared in nature as was the case with other travellers. All other details of the size of the pyramids or the purpose of their building- a theme most of the writers accounted for- were of no importance for him. What is of importance to him is the effect produced upon his mind by the mere vastness of the great pyramid which "screens an Egyptian pyramid from the easy, and familiar contact of our modern minds; at its base the common Earth ends, and all above is a world, -one not created of God" (319). The great Pyramid is an incident which recalls Kinglake's nightmare. It is a journey within a journey in which Kinglake journeys into his personal past, his youth and childhood and return home while he was still in the East.

Kinglake's description of the pyramids, like the description of the desert or the description of the holy places in Jerusalem, have no importance in their relation to reality whatsoever. The incident of the voyage in *Eothen* served as a point of departure to convey the author's final aim. First and foremost it was not the place that we see but the narrator's voice that we hear through his prose which unfold his intention in front of any incident or scene. The Desert is an incident and a point of departure through which Kinglake expresses his love for the freedom and the open frankness which he imagined to find in the East, in contrast to the English reserve, hypocrisy and 'stale civilization'. The holy places in Jerusalem and the absurdity of the Christian practices, as he depicted them, serve as a point of departure for Kinglake to reveal his paganism as superior to religion. The incident of the 'Sphynx' reveals his desire for the English occupation of Egypt. The Sphynx is the point from which he launches his attack against Islam. It seems to him as a comely creature, "but the comeliness is not of this world ".¹⁸ Kinglake's implicit attack begins when he says: "Laugh, and mock if you will at the worship of stone idols, but mark ye this, ye breaker of images, that in one regard, the stone idol bears awful semblance of Deity- unchangefulness in the

midst of change- the same seeming will, and intent for ever, and ever inexorable!" (324). Using the Sphinx, Kinglake prophesized the death of Islam. The "you" and the "ye" are directed to, and can be substituted for, Islam and Muslims. Abraham, the first Muslim according to the Quranic teachings, and Muhamad the Messenger of Al-Islam had purified the Kaabah from idols by breaking them and throwing them away. They are known as breakers of idols (breakers of images). The Muslims are used to mock and laugh at the worship of stone idols which is the sign of paganism. The solution for preventing them from so doing, according to Kinglake, will come through the British occupation of Egypt:

And we, we shall die, and Islam will wither away, and the Englishman, leaning far over to hold his loved India, will plant a firm foot on the banks of the Nile, and sit in the seats of the Faithful, and still that sleepless rock will lie watching, and watching the works of the new, busy race, with those same sad, and earnest eyes, and the same tranquil mien everlasting. You dare not mock at the Sphinx (324).

Similarly, when bitten by the fleas at Tiberias, Kinglake wrote:

Old Jews from all parts of the world go to lay their bones upon the sacred soil, and as these people never return to their homes, it follows that any domestic vermin which they may bring with them are likely to become permanently resident, so that the population is continually increasing. No recent census had been taken when I was at Tiberias, but I know that the congregation of fleas which attended at my church alone, must have been something enormous (172).

In a more literary style, Kinglake is echoing, here, Lamartine's description of the city which reads:

Tiberias is not worth passing, even at its interior; it is confused and dirty collection of few hundred houses, resembling the Arab huts, made of mud and straw. We were saluted in Italian and in Germany by several Polish and German Jews, who at the close of their days, when they are waiting only for the uncertain hour of death, come to pass their last moment at Tiberias, on the border of their own sea, in the very heart of their dear country, that they may expire under their own sun, and be buried in their own land, like Abraham and Jacob.

KINGLAKE'S JOURNEY.

Kinglake's journey was part of the practices of the gentry and nobility who used to visit Europe and later Egypt as part of their Grand Tour; a journey intended to widen their mind and experiences before settling down to political and social life in England. In the summer of 1834, Kinglake met one of his school friends from Eton days, called John Savile, who had recently become Lord Pollington, the son of the second Earl of Mexborough. Pollington had struck off via

18 T.Shaw described the Sphynx as follows: The head of a woman, joined to the body of a lion was called a Sphinx; being in general, an emblem of strength, united to prudence. *Travels and Observations*, p.356.

19 *Visit to the Holy Land or Recollection of the East*, Vol.I, p.240

the North Sea, the Caucasus, Persia, and India, and had come back home with splendid tales of his experiences. Kinglake found delight in listening to the tales of the adventurous and unusual journey of his friend and his intention was fired by a desire to make a similar one in the Levant, the Ottoman Turkey, extending from what is now Yugoslavia through Turkey and the Levant; an area Pollington had not seen. Pollington and Kinglake decided to make another journey together from one end to the other of the Turkish Near East- from the Danube to the Nile. They met in Hamburg and journeying through Berlin, Dresden, Prague, and Vienna, they reached Semlin where Kinglake's narrative began to unfold itself without any preliminary parade.

At Semlin Kinglake and his friend, Lord Pollington the Methley of *Eothen*, crossed into the Ottoman domain on the river Save, a crossing made significant by the strict quarantine barrier separating the two worlds. Since then Kinglake had ridden through "the land of the Osmanlees, from the Servian Border to the Golden Horn,- from the gulph of Satalieh to the tomb of Achilles (p.5). Plunging into the Ottoman Empire, Kinglake had come, as it were, to the end of this wheel-going Europe, and now his eyes would see "the splendour and the havoc of the East".

Kinglake and Methley were accompanied by an accomplished interpreter in several languages, though not in Arabic or Slav, called Mysseri. He served Kinglake "so faithfully throughout his Oriental journey and was the brain of their corps". He stayed with Kinglake for the whole journey and both of them last the book out. Pollington, on the other hand, returned home at the end of chapter four.

After a journey of some few days they reached Smyrna where Pollington found letters obliged him to return to England. By the following summer he had become a member of Parliament for Pontefract. It was most certainly for that reason that he returned to England. Having read about Pollington's election in an English newspaper, Kinglake wrote to congratulate him from Rome in September 1835.

In the course of the journey a series of characters are introduced but none of them stick it out to the end. At the beginning of his journey, Kinglake takes with him a ragged rout of "Suridgees"- a tribe of gypsies engaged to lead the baggage-horses. Moostapha, a handsome former janissary, the Turk bodyguard, the 'Tatar'- "a government courier properly employed in carrying despatches, but also sent with travellers to speed them on their way, and answer with his head for their safety" (19) -was to lead out the party from the gates of Belgrade. Kinglake satirized him in a ridiculous way. Moostapha's "regular, and handsome cast of countenance" is characteristic of the Ottoman race, and his "features displayed a good deal of serene pride, self-respect, fortitude, a kind of ingenuous sensuality, and something of instinctive wisdom, without any sharpness of intellect" (19-20). Dismounted, he adopted, or was obliged by his mass of clothes and his armament to adopt, the old praetorian strut which "used to affright the Christians in former times- a strut so comically pompous". Dismounting does not fit that janissary :

In truth, this great edifice of woollen, and cotton, and silk, and silver, and brass, and steel, is not at all fitted for moving on foot; it cannot even walk without ludicrously deranging its architectural proportions, and as to running, I once saw our Tatar make an attempt at that laborious exercise, in order to pick up a partridge which Methley had winged with a pistol-shot, and really the attempt was one of the funniest misdirections of human energy that I ever beheld.... But put him in his stirrups, and then is the Tatar himself again: there you see him at his ease, reposing of tranquillity of that true home (the home of his ancestors,) which the saddle seems to afford him, and drawing from his pipe the calm pleasure of his "own fireside" (20-21).

Mounting his horse, raised by his saddle to the height above the level of the back of his animal and carefully accounted at every point from thigh to throat with arms and implements for a campaigning life, he was an imposing sight; a ridiculous and funny one as portrayed by Kinglake. The Tatar was not the only thing ridiculed in *Eothen*, for every aspect of Eastern life was cloaked in ironic humour, mainly to emphasize Kinglake's superiority to his queer Eastern surroundings. Steel, Methley's Yorkshire servant, was one of the party and was most in keeping with the scene. Kinglake described him as the faithful Steel who marched with the step of a man "-not frightened exactly, but sternly prepared for death, or the Koran, or even for plural of wives" (7).

Arriving at Servia, which was still garrisoned by the Turkish troops under the command of a Pasha, Kinglake received an invitation from him and they communicated in an interview through the interpreter Myssri. A writer in the *Times Literary Supplement* describes the meeting in which the Pasha gave Kinglake an audience as an immortal comedy and "the most delicious report in the record of interviews, with its unforgettable refrain of "Whirr! Whirr! All by wheels! Whiz! WHiz!; all by steam!". All imagined: but there was some basis of reality" (25 July 1935).

Kinglake sketches the party as it rode through Servia with some details, jesting at almost everything he was encountering. They left the Pasha and in the first hours of their journey they entered a great Servian forest. At midnight of their first day's march they reached a Servian village whose people were "careful to conceal their riches, as well as their wives". The party took up their quarters in a square room with white walls and an earthen floor, unfurnished and "void of women". The natives, at first, refused to let them have provisions, declaring that "their hens were mere old maids, and all their cows unmarried", but their Tatar, Moostapha, "swore such a grand, sonorous oath, and fingered the hilt of his Yataghan with such persuasive touch that the land soon flowed with milk, and mountains of eggs arose" (26). The first night of his journey was unforgettable, a glorious time in his life, where he broke into a rhapsody and revealed his Byronic hatred for the conventions of English life and its "stale civilization" (27).²⁰

Before they reached Adrianople, Methley fell sick of fever and was too ill to

be kept in his saddle. He was put in "an *araba*, a vehicle drawn by an oxen, in which the wives of a rich man are sometimes dragged four or five miles over the grass by way of recreation". Kinglake insisted upon horses being put to one of the carts and so Methley was carried on to Constantinople. On their way to the city a fierce, icy storm which swept right down the steppes of Tartary faced them. Steel reached Stambul in a state of benumbed limbs and unconsciousness. The Tatar with his numerous clothes -"carrying seven heavens full of water, in his manifold jackets, and shawls" (38) -became weak and even worn out. Kinglake's spirit for satire and jesting does not leave him. Even in his misery and when he is tired he had the tendency to portray the Tatar's clothes as seven heavens of water and describe him as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber to command the party. Mysseri kept his energy, but was depressed by the news that the plague was prevailing in Constantinople. They crossed the Golden Horn in a caique and when they landed and made their way to the house of Giuseppini at Pera, they looked, said Kinglake, like "men that had been turned back by the Royal Humane Society, as being incurably drowned" (39).

They reached Constantinople to find the plague in possession, giving tone and colour to all that Kinglake saw and felt, associating it with all that is most truly Oriental in its character. During the prevalence of the plague, the Europeans kept much of themselves and avoided the touch of every human being they passed because they believed that the plague could be conveyed by the touch of infected substances, and that the deadly atoms lurked in all kinds of clothes and furs. Kinglake shares Sherer's observation that "during the plague season, the Europeans shut themselves in, and peep timidly at all visitors through a square hole in a locked door, through which they receive everything". Sherer also described the impression of the newly arrived Europeans who had never been to a plague-infected city and had never seen a case of a plague. To those people "it is at first highly comic to see all the little precautions adopted; and you cannot meet without smile those Franks, whose more humble rank, or the nature of their business, compels to stir about, armed with a thick stick to prevent a dog touching them, and making wide circuit to windward, round every man, camel, and jackass, which they meet".²¹ Kinglake was one of those newly arrived Europeans who found the Frank's behaviour ridiculous. He strolled about the city not caring for his hostess, fear and soon got compromised:

Faithfully promising to shun the touch of all imaginable substances,

20 Byron wrote to Lady Melbourne early in 1814 ..." My life is fritted away; there [in the East] I was always in action, or, at least, in motion; and except during night, always on or in the sea, and on horseback. I am sick of my present sluggishness, and I hate civilization". *The Works of Lord Byron: Letters and Journals*, ed., R.E. Prothero (London, 1898-1901) Vol.iii, 274.

21 Moyle Sherer, *Scenes and Impressions in Egypt and in Italy*, p.205.

however enticing, I set off very cautiously, and held my way uncompromised, till I reached the water's edge; but during the moment that I was waiting for my caique, some rueful-looking fellows came rapidly shambling down the steps with a plague-stricken corpse.... I contrived to be so much in the way of this brisk funeral, that I was not only touched by the men bearing the body, but also, I believed, by the foot of the dead man.... This accident gave me such a strong interest in denying the soundness of the contagion theory... and from that time... I went wherever I chose, without taking any serious pains to avoid a touch (45-46).

Methley soon rallied in Constantinople, but Kinglake felt that he should be given enough time to recover fully before they continue their journey. In the meantime, Kinglake availed himself the opportunity of exploring the city. He bought a horse and "pipe of tranquility" and took a Turkish phrase-master from which he gained some knowledge of the structure of the Turkish language. He also explored the bazaars and described the way they operated.

Kinglake's habit of studying military subjects,²² which hardened his heart against poetry and his delight "to follow from out of Arabian sands the feet of the armed believers, and to stand in the board manifest storm-tract of Tartar devastation", made him turn his face to the "shining Orient" and forget all about old Greece and all the scenes surrounding him at Constantinople which were of much interest to the "classical scholar". It happened that once he mounted the high ground above Pera where he saw in the far distance the snow-covered summit of Mysian Olympus; a scene which made him and his companions determine to travel on through the Troad. Recalling the past, Kinglake and Methley, two lovers of Homer and classical literature, lived the real world of the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, dreaming of Troy and the old Greeks and tracing the course of "divine Scamander" and longing to have sight of "Diana glorying in her arrows, and Venus the lover of smiles". (62)

After a journey of some days by the route of Adramiti and Pergamo, they reached Smyrna, "Infidel Smyrna" as known by Muslims. It is the main point of commercial contact between Asia and Europe where you find people of various nationalities. There, Lord Pollington found a letter awaiting him necessitating his return to England. Before parting with Kinglake he met Henry Stuart Burton, called in *Eothen* Carrigaholt, the eldest son of the Hon. Sir Francis Burton, of Castle Carrigaholt,

22

Kinglake had an increasing interest in military history. In 1845 he went to Algiers and accompanied the flying column of St. Arnaud and in 1854 he followed the English expedition to the Crimea, and witnessed the battle of Alma (20 September, 1854). He was introduced to Lord Raglan and in 1856 Lady Raglan asked him to undertake the history of the Crimean war which he accepted after he got all the papers and documents in her possession. He produced in eight volumes his *The Invasion of the Crimea: its origin, and an account of its progress down to the death of Lord Raglan*. (Edinburgh & London, 1863-1887). The first two volumes appeared in 1863, the third and fourth in 1868, the fifth in 1872, the sixth in 1880 and the seventh and eighth in 1887.

County Clare, in Ireland. Like Kinglake he was travelling the world for experience before settling down. Kinglake's sense of humour made him give an ironic description of Carrigaholt and his way of life in Smyrna. Carrigaholt was fond of sailing. He went to Liverpool and looked through the craft lying ready to sail and he found a smart schooner that perfectly suited his taste. He asked for a passage. The destination of the vessel was not of a real concern to him, and when he was informed that the schooner was bound for Constantinople, he agreed to go there saying that Constantinople would suit him admirably. When the vessel sailed, Burton discovered that the skipper carried on board "an enormous wife with an inquiring mind, and an irresistible tendency to impart her opinions". She looked upon Burton "as upon a piece of waste intellect that ought to be carefully tilled. She tilled him accordingly" (68). He was forced to attend lectures in the Bay of Biscay. The voyage lasted for six weeks and the philosophy inflicted on him according to Kinglake, "was not entirely fatal to him; certainly he was somewhat emaciated, and for aught I know, he may have subscribed somewhat too largely to the "Feminine-right-of-reason Society"; but it did not appear that his health has been seriously affected (69)". There was a scheme on foot for taking the passengers back to England in the same schooner. Had not Burton escaped this scheme by following the hints of his servant, who arranged a plan for escaping, he would have been kept, according to Kinglake's ironic spirit, "perpetually afloat, and perpetually saturated with arguments".

At this stage Kinglake offered an amusing description of Burton's Platonesque desire for the Beautiful and Good- "this practical Plato, with a purse in his hand, carried on his mad chase after the Good and Beautiful, and yet returned in safety to his home" (73). He has a gentleman-like judgement in matters of taste and lived in a state of perpetual negotiation. He "was forever on the

point of purchasing, not only the material productions of the place, but all sorts of such fine wares as "intelligence", "fidelity", and so on. He was most curious, however, as the purchaser of the "affections". Sometimes he would imagine that he had a marital aptitude, and his fancy would sketch a graceful picture in which he appeared reclining on a divan, with a beautiful Greek woman fondly couched at his feet, and soothing him with the witchery of her guitar; having satisfied himself with the ideal picture thus created, he would pass into action; the guitar he would buy instantly... he would suddenly feel the yearnings of a father's love,... he would issue instructions for the purchase of some dutiful child that could be warranted to love him as parent.... You may well imagine that this anxiety of Carrigaholt to purchase(not only the scenery) but the many dramatis personae belonging to his dreams, with all their goodness and graces complete, necessarily gave an immense stimulus to the trade, and intrigue of Smyrna, and created a demand for human virtues which the moral resources of the place were totally inadequate to supply" (69-71).

This description of the vanities of Burton was followed by a criticism of the Greek race. Apart from their vices and meanness, which Kinglake ascribed to the Ottoman occupation, the foe of the Hellenic people whose ancestors invented virtue, Kinglake

loves the race. Only five years previous to Kinglake's tour, Greece had been declared an independent and sovereign kingdom; and about two years had passed since Otho, a Bavarian prince had been proclaimed king of that country. Byron took part in the Greek's War of Independence, and Kinglake's attitude to the Greeks was, more or less, Byronic.²³ Like Byron, Kinglake was a gentleman and both were admirers of classical Greek literature and sympathetic to the Greek race. Byron attitude towards the Greeks and his ideas about them could be found in his *Child Harold* of which Canto I and II were written amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. George Gordon devoted the later part of his life helping the Greek revolution for independence.

From Smyrna Kinglake and Mysseri embarked on a Greek brigantine to begin a fresh journey along the coasts of Syria via Cyprus. Pollington and Steel went back to England; the Tatar and Carrigaholt disappeared to leave the stage for new characters to fit in the new stage of Oriental places and scenery. The changing winds led the brigantine to Cyprus instead of Beirut and Kinglake and his companies landed at Limassol. The English Vice-consul, of Greek nationality, provided him with generous hospitality. Kinglake visited the site of the Paphian temple to fulfill his Pagan soul's desire and be blessed with divine counsels from the lips of Pallas Athenie. At the end of his heathenish journey he found that his impelling feeling had departed and "there was nothing to do but to laugh the things off" which he did on the way back in Baffa, a village not far distant from the temple of Pahos. Kinglake, here, introduced the reader formally to his paganism and amused them with a description of his Greek companion who had shown a noble Greek hospitality by slaughtering his chickens with a stick:

The Proconsul stood for a moment quite calm- collecting his strength; then suddenly he rushed into the midst of the congregation, and began to deal death, and destruction on all sides; he spared neither sex, nor age; the dead and the dying were immediately removed from the field of slaughter, and in less than an hour, I think, they were brought to the table, deeply buried in mounds of snowy rice (107).

Kinglake, then, returned to Limassol, and from there to Larnacca, the chief city of Cyprus and over the water at last to Beirut.

Beirut awakened Kinglake's memories of childhood and instead of accounting for the city he presented us with detailed description of his meeting with Lady Hester

23

For more detailed information on the extent to which Byron influenced English liberal thinking and liberal thought in the literature of Victorian England and his influence on individual writers see "Byron and England" in *Byron Political and Cultural Influence in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, ed., by Paul Graham Trueblood (Macmillan, London, 1981), pp. 25-48. The book is a symposium which tries to assess and explore the nature, extent and effectiveness of Byron's cultural and political influence on the climate of thought and social action in nineteenth-century Europe. Richard Jenkyns's *The Victorians and Ancient Greece*, (Oxford 1980) is a useful account which is concerned with the influence of ancient Greece upon Victorian England and the Victorian interpretations of Greek art and society.

Stanhope (1776-1839) and her adventures; he even entitled the chapter on Beirut as 'Lady Hester Stanhope' (111-149). The latter's image together with that of Robinson Crusoe, lived in Kinglake's memory while he was a child and were the magic touchstone of rare romance and adventures. Arriving at Beirut, his thought naturally turned to Lady Hester. He felt at once that his mother would be sorry that he had been within a day's ride of her early friend without offering to see her, therefore, he despatched a letter mentioning his mother's maiden name²⁴ and asking to visit her. She sent him two horsemen and an appropriate letter of invitation, but feeling rather unwell, he did not go immediately. On receiving a second letter he started from Beirut to her retreat at Djouni as soon as flood-water in the River Damour had had sufficiently subsided.

It is worth mentioning, here, that Kinglake was not the only European traveller who visited Lady Hester in Lebanon. Lamartine visited her and described his meeting in his *Voyage en Orient*. He also reported that she refused by that time all communications with English travellers, with ladies and even with members of her own family.²⁵ Lady Hester was a unique figure and the first extraordinary example of an English person identifying with the Arabs as her own people. She invented a theory that the ancient Scottish and Irish families were of Arab descent. The eldest daughter of Lord Stanhope, she spent her girlhood with her grandmother, Lady Chatham, at Burton Pynsent, in Somersetshire, and it happened that while she was there she knew Kinglake's mother. On her father's second marriage, she kept house for her uncle, the second Pitt for three years, and upon his death she quitted England and drifted out to the East.²⁶

Kinglake's journey to Lady Hester's retreat was the beginning of his tour in Syria. Arabic was not one of the seven languages spoken by Mysseri and accordingly he had to hire another interpreter; an occasion which provided him with the opportunity of amusing his reader in one of the longest chapters of *Eothen* which was, however, marked with an air of seriousness. His Arabic interpreter, Demetrius or Dthemetri, was a zealous member of the Greek Church with a "thoroughly Tatar countenance, which expressed the agony of his body, or mind as the case might be, in the most ludicrous manner imaginable" (116). He suspended quantities of little bundles and bags filled with treasures about his neck and shoulders and waist because

24 The maiden name of Kinglake's mother is Mary woodforde, the daughter of Thomas Woodforde, of Taunton.

25 *Visit to the Holy Land*, pp.145-46.

26 For more detailed information on Lady Hester refer to *The Life and Letters of Lady Hester Stanhope*, by the Duchess of Cleveland, (London, 1914). See also Lytton Strachey, "Lady Hester Stanhope", in *Books and Characters* (London, 1922), pp.218-290.

he thought them to be too valuable to be intrusted to the jerking of pack-saddles. The mule he rode on forgot "that his rider was a saint, and

remembering that he was a tailor, took a quiet roll upon the ground, and stretched his limbs calmly and lazily, as if he were preparing to hear a long sermon.... He always addressed the beast in language which implied that he, a Christian and saint, had been personally insulted and oppressed by a Mahometan mule". Kinglake suspected him of now and then leading him out of their way, "in order that he might have the opportunity of visiting the shrine of a saint, and, on one occasion... He was induced by religious motives to commit a gross breach of duty" (117).

Kinglake manipulated Dthemtri skilfully to criticize the religion of Christianity; to account for religious practices in Jerusalem; to attack Islam through the latter's attitude towards it; and most of all, to highlight his own paganism as superior to all religions whatever they be.

Lady Hester received Kinglake in the stately manner of an Oriental figure in male costume. The slave-girls offered them light tchibouque and coffee. Then Lady Hester began to speak freely of her peculiar theories and her mystical, zodiacal, prophetic and political knowledge. Kinglake listened to her attentively with a pretended seriousness. He was a Victorian man to whom mysticism, astrology, divination and clairvoyance had no basis in truth. He allows his scepticism and amusement to appear to the reader, but not to Lady Hester, who offered to adopt him as her "ilhve in occult science". With seeming seriousness he mentioned the ridiculous theory of Milnes²⁷ that gypsies always wander from west to east. This idea, according to Kinglake, was the invention of a poet's mind but more closely akin to Lady Hester's habitual train of thinking that she immediately threw off all restraint belonging to an interview with a stranger. The story of Lady Hester was a means for Kinglake to emphasize his preconceived idea that mysticism and superstition are Oriental in character and practice.

From Lebanon the party set off for the Holy Land, where they wandered amongst the hills of Galilee. There Kinglake visited the Christian village Nazareth- "the home of the blessed Virgin" and was led from the convent to the sanctuary to the Virgin's home. Reacting to this spiritual scene Kinglake underwent an internal conflict; "religion and gracious custom" commanded him, and he fell down loyally to kiss the rock that the Blessed Mary had passed, but his old pagan demon within him woke up and prevented him from so doing.

Neither Mysseri nor Dthemtri nor even the Shereef, who was accompanying them, knew the way Kinglake intended to take from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee, and from there to Jerusalem. Ignoring the popular prejudices against Christians and on recommendation of the monks in Nazarene, Kinglake hired "a little active young

²⁷ Richard Monckton Milnes (1809-1882) visited Egypt and the Levant in the winter of 1842-3, the year immediately preceding Kinglake's publication of *Eothen*.

Nazarene". By now, Dthemetri and the Nazarene had taken the place of Pollington and his servant. With the progress of events in *Eothen* we see that the former was given the the qualities of a master and the latter of a servant.

The party passed by Cana on their way to Tiberias, one of the four holy cities according to the Talmud, and it is from this city or its neighbourhood, Kinglake wrote, that the Messiah (Christ) is to rise, according to the Jews and Muslims' belief . After Tiberias the guide took the party across Jordan by Djesr el Medjame and lost them in the border of the desert. Longing for the prospect of the Bedowin, of the prospect of "bread and salt in the tent of an Arab warrior", Kinglake wilfully allowed his guide to mislead him. After three days wondering the party went faint and languid from want of food. Wandering how to cross the Dead Sea, Kinglake thought of constructing a raft, but discovered that they had no material. Dthemetri suggested that the Nazarene guide be put to death, a plan which Kinglake thought over and rejected. Meanwhile, Kinglake saw black tents teeming with Arabs whose appearance showed nothing of the Bedowin blood. They were poor fellows, who had no bread to offer because the soldiers of Ibrahim Pasha had carried off their possessions. The party entered into negotiations with local Arabs who consented to make a passage for them near the point where the Jordan runs into the Dead Sea. They made rafts out of skins filled with air and tied to boughs. Crossing the Western Bank they immediately went to Rihah, a village which occupied the site of ancient Jericho and then to Santa Saba where they remained there for the night. The next day they made their way to Jerusalem.

For the first time Kinglake entered the desert and faced the Bedowins. His attitude toward them was fashioned by his own preconceptions formed from reading European travellers. Before coming into actual contact with any of them, and before crossing the Jordan River, Kinglake says- "There, on the other side of the river,... there reigns the people that will be like to put you to death for *not* being a vagrant, for *not* being a robber, for *not* being armed and houseless" (176). He characterized the Bedowin with predatoriness, bloodthirstiness, savagery and cruelty- the attributes of primitive people. But as a true Romantic, who finds the idea of escaping in nature and primitive society exciting -"There is comfort in that [the society of the Bedouin] -health, comfort, and strength to one who is dying from very weariness of that poor, dear, middle-aged, deserving, accomplished, pedantic, and pains-taking governess Europe" (176).

Sir John Mandeville had been one of the first European travellers who met the Arab Bedowin in the desert between Syria and Jerusalem. He described them as "a folk of full evil conditions and full of all manners of wickedness and malice... they are right foul foulk and cruel and of evil kind".²⁸ Lithgow's Arabia deserta is not that of Doughty. It is the place where the people of Israel wandered for forty years, that is, the Sinai desert and its inhabitants were Bedowin who were people, generally,

"addicted to Theft, Rapine, and Robberies: hating all Sciences Mechanical or civil... boasting much of their tribal Antiquity, and noble Gentry."²⁹ Laurent d'Arieux, who went to Palestine on an official mission in 1664, was well received by the Grand Emir of Mount Carmel. He found much "Justice and Honesty" in the Bedowin society, nevertheless, he described them as "People whose usual profession is Robbery, and the employment of what we call *High-way-men*".³⁰ Plaisted's bitter experiences with the Bedowin confirmed the accounts of previous travellers and made him state a warning to his fellow Europeans advising them to avoid the Arab. "Therefore let those who shall pass this way hereafter put no trust in any Arab, especially those of the desert, for there is not one of them but is villain enough to cut your throat for ten piasters".³¹ In his "Preliminary Discourse" to the *Koran*, Sale spoke and criticized the Bedowin's "natural disposition to war, bloodshed, cruelty and rapine".³²

Kinglake's preconceived ideas of the desert inhabitants did not make him lose interest in the place. He felt the exhilaration of desert life and yielded to an impulse which seizes many European travellers in the East, that is, the urge to seek freedom in the anonymity of the burning sand of the desert and behave without constraint. Outdistancing his guide across the desert from Cairo to Suez, Kinglake was left alone to experience some relief -"I was here in this African desert, and I *myself, and no other, had charge of my life*"(328). Kinglake felt in that place that the "world about you is all your own, and there, where you will, you pitch your solitary tent; there is no living thing to dispute your choice" (258). In the desert Kinglake was not interested in the description of the look of the place, but his own feeling while journeying there and the impact of the scene. In the Sahara he passes "through valleys that the storm of the last week has dug, and the hills and valleys are sand, sand, sand, still sand, and only sand, and sand, and sand again" (256). The sun was described as influencing Kinglake's sensibility rather than being an object alien to him and part of the desert; a scene conveyed only by a true romantic:

The sun, growing fiercer, and fiercer, shone down more mightily now than ever on me [as] he shone before, and as I dropped my head under his fire, and closed my eyes against the glare that surrounded me, I slowly fell asleep, for how many minutes, or moments, I cannot tell, but

28 *Mandeville's Travells*, pp. 46-47.

29 William Lithgow, *The Total Discourse*, p.262.

30 Laurent d'Arvieux, *The Chevalier d'Arvieux's Travels in Arabia the Desert*. English translation of *Voyage en Palestine*, tran. by de la Roque (London, 1718), p.91.

31 Bartholomew Plaisted, "A journey from Busserah to Aleppo". In Douglas Corruther's, ed., *The Desert Route to India*, (London Hakluyt Society, 1928, pp. 49-128), p.73 . First published in 1757.

32 George Sale, "Preliminary Discourse". In *The Koran* (London, 1896), p.56. First published in 1734,

after a while I was gently awakened by a peal of church bells- my native bells- the innocent bells of Marlen, that never before sent forth their music beyond the Blaygon hills!.... Then at last I was well enough awakened; but still those old Marlen Bells rang on.... I attributed the effect to the great heat of the sun, the perfect dryness of the clear air through which I moved, and the deep stillness of all around me (272-273).

In the desert, Kinglake, "the eternal ego that I am", is a romantic person seeking freedom and feeling exultation in loneliness far away from the "stale civilization" and the disputes of European society. He is Byronic, echoing Byron's *Childe Harold* in which for the first time the desert becomes a romantic experience:

Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
 With one fair Spirit for my minister,
 That I might all forget the human race,
 And, hating no one, love but only her!
 Ye element!- in whose ennobling stir
 I feel myself exalted - Can ye not
 Accord me such a being? Do I err
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society, where none intrudes,
 By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
 I love not Man the less, but nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.³³

Byron felt a 'rapture on the lonely shore'. A shore which preoccupied Kinglake's mind when he approached the desert. Gaza, his starting point to the desert, "stands upon the verge of the Desert, and bears towards it the same kind of relation as a sea-port bears to the sea", and it is there that Kinglake charts his camels, "the ships of the desert" (240), and it is there that he felt the loneliness of the desert whose influence "was not of a softening kind, but filled me rather with a sort of childish exultation in the self-sufficiency which enabled me to stand thus alone in the wideness of Asia" (258).

Kinglake and his companions proceeded to Jerusalem. There he witnessed the Christian Pilgrimage and accounted for it; an account marked with superficiality concentrating on the physical structure of the shrine and the holy Sepulchre and the differences between the Christian Churches. Apart from his reaction, which was coloured by his paganism, and his satire of Christianity, Kinglake offered nothing novel about Jerusalem. By narrating a story he had not witnessed, of a "tribe of wild Bedowin" entering Christianity, Kinglake achieved his goal of satire and associating Christianity

33 Lord Byron, *Childe Harold* (canto V, clxxvii & clxxviii).

with ignorance. The Bedowin, who stand for new converts, were induced by a whim or a policy to embrace Christianity. They were ignorant of the rudiments of their adopted faith, nevertheless they would perform the Pilgrimage. Although they had never been to a Church except in that Easter, they pretended to have concurred with the Greeks in rejecting the great Roman Catholic schism. In the Sepulchre they fancied "that the ceremonies there enacted are funeral games, of a martial character, held in honour of a deceased chieftain, and that a Christian festival is a peculiar kind of battle, fought between walls, and without cavalry" (225). Accordingly they began to produce "horrible cries and frightful gestures" to the extent that they destroyed the solemnity of the service.

After the solemnity of Easter, the pilgrims visited the sacred scenes in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, including the Wilderness of John the Baptist, Bethlehem, and Jordan. They also bathed in the sacred water. Kinglake witnessed the burial of one of the pilgrims, explained the survival of Bethlehem and the beauty of its girls and the relief it enjoyed after it had been evacuated from the Muslims. Then, he said farewell to the Holy Land and travelled to Egypt. From Gaza Kinglake crossed the desert to Cairo.

Kinglake found that one of the greatest drawbacks to the pleasure of travelling in Asia was the obligation to make your way, more or less, by bullying. Of course, Kinglake did not have to do this himself, for it was left to Dthemetri. They made a contract with an agent according to which they were to reach Cairo within two days from the commencement of their journey. They began their travel from Gaza. For several miles beyond Gaza they did not enter the desert and Kinglake "began to grow almost uneasy- to fancy that the very desert was receding before me, and that the long-desired adventure of passing its "burning sand" was to end in a mere ride across a field" (247). But before the end of the first day's journey Kinglake had the gratification of finding himself surrounded on all sides by a tract of real sand, by the desert, the Sahara. Travelling in the desert was a new experience for him. He found that "as long as you are journeying in the interior of the Desert you have no particular point to make for as your resting place. The endless sands yield nothing but small stunted shrubs; ...you pass through valleys that the storm of the last week has dug, and the hills, and valley are sand, sand, sand, and only sand. (256). Breaking camp, he felt an irresistible emotional identification with the desert and "felt loath to give back to the waste this little spot of ground that had glowed for awhile with the cheerfulness of a human dwelling" (260). His tent in the desert was described by him as his "genial home" (261). Kinglake gave a vivid picture of his feeling as a traveller in the Arabian desert. On the fifth day of their journey he felt that the air above was lying dead and the desert was still and lifeless as some dispeopled and forgotten world that rolls round and round in the heavens through wasted floods of light. This scene was interrupted by Kinglake's encounter with another English gentleman, highlighting the

contrast between the freedom of the desert and the reserve of European life. The presence of two gentlemen in the desert brought the law of gentry with it and the formality of English life to the extent that both Kinglake and the other Englishman were considering whether they should speak to each other or not. They applied their law and from afar lifted their hands to their caps, and waved their arms in courtesy, passing each other quite as distantly as if we had passed in "Bond Street" (266).

The passing Englishman warned Kinglake of the plague, which was prevailing in Cairo. Another Frenchman also warned him in a village near to Cairo to prevent him from entering the city. Kinglake thanked him and entered the city to face the fact of the plague. During the period of his stay in Cairo the Plague was "so master of the city" that he could not dissociate the two ideas, the City and Plague. In Cairo he went to Osman Effendi, an owner of several houses in which he was lodging European travellers besides Kinglake. The man was frightened from the plague and held the European opinion about the subject of contagion. Osman, a Scot who came to Egypt as a drummer-boy with Fraser's force, was taken prisoner and turned into a Muslim. He had then joined the Egyptian campaign against the Wahhabi in Arabia. After that experience he went back to Egypt and began to flourish, acquiring property and becoming an Effendi or gentleman.

Osman's story is more symbolic than real in which Kinglake tried to focus on the ill-treatment a European might find on the hand of Orientals. Osman is the European and unconverted Kinglake himself. Like Osman, Kinglake was of a Scottish origin³⁴ and like him he was a gentleman and anti-Muslim at heart. The substance of this story bears resemblance to that of Lamartine's Aboulias, his cook in Beirut. Aboulias was formerly a young and intelligent Christian, and had already been in the service of several European consuls. He was a trader. Aboulias' fact of being 'infidel' occasioned him some molestation which he tried to avoid by entering into partnership with a Muslim Arab. When he found himself one of the most respectable merchants in the country, his partner tricked him and in a dispute Aboulias blasphemed Muhammad, "a capital crime in an infidel". He was brought to the Pasha who sentenced him to death. Execution was carried into effect, but the cord broke and the wretched Aboulias fell down at the foot of the gallows. His bride took his body to be buried, but found him alive. They tried to hide this fact but the Pasha discovered it. He was brought before the Pasha again who offered him the choice of "either being hung a second time or to turn Turk. Aboulias preferred this last alternative, and for sometime professed Islam."³⁵

Although the plague was prevailing in Cairo, Kinglake explored the city

³⁴ Kinglake's family is said to have been of Scottish origin, the original name being Kinloch, and to have come to England in the reign of James I, and settled in Somerset.

undeterred by any fear. Hiring two donkey boys and their donkeys, which were the means of transport in the city, he went, like all European visitors, to the slave-market, the bazaars, the Pyramids, and some other public places. Like Lane, he met a magician skilled in the art of *Darb al-Mandal*. He asked the magician to show him some of his art. The latter accepted, but failed in his performance.

Kinglake arranged with him to go to the Pyramid and evoke the Devil, but the magician died of the plague before the appointed time. Kinglake and his party escaped the plague during their three weeks' residence in Cairo, whereas most of the people with whom they had anything to do were siezed with the plague: his banker, his doctor, his magician, his landlord, and one of his donkey boys. From Cairo he went to Suez by way of desert, taking two dromedaries one for himself and one for Dthemetri. He left Mysseri, still remaining weak from illness, to follow with the camels and baggage. Dthemetri's dromedary was so slow that Kinglake felt bored. Leaving him, he rode away wandering in the desert alone: "here in this African desert, and I myself, and no other, had charge of my life". Lost and in the midst of this feeling, he found himself approaching a Bedowin Arab mounted on a camel and attended by another Bedowin on foot. Kinglake went to the mounted Bedowin, took hold of his water-flask, opened it, drank from its leathern lips, mounted his dromedary and went towards the east. The Bedowin were amazed and stood fast in a mute horror.

After a long wandering, Kinglake saw the Red Sea and felt the "power of ancient pagan creed". From there he proceeded eastward until he reached Suez. The British agent there, an employee of the East India Company, received him in his house with the utmost kindness and hospitality. Kinglake stayed for a while in Suez, hoping that the Governor would restore to him a pistol which he had lost in the desert when his dromedary bolted. Failing in this he recommenced his journey to Gaza. Again he travelled in the desert with the Bedowin and had a new experience. From Gaza he went to Nablous and from there to Damascus.

Kinglake entered Damascus "Shaum Shereef- the "Holy", the "Blessed" Damascus, as he described it. It seemed to him as it seemed to Lamartine a 'holy' and 'free' city. But, unlike Lamartine, Kinglake found no difficulty in exploring the city. He went wherever he chose and attended even the public bath without molestation.

35

Lamartine, *Visit to the Holy Land*, P. 128-29. Lamartine's story echoes that of Niebuhr, in which he explained that a Christian, convicted of blasphemy, would be in danger of losing his life. Niebuhr's story reads: "While I was in Bagdad, a Janissary urged a citizen for a debt; the latter always answered with a devout air, that he should remember God and the Prophet, and wait patiently for payment, without putting himself in a passion. The Janissary was at last provoked to utter a blasphemous expression; the artful citizen attested witnesses; and the Janissary was accordingly convicted, expelled out of his corps, and next day hanged". Carsten Niebuhr, *Travels in Arabia*, in *A General Collection of Voyages and Travels*, by John Pinkerton, (London, 1811), Vol.10, p.141.

Even his relation with the Damascene Muslims were upon a much better footing than at most other places. It seems that either the Damascenes had undergone a dramatic and unexpected change in their attitude towards Europeans, or Kinglake's account of the people was far from reality. A year or two before the time of his going to Damascus, Kinglake informs us, "Damascus had kept up so much of the old bigot zeal against Christians, or rather against Europeans, that no one dressed as a Frank could have dared to show himself in the streets" (388).

Kinglake seems to have taken for granted Lamartine's account without referring to it. Lamartine began his journey to the East in 1832, two years before Kinglake commenced his travel, arriving to Damascus in April 1833. According to Lamartine the fanatical temper of the population of Damascus and the surrounding country required certain precautions from "Franks who risk a visit to that city" and that "the arrival of a Frank in European costume would be the signal for another commotion". "Of all Orientals", Lamartine found the Damascenes to nourish "a growing hatred and religious horror of the European name and dress; they alone refused to admit the consuls, or the consular agents, of Christian powers".³⁶ Kinglake attributed the Damascenes' toleration of Englishmen, a year or two later, to the firmness and temper of Mr. Farren who was working there as consul-general. Both travellers, Kinglake and Lamartine before him, expressed their admiration of Damascus. The former described her as an "earthly paradise", the latter as the "site of lost paradise". Both of them wandered in the city and accounted for it in a similar way.³⁷

Having explored some of Damascus markets and gardens, Kinglake began his return journey to Europe, via Lebanon by the ruins of Baalbec and the mountains of Lebanon. As before he gave an account of his impressions as he proceeded on his journey. Passing once a valley, he met its chief, a man of highly intelligent nature who had the sagacity to foresee that Europe would intervene authoritatively in the affairs of Syria. Out of such a conviction the chief had begun to teach his son a European language. From the coast of Syria Kinglake sailed with a Russian General Officer towards Europe. After nine days of sailing they disembarked at Satalieh and decided to go on thence by land. The Pasha of Satalieh gave them a generous feast and supplied them with horses for the rest of their journey of which Kinglake mentioned nothing. Kinglake's narrative which began at Semlin ceased at Satalieh.

KINGLAKE, *EOTHEN* AND THE ORIENT.

In 1844, *Eothen*, the final product of Kinglake's travel came out after many attempts made since 1834. It had been turned down by John Murray, the most famous

³⁶ Lamartine, *Visit to the Holy Land*, part ii, p.46.

³⁷ See *Eothen*, pp. 343-353 & *Visit to the Holy Land*, part ii, pp. 46-72.

publisher of travel literature, whose pretext was "that wicked spirit of jesting at everything, which formed the essence of the book".³⁸ The book was published by John Oliver of Pall Mall on condition that Kinglake would pay fifty pounds. After its publication the book ran into many editions and was widely read. Kinglake's motives for producing *Eothen* were accidental, as he revealed in the preface of the book. Eliot Warburton, a fellow-pupil of Bryan Waller Proctor, the author of *The Crescent and the Cross*,³⁹ was planning to travel to the East when Kinglake came back home from his journey. He asked him for advice and Kinglake responded by furnishing him with a map and a suggested itinerary. Later he expanded his advice into a book, based upon the ample notes and sketch-books he had kept during his travels. The book, accordingly, retains an epistolary form because it was addressed by the author to one of his friends; but Kinglake "through it was not only speaking to Warburton but to all Warburtons, all Englishmen and women of similar origin and similar tastes".⁴⁰ Eliot Warburton, on the other hand, said that Kinglake was writing as if he was addressing him only and not "as if his audience was to be a great and enlightened community, or any other respectable aggregate".⁴¹

Eothen is a remarkable example of Kinglake's literary and fluent productivity. Its definite object, which had been exhausted by many writers before him, did not prevent him from dealing with such a subject in a new way. Travel in *Eothen* becomes incidental and the journey motif is only a vehicle whose movement renders the traveller's impression, sensibility, thoughts and personality explicit. The landscape is "momentarily more symbolic than real, a geographical projection of psychological alternatives implicit in the pattern of his association". Greece is identified with boyhood imagination "asexual and free"; England "is the active world of the ego, entrained by civilization but vital and masculine"; and the East is a place "of shadow, of feminine sensibility, of death and dark subconscious impulses".⁴² Kinglake travelled to the East not, like Lady Hester, as one of those people "goaded by sorrow" into "a longing for the East" (123); nor was he one of those "wandering Englishmen... guilty of some pride, or ambition, big or small, imperial, or parochial, which being offended has made the lone place more tolerable than ballrooms to him, a sinner" (264); nor, too,

38 Gerald de Gaury, *Travelling Gent: The Life of Alexander William Kinglake (1809-1891)*, (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1972). p.48.

39 For an account of Warburton's travels the reader can refer to his *The Crescent and the Cross* (London, 1845).

40 See Jan Morris' introduction to *Eothen* (Oxford, 1982). pp.x-xi.

41 *Quarterly Review*, Vol. Lxxxv. December, 1844 & March 1845). p.56.

42 "Kinglake's *Eothen*", by B. Dunlap *Studies in Literary Imagination*, Vol.8, 1974, part.ii, p.85. The article concentrates on the influence of literary popular imagination on Kinglake's thought in relation to *Eothen*.

was he to travel "as one flying from his country because of ennui", but as one who "was strengthening his will and tempering his nature for that life of toil and conflict in which he is now engaged" (x).⁴³ Accordingly he travelled with a professed Englishness and was an alien Oriental, a European consciousness operating in a new environment, expressing the nineteenth-century European concept of the East, contrasting Europe and the Orient in favour of the former, asserting the Oriental inferiority and the Occidental superiority and portraying the East as it was needed by the West. The narrative consciousness is given a very large role to play and is ended by being aware of the representation of the Orient in Western discourse.

By the time Kinglake was writing and revising his book the "Eastern Question", that is, the European policy towards the Turkish Empire, 'the sick man', had come to the fore in British Parliamentary debates. Kinglake was not then very much interested in politics as he became later in his life, nevertheless he expressed the necessity for the British occupation of the East. He devoted, as we have seen, the whole chapter on the Sphynx saying that Egypt was a necessity which the English should obtain for the security of their route to India- so that they should "plant a firm foot on the bank of the Nile, and sit in the seat of the Faithful" (324). Kinglake's pride of his race and their achievements gave him the impression that not only Europe or England needed the East, but even the East itself needed Europe and was looking forward for the day of its being occupied by the West. When he was on his visit to Lady Hester, Kinglake, hit upon the idea, or rather had the impression, that the Syrians were "excited by the achievements of [the admiral] Sir Sydney Smith" and they "had begun to imagine the possibility of their land being occupied by the English, and many of them looked upon Lady Hester as a Princess who came to prepare the way for the expected conquest" (124). In Lebanon, he met a chief of a valley who seemed to him very intelligent. Like the Syrians, the chief said nothing, but Kinglake spoke on his behalf saying that the chief "had had the sagacity to foresee that Europe would intervene authoritatively in the affairs of Syria" (403). Kinglake was obsessed with the idea of Englishmen and their abilities to do everything everywhere for the benefit of humanity. As an historian of the Victorian age has written, the conquering English were sustained by an "unquestioning and unquenchable conviction that British institutions and British customs, doctrines and beliefs were the best in the world... not only for

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This does not mean that Kinglake was not trying to escape from industrial European society and 'the stale civilization of Europe'. He was an escapist but for a short period of time. His country, England does not cease to please him once and for all. In this sense he can be contrasted with *Rasselas*. Impelled by the phantoms of hope, the latter, accompanied by his sister, leaves his happy valley because its pleasure has ceased to please him and because he is fired with a desire to do something. His journey of disillusionment continues, until Imlac protests that "While you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live". For more details the reader can refer to Dr. Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas Prince of Abyssinia* (R&J Dodsley: London, 1759).

Britons but for all other peoples of the earth as well".⁴⁴

Kinglake's ideas concerning the occupation of Egypt reflected more of his opinion, a fragment of the British opinion on the parliamentary debate over the Eastern Question. His impressions of the Syrian desire to be occupied by the English echoes his pride in his nation. Kinglake had an exaggerated idea of his Englishness and the English prestige in the East. He regarded himself not only as a passing traveller but as a representative of his nation whose name was to be associated with honour, civilization and justice. In spite of his paganism, Kinglake defended religion when it is no more than a badge of nationality. He conflates his nationalism with religion, assuming the superiority of England as the protector of Christianity and implying its primacy over other European countries in Western civilization. In the Orient, religion and nationality became synonymous and Kinglake felt that he belonged to the world of Christianity- a feeling motivated by his nationalism and nothing else. He sympathized with the Christians of the East against the Muslims only because a fellow Christian at Damascus identified himself with the English because they were Christian "I, too, am a Christian. My foes are the foes of the English", his fellow says, and we "are all one people, and Christ is our King" (391). Kinglake felt kindly towards his "fellow Christian in the East", because "it was a pride and delight for a Syrian Christian to look up and say that the Englishman's faith was his too" (ibid). Christianity became, for Kinglake, part of his Englishness, a national rather than a religious feeling. He even felt more strongly for his creed when he saw it despised, and fancied himself listening to an old Crusader's consciousness whispering and saying "Common cause!". This new and novel dimension which he gave to Christianity provided him with the opportunity to show up Islam as an inferior religion so long as Islam is the religion of the Oriental-Arab. He achieved his goal by granting himself the right to express Dthemetri's feeling, who is a Christian clinging to his creed:

With all this consciousness of religious, and intellectual superiority Dthemetri had lived for the most part in countries lying under Mussulman Government, and had witnessed (perhaps too had suffered from) their revolting cruelties; the result was that he abhorred, and despised the Mahometan faith and all who clung to it... Dthemetri was in his sphere a true Crusader, and whenever there appeared a fair opening in the defence of Islam, he was ready, and eager to make the assault (370).

Christianity is a superior religion and Islam is an inferior one so long as the former can be associated with Kinglake's national feeling and the latter with the Arab East, otherwise both religions are irrational and nonsensical as they appeared to Kinglake. In a pure Christian atmosphere Kinglake looked down upon Christian practices. The doctrine and practices of Christianity had changed the modern Greeks, whose ancestors had invented virtue into mean people. Concentrating on the physical

⁴⁴ Byron Farwell, *Queen Victoria's Wars*, (London, 1973), p.3.

side of religious practices and ignoring their spiritual context, which is their core, Kinglake launched his attack on the institution of fasting as performed by the Greek Church. Such fasts, says Kinglake, "produces an ill effect upon the character of the people, for they are not a mere force, but are carried to such an extent as to bring about a bona fide [mortification] of the flesh" (79). Instead of refining and purifying the spirit to create toleration, fasting generates wicked and murderous criminals "the number of murders committed during Lent is greater", he is told, "than at any other time of the year" (ibid).⁴⁵ The vast number of the Saints' days were seen by Kinglake to shorten the lives of the people very materially. He believes that "one-third out of the number of the days in the year are 'kept holy', or rather kept stupid, in honour of the saints" (80).

At the shrine of Mary in Nazareth, Kinglake's "watchful reason" conquered religion once and for all. Fasting, which sometimes heats "a man's brain and draw him out of the world" and which confuses "his notions of right and wrong, and weakens his power of choosing the right", combines with "faith in loveliness transcending mortal shapes" and tempted him to embrace Christianity. He submitted but with full confidence that his watchful reason, if ever so slightly provoked would drag him back to life:

Religion and gracious custom commanded me that I fall down loyally, and kiss the rock that blessed Mary passed. With a half consciousness -with the semblance of a thrilling hope that I was plunging deep, deep into my first knowledge of some most holy mystery, or some new, rapturous, and daring sin, I knelt, and bowed down my face till I met the smooth rock with my lips- One moment- one moment- my heart, or some old Pagan demon within me woke up, and fiercely bounded- my bosom was lifted, and swung- as though I had touched her warm robe. One moment- one more, and then- the fever had left me. I rose from my knees. I felt hopelessly sane (154-155).

The monks of Palestine have rejected all the "intellectual vanities of life" and as such they did not inspired him with any desire to seek heaven by way of a monastery. Kinglake thinks that "if the taking of cowl does not imply a complete renouncement of the world, it is at least (in these days) a bona fide farewell to every kind of useful and entertaining knowledge" (157). At the Sepulchre, he showed a complete indifference to religion and ridiculed the pilgrims. He himself did not perform the pilgrimage rites, but used Dthemetri's religious feeling to account for them. The funniest of the rites appeared to him that of the miracle displayed before the pilgrims on Easter Saturday, that is, the holy fire. In brief, when religion and nationality are fused as in the East, Kinglake is a Christian, and when they are separated then he is

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Burton accounted for fasting in Islam in the same way. He finds that Ramadan, the month of fasting, usually leaves a harmful impact on Muslims and darken their "temper into passive gloom". Ramadan, according to his account, is for "many classes 'one-twelfth of the year wantly thrown away". See his *Pilgrimage*, I, pp.74-6.

an English and no more a Christian.

Forty years later Kinglake's enthusiasm to keep the name of his nation clear from any injustice made him subscribe to the fund established in defence of Arabi, which Wilfred Blunt had promoted in 1882. "I am horrified", he wrote to Lady Gregory, "at the idea of their being really

ground for alarm... with respect to the fate of Arabi. Unless it is made clear to *English* investigators, and by English modes of proof, that he is guilty of the massacre at Alexandria or the cruelties perpetrated elsewhere, the notion of his being put to death would be revolting- so revolting that I can hardly think on reflection such a thing is possible. Our people can't be so idiotic as to fancy that if wrong is done, they can shelter themselves behind their own puppet, and say that the puppet, not they, did the deed".⁴⁶

Kinglake's belief in the English presence in the East complemented the growth of English political interest in the area. Imperialism in the wide sense of empire for empire's sake, as was the case with Burton, was not his motive, and his claims concerning the British occupation of Egypt were not for the sake of a Mediterranean Empire in the East. They were little more than the by-product of his view of better security in the Mediterranean. They were also the outcome of his gentlemanliness which he cherished in the East and among the Arab. It was one added way of convincing himself that he, as an English, was born to rule over them.⁴⁷ His conception of England in relation to the Arabs was dominated by his the idea of the superiority of the English and inferiority of the Arabs as unable to rule themselves and create progress. He concentrated on the despotic rule of Ibrahim Pasha and its success in subjugating the Arab, who according to his account possessed no political virtues which rendered them worthy of self-government. This can also be ascribed to the fact that Kinglake was himself "a bit of snob and if hardly a chauvinist, at least a convinced advocate of the theory that all things English were, on the whole, best".⁴⁸ He expressed the outlook of a gentleman and the Victorian on the world which was suffused with a vivid sense of superiority. "Upon the ladder of progress, nations and race", according to this theory, "seemed to stand higher or

lower according to the proven capacity of each for freedom and enterprise: the British at the top, followed a few rungs below by the American, and other 'striving, go-ahead' Anglo-Saxon. The Latin people

⁴⁶ Lady Gregory, "Eothen and the Athenaem Club", *Blackwood Magazine*, December, 1895, p.800.

⁴⁷ Girouard noticed that the sources of imperialism and the sources of the Victorian code of the gentlemanliness were so intertwined that they were often indistinguishable from each other, and affected the way the Empire was to run. Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman*, (London, 1981), p.225.

⁴⁸ Jan Morris, Introduction to *Eothen*, p.iv.

were thought to come next, though far behind. Much lower still stood the vast Oriental communities of Asia and North Africa where progress appeared unfortunately to have been crushed⁴⁹ for centuries by military despotisms or smothered under passive religion.

In the East Kinglake identified his consciousness with the superior consciousness of his nation and immediately applied the superior/inferior relationship expressing the nineteenth-century ideological concept of the inferior "Other", illustrating it through his encounter with the Oriental-Arab. His dissociation from 'real' Oriental life and his unwillingness to alienate himself even for awhile from European ideology made his views limited and mere application and confirmation of his ideology.

Kinglake was "one of God's Englishmen, at a time when Englishness had reached a climax of confidence and prestige".⁵⁰ Accordingly his views, in spite of their "vaunted individuality", expressed "a public and national will over the Orient" and his ego was the "instrument of his will's expression, not by any means its master".⁵¹ In *Eothen*, Kinglake appeared as the "Englishman" who in the "loneliness of the Desert ...remains tethered by the chain that linked him to his kind (258)", and was confident in the "natural ascendancy of Europeans" which brought the Oriental gradually down to "a state of subserviency" to him or rather to his attendants (353). He was superior to Orientals even in the desert where he rode safely there as "an Englishman with a brace of pistols and a couple of servants". He amazed the "inferior" natives who only dared travel in troops or in herds. This journey was not performed because of the English being under the "protection of evil demons", as one of the Arabs suggested, but because of "the strong wilfulness of the English gentleman" which "seems perfectly superhuman to the soft Asiatic", as Kinglake put it (263). Not only English men were superior to Oriental men, but "the European gentlewoman", by virtue of "her more highly gifted mind, or rather by her nobler habits of thoughts" proved her superiority to her sister in the East as well.⁵²

The East, for Kinglake, is sexual and despotic; a world in which religion prevails only to suppress reason and animate sensuality; a world characterized by the plague and is on the verge of dying; a world which should give way to the European West whose future is endless:

Behind me [the East] I left an old decrepit world- religions dead and dying-calm tyrannies expiring in silence- women hushed, and swathed, and

⁴⁹ R. Robinson and J. Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians*, pp.2-3.

⁵⁰ Jan Morris, Introduction to *Eothen*, p. iii. For more details on the development and meaning of the idea of Englishness in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century see *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920*, ed., by Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (London: Croom Helm, 1986)

⁵¹ Said, *Orientalism*, p.194.

⁵² Kinglake, "The Rights of Women", *Quarterly Review*, December, 1844, p.111.

turned into waxen dolls- love flown, and in its stead mere Royal, and "Paradise", pleasure. -Before me [the West] there waited glad bustle and strife- love itself, an emulous game,- religion a Cause and a Controversy, well smitten and well defended,- men governed by reason, and suasion of speech,- wheels going,- steam buzzing,- a mortal race, and a slashing pace, and the Devil taking the hindmost,- taking me, by Jove, (for that was my inner care,) if I lingered too long, upon the difficult Pass that leads from Thought to Action (400-401).

Kinglake locates the Orientals on the level of sensuality. Dunlap states that "a persistent interest in sexual customs of the East, and in the extravagances of Oriental despotism were part of the tradition in which he [Kinglake] wrote."⁵³ Reason, if the Arabs have any, is annexed to, and directed by their sexual desire; a desire solidified and protected by their religion, Al-Islam. Kinglake's anecdote of Mariam tries to show the way the Oriental sexual desire can find a channel through Islamic teachings to justify its illegality. Mariam is a beautiful Christian girl, aged between fifteen and sixteen years old. She was married to a young Christian and was living with him peacefully, when a Muslim Sheikh of wealth and influence fell in love with her. The Sheikh tempted her to embrace Islam using his own means. Mariam accepted and became a Muslim; an act which made her divorce from her Christian husband legal according to Islamic law, and provided the Sheikh with the opportunity to add another wife, Mariam, to his wives.⁵⁴ Kinglake not only portrays polygamy as an Islamic institution, which makes the Muslim sensual people, but as one of the basic doctrines involved in embracing Islam. Osman Effendi, the Scotchman proselyte, underwent the "ceremonies necessary for turning him into good Muslim".⁵⁵ He took part in the fight against the Wahhabi and was circumcised,⁵⁶ but this was not enough as Kinglake assumed. Osman had to give a pledge "of his sincere alienation from Christianity by

53 Benjamin Dunlap, Kinglake's *Eothen*, p.86.

54 Kinglake's account of the Sheikh, here, recalls that of Lane's *Modern Egyptians*. In his introduction, Lane introduces his reader to the first 'Modern Egyptian' the Sheikh Ahmad. This man, according to Lane's account, has two unfortunate characteristics: a liking for polygamy, and a strong penchant for eating glass.

55 On analogy of Christianity Kinglake assumes that the individual has to undergo certain ceremonies to be turned into Muslim. In Islam there are no ceremonies neither for the new-born Muslim nor for the proselyte. When the latter says, with complete consciousness and free-will without any fear or external compulsion": I witness that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah", or even feel whole heartedly this sentence and then begins to apply the Islamic teachings, he becomes Muslim.

56 Circumcision in Islam is a Sunnat, which can be done or avoided; it is not Fard (obligatory), but Muslims in general practice it following the example of their Messenger. In the case of a convert to Islam from some other creed, to whom the operation may cause some suffering as with Osman, it can be dispensed with. For more details see *A Dictionary of Islam*, by T. P. Hughes, (London, 1895), under circumcision.

keeping a couple of wives".⁵⁷ Hareem and slavery are another means of establishing what Kinglake thinks of as the fact of Oriental sexuality. Arab women are viewed by him to have "been good enough, so far as relates to the exercise of minor virtue "and to have no religion"(249).⁵⁸

Oriental's mentality is not only inferior to that of Europeans', it is, with Kinglake as with many others, endowed with an essence which is itself dead and inactive. The Arab body or his physical structure seems to Kinglake to be the slave of his mind, but unfortunately his mind is dead and the Arab suffers the "want of foresight" and is "grossly improvident" (249). The Oriental mind, "for creative purposes, is a thing dead and dry- a mental mummy that may have been a live King after the flood, but has since lain blighted in spice" (96). This conception of the Arab mind, in particular, and the Asiatic mind in general where "poor, dear, patient Reason would have fought her slow battle against Asiatic prejudice" (35-36), made Kinglake exclude the idea that the *Arabian Nights* could have been the product of the Arab mind:

I inquired as to the source from which the story [*Arabian Nights*] had been derived, and the crew all agreed that it had been handed down unwritten from Greek to Greek... I became strongly impressed with a notion that they [the tales of the *Nights*] must have sprung from the brain of a Greek. It seems to me that these stories whilst they disclose a complete, and habitual *knowledge* of things Asiatic, have about them so much of the stirring, and volatile European character, that they cannot have owed their conception to a mere Oriental (96).

The Orientals, according to Kinglake, are superstitious, a characteristic which put them in sharp contrast to Occidentals. As soon as a European enters the Orient he is assailed with superstitions and nonsense. Unless the European guards himself- the good sense and the sound religious knowledge of the English would be likely to guard them from error- he will be infected by the social atmosphere of Asia, and "if he has been unaccustomed to the cunning of fence by which Reason prepares the means of guarding herself against fallacy, he will yield himself at last to the faith of those around him" (148). The Europeans' case will be like that of Lady Hester who deepened her faith in Eastern "Astrology and Magic science".

The Oriental mind, according to Kinglake is structured in a way so as to understand only the language of intimidation. The policy of "strike terror and inspire respect" (241) is the only means by which one can deal with an Oriental and especially an Arab. This policy was behind the victory of Ibrahim Pasha in Syria.

57 Islam allows polygamy but conditions it in a way which makes its practice very limited and almost impossible. It is not a condition of becoming a good Muslim, but almost always a sign that you are an unusual one.

58 Montesquieu was a pioneer in this field. He claimed that Muslim or Arab women had no religion and no soul and did not go to heaven. See his *Persian Letters*, pp.73-4.

Kinglake tried it and found it very helpful in his travels. The Asiatic seems to him to be "animated with a feeling of profound respect, almost bordering upon affection, for those who had done him any bold and violent wrong" (203). The Oriental mind is passive, submissive and cunning. Kinglake finds that the "readily bowing mind of the Oriental would have bowed low, and long under the feet of a conqueror whom God has thus strengthened" (367). Every Oriental-Arab, Kinglake observes, does not want to know who his neighbour is, but who will be his ruler, and whose feet he is to kiss. Intimidation, submission and cunning are part of the history of the East that they (Oriental-Arab) have a proverb which reads: "Treat your friend... as though he were one day to become your enemy, and your enemy as though he were one day to become your friend" (368).⁵⁹

Kinglake finds the Arabs to be selfish, depraved and contemptuous in their attitude towards Europeans. They do not pray for the plague to ended, "but that it may go to another city!" (286). On his visit to the Pyramids, Kinglake met some Arabs who asked him for presents and then plotted to kill him because he refused their request. In Suez he finds that the "Governor was a thorough Oriental, and until a comparatively recent period had shared in the old Mahometan feeling of contempt for Europeans" (341).

East and West, Orient and Occident are contrasted in their characteristics and separated from the very beginning by the plague which Kinglake associated with almost everything Oriental. The Plague is a metaphor for the Orient and a living character which sums up what the Oriental was for the nineteenth-century European. Kinglake presents the plague so as to signify the Oriental "other" and contrast their attitude to that of the European. The contamination of the plague is feared by Westerners who try to impose barriers between themselves and Orientals, avoid touching each other and lock themselves in. The Europeans are afraid of the plague because it is alien to them, while the Orientals are at home with it because it is itself Oriental in character.⁶⁰ In

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This proverb is a mistranslation and a distortion of a wise saying of the fourth Caliph Ali ibn Abi Talib. It reads: *أحببت حبيبتك يوماً ما جئني أن تكون لي خصماً يوماً ما وأبغضت لخصمك يوماً ما عسى أن يكون حبيبتك يوماً ما*. "Love the one you love to some extent, it may be that one day he will be the one you hate. And hate the one you hate to some extent, it may be that one day he will be the one you love" [*Al-Adab Al-Mufrad (The Selected Literature)*, p.697.]. In the original Arabic the words "enemy" and "friend" do not exist. Ali, here, is not stating the principles underlying the relation of the Muslim to his enemy, but rather advising somebody called Ibn Al-Kawa to follow the golden mean in his relation with his brothers in Islam. Ali is asking him to keep his passions, the strongest of which are hatred and love, always under control so that he can avoid disappointment which might turn him to the other extreme.

60

The Muslim are ordered by their Messenger to take account of a plague. Muhammad says addressing the Muslims: "If the Plague is in a land and you are not in, do not enter it. And if the Plague is in a land and you are in, do (Footnote continued)

Cairo, Kinglake associates the city and the plague so that the one can refer to the other.

Kinglake's journey to the Orient discloses not only the European ideological concept of the Oriental as an inferior other, but the personal life of Kinglake himself. It is a journey in search of the self and it is a literary journey to a literary Orient which affirms and reveals more of the Englishness of Kinglake himself; his consciousness; his past and his childhood as the repositories of the self, rather than the "reality" of the East. The ideological account of the Orient is always accompanied by the autobiography of the traveller and the continuous presence of English geographical places. Alex finds in *Eothen* a book which "gives us not a few delightful autobiographical glimpses".⁶¹

Eothen keeps close to Kinglake's experience and serves as a narrative through which he mirrors his personal life. In his Oriental travels, Kinglake continually ruminates on his past. He recalls his years at Eton, his boyhood love of Homer and his daydreams of Robinson Crusoe. The Oriental scenes always remind him of their English equivalent, linking his own past experience with the present. He associates Greece with his boyhood imagination. It reminds him of Homer, which in turn, recalls his childhood upbringing. Kinglake tells us that his mother, "the most humble and pious among women", had taught him "no Watt's hymns- no collects for the day; she could teach him in earliest childhood, no less than this- to find a home in his saddle, and love old Homer, and all that Homer sung" (56). He also expresses his delight in reading the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. He had pored over the *Odyssey* as over a story book and clasped the *Iliad* to his brain with reverence as well as with love. As a small boy, he had an occasional haunting nightmare. "When I was very young", he afterward recorded, "between the age, I believe of three and five years... I was often in time of night the victim of a strange kind of mental depression". He used to lie in bed, perfectly conscious, as he thought, with open eyes, but without being able to speak or move and all the while overcome by one idea, that of immensity. The horror lay in the absence of shape or form, simply vastness. When at last he roused from his nightmare, he could not find words to describe his sensations and never, even later in life, could he explain why "the forced contemplation of a mere quality, distinct from matter, should be so terrible" (318-319). He also tells us that in his childhood he was familiar with the names of Lady Hester Stanhope and Robinson Crusoe, which he associates with adventure (112). From *Eothen* we know that Kinglake received his education at Eton under Keate.⁶² Using the magician at Cairo, Kinglake provides us with an amusing portrait of his teacher and describes his characteristics.

⁶⁰(continued)

not go out of it". See *Musnad Al-Immam Ahmad*, Vol.i, p.192.

⁶¹ Inns Shand Alex, introduction to *Eothen*, p.vi.

Eothen reveals Kinglake's attitude towards religion. He is a pagan who tries to satisfy his "pagan soul's desire" (103) in his journey. This feeling of paganism was not abandoned in his late life -"Pray remember that I am heathen, I dislike churches, and had I my way I would write in every church, chapel and cathedral only one line: 'Important if true'".⁶³ *Eothen* also reveals his attitude towards women; an attitude which he applied consistently in his personal life and never abandoned. He remained single and found in marriage the end of man's aspirations. Carrigaholt was the man he used to illustrate and express his attitude towards marital status- "But now, poor fellow, the lowly grave, that is the end of men's romantic hopes, has closed over all his rich fancies, all his high aspiration; he is utterly married." In Suez he witnessed the marriage procession of three young men in which some people were carrying torches and others were thumping drums and firing pistols. At the moment when the bridegroom came, Kinglake observed that he has scarcely in his life seen "any phenomena so ridiculous as the meekness and gravity of three young men whilst being led to altar (345).

Kinglake remained a bachelor because he believed that women always prefer other men to their husbands. Nevertheless he was not hostile in his attitude towards women and heartily admired many clever women with whom he formed a genuine friendship. He was critically studious of female charms and expressed his admiration for their beauty. He fancied, for example, the Smyrniote beauty. The girls were described by him as glorious shapes in their beauty. In them you see "the massive braid of hair as it catches a touch of light on its jetty surface- and the broad, calm, angry brow- the large black eyes deeply set, and self-relying like the eyes of a conqueror.... You see the thin fiery nostril, and the bold line of the chin and throat disclosing all the fierceness [and] sweetly turned lips" (83). He also found the Muslim women of Nablous to be "so handsome that they could not keep up their yashmaks". Kinglake, in fact, belongs to the chivalrous order of bachelors for whom the worship of women is a fine adventure, but he was too cautious to be beguiled by their beauty. In the East he kept away from women; neither the women of Cyprus nor the girls of Bethlehem were able to change his mind. He established his view of women in his essay on the "Rights of Women"⁶⁴ where he accounted for the characteristics of women, the secret and influence of their fascination, their seduction, attainments, defects and

62 John Keate (1773-1852) became an assistant master at Eton about 1797, and in 1809 was elected head-master of Eton. He retired from the head-mastership in 1834.

63 Quoted from de Gaury's *Travelling Gent: The Life Of Alexander Kinglake*, P.135.

64 See A. W. Kinglake "The Rights of Women", in *Quarterly Review*, Vol. LXXV, December 1844 & March 1845, pp. 94-125.

foibles.

In *Eothen*, Kinglake's journey to the self brings England into focus and English geographical place into the reader's attention. Oriental places are rewritten in conjunction with English places and the East is thus an occasion for referring to England. Travel for Kinglake is a means of affirming his home and a way of remaining home when away from it. The Servian forest recalls a past school-day when he and his friends used to loiter on the bank of Thames; the Thames of the 'old Eton fellow' that wrestled with him in their boyhood till it taught them "to be stronger than he", and to bully Keate and scoff at Larrey Miller, and Okes. The Servian forest recalls also the "Brocas Clump" (29). On emerging from it the scene of the plain reminds him of an English Park land whose trees were as if to shut out "some 'infernal' fellow creature in the shape of a new made squire" (30). To give not only a description of the place, but to convey an impression of it as well, Kinglake uses the technique of comparing Eastern places with scenes in Europe. The result is that of having behind the Oriental landscape a background of English scenery which always stresses the traveller's identity. Jordan recalls the Thames; the sea of Galilee, Windermere; the toast of the Arab desert bivouac, an Eton breakfast; the hungry questing jackals are the place-hunters of Bridgewater and Taunton; the Damascene garden a neglected English manor from which the family has long been absent abroad; and "the Marline" bells of home are heard in the desert calling to morning prayer the prim congregation in far-off St. Mary's parish. Kinglake also likens the contest between the Churches in Jerusalem, which went on "quietly enough till their blood is up", to the "peculiar relation subsisting at Cambridge between 'town and gown'" (227). In comparing English places with Oriental ones Kinglake is well aware that his reader is English who has knowledge of the famous places in Britain and even in Europe.

Kinglake's supreme achievement in *Eothen* was the way he kept his reader in mind. His book was, accordingly, received by admiration by almost all those who read it. Warburton, on one occasion, describes it as "a work containing more brilliant truthful, and vivid description, more delicate and subtle humour, than any other book upon the East";⁶⁵ and on another occasion, he finds in it "a real book- not a sham" which "displays a varied and comprehensive power of mind, and a genuine mastery over the first and strongest of modern language".⁶⁶ E.M.Forster thinks that "Elderly travellers do not write *Eothen*" and continues that "only in youth or through memories of youth, only in the joyous light of the morning can the lines of the Oriental landscape be seen".⁶⁷ Ince notices that the Orient has inspired many writers from Marco Polo to Doughty, Lawrence, and Gertrude Bell, but it has inspired none more

⁶⁵ E. Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, VOL. II, p.61, fn.

⁶⁶ E. Warburton, *Quarterly Review*, vol. lxxv, 1844-5, p.76.

successfully than Kinglake whose *Eothen* stands incomparably the greatest of all books of Eastern travel in the English language by reasons of its wit, its insight into characters and its rapier flashes of irony.⁶⁸ Tuckwell finds the book to be "unique amongst books of travel: it is through *Eothen* that its author has soared into a classic and bids fair to hold his place".⁶⁹ George Sampson takes *Eothen* as "perhaps the best book of travel in the English language";⁷⁰ and Lady Augusta Gregory has sincerely stated that "the books like *Eothen* have not yet appeared".⁷¹

What made *Eothen* stand unique in the literature of travel and gain so vast a popularity is Kinglake's highly coloured and refined style, his versatile mind and subtle humour, and his technique of transmitting the East through his sensibility. Kinglake's gift of phrase and his own personality rank higher than the East and are themselves the focus of *Eothen* rather than the Orient itself. *Eothen* is, accordingly, a literary work and a delightful record of personal impressions rather than an outward fact. It is an epistle expressing not what Kinglake finds in the East, but the effect of what he finds upon his sensibility following the practice of the romantics. Like Byron, whose *Child Harold* gives fuller expression of his own mood, thoughts and personality, based on his own travels and experiences in the East, Kinglake reveals through *Eothen* his personal experiences in the East, his childhood experiences, his thought of the Orient and the Occident, and the way his egoism operates. The Orient for Kinglake is no more than an external world on which he casts his impressions and through which he sees his self rather than the "real" East. Kinglake is fully aware of this fact and professes that he is giving simply a record of impression received during his travel in the East- "As I have felt so I have written", says Kinglake, "and the result is, that there will often be found in my narrative a jarring discord between the associations properly belonging to interesting sites, and the tone in which I speak of them" (vii).

Eothen is a literary journey whose representation of the East asserts the writer's identity as an Englishman and a Westerner. Retracing the paths of previous and contemporary travellers, English, French, and Europeans, and representing these places in a definitive literary style, Kinglake can be said to have acquired his place among men of letters rather than Orientalists such as Richard Burton. Kinglake makes

67 E. M. Forster, "Salute to the Orient", *Abinger Harvest*, (Penguin, 1936), p. 277.

68 Richard Basil Ince, *Calverly and Some Cambridge Wits of Nineteenth Century* (London, 1929), p.227.

69 Rev. W. Tuckwell, *A. W. Kinglake: A Biographical And Literary Study* (London, 1902) pp.88-9.

70 George Sampson, *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature*, 3rd, ed., (Cambridge, 1970), p.703.

71 Augusta Gregory, *Blackwood Magazine*, December 1895, p.800.

no real contribution to knowledge about the Orient. His real contribution is to the production of literature on the Orient. The East to Kinglake is no more than a literary place, serving as background to his own literary creation. The Orient of Kinglake is not an independent entity existing outside his imagination; it is drawn through preconceived ideas rather than from a pragmatic experience.

In *Eothen*, Kinglake evolves and alters the preoccupation of travel-writing in England to make it impressional and personal. The success and wide acceptance of Kinglake's experiment, that is, the consciousness of the writer and the Orient fused together and expressed in a literary style is part of the background to Palgrave's and Burton's approach to the writing up of their travels in Arabia in personal style. Burton was the first after Kinglake to entitle his pilgrimage in Arabia *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to AL-Madina and Mecca* and sticks to his personal and literary description.

CHAPTER FOUR

BURTON'S *PILGRIMAGE*

The actual experiences and adventures of the travellers, exaggerated in the retelling and, by a process familiar to us all, more richly coloured in memory than they were in reality, did little or nothing to lessen the credulity with which these old traditions of the East were accepted at home. It is true, too, that among travellers were some of sceptical mind. But both the critical instinct and the necessary accumulation of testimony were lacking to differentiate the fabulous from the real; and the analogies between the two classes were sometimes disconcertingly close.¹

¹ S.C.Chew, *The Crescent and the Cross*, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1937), p.15.

Sir Richard Francis Burton's *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madina and Meccah* has, in fact, done nothing to lessen the credulity with which the old traditions of the Oriental-Arab world were accepted in Europe. It, instead, hardened and deepened the distinction between the Orient and the Occident and asserted the inferiority of Oriental populations. This can be primarily ascribed to his enthusiasm for the idea of the Empire and his assimilation of racial theories. Burton concurs with the European ideology that man's advance towards a better future was to be made under the leadership of the white race and that other races would for a while be left behind in a primitive or backward state, thus accepting and justifying the link between the idea of progress and that of racial hierarchy which was widely accepted in Victorian England.

In his attitude towards the the non-European Burton was not only a racist, but an imperialist as well. Kiely, as many other critics, observed this aspect in Burton's character and described him as "a racist, imperialist, and arch conservative, who was forever developing ludicrous theories to support his prejudices". He also added that Burton was "a braggart, often a bully, and occasionally a liar".² Bishop found Burton to be an imperialist morally as well as politically.³ Tidrick states that Burton himself regarded his exploration not only as a quest for knowledge and fame but as pathfinding ventures of the Empire and that his patriotism had expressed itself imperially.⁴ Burton's description of the Arabs concentrated, mainly, on the side which can be put in the service of his nation, the Empire. Blunt observed this in Burton and made it clear that in his talks with him as well as in his books Burton "showed little true sympathy with the Arabs he had come to know so well. He would at any time, I am sure, have willingly betrayed them to further English, or his own professional interests".⁵

Burton's obsession with the racial theorization of his age made him produce a systematic account of the inferiority of the "Arab race", irrespectively of what he had really seen; his enthusiasm and extreme concern for the glory of the British Empire made him offer negative criticisms of the Arab, whom he sometimes found so appealing, and advocate the necessity for the use of repressive measures against them to subject them to the British rule; and his lack of interest in religion in general, another factor which strengthened his negative attitude towards the Arab, made him present the reader with a description of the external practices of Islamic rites and

² Robert Kiely, [review of recent books on Burton and other travellers] *Victorian Studies*, 1965-66, Vol.9, p.65.

³ Jonathan Bishop, "The Identity of Sir Richard Francis Burton", *Victorian Studies*, 1957-59, Vol.I, p.119.

⁴ Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby*, (Cambridge, London, 1981). p.76, 66.

⁵ W.S.Blunt, *My Diaries*, (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1921), p.546.

neglect the spiritual meaning of these practices which in practice are most significant.

He described with some precision the Islamic rites in the pilgrimage (Hajj), but conveyed none of their spiritual meaning. The Roman Catholic Russel found that Burton's account of the religious life of the Muslims to be "purely exoterical" in which "their external ceremonial, their bowings, their prostration, postures, gesticulation, the very word of their prayers, he details with curious and somewhat wearisome minuteness". He also found Burton to have never gone below the surface and to have failed or avoided "to touch what may be called the inner life of Islam, its spiritual destinies, its intellectual tendencies or its relation to the Jewish, Christian, or Bhuddish systems".⁶

Burton presented us with a summary of the places and the people as he thought he saw them and reacted with fascination sometimes and disenchantment most of the times. His work, as such, is as informative as lacking in presenting the "reality" of the Oriental-Arab life. It is, in fact, a representation in which his knowledge of the East; his ideological concept of the non-Europeans; and his experiences there blended together to produce an image of Oriental society in a more literary style. "His published accounts of Arabia and the Arab", seemed to Blunt to be "neither sympathetic nor true, and his *Pilgrimage*, to be largely made up with literary padding, and as narrative reads to me insincere".⁷ In his preface to the first edition of Burton's *Pilgrimage* Wolley states that Burton's object seems to be "to illustrate the peculiarities of the people- to dramatise, as it were, the dry journal,- and to preserve the tone of adventures, together with that local colouring in which mainly consist "l'education d'un voyage".

Independently of the interest which is almost always attached to any account of a region so completely unknown in the West, Burton's *Pilgrimage* can be read for its fictional and imaginative and personal numerous adventures its hero passes. Burton is the principal character of his *Pilgrimage* and even the centre of fantastic adventures. He even entitled his account of his summer's tour through Al-Hijaz, "A Personal Narrative", and claimed to have laboured hard to make its nature correspond with its name, simply because "it is the personal that interest mankind".⁸

Burton's *Pilgrimage* is taken by Edward Said as an example of category two of his division of European travellers to the Middle East.⁹ Burton is the author and the

⁶ C.W. Russell, "Sinia, Palestine, and Meccah", *Edinbrugh Review*, 1856, Vol.104, P. 398.

⁷ Blunt, *My Diaries*, p.546.

⁸ *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah*, by Sir Richard Francis Burton, edited by his wife Isabel Burton, (Tylson and Edwards, London, 1893) p.I,4. First published in 1855. Subsequent references will appear parenthetically.

hero of his *Pilgrimage* which cannot be read as an analysis of the Oriental society but rather as a literary work expressing Burton's ideology. Its interest lies rather in its divergence from reality. Viewing it in the light of the text/world relationship, we find differences between the image and what it represents, and viewing it in the light of the text/text relationship, that is, intertextuality, we shall find that it is interrelated to almost all the texts of travel literature on Arabia. These texts constitute its latent content.¹⁰ He borrowed materials from Sale, Burckhardt, Ali Bey, Lane, who was an authority on the Orient, and others and shaped in his own way.

BURTON AND PREVIOUS EUROPEAN TRAVELLERS TO ARABIA.

Before commencing his journey, Burton's personality as a scholar appears clearly. Burton started as an open-minded traveller who tried to associate himself with Egyptian society, Bedowin society and the society of the inhabitants of Al-Madinah and Meccah, conceiving of himself as sharing the life of the Arabs in whose land he was living. He tried to pass as an Oriental himself. He also familiarized himself with almost all European and non-European travellers, geographers and anthropologists who left any written account of their experiences. He acquainted himself with almost all travellers' statements or books written on Arabia which he came across and made personal investigations of their accounts verifying, confirming, correcting and supplying when necessary. He even cited some European travellers at length tracing them back to Ludovico di Varthema. Burton found his account to abound "with the information to be collected in a fresh field and hard-headed observer". They appeared to Burton to be "disfigured with a little romancing". Burton also verified Varthema's observations stating that "all things well considered, Lodovico Bartema, for correctness of observation and readiness of wit, stands in the foremost rank of the old Oriental travellers". In spite of Varthema's "correctness of observation", Burton located some corrections in his text which he placed in his footnote on "The Navigation and Voyages of Lodovico Varthema, Gentleman of Rome A. D. 1503".¹¹ He also read, evaluated and annotated

⁹ See chapter two p.50.

¹⁰ According to Said, every writer on the Orient "assumes some Oriental precedent, some previous knowledge of the Orient, to which he refers and on which he relies. Additionally, each work on the Orient affiliates itself with other work, with audiences, with institutions, with the Orient itself. The ensemble of relationships between works, audience, and some particular aspects of the Orient therefore constitute an analyzable formation- for example, that of philological studies, of anthropologies of extracts from Oriental literature, of travel books, of Oriental fantasies- whose presence in time, in discourse, in institutions gives it strength and authority". *Orientalism*, p.20.

¹¹ Burton's *Pilgrimage*, II, p.337. Appendix IV of the *Pilgrimage* deals with the "Navigation and Voyages of Ludovico Varthema", pp.333-357. Burton cited Varthema and annotated his text.

Pitts' text, who was followed by the nineteenth-century traveller Giovanni Finati.
12

Giovanni Finati, a deserter from the Italian army, who became a convert in Albania to escape a prison sentence, is viewed as the least reliable. His story begins with his seduction of the favourite wife of a Turkish general. Then he fled to Egypt, served there as renegade and went to Al-Hijaz in the force which was sent to besiege the Wahhabbi in Gunfude in 1814. He stayed for awhile in Meccah and performed the Muslims' pilgrimage. His narrative came through William John Bankes with whom he served as a dragoman in Syria. His account of the pilgrimage is very brief and the geographical information he had given is considered to have added nothing to geographical science on Arabia. His work can best be read as an adventure story.¹³

Finati was not the only nineteenth-century European traveller who preceded Burton in performing the Muslim pilgrimage. Ali Bey made his pilgrimage in 1807 and Burkhardt in 1814. They were two of the great European travellers of the first half of the nineteenth century who left a detailed account of the Muslims' pilgrimage to Meccah. Burton referred to both and paid them homage when he said "I offer no lengthened description of the town of Meccah, Ali Bey and Burkhardt have already said all that requires saying".¹⁴

Ali Bey's travels commenced with his disembarkation at Tangier in 1803. After two years, he set out on his pilgrimage calling at Tripoli, Cyprus and then Cairo. He stayed there for awhile and in 1806 he set out with the pilgrimage caravan for Suez. In 1807, the Spanish Ali Bey Al-Abbassi, whose real name was Domingo Badia Y Leblich, began the journey of his pilgrimage. He travelled as a wealthy Muslim Prince with sufficient knowledge of Arabic. His object was to deal mainly with scientific observation. Bidwell ranked him as the first to give the West a systematic account of Meccah, the first who described its trade, and even the first to give a description of its exact position.¹⁵

In his introduction to the *Narrative of the Life and Adventure of Giovanni Finati*, Bankes suspected Ali Bey to have been secretly brought up as Jew and added that he had in his possession an authentic proof of Ali Bey's having been employed by the French government as a spy. Bankes also described him as a man of indefatigable industry, but of very little previous knowledge (pp.x-xi). Science and

12 For more detail see Burton's *Pilgrimage*, I,358, Appendix V, Vol.II, pp.358-389.

13 For a full account of Giovanni Fanita's adventures see his *Narrative of the life of Giovanni Finati*, by William John Bankes (London, 1828). 2 Vols., Burton cited and annotated Finati's travels in his *Pilgrimage*, Vol.II, pp.390-401.

14 Burton's *Pilgrimage*, II, 299. fn.1.

15 R. Bidwell, *Travellers in Arabia*, p.28.

scientific researches claimed to be Ali Bey's main concern or the objective of his journey, but his interest in religion and his account of the social life in Arabia had sometimes supremacy over science. He associated himself with the Muslims' way of life and made serious attempts to understand Islam. He even conveyed the spiritual meaning of some Islamic rites in the pilgrimage,¹⁶ an attempt most lacking in Burton who came after him. His description of the physical structures of the holy places of Al-Islam was given in details and Burton depended on him and reproduced his plan of the Holy Mosque at Meccah in his *Pilgrimage*, (II,292). He also reprinted and confirmed Burkhardt's description of Bayt Allah at Meccah, illustrating it by a few notes.¹⁷

As a scholar Burton was not content with annotating the account of previous travellers to Arabia; instead he tried to fill in gaps where necessary. Muhammad's Mosque in Al-Madina was not visited by Ali Bey, who was prevented by the Wahhabi from going there, but it was visited by Burkhardt and fully described. Burton felt the necessity of drawing a plan of it to make it clearer, filling up a gap left by both Ali Bey and Burkhardt. He made "a ground-plan of the Prophet's Mosque", he said, because Burkhardt "was prevented by severe illness from so doing". Burton thought that his plan would "give the reader a fair idea of the main points", confessing however that "on certain minor details, it is not to be trusted". This he ascribed to the danger he was facing in his travels, not to his inaccuracy. Some of the papers which he "had placed among my medicine, after cutting them into squares, numbering them, and rolling them carefully up, were damaged by breaking of a bottle". (*Pilgrimage*, I,341, fn.2).

Varthema, Pitts, Finati, Ali Bey, Burkhardt and Burton are not the only European travellers to Arabia before the 1850s, but the only European travellers who left records of their experiences and their travels in the area.¹⁸ In his *Christians at Meccah*, Ralli divides the Christian pilgrims to Meccah into three groups. The first group are those travellers from Varthema to Pitts. The second group are the votaries of science such as Ali Bey, Seetzen, Burkhardt and Hurgonje. The third group are those who were impelled by love of adventure and curiosity. Burton is classified as belonging to groups two and three, for he was prompted by science in his travel and was an adventurer by nature who found delight in passing the risk of performing the pilgrimage as a born-Muslim as he claimed.

¹⁶ For more details on Ali Bey's travels see his *The Travels of Ali Bey* (London, 1816).

¹⁷ See Burton's *Pilgrimage*, Vol.II, Appendix II, pp.294-319.

¹⁸ For more detailed information on European travellers to Arabia: See, *The Penetration of Arabia*, by D. G. Hogarth, (London, 1905); *Christians at Meccah*, by Auguste Ralli, (London, 1909); *Travellers in Arabia*, by Robin Bidwell, (London, 1976); and *Explorers of Arabia*, by Zahra Freeth & H.V.F. Winston, (London, George Allan & Unwin, 1978).

Burton was not the first non-Muslim to penetrate Meccah as the impression his *Pilgrimage* conveys. Penzer finds this to be a common error which he corrected by stating that Burton was not the first unbeliever, or English Christian to enter Meccah. Burton, Penzer asserts, "was neither. He was the first English Christian to enter Meccah of his own free will as a true Mohammedan pilgrim and not as a convert."¹⁹ Brodie also corrects the erroneous belief that Burton was the first non-Muslim to penetrate Meccah and mentioned a good number of other travellers, either non-Muslim or "temporary converts" who preceded him. Burton, according to her, has done a great service to history by summarizing their voyages or citing at length from their accounts in the appendices of his own volumes.²⁰ Nevertheless, Burton was assumed to be the first European to have accomplished the pilgrimage at Meccah as a man born of Muslim parents, for which he was violently criticized by many of his contemporaries. Russell expressed his "strong reprobation" of Burton's conduct and considered it as "utterly unworthy of a Christian gentleman". He also finds in Burton's performance of of the pilgrimage something

"indescribably revolting to our feelings, in the position of an English officer, even though it be in the pursuit of very interesting and desirable information, crawling among crowd of unbelievers, around the objects of their wretched superstition; sharing and perhaps, exaggerating their miserable exhibitions of reverence; quaffing cups of holy water with them from the consecrated well; repeating their prayers; joining in their litanies; reciting the 'Fat-hah' with them; copying their gesticulations... turning his face to Meccah; placing his right shoulder opposite the right pillar of the Prophet's Mosque; and in a word, accommodating himself... to every detail of their public private worship. All this Burton professes to have done and more".²¹

Palgrave, a traveller contemporary with Burton, attacked his disguise, finding it unjustifiable. He also attacked his exaggeration of the Arab's extreme aversion to Christians and the danger or peril it entails. He found no danger in being a Christian, for he himself claimed to have travelled as a Christian to Arabia; the real danger, Palgrave thought, "consists mainly in the chance of being recognized for European, or agent of Europeans" which "might probably be fatal". Rightly supporting his argument by quoting from the Quoran, Palgrave asserted his belief that a Christian may well traverse Arabia without being ever obliged to compromise his religion or honour. He accordingly claimed to have travelled as a Syrian Christian, attacking even the very act of Burton's disguise as wandering Darweesh. "Passing oneself off as a

¹⁹ Norman M. Penzer, *An Annotated Bibliography of Sir Richard Francis Burton* (A.M. Philpot, Ltd.) P.47.

²⁰ Fawn M. Brodie, *The Devil Drives: A Life of Sir Richard Francis Burton* (London, 1967) P.16.

²¹ C.W. Russell, "Sinai, Palestine, and Meccah", *Edinburgh Review*, 104, 1856, pp.389-90.

wandering Darweesh, as some European explorers have attempted", Palgrave observed, "is for more reasons than one a very bad plan". Palgrave found it "unnecessary to dilate on that moral aspect of the proceeding which will always first strike unsophisticated minds". Like Russell, Palgrave found it hardly compatible with the character of a European gentleman or a Christian "to feign a religion which the adventurer does not believe" or "to perform with scrupulous exactitude, as of the highest

and holiest import, practices which he inwardly ridicules, and which he intends on his return to hold up to the ridicule of others, to turn for weeks and months together the most sacred and awful bearings of man towards his creator into a deliberate and truthless mummery, not to mention other and yet darker touches".²²

Palgrave's stricture on Burton's disguise aroused the latter's ire. In his preface to the third edition of his *Pilgrimage*, Burton defended himself by a counter-attack on Palgrave whom he described as a traveller who was born a Protestant, of Jewish descent and took the view of the order of the Jesuit. By way of humiliating him, Burton described him as an Englishman by birth who accepted French protection. Burton also found nothing offensive to Christianity in the Muslims' pilgrimage since the Muslims "venerate Abraham, the Father of the Faithful" (I,xxi-ii).

Blunt refused the idea of disguise altogether and proclaimed his Englishness and Christianity in his travels in Arabia. He too attacked Burton's disguise when he declared that Burton had exaggerated the "difficulty of the undertaking which in those days was comparatively easy to any one who would profess Islam, even without possessing any great knowledge of Eastern language".²³ Blunt's attitude towards Burton was not as hostile as that of Doughty, who travelled to the East in 1876. He had never read or even seen Burton's *Pilgrimage*. Penzer, who reports that he had an interesting letter from Doughty, ascribed the latter's behaviour to his prejudices against Burton for passing himself off as a Muslim.²⁴

Doughty was a devout Christian who made no bones about proclaiming himself to be a Christian and an Englishman in his travels. His destination was Madain Saleh. Unlike Burton, he was very much concerned with Christianity, so that he did not go to Meccah or try to make the pilgrimage because this contradicted his religious teachings. Had it not been against his principles to pass as a Muslim, Penzer observed, Doughty might have got to Meccah itself. His Christianity was the motive even of his archeological interests in his travels: -"interested as I was, in all that

²² Palgrave's *Narrative of a Year's Journey*, (Macmillan, London,1865) Vol.I, p.264, 258. For more details on Palgrave's attack of Burton see pp.258-265.

²³ *My Diaries*, p.546.

²⁴ Penzer, *Annotated Bibliography of Sir Richard Burton*, p.48.

pertains to Biblical research, I resolved to accept the hazard of visiting them [the carved monuments of Madain Salih]".²⁵ Doughty stuck to his plan and fulfilled his objectives, whilst Burton, like Burkhardt, changed his original plan and instead of contributing to science and geography he concerned himself with anthropological and theological studies.

BURTON'S JOURNEY.

In the autumn of 1852 Burton offered his services to the Royal Geographical Society of London to undertake an exploring expedition "for the purpose of removing that approbrium to modern adventure, the huge white bolt which in our maps still notes the Eastern and Central regions of Arabia" (I,1). His intention was to land at Maskat and go through the Empty Quarter to Meccah and Al-Madinah. By that time he held the rank of a lieutenant in the East India Company and, consequently, he had to apply for a furlough. The Geographical Society supported his scheme, but his employer refused to sanction such a journey because of the dangers it involved. At last, Burton obtained from the Court Director of the Company a year's leave of absence to pursue his Arabic studies "in the land where the language is best learned".

Burton began his expedition with the principal object of crossing the "unknown Arabian Peninsula, in a direct line from either Al-Madinah to Mascat, or diagonally from Meccah to Makallah on the Indian Ocean" (I,3). The secondary objects of his expedition were numerous; he was desirous to find out the possibility of exporting Arab horses to India; to obtain information concerning the Great Eastern wilderness, the vast expanse marked on the map as Rub' Al-Khali; to discover the lie of the land; and to study the races of Arabia (I,3).²⁶

The "one year's leave", the tribal fight, and what is more important Burton's obsession with penetrating the mysteries of the Oriental-Arab family life and society - "to see with my eyes what others are content to "hear with ears", namely, Moslem inner life in a really Mohammedan country; and longing, if truth be told, to set foot on that mysterious spot which no vacation tourist has yet described, measured, sketched and photographed" (I,2)-, made Burton abandon his original principal scheme and substitute for it a visit to Al-Madinah and a Pilgrimage to Meccah.²⁷ Had he accomplished the plan to which he set himself, he would have added considerably to Burkhardt's findings

²⁵ C. M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (London, 1923) 2 vols. p.viii. (preface to the second edition).

²⁶ By an internal textual study of Burton's *Pilgrimage*, Assad extracted what he called four of the most important ingredients in Burton's fascination with the East. The most important spurs to Burton's urge to travel, according to his study, are: Burton's sentimental attraction for the melancholy and the mystery of the East; the excitement of adventure; the stimulus to keen enjoyment of animal existence; and the sense of pride in accomplishment. See *Three Victorian Travellers*, by Thomas J. Assad (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1964). P.19.

in his travels in Arabia and to Sadlier's feat in crossing Central Arabia from east to west in 1819. Sadlier went there on an official mission as the emissary of the British Government in India to contact Ibrahim Pasha after his success in his campaign against the Wahhabbi. Sadlier's mission was political and his scientific observations were limited. Nevertheless he made a careful compass route survey and his report contained notes on the tribes and the oasis which he visited.²⁸ In 1862 Palgrave crossed Central Arabia but not from the Red Sea. He began from Ma'an in Syria proceeding south-west to Riad and from there to Muscat in the west. Like Sadlier, his mission was mainly political and his lack of accuracy in geographical matters left the exploration of Arabia Central from east to west open to twentieth-century British explorers such as Philby. It was not until 1917, that is, sixty-four years after Burton had abandoned his plan, that Central Arabia was crossed from east to west by Philby who crossed the Arabian peninsula from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. Later in 1932 he also explored the rub al-khali, crossing it in its most waterless section from east to west. It is worth mentioning here that Bertram Thomas had crossed the Rub Al-Khali from south to north in 1928.²⁹

Arriving at Al-Madinah Burton was originally supposed to go from there direct across to Mascot, from which city in former times a caravan regularly set out for the pilgrimage, but the tribal fight which took place by that time between the Hazimi and the Hamidi "put an end to any lingering possibility of of my prosecuting my journey to Mascot" (II,29). Burton said that he proposed to undertake the journey in Bedowin fashion and had formed a friendship with one of his fellow travellers from Yanbu, called 'Mujrim' or 'the sinful' (the word 'Mujrim' in Arabic means 'murderer' not 'sinful'), who undertook to procure for him all possible information about the route. Mujrim, at last, consented to travel with him, but because of the fight he declined wishing to stay by his brethren the Hawazim in their trial. He also told Burton that no traveller, not even a native Bedowin could at that time safely undertake the journey, which was about fifteen hundred miles, through a barren desert, and that even with the Bedowin themselves it occupies from nine to twelve months. Burton, accordingly, abandoned his original plan and contributed nothing to the exploration of

27 Burton entitled his book *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah*. According to Islam the pilgrimage can only be made to Meccah. There is no pilgrimage to Al-Madina, but it is customary that Muslims visit Muhammad's tomb there after or before accomplishing the pilgrimage.

28 For more details see *Diary of a Journey Across Arabia from El-Khatif.. to Yamboo... During the Year 1819*, by G.F.Sadlier, (Compiled from the records of the Bombay Government by P. Ryan, Bombay, 1866).

29 For more details on Bertram Thomas see his *Arabia Felix*, (London, 1932). The reader can find more details in "The explorers of the Rub 'Al-Kali", in *The Untold Story of Exploration*, by Lowell Thomas, (London, 1938).

Central Arabia; he was even unable to solve the mystery of the longitude of Al-Madinah because he discarded his sextant early in the journey in Suez. Entering Arabia by Al-Hijaz, he was obliged to leave behind all his instruments, he said, except "a watch and a pocket-compass, so the benefits rendered to geography by my trip have been scanty" (II,30).

Burton's narrative begins with his departure from London to Southampton on the evening of April 3, 1853. Like Burkhardt, Burton prepared himself in England to personify an Oriental. With the help of Captain Harry Grindly, a man with considerable experience of the Orient, who accompanied him to Alexandria as an interpreter, Burton assumed his new character of a Persian Prince. Throughout the voyage he strove to perfect his role in details such as the Muslim way of drinking a glass of water. On board the ship Captain Gridly and Burton met John Wingfield Larking who was introduced to Burton's secret and offered to help him in Egypt.

Arriving at Alexandria Burton brushed off the beggars clustered on the quay in an Oriental way which convinced "the bystander that the sheep-skin covered a real sheep". "*Bakhshih*", meaning alms, or tip, screamed a beggar in Burton's face. "*Mafish*", meaning there is none, was Burton's answer like a true Oriental.

From the dock Burton travelled to the home of John Thurburn, Larking's father-in-law, who hospitably received him and lodged him in an outhouse overlooking the lovely Mahmudiyah canal where he could continue to perfect his disguise and assemble the material he would need for his pilgrimage to Meccah. He said he commenced his training and lost no time in securing the assistance of Sheikhs to revive his collection of religious ablutions; to get himself somewhat up again in the Quoran; and to renew his acquaintance with the act of prostration. To familiarize himself with more Oriental manners he claimed to have availed himself of the opportunity of attending the bazaars, mosques, Cafe, public baths (Hammam) and other places of public resort.

In Alexandria he claimed to have worked as an Indian doctor and soon acquired a good reputation as a healer. This profession provided him with the opportunity of mixing with Eastern people, especially the "fair sex, of which Europeans, generally speaking, know only the worst specimens" (I,12). Burton declared that he practised the *Mandal* and the magic mirror and convinced the Egyptians that he was a man with supernatural power who knew everything. At this stage, Burton seems to have presented the reader with an exaggerated, rather fictional and imaginary picture of himself and his achievements during his residence in Alexandria. His one month stay in Alexandria could not have provided him with the opportunity to familiarize himself with what he claimed, especially the *Mandal* magic art which he pretends to have practised.³⁰ His career in Alexandria shows no real involvement or association with the Oriental-Arab life, taking into account that he lived there in an outhouse "to blind the inquisitive eyes of servants and visitors" and was behaving as if he thought he was

being spied upon by an "Armenian Dragoman" (I,11). Accordingly he borrowed his raw material from other travellers, mainly Lane, and moulded it in a way so as to attract his reader. His knowledge of the *Mandal*, which he mentioned in passing without giving any details, came from Lane's *Modern Egyptians*,³¹ and his assumption that he practised it seems to have been founded on Warburton's statement that a friend of his at Alexandria informed him that "he knew an Englishman who had learnt the art [of Darb Al-Mandal] and practised it with success".³²

After a month of hard work at Alexandria in which he claimed to have polished his Arabic by removing the rust of three years' sojourn in Europe, Burton began to look for a suitable Oriental character to adopt without arousing suspicion. He assumed the character of a wandering Darweesh.³³ Burton's admiration of the Darweesh disguise, analysed psychologically, extolls his freedom from class restrictions and social etiquette. As a Darweesh, he thought, he could feign madness in moments of great danger and escape, because "a madman in the East, like a notable eccentric character in the West, is allowed to say or do whatever the spirit directs" (I,15). Burton's notion of madness, here, seems to have come from Varthema's account rather than its reality in the East. Arriving at Aden, Varthema was imprisoned. To escape his prison sentence, he decided to feign madness and began to behave accordingly. He assumed the character of a pious Muslim (this in Burton's concept is a Darweesh) and converted a great fat sheep into Islam and put to death a donkey which had neglected to praise the Prophet. Varthema was suspected to be either a madman or a holy man. Two learned men were brought to decide upon this, but they were of diverse opinion,

30 Burton arrived in Alexandria without any previous knowledge of the superstitious practice of the *Mandal*. The practitioner of the *Mandal* would not pass his art so easily to others even to their own children. Those magicians claim divinity in practising it and declare that no one could perform it unless he is from the dynasty of certain Walee (saint) or unless he is a follower of a certain saint or saints who would help him to control the genii and evil spirits to obey his order whatever they be. Assuming that Burton had been given the secret of this art on the first day of his arrival, he would have needed a period of practice which might have extended to years to master it.

31 E.W.Lane was the first writer who introduced the details concerning the magic art of *Darab Al-Mandal* to the English reader and mostly likely to Europe. For more detailed information the curious reader can refer to his *Manners and Customs of Modern Egyptians* (London, 1890), pp. 247-254. First published in 1836.

32 E.Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross* (London, 1845) Vol.I, p.153. This statement gives credibility to Burton's claim. Warburton travelled to the East in 1845 where he met Sheikh Abdl-el-Kader Maugrabee, the most remarkable of the magicians of the *Mandal* art, and the man who introduced the art to Lane, and that the magician performed some practices in his presence. For more details see pp. 150-153.

33 For a detailed account of the Daraweesh in Egypt in the first half of the nineteenth century see Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, pp. 220-26.

one of them affirming one thing, and one another.³⁴

Making his preparation for the Hajj, Burton discovered that he had to provide himself with a passport. This he obtained from the English consul at Alexandria after disbursing a dollar. The passport certified that Burton was an Indo-British subject named Abdullah.

From Alexandria Burton boarded a small Nile steamer to Cairo. Seeing Burton sitting alone on the deck, a man came and sat down beside him and began a conversation. This same man, Haji Wali, a shrewd Alexandrian wandering merchant, met Burton again in the Jamiliyah Wakalahat in Cairo and went with him in a later time with his expedition to Midian. They, for the time being, became fast friends who used, while in Cairo, to dine together, pass the evening in the same mosque or some other places of public pastime and sometimes smoke the forbidden weed "Hashish". Haji Wali advised Burton to lay aside the Darweesh's gown, and all connection with Persia and the Persians. He told him that if he persisted in assuming the identity of a Persian Darweesh, he would get himself in trouble. In Egypt he would be cursed; in Arabia he would be beaten because he would be considered a heretic and even if he fell sick he might die by the roadside. After a long consultation as to what nation he was to belong to, he changed his identity to put himself before the public as a 'Pathan' (the Indian name of an Afghan), that is, a British subject, born in India of Afghan parents, educated at Rangoon as a doctor,³⁵ and sent to wander as was their manner from early youth. To support the character required a knowledge of Persian, Hindustani, and Arabic, all of which he said he knew sufficiently to pass muster. To perfect his new disguise Burton pronounced Arabic words in the way they were pronounced and transliterated in the Urdu language.³⁶ He had learned this while he was

³⁴ See *The Travels of Ludovico di Varthema*.

³⁵ In *Heart-beguiling Araby*, Tidrick suggest that we substitute France for India, English for Afghan, and Oxford for Rangoon, and we have Burton himself (p.65). She also finds Burton's disguise as a doctor to be a successful one, for the doctor's cosmopolitan background could be used to explain any linguistic slips (p.68).

³⁶ Burton's transliteration of Arabic words is derived from the Urdu language not directly from Arabic. This would be acceptable if he used it only to perfect his disguise, but unfortunately he used the same system in his translation of the *Arabian Nights*. The Urdu-speaking people usually substitute the Arabic letter '.....' = 'dh' with the letter '.....' = 'Z', a rule which Burton followed as the following examples from the *Pilgrimage* show:

Ramazan (i,74)	Ramadhan	رمضان
Kazi (ii,23)	Kadhi	قاضی
Farz (ii, 279)	Fardh	فردھ
Fuzul (ii,263)	Fudhul	فوذول
Id-al-Azha (ii,291)	Id-al-Adha	عید الاضحی
Zarabt (ii,26)	Dharabt	ذہرابت

The Arabs have a story called Majnun Laila [Mad in Laila]. The Urdu-speaking (Footnote continued)

a lieutenant in the Sind countries. Haji Wali also advised him to put forward in preference the profession of an Indian doctor travelling under a vow to visit all the holy places in Islam. "What business", asked Haji Wali in way of objection to Burton's plan to travel as a Darweesh, "have those reverend men [Daraweesh] with politics, or any of the information you are collecting?" (I,45).

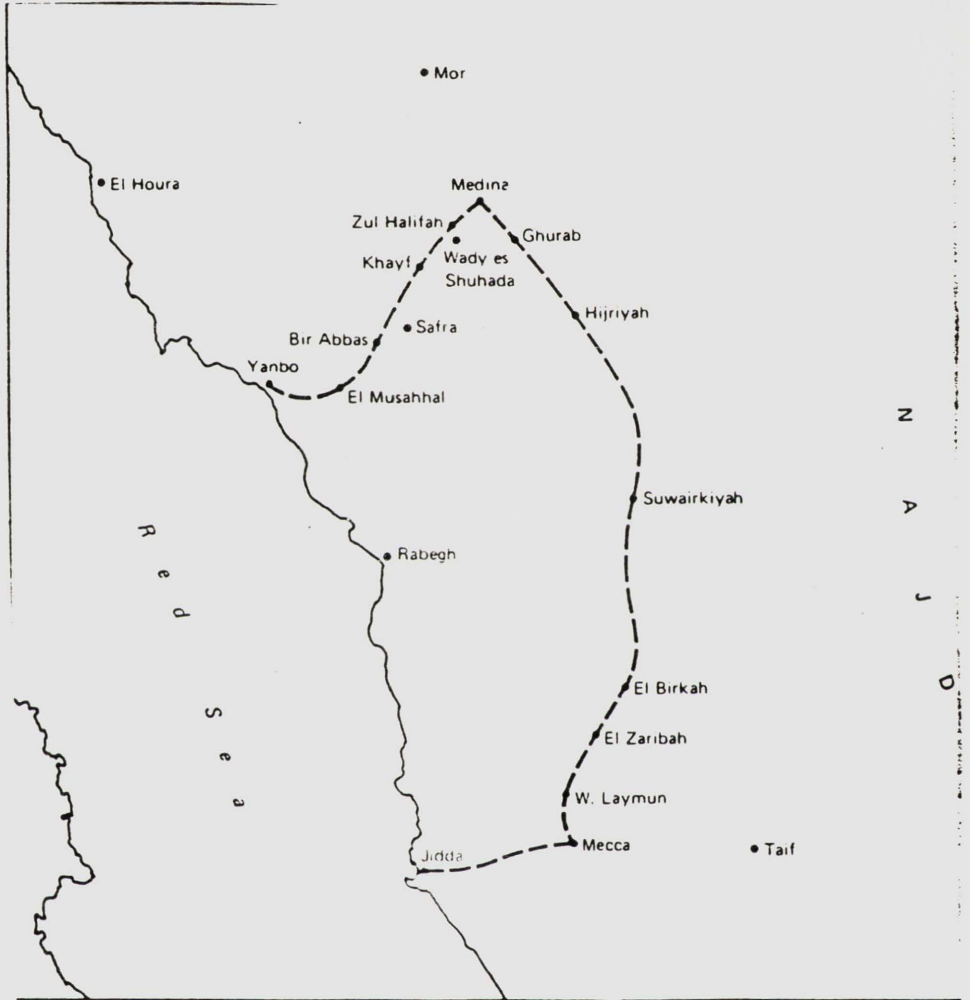
Assuming his new character, Burton lived in Cairo in a native inn or Wakalah and worked as a doctor. He claimed to have cured two Abyssinian slave girls. He also attended courses in the theological university of Al-Azhar; fasted Ramadhan; and witnessed the ceremony of the Eid. However, he did not stay for a long time in Cairo and his departure was accelerated by way of his acquaintance with an Albanian officer in the Wakalah, who was on leave from the Hijaz. The latter invited Burton to his room where they removed their daggers and emerged extremely drunk. They tried to persuade Haji Wali and other inhabitants to join them. The Albanian called for dancing girls, bellowed insult on the Egyptians and threatened to drink the porter's blood when his servant managed to get him to bed. This incident put Burton in disrepute, and after some deliberation with Haji Wali, he found it appropriate to leave Cairo as soon as possible.

He began his journey in the desert from Cairo to Suez, hiring two camels and setting off with an Indian servant. On the way he found some traders from Al-Madinah, who were going back home, and a Meccan boy, called Muhammad Al-Basyuni, whom he had once met in Cairo. Muhammed took charge of Burton and stayed with him for the rest of the journey. The journey from Cairo to Suez is marked with Burton's first encounter with the Arab-Bedowin and the desert life. The desert acts upon his mind and body sharpening, exciting, arousing, and stimulating his senses. Its views seemed to him to be "eminently suggestive" and to "appeal to the Future, not to the Past" (I,149). In the desert Burton finds that one's "morale improve"; that one becomes frank and cordial; hospitable and single-minded where the hypocritical politeness and the slavery of civilization are left behind in the city. One's senses are quickened: they require no stimulants but air and exercise. He found "a keen enjoyment in a mere animal existence" (I,150). Burton here expresses his fascination with the Bedowin life where the spirit finds virtue more apparent in simple and unsophisticated modes of culture and society than in the complex and self

36 (continued)

people call it 'Laila Majnun'. Burton followed their practice and called it after their word order 'Laila Majnun' (ii, 88, f.n.).

Burton's route of travel in Hijaz
(From *Explorers of Arabia*, by
Z.Freeth and H.V.F. Winstone)



conscious one.³⁷ Like Kinglake, Burton felt exultation in the desert which stood, for him, as one of the most romantic places where he tried to evade the toils of regular existence in accord with the spirit of the age. In a state of excitement he utters:

And believe me, when once your taste have conformed to the tranquility of such travel, you will suffer real pain in returning to the turmoil of civilization. You will anticipate the bustle and the confusion of artificial life, its luxury and its false pleasure, with repugnance. Depressed in spirits, you will for a time after you return feel incapable of mental or bodily exertion. The air of the city will suffocate you, and the care-worn cadaverous countenances of citizens will haunt you like a vision of judgement. (I,151)

Burton's life and adventure in Egypt, though remarkably well organized, have few novelties in comparison with the part of the book devoted to Arabia and the pilgrimage. This might be said to have commenced with his departure from Cairo. The actual travel to Al-Hijaz begins with his embarkation in the pilgrimage-ship *Sambook Silk Al-Zahab* or 'Golden Wire'. At this stage Burton formed acquaintance with a party of travellers bound to the same destination who were preparing for a long journey with scarcely two dollars of ready money among them. Burton made each of them a loan which afterward proved a most serviceable influence. They examined his belongings and found among his possession a sextant which for a moment seemed to threaten to penetrate his disguise. It aroused the suspicion of the boy Muhammad who declared that Burton must be an infidel spy from India. Like Burckhardt, Burton's skill in Muslim theology made him escape the suspicion, but he found it necessary to discard his sextant which he left behind with a sigh. This incident recalls Ali Bey who, when attacked by the Wahhabi, destroyed all the specimens of insects and flowers which he had collected and threw away all of his fossils for fear of being taken for a magician.

The voyage from Suez to Yanbu, a sea port on the eastern coast of the Red Sea, was not eventless and quiet as that from Southampton to Alexandria. The *Silk Al-Zahab* was cramped with a hundred and thirty passengers on board, while its accommodation capacity was for sixty persons. Burton and his companions booked first class accommodation and were sitting on the poop when a sudden savage fight with knives and teeth arose between the Syrians and the Magribis. But Burton shrewdly brought it to an end by pushing down a huge earthen jug full with water on the head of the attackers and so ended the dispute. The passengers reached Yanbu without further incidents.

On 18 July Burton and his companions set out in the ordinary caravan of Bir-Abbas whence on the 22nd of the same month they commenced their route to Al-Madinah under the glare of July sun in the desert. They had to pass through the

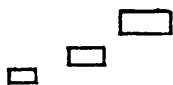
³⁷ John Dennis Duffy has examined the theme of romantic primitivism in the writings of Burton, Blunt, Doughty, and Lawrence For more details see his *Arabia Literaria; Four Visions of the East, 1855-1926*. (University of Toronto, 1964. Ph.D Thesis).

'Pilgrims Pass' where they were ambushed by robbers. The bedwin tribesmen kept up a heavy fire and were shooting from behind. But the caravan escaped having lost only twelve men. On the twenty fifth they reached their destination, the sanctuary world of Islam, Al-Madinah after a march of a hundred and thirty miles.

Burton remained there for more than a month and described the city and the religious rituals in which he took part. He began his description by introducing the reader to the holiness of Al-Madinah which was drawn from its connection with the history of Muhammad and the memorial of him which it contained. Next he moved to describe his visit to the Muhammad's Tomb with a physical description of the tomb itself from hearsay, a description of the external architectural interest, and a discussion regarding the conventions of the disposition of the Messenger's remains. His reaction to the Mosque was passive. It did not impress him and he regarded it as 'mean tawdry' suggesting "the resemblance of a museum of second-rate art, a curiosity shop, full of ornaments that are not accessories, and decorated with paper splendour". Burton did not see the tomb, consequently he depicted it from books as he claimed. He misquoted Ibn Jubayer's description stating that "Ibn Jubayer, who travelled in A.H.580, relates that the Apostle's coffin is a box of ebony (abnus) covered with sandal-wood, and plated with silver; it is placed, he says behind a curtain, and surrounded by an iron grating" (I,323).³⁸ In drawing a plan for the Chamber, Burton's picture were similar to those of Burckhardt who quoted Al-Samanhoudy.

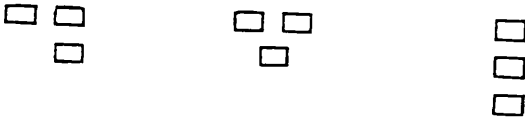
In describing the Hujra (Chamber), a name derived from the circumstances of its having been Aiysha's room, where Muhammad's tomb stood in addition to that of Abubaker and Omar and an empty grave, Burton reported, reserved to Isa Ibn Maryam (Christ), Burton was inaccurate in referring to his sources. He had not seen the arrangement of the tombs, yet he described them in a way as described by Burckhardt who quoted Al-Samanhoudy. Burckhardt did not see the Hujra and accounted for it as follows:

As far as I could learn here these tombs are also covered with precious stuffs, and in the shape of catafalques, like that of Ibrahim in the great mosque of Mekka. They are said to be placed in the following order:



38 In the above quote, Ibn Jubayer is not describing Muhammad's coffin, but a chest of five spans opposite his head. See *The Travels of Ibn Jubayer*, by Ibn Jubayer, translated by R.J.C. Broadhurst (Janathan Cape, London, 1951). Ibn Jubayer was an Arab traveller, born in 1145. In February 1183, he set out from Granada to Meccah with the single aim of performing his pilgrimage. He emarked to Alexandria and from there he went to Al-Hijaz. Ibn Battuta is another fourteenth-century Arab traveller who was read and quoted on some points by Burton.

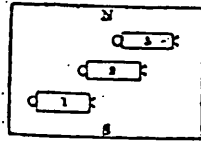
The largest being that of Mohammed, and the one above it Abou Beker's.... They did not always stand in their present position; Samhoudy places them at different times thus:



See Burckhardt's *Travels in Arabia*, p.333.

Burton declared that he had not read Al-Samhoudi,³⁹ yet he produced a plan quoted from Burckhardt with slight alterations without referring to either Burckhardt or the Muslim historians to whom he ascribed his knowledge. Burton's description reads:

The places they [Mohammed, Abou Beker, and Omar] are usually supposed to occupy... would be thus disposed:



Then Burton states that Muslim historians are not agreed upon this point and they differ in arranging them as follows:

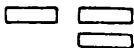
Many prefers this position



some thus in unicorn



others at right angles



³⁹ *Pilgrimage*, I,340, f.n.

Pilgrimage, I,324-5.

Besides Muhammad's tomb Burton visited other places of high veneration for the Muslims, notably: Mahbat Jibril, the place where the Archangel Gabriel descended with heavenly revelations, the grave of Lady Fatima (Muhammad's daughter) and he made some supplications in honour of the early martyrs of Islam in the great cemetery of Al-Bakia. He also visited Lady Halimah (Muhammad's foster mother) and his wives. Burton went on with detailed description of the physical structure and the edifices, ending his Ziyarah (visit) with the depiction of Lady Fatimah's garden and the puny date tree which it contained. He described how the fruit of the sacred trees were sold at high prices to be carried home by the pilgrims.

During his Ziyarah Burton translated the prayers of the visitation ceremony, the salutations, the testifications and ejaculation at length and tried to account for some aspects of Islamic practices. He was not successful on all points. He failed in his translation, for example, in the simplest thing, the translation of the Fatihah, the opening Sura of the Quoran, conveying a wrong sense. His translation reads:

"In the name of Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

"Praise be to Allah, who the (three) Worlds made.

"The Merciful, the Compassionate.

"The King of the Day of Faith.

"Thee alone do we worship, and thee (alone) do we ask aid.

"Guide us to the Path of worship that is straight

"The Path of those for whom thy love is great

"Not those on whom is Hate, nor they that deviate

"Amen! O Lord of Angels, Jinnis, and Men (I,319).

Burton here invented the last line which has no existence in this Sura. In line two he mistranslated the second half. The fourth line should be "The King of the day of Judgement". His literal translation made him render the Arabic words "Yawm Aldin" as "the day of faith", a correct literal translation, but considered in their religious context, they mean "the day of judgement". In line eight he used 'Hate' for 'Wrath'. In his footnote to this translation Burton states that he endeavoured to imitate the imperfect rhyme of the original Arabic as if the Quoran was written in rhyme. This, of course, is incorrect for the Quoran is not poetry and not rhymed.

Burton sometimes translated literally and missed the Arabic meaning of the text. He translated the following proverb: "Al-Harm f' il Haramayn" as "Evil (dwelleth) in the two holy cities" (ii,232). This proverb means that Al-Haram (Evil or what is evil) is to be given special attention in the Haramyn [Muhammad's Mosque in Al-Madinah and the Mosque in Ka'bah in Meccah]. It emphasizes, contrary to Burton's interpretation, that even if 'Evil' is practised outside Haramayn- an assumption unacceptable in Islam- it should not be practised in any way in the Haramayn. Another example can be found in Burton's description of the water of Bir-al-Nabi [The Messenger's well]. Burton says that a well-educated man has told him that the water had been "light" (wholesome) as any in Al-Madinah. Then Burton footnoted that the

"Arabs who, like all Orientals, are exceedingly curious about water, take the trouble to weigh the produce of their well; the lighter the water, the more digestible and wholesome it is considered" (i,338). Burton here takes the material and literal meaning of the Arabic word 'Khafif' (light) and constructs this image of weighing water. The 'khafif' water, as used and understood by the Arabs, is any water which is not salty and which does not contain calcium oxide. The meaning of 'khafif' is figurative in relation to food or drink. When says in Arabic that certain water is 'khafif' (light), he means that it is fresh and tasteless (not salty). Thus light is a matter of taste not weight.

Having performed the duties of a Zair (visitor), Burton began to relate the story of the history of the Mosque.⁴⁰ The Mosque of Al-Madinah was first built by Muhammed himself in the place where his she-camel knelt down by order of heaven. Since then it had been rebuilt four times, receiving successive additions from the generosity of the Muslim world. The principal of the Mosque was called Sheikh Al-harim; he was no longer a eunuch, although almost all other officials in charge were. Oddly Burton claimed that these men are married and some of them have wives. Besides these there were a number of servants called farrashin attached to the mosque. In addition to this there was a library. Burton also observed that the Kazi (or kadhi=judge) had under him three muftis belonging to the the hanafi, the shafe', and the maliki school, and that almost all the citizens of Al-Madinah, who were indirectly employed, acted as muzawwirs. Having investigated Al-Madinah, visited the mosque of kuba and Hamza's tomb, Burton had to decide upon the route to Meccah.

There are four routes to Meccah: "The Darb Al-Sultani" or the "Sultan Way", known from Burckhardt's description; the second is "Wady Al-Kura", which has a regular supply of wells; the third is called "Tarik Al-Ghadir"; and the fourth, which Burton followed, is called "Darb Al-Sharki" or "Eastern Road", with a distance of about two hundred and fifty miles by Suwayrikah, Zaribah and Al-Birkat.

On the morning of 31 August Burton joined the caravan and resumed his journey to Meccah. He parted with his Madinah friends after affectionate embraces at the Egyptian Gate. The journey to Meccah through the desert was a hard and tiresome

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On this point, Burton derived information indirectly and with some variation from the Arab traveller Ibn Battuta. For more details on Ibn Battuta see his *The Travels of Ibn Battuta*, tr. by H.A.R. Gibb (Cambridge. Published for the Hakluyt Society, 1958). Ibn Battuta (1304-1377) was the greatest name in the middle ages in the field of travels. He was born in Morocco. After finishing his studies at the age of twenty-one, in the year 1324, he set out from Tangier with the object of making a pilgrimage to Meccah. He covered the entire Islamic world and lived in Delhi for seven years. He also travelled to China and visited the East Indies and the African continent. His travels provide valuable information about the world of those days. Hogarth took him to be "the first to test geographical tradition with his eyes, or by examination of local native witness". See *The Penetration of Arabia*, by Hogarth, (London, 1905) p.27.

one. The desert, the place of romance, seems to have reminded Burton of its dwellers, the Bedowin, and stimulated him to produce a commendable chapter on them and the geneology of the Arab race. He divided the Arabs into Arab Al-Aribah; Arab Al-Mutarribah or the Arabicized Arab; Arab Al-Mustaribah or the half-caste Arab; and Arab Al-Mustajamah. He also produced a phrenological exercise illustrating the physical portrait of the Bedowin of Al-Hijaz. In this chapter, the most interesting of his *Pilgrimage*, Burton reveals himself rather than his object. The Bedowin society embodied his attitude and expressed his desire for power. Tidrick stated that Burton "found in the 'wild man' (his favourite term for the Bedowin) a reflection of his own nature". Burton, she added, was himself "a wild man, but one who had the misfortune to live in an effeminate society where strength was not rewarded by power".⁴¹ As we have seen, Burton expressed his admiration for the Bedowin when he first encountered them on the way to Suez. They were "pleasant companions, and deserving of respect, for their hearts are good, and their courage is beyond a doubt". The travellers who "complain of their insolence and extortion" may have been, according to him "either ignorant of their language or offensive to them by assumption of superiority, -in the Desert man meets man, -or physically unfitted to acquire their esteem" (II,148). He found the manners of the Bedowin "free and simple" but "sometimes dashed with strange ceremonies" (II,85). He also approved their concept of chivalry which makes their society "so delightful to the traveller who... understand and is understood by them" (II,97).

Burton saw in the Bedowin society a social organization which encouraged the cultivation of warrior virtue among its members and he admired the predatoriness of the Bedowin.⁴² He identified the brigands with the rebels whose "revolt against society requires an iron mind in an iron body, and these mankind instinctively admires, however misdirected be their energies" (II,102). In the Bedowin Burton found "a truly noble compound of determination, gentleness, and generosity" who live in "*Sociiiti Leonine*", a society in which "the fiercest, the strongest, and the craftiest obtains complete mastery over his fellow" (II,86). Burton approved such a society which is based on a respect for the despotic and the physically strong because he thought that in such a society he would acquire a special place. Later in his life he remained convinced of the practicality of Eastern despotism and viewed it with profound liking.

41 K. Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby*, p.73.

42 Blunt did not admire predatoriness. Nevertheless the Bedowin political system impressed him for its being free from bureaucracy. "The political organisation of the Bedowin", Blunt writes, "is extremely interesting, for it gives us the purest example of democracy to be found in the world, -perhaps the only one in which the watch-words of liberty, equality and fraternity are more than a name". *The Bedowin Tribes*, II,229. Palgrave denounced all aspects of Bedowin tribal life considering their tendency towards promoting a warrior life destructive to civilization. Doughty's account supports that of Palgrave.

"Eastern despotisms", Burton observed, "have arrived nearer the idea of equality and fraternity than any republic yet invented" (*Nights*, X,63). He also advocated that such despotic measures be used against the colonized, including the Bedowin,⁴³ in the process of building the Empire. His approval of the *Societi Leonine* reflects his love for power. It is in this society that man's physical superiority, through the use of violence, is rewarded. Burton despotic and violent nature found its echo in the disorder and predatory of the Bedowin: -"The true Badawi style of plundering, with its numerous niceties of honour and gentle-manly manners, give the robbers a consciousness of moral rectitude" (II,102). The desert also reminded Burton of Arabic poetry and many aspects of the Bedowin life, while the caravan was on march.

Arriving at Al-Zaribah, the appointed place of wearing the Ihram garb, one of the main practices of the pilgrim in performing the Hajj, the caravan halted and the pilgrims began to get themselves ready. On the afternoon of the appointed day, between the noonday and afternoon prayer, a barber attended the pilgrims to shave their heads, cut their nails and trim their mustaches. The pilgrims then had to bath and perfume themselves. Next they had to put on the Ihram attire, which is according to Burton's description "nothing but two new cotton clothes... white, with narrow stripes and fringes: in fact the costume called Al-Eddeh, in the bath of Cairo" (II,138-9). One of the clothes, the Rida, is thrown over the back, and leaving the arm and shoulder bare, is gathered in a knot at the right side. The second cloth, called the Izar, is wrapped round the loins, covering the person from the waist below the knee, and is secured at the middle by having the ends wrapped. The pilgrims heads were kept bare and nothing was allowed upon the instep. After the Ihram, which Burton named "a toilette", the pilgrims placed their face in the direction of Meccah.

The caravan arrived at Meccah and Burton availed himself the opportunity of visiting the Harim (The House of Allah) before entering upon the solemn religious visitation. He described the Kabah and all its sacred appurtenances. He entered Bait Allah through Bab Beni "Shaibah"; uttered certain supplications; and proceeded to the Shafi's place of prayer, the open pavement between Makam Ibrahim and the well of Zam Zam. Next he performed the two-bow prayer in the honour of the mosque and had a cup of the holy water of Zam Zam. After that he advanced towards the eastern angle of the Kabah where the Black Stone is placed. Burton criticized Burkhardt for stating that no one had ever been permitted to see the Black Stone which bears the footmark of Ibrahim. He claimed to have been offered permission to see it on the

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In his later works Burton's views of Bedowin predatoriness underwent revision. In *Unexplored Syria* he criticized the Bedowin as bandits and raiders and suggested that they be put down for the benefit of civilization. See (Vol.I, pp.150-158, 210). In *The Gold Mines of Midian* he conditioned civilization with the freeing of the town from the Bedowins' raiding and protection payments. They became "like the noble savage generally, a nuisance to be abated by civilization" (157).

payment of five dollars.

Burton followed all the rituals of the Hajj. He made the circumambulation, ending it by kissing the Black Stone; went to Al-Multazem; repaired to the Shafi's place of prayer near Makam Ibrahim and recited the Sunnat Al-Tawaf (two prostrations); and, at last, went to the door of the building in which was Zam Zam and drank another "nauseous draught". After the ceremonies at Bait Allah, came the visit to the sacred places. Mount Arafat holds a high place among these and accordingly Burton and the pilgrims gathered there first. Standing at Arafat was followed by Yaum Al-Nahr (the day of sacrifice) or the third day of the Hajj. The pilgrims, then, performed the Stoning of the Devil (Al-Rajm or Lapidation); they brought the pebbles from Muzdalifah, washed them with water and bound them up in the corners of their Ihram-garb. Having thrown the seven stones, they retired to the barber's. It was the time to remove the Ihram garb and enter the state of Ihlal.

The pilgrims returned from Muna to Meccah. Shortly after their arrival the boy Muhammad came to Burton in a state of excitement to inform him that his long-desired opportunity of inspecting the interior of the Kabah had now arrived, as it was empty and would remain so for a short time. Burton claimed to have availed himself of this opportunity and in spite of the fear of detection, he contrived to make an accurate observation of all its parts and even to draw a rough plan of it with a pencil upon his white Ihram. However, if Burton had been in the state of Ihlal he should have laid aside the Ihram garb. No sketches in this state appear in his *Pilgrimage*. Lady Isabel Burton, his wife, admired this scene and saw in her husband a competitor of Burkhardt in describing the Kabah. "Burkhardt the Swiss traveller", Lady Burton wrote, "did get in, but he never could see the Kabah, and he confessed afterwards that he was so nervous that he was unable to take notes, and unable to write or sketch for fear of being detected, whereas Richard was sketching and writing in his *burnous* the whole time he was prostrating and Kissing the holy stone."⁴⁴

Lady Burton seems not to have read Burton's appendix to his *Pilgrimage* where he told us that the House of Allah, Kabah, had been so fully described by his predecessors that there was little inducement for him to attempt a new portrait. Feeling that the reader might desire a view of the great sanctuary, Burton found himself obliged to do homage to the memory of the "accurate Burkhardt" and extract from his pages a description which he illustrated by a few notes (II,294). Ralli found Burkhardt's *Travels in Arabia* to be the foundation of all the exact knowledge of Meccah and his description of the House of Allah to be final. "The outward aspect of

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Isabel Burton, *The Life of Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton* (London, 1893). Vol.I,169-70. In his *My Diaries*, Blunt describes her as "a sociable and very talkative woman, clever, but at the same time foolish, overflowing with stories of which her husband was always the hero" (542). J.K.Laughton reviewed Lady Burton's two volumes in the *Edinburgh Review*, Vol.178. 1893. pp.439-468.

the Pilgrimage may vary from year to year", says Ralli, but Burkhardt "has siezed upon the essentials".⁴⁵

The last rite connected with the Hajj which Burton attended was the sacrifice. This was not obligatory; it is just a Sunnah, a practice of Muhammad. A substitute of ten days fast was accepted. Considering the reduced condition of his finance, Burton adopted fasting. Next came the "Days of Drying Flesh" and the "Dragging Place of the Ram", the animal which was sacrificed for Ishmael. Having finished with the Hajj, Burton performed the Umra or what he, incorrectly, called the "Little Pilgrimage" and visited the places of pious visitation at Meccah. With the termination of the Hajj, Burton set out for Jeddah and from there he sailed to Suez in a small boat called "Dwarka", sent by the Bombay Steam Navigation Company to carry the Indian pilgrims from Hijaz.

BURTON'S MISCONCEPTIONS

Burton's access to Arabic language and his proclamation that he had seen the Holy Places of Al-Islam and accomplished the Muslims' pilgrimage gave him a peculiar place among European Orientalists. He showed erudition in affairs Oriental and claimed the privilege of telling everything about the Arab, their religion, and their customs and tradition. Burton did, in fact, account for some aspects of Eastern life, but was in danger of exposing more of the European's concept of the Arabs and more of the observer than the observed. He was informative in describing the physical appearance of the rituals of the Hajj; the edifices of the holy places of Al-Islam; the caravan route to Meccah and Al-Madinah; the students in Al-Azhar Mosque and their courses of study; the customs and manners of the Bedowin, the way they meet strangers, life in their tents, their marriage, their predatoriness; Arabic poetry and some other aspects of Oriental and Islamic practices.⁴⁶ But Burton's shortcomings exceeded his success. In the

⁴⁵ A. Ralli, *Christian at Meccah* (London, 1909) p.74.

⁴⁶ Burton was also informative in describing the way the Muslims enter the mosque and their performance of a two-bow prayers in the honour of the mosque (I,100); the Tayammum, ablution in the absence of water (I,261,fn 1); the siesta about noon and Muhammad's Hadith "Take the mid-day siesta, for, verily, the demons sleep not at this hour" (I,299,fn 1); the difference between the Hajj and the visit of the Muhammad's tomb in Al-Madinah (I,305); the "salat" (prayer) from Allah means mercy, from the angels intercession for pardon, and from mankind blessing (I,313,fn 4); translating the word Hujra (Chamber) and how it is mixed with Hijra (Flight) (I,314,fn.1); visiting graves (I,314,fn.2); the Muslim's denial of the crucification of Christ (I,326,fn.1); the Muslim's preference not to eat garlic or onions when appearing in public, entering mosque or joining prayer (I,357, fn.1); Arab funerals are simple (II,23); adultery, murder and their punishment in Islam (II,19); the "Tashrit" or gashing, the male-gashing and female tatoeing and explained how Muhammed had forbidden his followers to mark the skin (II,234, fn.1); and the tradition concerning the clipping of moustaches according to the Safi's school (II,53). He also described the way (Footnote continued)

process of accounting for Arabic poetry he failed, for instance, to relate the story of Al-Mutanabi's death, one of the greatest Arab poets. Burton's story reads:

When Al-Mutanabi, the poet, prophet, and warrior of Hams (A.H.354) started together with his son on their last journey, the father proposed to seek a place of safety for the night. "Art thou Al-Mutanabi"; exclaimed his slave "who wrote these lines"-

"I am known to the night, the wild, and the steed;
to the guest, and the sword, to the paper and reed?"

The poet in reply, lay down to sleep on Tigris' bank, in a place haunted by thieves, and, disdaining flight, lost his life during the hours of darkness (II, 96-7).

In translating the line of Arabic poetry, Burton introduced a slight change to the meaning of the original Arabic. He himself translated the same line on the first page of his *Pilgrimage* in a different way which reads:

"Dark and the Desert and Destries me ken,
And the Glaive and the Joust, and Paper and Pen."

Burton account of Al-Mutanabi's death is vague. Al-Mutanabi is known in Arabic literature as the poet whose poetry killed him in the same way as Al-Jahiz's writing killed him. The latter was sitting on his desk when his books fell on his head and gave him a death blow. Al-Mutanabi's story is different and the story of his death goes like this: Satire was a celebrated theme in Arabic poetry and Al-Mutanabi was one of the greatest satirists who succeeded in everything he wrote. Once he wrote a poem in which he satirized the sister of a person, called Fatik Al-Assadi. The latter took upon himself an oath of revenge in honour of his sister. Once Al-Mutanabi was on a journey with his servant; they saw Fatik Al-Assadi with a group of knights approaching them. Al-Mutanabi immediately felt the danger and began to gallop in flight from his enemy, but his servant was shrewd enough to remind him of a poem which Al-Mutanabi had written. The servant turned to the poet exclaiming: O, Mutanabi, did not you say the following poem?

The night and the horses and the desert know me

And the sword and the guest and the paper and the pen.

The servant went on citing the poem until he reached the line which goes:

Live in dignity or die in dignity,

Among the strike of arrows or the movement of banners.

Hence Al-Mutanabi was put in a critical situation; he had either to fight and live in dignity, or run away and live a coward in the eye of Arab society. He chose the former; drew his sword and turned to stand the battle in which he was killed.

Burton also failed to account for many aspects of the Muslims' life and practices. He says, for instance, that

in Moslem law, prophets, martyrs, and saints are not supposed to be

⁴⁶(continued)

the Sayyids of Al-Hijaz dress themselves (II,4, fn.2) and some Arabic proverbs.

dead; their property, therefore, remains their own. The Olema have confounded themselves in the consideration of the Prophetic state after death. Many declare that Prophets live and pray for forty days in the tomb; at the expiration of which, they are taken to the presence of their Maker... the common belief, however, leaves the bodies in the graves, but no one would assert that the holy ones are suffered to undergo corruption (I,340. f.n.3).

Islam is clear about these points. It is not true that martyrs, prophets and saints are not supposed to be dead. Prophets and martyrs are distinguished in Islam and should be separated from saints, a later Sufi invention, but all of them are dead. Allah tells his Messenger Muhammad in the Holy Quoran saying: "You are dead (will die) and they (human beings) are dead". In another Sura of the Quoran Allah also says: "Every soul should have the taste of death" (iii,185). Their property, therefore, passes to their inheritors according to the Islamic Shari'a. Burton's second point that Prophets live and pray in their tombs is completely untrue. In Islam, there is what is called "the torture of the tomb" in which man is to be tortured by the angels for his wrong doings. This is the worst torture of its kind in Islam, because of the narrowness of the grave. Only Prophets and martyrs can escape it since their souls, according to Islam, go immediately to Allah and escape the experience of the tomb. Burton's third point that the bodies of Prophets, martyrs and saints do not suffer corruption is partly correct in that only Prophets' bodies do not undergo corruption.

Visiting the mosque of Kuba in Al-Madina, Burton notices that there is on the 17th of Ramadhan (in Burton's spelling Ramazan) a regular Ziyarat or visitation in which the people "pray in the Harim of Al-Madinah, after which they repair to the Kuba Mosque, and go through the ceremonies which in religious efficacy equals an Umra or Lesser pilgrimage" (I,409. f.n.3). It is important here to notice that the Hajj is an obligatory pillar of Islam and should be performed at certain times of the year in Meccah. According to Islamic teachings, Hajj is one pillar of Islam, prayer, fasting Ramadhan, and Zakat (poor rate), are other pillars. None of these can equate or replace the other. Hajj, in another word, can not be replaced or equated by anything but performing it in Meccah on Mount Arafat. Burton, here, reveals more of his information on Islam which he learnt when he was in India. This practice of building a Kuba-like image and performing the rites of the Hajj on the 17th of Ramadan existed among a very backward tribe in Baluchistan, a province of Pakistan, and was condemned by all the Muslims who viewed them as heretics.

Burton confuses the idea of the Hajj in stating that it can be performed in Al-Madinah. He says that a mile and a half south-east of Al-Bakia there is a dome called Kuwat Islam (the Strength of Al-Islam) where Muhammed planted a dry palm-stick and "on one occasion when the Muslims were unable to perform the pilgrimage, Muhammed here produced the appearance of the Kabah, an Arafat, and the appurtenances of the Hajj (II,49). This story is contradictory to the main principles of

Islam. The Hajj is obligatory to be performed at Meccah, otherwise it is not. If the Messenger of Al-Islam was able to accomplish it in Al-Madinah, why did he bother himself so hard in conquering Meccah ? From a historical point of view the Muslim had had no crisis in accomplishing the Hajj after they opened Meccah at the time of Muhammad till his death.

During his visit to Muhammad's Mosque, Burton describes the Raudha as follows:

It is like the Black stone at Meccah, bona fide, a bit of Paradise, and on the day of resurrection, it shall return bodily to the place when it came... all Moslems are warned that the Rauzah is a most holy spot. None but the Prophet and his son-in-law Ali ever entered it, when ceremonially impure, without being guilty of the deadly sin. The Mohammedan of the present day is especially informed that on no account must he here tell lies, or even perjure himself. Thus the Rauzah must be respected as much as the interior of the Beyt Allah at Meccah (I,310. f.n.3).

Burton's literal translation and understanding of the meaning of the Raudha makes him produce a confused image and ascribe to it a confused concept. There is a Hadith or a saying, widely spread and known, which reads: "Between my tomb [Muhammad's tomb] and my pulpit is a parade [Raudha] from the parades of paradise". This means in Arabic that there is a parade *like* those in paradise. Thus the Raudha is not a bit of paradise and will not return to it. Like the Black Stone, it has nothing to do with paradise, and its relation to it is allegorical rather than literal. The Hadith has a deeper meaning. The pulpit stands for the teachings of Islam, the tomb for Muhammad's death and the Raudha for the duration of Muhammad's life. If the Muslim follows Islam from birth to death as it was revealed to Muhammed and practised by him, he will go to paradise in the hereafter. The Raudha, as such, is as holy as any other place. That the Raudha is equal to Bait Allah is not a debate and both of them are sacred. The other point relating to impurity and its relation to the deadly sin is confused as it is in Burton's understanding. Muhammad, as known in Al-Islam, did not use to leave home impure or even without having ablution. He did not enter any holy place impure, even though entering the Raudha impure is not a deadly sin.⁴⁷ The non-Muslims can enter it without being guilty of any deadly sin. Burton's final point here is that concerned with telling lies. Telling lies, according to Islam is taboo and a characteristic of unbelievers. To tell lies in Raudha is the same as telling lies to children at home. It is strongly prohibited anywhere and everywhere.

Burton also confused the concept of veil in Islam in relation to Muslim woman and was mistaken in analysing or tracing its roots. He says that in the "sixth year of

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Basing his argument on the Quoran and the Hadith, Shams Al-Din Alshaahabi classified the deadly sins in Islam into seventy. He does not include or even mention entering the Raudha or something similar to it as a deadly sin see his *Kitab Al-Kabair (The Book of the Deadly Sins)*, Damascus 3rd edition, 1975.

the

Hijrah, after Muhammed's marriage with Zaynab, his wives were secluded behind Hijab, Pardah or Curtain. A verse of the Koran directed the Moslems to converse with them behind the veil. Hence the general practice of Al-Islam: now it is considered highly disgraceful in any Moslem to make a Moslemah expose her face, and she will frequently find a threat upon the prejudice" (I,365. f.n.1).

That the Quoran directed the Muslim to speak to Muhammad's wives from behind a curtain does not entail by necessity what Burton concluded that a woman in Islam had to cover her face. The law concerning woman's relation to society and her veil occurred in many places in the Quoran, especially in Al-Nissa Sura (The Women Sura), one of the longest Sura in the Quoran. Nowhere in the Quoran or Muhammad's tradition was woman ordered to veil her face. A woman in Islam is allowed to expose her face providing that she does not use make up. Veiling the face is not an Islamic institution, but a mark of aristocracy which came to exist in later ages. In performing the pilgrimage the Muslim woman is not allowed to veil her face, otherwise her Hajj will not be accepted by Allah.⁴⁸ Not only here, but on many occasions Burton's conclusions were erroneous.⁴⁹

BURTON'S RACIALISM AND IMPERIALISM.

The interest which Burton shows in accounting for Eastern life, especially with regard to the rituals of the Hajj, made his actual journey less remarkable and drew the attention to his claimed proficiency of familiarity with the minutiae of Eastern manners and life. Burton's approach was that of a partial European who had already shaped his understanding of the people he was living with. Nowhere in the *Pilgrimage*, was Burton an Easterner; he had always appeared, even in kissing the Black Stone at Meccah as a European who identified himself with the whole of Europe, and especially Britain. In the process of breaking the "guardian spell" of the Oriental-Arab life and culture, Burton's *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah* has exposed the European's concept- the imaginary and unreal one- of the Arabs and Islam and their material interest in the area. Burton was revealing himself while claiming to be objective and scientific. He showed clearly his general position in the nineteenth-century controversy over the future of the Empire and the origin of man. His pride in his own nationality strengthened his feeling of racial superiority. He

48 According to the Islamic Shari'a, woman is allowed to unveil her face. For more details on this particular subject see *Hijab Al-Mara Al-Muslima fi Al-Kitab (Quoran) wa Al-Hadith (The Veil of the Muslim Woman in the Book (Quoran) and Hadith)* by Nassir Al-Albani, (Damascus, 1394. H.). For the same purpose see also *A Manual of Hadith*, by Maulana Muhammed Ali (Lahore, no date), pp.390-391. Special attention should be paid to footnote 17, p.391.

49 For more details see appendix to this chapter.

identified his consciousness with the British Empire, "an identification which gave him a national identity which was also a certificate of superiority".⁵⁰ Assad finds in Burton "an Englishman of the Empire even in describing the characteristics of the Arabs".⁵¹ Even the popularity of his *Pilgrimage* derives from its imperialistic tone. It came from the fact that his audience identified with him as a Prospero figure⁵² who assumed control over the natives conveying a sense of superiority. According to Said, Burton's individuality in the *Pilgrimage* merged with the voice of the Empire.⁵³

Said also finds in Burton's writings the exemplification of the struggle between individualism and a strong feeling of national identification with Europe, especially England, as an imperial power in the East. The coexistence of two antagonistic roles can be observed, Said added, in the way Burton thought of himself both as a rebel against authority (hence his identification with the East as a place of freedom from Victorian moral authority) and as a potential agent of authority in the East.⁵⁴ Tidrick shares Said's opinion, investigating this dual feeling of Burton from a psychological point of view. She poses the question of "Why Burton bothered to be patriotic at all and why did he not abandon England and make his career on the continent?" She finds the answer in Burton's childhood. Expatriate children of whom Burton is one, according to her, tend to "acquire an abnormal consciousness of their

nationality, from other children who fasten on to any distinguishing characteristic and from parents' consciousness of being in exile. Added to this in Burton's case was probably a pride in England's military prowess, which was bound to appeal to the child's belligerent nature. In the course of his incessant childhood wanderings his Englishness provided one of the few continuous threads of identity. It became a habit, and a source of pride."⁵⁵

Burton was British in blood rather than upbringing and more British in

50 K. Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby*, p.75.

51 Thomas J. Assad, *Three Victorian Travellers*, p.22.

52 O. Mannoni, a French psychiatrist, takes *The Tempest*, a Shakesporean play, as an archetype of the popular literature of imperialism. He identifies the motive spring of European colonialism as the impulse to triumph over the feeling of inferiority through the domination of others. According to him a 'dependency complex' is inherent in the psychological culture of the African and the germ of this complex was latent in him from childhood. This complex not only antedates colonialism, but find its gratification in it. Prospero, according to his theory stands for the superiority of the Europeans. For more details see *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, by O. Mannoni, trans. by Pamela Powestland, (Methuen: London 1956). First published in French in 1950.

53 E.W. Said, *Orientalism*, p.196.

54 *Ibid*, p.195.

55 Tidrick's *Heart-beguiling Araby*, p.67.

identifying himself with the Empire which has to do a lot with his desire for power. His views of the Empire were not theorized and were in conflict with the ideas of his time. He believed that man had more freedom under tyranny and despotism and he hated republicanism; he also preferred a despotic and severe rule whatever the results. He also has no notion of Arab independence and did not contemplate the idea of them ruling themselves, but just subjecting them to British rule.

Britain was a great imperial power, hence Burton's patriotism emerged in his being imperialist. But it is not always a rule that patriotism gives birth to imperialism in the process of building the Empire. Blunt, for example, who was British both in blood and upbringing, was not only anti-imperialist, but a pro-Arab nationalist, who theorized for the Arab national movement.⁵⁶ Blunt found in the Arabs a nation which can enjoy independence and rule itself. In the process of developing their potential, the Arab, according to Blunt, should be freed from the Ottoman domination and the Caliphate should be restored to Meccah. In his article "England's Interest in Islam", Blunt suggested the independence of the Arabs and the protection of the Caliphate by the British - "The Caliphate no longer an empire, but still an independent sovereignty - must be taken under British protection, and publically guaranteed its political existence, undisturbed by further aggression from Europe".⁵⁷

Unlike Blunt, Burton's patriotism, "imperialistic patriotism",⁵⁸ rather than his alienation from his zone of familiarity, that is, his cultural and ideological environment, permeates almost everything he wrote on the Arab in particular, and on the non-Europeans, in general. In his *Pilgrimage* Burton conveyed a sense of Western superiority and Eastern inferiority, hoping thus to prepare the Occident to submit resistlessly to the idea of its colonisation of the Orient. His imperial biases became explicit on many occasions and were supported by his sometimes psychological explanation of the Arab's human nature:

Yet Egyptian human nature is, like human nature everywhere, contradictory. Hating and despising Europeans, they still long for European rule. This people admire an iron-handed and lion-hearted despotism; they hate a timid and grinding tyranny. Of all foreigners, they would prefer the French yoke, -a circumstance which I attribute to the diplomatic⁵⁹ skill and national dignity of our neighbours across the channel. (I,111-12).

⁵⁶ Al-Kawakibi, one of the greatest twentieth-century Arab nationalists, derived many of his political ideas from Blunt. For more details see S.G.Haim "Blunt and Al-Kawakibi" *Oriente Moderne*, 1955, pp. 132-143.

⁵⁷ "The Future of Islam", *Fortnightly Review*, 1882, 31, p.44.

⁵⁸ Assad, *Three Victorian Travellers*, p.22.

⁵⁹ See also Burton's *Arabian Nights* (Vol.1, p.190, f.n.1) where he states "the good Moslem will not complain of the rule of Kafir or disbeliever, like the English, so long as they rule him righteously according to his own law.

Burton's enthusiasm for the Empire appeared here in criticizing the British to better their diplomatic skill to secure Egypt which he regarded as "a treasure to be won". He also decorated the image of occupying Egypt by illustrating its geographical situation and its importance in the opening the whole of Eastern Africa and its vital importance, when in Western hands, for the command of India. "Egypt" he held to be the "most tempting prize which the East holds out to the ambition of Europe" (I,114).⁶⁰

In Arabia, it was the British rule that he envisaged. He foresaw the necessity for the British to occupy Al-Hijaz: -"It requires not the ken of a prophet to foresee the day when the political necessity- sternest of *Avaxkn-* will compel us to occupy in force the fountain-head of Al-Islam" (II,231, f.n.2), and looked forward for the day "when the tide of events" will force the British "to occupy the mother-city of Al-Islam" (II,268). Burton also found the British presence in Arabia to be the natural desire of the Englishman "who would everywhere see his nation second to none even at Jeddah" (Ibid). Accordingly and with a patriotic imperial purpose in mind, he made many helpful suggestions on how to handle the Arab, especially the Bedowin, "By proper use of the blood feud; by vigorously supporting the weaker against the stronger classes; by regularly defeating every Badawi who earns a name for himself; and, above all, by the exercise of unsparing, unflinching justice", Burton thought "the few thousands of half-naked bandits, who make the land a fighting field, would soon sink into utter insignificance" (I,258-59).

Burton was ruthless in his advocacy of subjecting the Arabs to the iron rule of law and order. He criticized the British government because it did not rule in the despotic and severe manner, which he had in mind, and admired the despot of Egypt, Muhammad Ali. He also despised the Ottoman reform. The Arab Fellaḥ, in Burton's view, "must either tyrannise or be tryannised over; he is never happier than under the British rule or misrule" (*Nights*, VIII, 189). This he ascribed to have been caused by the situation that throughout Oriental history government has been a despotism tempered by assassination and that "under no rule is man socially freer and his condition contrasts strangely with grinding social tryanny which characterises every mode of democracy or constitutionalism, i.e. political equality" (*Nights*, IV,206, f.n.).

In the *Gold Mines of Midian* Burton differentiated between the Fellaḥ or the Arab-town and the Bedowin,⁶¹ suggesting that if the British found it necessary to raise

⁶⁰ In "England's Duty to Egypt", in *Academy*, 23, 1883, Burton argued that since Egypt became free from Turkey, she should be most prosperous under the English protectorate, only if the British governed like men, and not like philanthropists and humanitarians.

⁶¹ Burton's division of town-Arab and Bedowin seems to have been derived from Palgrave's *Central Arabia*, which appeared in 1865. Burton's view of the Bedowin had undergone some modification after the publication of Palgrave's new ideas of contempt towards the people of the desert. For more details of Palgrave's on the (Footnote continued)

regiments of these men, "nothing would be easier, pay them regularly, arm them, work them hard, and treat them with even handed justice there is nothing else to do".⁶²

In his preface to the first edition of his *First Footsteps in East Africa* (1856), Burton supported British imperialism whole-heartedly, expressing his feeling in black and white:

'Peace', observes a modern sage, 'is the dream of the wise, war is the history of man. To indulge in such dreams is but questionable wisdom'. It was not a 'peace-policy' which gave the Portuguese a seaboard extending from Cape Non to Macao. By no peace policy the Osmanlis of a past age pushed their victorious arms from the desert of Tartary to Aden, to Delhi, to Algiers, and to the gates of Vienna.... The English of a former generation were celebrated for gaining ground in both hemispheres: their broad lands were not won by peace policy, which, however, in this our day has on two distinct occasions well nigh lost for them the 'gem of the British Empire'-India. The philanthropist and political economist may fondly hope, by outcry against 'territorial aggrandizement', by advocating a compact frontier, by abandoning colonies, and by cultivating 'equilibrium', to retain our rank amongst the great nations of the world. Never! the fact of history prove nothing more conclusively than this: a race either progresses or retrogrades, either increases or diminishes: the children of Time, like their sire, cannot stand still.⁶³

Burton's first encounter and experience with the Empire was in India. He inveighs mercilessly against British separatism and the separatists, who were anti-imperialist and attacked severely Cobden's anti-imperialistic attitude.⁶⁴ Burton viewed him as "one of the most single-sided of men, whose main strength was that he embodied most of the weakness, and all the prejudice, of the British middle class". Cobden found in the Indian government "a military and despotic government" and regarded the East India company in Asia as a simple monopoly, and "openly asserted that England had attempted an impossibility in giving herself to the task of governing one hundred millions of Asiatics".⁶⁵ Cobden also held the opinion that Hindustan must be ruled by its natives "who will prefer to be ruled badly by its own colour, kith, and kin, than subject itself to the humiliation of being better governed by a succession of transient intruders from the Antipodes".⁶⁶ With an imperialistic zeal Burton launched

61 (continued)

Arabs see chapter four.

62 *The Old Mines of Midian* (London, 1878), pp.154-55. See also Burton and Tyrwhitt-Drake, *Unexplored Syria* (London, 1875) Vol.I, p.151.

63 Sir. R.F. Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa*. London, 1856, pp.xxxii-xxxiii.

64 Cobden was one of the chief political leader of the so-called Manchester School, who were mainly anti imperialists. For more details see "Mid-Victorian Separatism", in *Studies in Mid-Victorian Imperialism*, by C.A. Bodelsen, (London, 1924), pp.32-59.

65 Isabel Burton, *The Life of Captain Sir Richard Francis Burton* (London, Chapman and Hall, 1893), Vol.I, 114.

a bitter and severe attack on Cobden, describing him, in an ironical tone, as a "professional reformer", and considering his belief as a "regular, Free-trade bash". Cobden, this "Great Bagsman" would "doubtless have been thunderstuck", Burton stated, "if he had heard the shouts and laughter with which his mean-spirited utterances were received by every white skin in British India". Burton, then, expressed his conviction that there was "not a subaltern in the 18th Bombay N.I who did not consider himself perfectly capable of governing a million Hindus".⁶⁷ Burton concluded his attack by supporting and defending the British Empire in India whole-heartedly, finding nothing wrong if the end justifies the means:

This is the way in which the British Empire in the East arose, and probably this was the least objectionable way. For when the Company [East India Company] rose to power, it began to juggle native Princes out of their territory, to deny the right of adopting a sacred privilege amongst the Hindus, and to penetrate all kinds of injustice.⁶⁸

The idea of the Empire preoccupied Burton even in the sphere of literature. His translation of the *Arabian Nights* was not for the sake of entertainment in literary form, but was done mainly with an imperial aim in mind. He devoted his translation to his "fellow-countrymen in their hour of need", drawing their attention to the fact that their overemphasis on Hindu and Sanskrit literature has led them astray from "Semitic studies", which were essential for the British "to deal successfully with a race more powerful than any pagans- the Moslim".⁶⁹ England, Burton observed, must remember that "she is at present the greatest Mohammedan empire in the world and accordingly should not neglect 'Arabism' which will make her capable of ruling the East with ease. Burton offered himself indirectly as a ruler to the Muslim world by asserting that Muslims must not be ruled by 'raw youth'. He "who would deal with them successfully must be, firstly, honest and truthful and secondly, familiar with and favourably inclined to their manners and customs if not to their law and religion".⁷⁰ Burton's England was, indeed, the England of the Empire, held together by an iron rule, and his patriotism was that which included a feeling of superiority as an Englishman, which split over into a feeling of personal superiority.⁷¹

Burton's imperial zeal found its gratification in his assimilation of the racial theorizing of the nineteenth-century debate over the origin of man. In his "Notes on

66 Ibid, vol.I, p.115.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid, Vol.I, p.116.

69 Burton's *Nights*, Vol.I. xxiii.

70 Ibid, Vol.I, p.xxiii-xxiv.

71 Thomas J. Assad, *Three Victorian Travellers*, p.30.

the Dahoman", a paper read before the Anthropological Society of London (1865), Burton made it clear that his object of study, as a member of the society, was "Man in all his relations, physical, moral, psychical and social".⁷² He adopted the nineteenth-century "new ideology of racism, which declared that moral and intellectual as well as physical traits were biologically determined." An ideology which "confused cultural and physical characteristics, and gave 'race' an all inclusive meaning so that it became, in the minds of its exponents, the most significant determinant of man's past, present and future".⁷³ In his "A Day Amongst the Fans", Burton asserted that "nowhere does the selection of species, so to speak, fight more fiercely the battle of life, than, in maritime Africa".⁷⁴ He considered the ferocious side, the peculiar development of destructiveness in the African brain to be with him a necessary of life. Then he expressed his conviction saying -"I cannot believe this abnormal cruelty [of the Negro] to be the mere result of civilization. It appears to me rather the work of an arrested development, which leaves to the man all the bloodthirstiness of the *Carnivor*".⁷⁵ The African was, according to him, an "unimprovable" race and "inferior to the active-minded " and "objective European", and to the "subjective and reflective Asiatic". The African, "partakes largely to the worst characteristics of the lower Oriental types- a stagnation of mind, indolence of body, moral deficiency, superstition, and childish passion".⁷⁶ The African were also destined not to take a lead in the work of civilization, and consequently Burton found in them a natural labouring class, designed for the performance of the dirty work of civilization. He unhesitatingly asserted that the world still wants the black hands because "enormous tropical regions yet await the clearing and draining operations by lower races, which will fit them to become the dwelling-places of civilized man".⁷⁷ He also believed that the Dark complexion of the Sindhi indicated his "arrested development".⁷⁸

Burton's views in the debate over the origin of man were in accordance with

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- 72 Burton, "Notes on the Dahoman", in *Selected papers on Anthropology, Travel and Exploration*, ed. by N.M. Penzer (London, 1924), p.109.
- 73 Douglas A.Lorimer, *Colour, Class and the Victorians*, (Leicester University Press, Holmes& Meier Publishers, 1978), p.14.
- 74 Burton, "A Day Amongst the Fans", in *Selected Papers*, p.97.
- 75 Ibid, p.100.
- 76 Burton, *The Lake Region of Central Africa*, (New York, 1961), II,326. First published in 1861.
- 77 Burton, *Two Trips to Gorilla Land and the Cataract of the Congo*, (New York, 1967), II,311. First published in 1876.
- 78 Burton's *Sindh and the Races that Inhabit the Valley of the Indus*, (Oxford University Press, London, 1973), p.283.

those of the polygenists who believed that the different races of man were different from each other in their physical, mental and moral attributes. He also concurs with their view that the different races of man form not mere varieties of one single species, but instead several distinct biological species of their own.⁷⁹ Burton's racial theorization sprang from his approach to the non-Europeans, not as primarily a social being, governed by social law which can be changed according to the social situation, and standing apart from nature, but as primarily a biological being, embedded in nature and governed by biological laws.⁸⁰ He ascribed the backwardness of the non-Europeans, especially the African, to the biological inferiority of the race rather than the various social conditions. Like James Hunt, he pigeon-holed the non-Europeans on biological sexual and genital levels, trying to stress their primitivity and hence their inferiority which will help to manifest the Europeans as superior. This he closely tied with the perspective which the Western man has of himself as moving toward the universe of mind. Burton viewed the non-Europeans, and especially the Negro as having the key to the world of the erotic and sensual and as such the owner of hallucinating sexual power.⁸¹

Burton's racist views were close to race science in the nineteenth century and Burton was one of those who took race and its theory seriously and tried to apply them to the people he encountered in Asia and Africa. Concerning the African, Burton's view were influenced by those of the ethnologist James Hunt the founder of the Anthropological Society of London to whom Burton lent his help in founding the Society and whose presidential chair he first occupied (*Nights*, I,xviii). Hunt broke with the Ethnological Society, which he joined in 1854, on the issue whether the Negro race formed a distinct species, or type. He believed it did and emphasized the deep

79 Contrary to the polygenists, the monogenists believed that all varieties of humankind were, despite oddities of physical appearance and social customs, members of a single human, biological 'species' and united in a single brotherhood by their common humanity. James Cowles Prichard was one of the eminent monogenists in Britain in the nineteenth century. For more details information on Prichard see his *Researches in the Physical History of Man*, (London, 1836-43), 5 Vols.

80 The concentration on the biological rather than the social factor in determining the human existence is a racial attitude. Such a theorization, according to Frantz Fanon, tends to negate man's vocation as a subject of history and underestimate his capacity collectively to transform himself and his world. For more details see his *Black Skin White Masks*, (Grove Press, Inc. New York, 1982).

81 For more details on Burton's portrayal of the sensuality of the Negro see his works on Africa. A special reference is to be made to *A Mission to Gelele, King of the Dahome*, (London, 1864), 2 Vols. In this work, Burton states his views about African fetishism. Fetishism, according to him is a natural stage in the development of religion among all people. This, of course, is contradictory to the Christian belief. For an account of Fetish in West Africa and its school see Mary H. Kingsley's *West African Studies*, (London, Macmillan, 1899). pp.112-179; and *Travels in West Africa*, (London, 1897). pp.429-547.

mental and physical gulf which separated the Negro from the European stating:

No man who thoroughly investigates with an unbiased mind, can doubt that the Negro belongs to a distinct type.... The term species, in the present state of science, is not satisfactory; but we may safely say that there is in the Negro that assemblage of evidences which would, *ipso facto*, induce the unbiased observer to make the European and the Negro distinct types of man.⁸²

Hunt also held the view that the Negroes are incapable of mental and social advance except by means of racial intermixture with Europeans.

Burton's fascination with race theories ante-dates Hunt's theorization, and his activities in the Anthropological Society of London. When Burton made his pilgrimage to Arabia, he had wholly assimilated the race theory of phrenology⁸³ and was racist in accounting for the physical characteristics of the Arab. He used phrenology only to assert his preconception of the "Arab race" through their physical portrait. He was phrenological in his phraseology. The idiosyncrasy of the wanderer, seemed to Burton, while he was at Alexandria, to be a composition of what the phrenologists call "inhabitiveness" and "locality" equally and largely developed (I,16). In Alexandria, Burton met an Alexandrian Sheikh, who offered to accompany him in his pilgrimage, but he turned down his offer for many reasons, the third of which was that the man "had shifting eyes (symptom of fickleness), close together (indices of cunning)". The Sheikh had also "a flat-crowned head, and large ill-fitting lips", signs which led Burton to "think highly of his honesty, firmness and courage (I,17). "Phrenology and physiognomy",⁸⁴ appeared to Burton to disappoint its practitioner, for sometimes, when applied to civilized people, "the proper action of whose brain upon the feature" is impeded by the external pressure of education, accident, example, habit and necessity. But, on the other hand, they are "tolerably safe guides when groping your way through the mind of man in the so-called natural state, a being of impulse in that chrysalis condition of mental development which is rather instinct than reason" (I,17).

82 James Hunt, "On the Negro's Place in Nature", in *Anthropological Society of London, Memoir*, (1963-64). p.52. See also Ronald Ranger "Race, Politics and Science: The Anthropological Society of London in 1860", *Victorian Studies*, (22, 1974). pp.51-70.

83 Temkin noticed that in the first half of the nineteenth century, phrenology represented a widespread movement transcending by far the circle of scientists and psychologists and affecting philosophy, religion, education and literature. Owsei Temkin, "Gall and the Phrenological Movement", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1947, vol.21, p.273.

84 Temkin noticed that during the formative years of Gall, the founder of phrenology, physiognomy, the art of judging character and disposition from the features of the face or the form and lineaments of the body generally, was in great vogue and that the origin of Gall's work must be seen in the frame work of this movement. Owsei Temkin, "Gall and the Phrenological Movement", *Bulletin of the history of Medicine*, 1947, 21, 276-277.

As a practitioner of medicine in Egypt, Burton claimed to have followed the practising phrenologist "by connecting the disease to one of the four temperaments, or the four elements, or the humours of Hippocrates" (I,53). And accounting for the physical portrait of the Bedowin of Al-Hijaz, he issued a phrenological study, illustrated by a phrenological exercise.

Phrenology was inaugurated in 1795 by the Austrian anatomist Franz Josph Gall.⁸⁵ His disciple, the German physician, John Gasper Spurzheim was converted in 1800. They worked together until 1813 when they had a permanent falling-out. In Britain phrenology was introduced by Spurzheim during lecture tours in 1814-1815. George Combe, the British disciple of Spurzheim, was converted to the new science three years later and became the progenitor of the British phrenological movement. He founded the Edinburgh Phrenological Society in Britain in 1820 and the *Phrenological Journal* in 1823.⁸⁶

As a new science, Phrenology was elaborated from Gall's assumption that an apparent correlation existed between the mental abilities of men and the shape of their heads. As a schoolboy he noticed that his brighter schoolmates had very prominent eyes which made him speculate that the areas of the brain behind the eyes and brow might house the organs of intelligence. Thus children with good memories appeared to him to have high forehead and bulging eyes.⁸⁷

The main principle of phrenology was the belief that the brain is the organ of mind; the latter being a compound of distinct, innate and fixed faculties, each of which had its locus in different organs of the brain.⁸⁸ The mind, accordingly, was viewed by phrenology as a composite structure made up of different parts with different functions

85 For more details on Gall and the Phrenological movement see "Franz Joseph Gall and Phrenology", by J.Knott, *Westminster Review*, 166, August, 1906, 150-163; and "Gall and the Phrenological Movement", by Owsei Temkin, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 21, 1947, 275-321.

86 For more details see T.M.Parssinen's "Popular Science and Society: The Phrenological Movement in Early Victorian Britain", *Journal of Social History*, Vol.8, 1974-5, pp.1-20.

87 For a detailed account on the scientific origins and programme of phrenology see Robert M.Young, *Mind, Brain and adaptation in Nineteenth Century: Cerebral Localization and its Biological Context from Gall to Ferrier*, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1970). Chapter four of William Fredrick Bynum's *Times Noblest Offspring: The Problem of Man in the British Natural Historical Science, 1800-1863*, entitled "Phrenology as a science of Man", outlines the theoretical basis of phrenology and the general contours of the British movement and examines some of the more direct influences of phrenology on the nineteenth-century study of man. See also David de Guistino's *Conquest of Mind, Phrenology and Victorian Social Thought*, (Croom Helm, London, 1975). The reader can also refer to some articles from the *Phrenological Journal*, such as: "Essay on the Phrenological causes of the different Degree of Liberty Enjoyed by different Nations", 1824-5, Vol.2, pp.598-619; and "Observation on the Phrenological Standard of Civilization", 1834-6, Vol.9, pp360-74.

rather than a unitary organ.⁸⁹ Phrenology depends on the belief that, just as the face was an outward sign of the inner soul, the bony head was an outward reflection of the structure of different organs of the brain.⁹⁰ In other words, the basis of phrenology as summarized by Parssinen, is:

the belief that psychological characteristics of an individual are determined by the size and proportion of controlling organs in the brain. A person with a highly-developed 'veneration' organ, for example, will probably be extremely religious. Furthermore, the size of these organs can be discovered by noting the shape of the skull and, especially, any protuberances, since the cranium corresponds closely to the shape of the brain beneath. Consequently, an individual's character can be discovered from a careful examination of his head".⁹¹

The Phrenologist studied the brain and its function not experimentally by direct observation and dissection of the brain itself, but by a study of 'temperament' and by close observation and measurement of the skull in which the brain was housed. Behaviour or 'temperament', the phrenologists argued, was determined by different organs of the brain.

Combe expounded the view that the temperaments were organized around the main system of the body and accounted for fourfold typology of temperaments: the lungs, heart and blood vessels caused by the "sanguine temperament"; the "muscles, bones and fibres originated the "bilious temperament"; the brain and nerve produced the "nervous temperament"; and the glands and digestive organs which were responsible for the "lymphatic temperament".⁹² The psychological characteristics which the phrenologists called "faculties" fell into two major orders:

The first order, feeling, is divided into two sub-category: 'propensities' and 'sentiments'. Propensities are those faculties- 'combativeness', 'destructiveness', 'secretiveness'- that man shares with all animals. They are located in the back of the brain. Sentiments are faculties- 'veneration', 'firmness', 'hope'- that are proper to man alone and are located at the top of the brain. The second order consists of 'intellectual faculties', and includes external senses (such as taste and smell), as well as perceptive faculties such as 'language', 'comparison', and 'causality'. These are located at⁹³ the front of the skull, roughly from the hairline to just below the eyes.

88 J.G.Spurzheim, *Outline of Phrenology*, (London, 1827), p.4.

89 Ibid, p.9.

90 Ibid, p.4.

91 T.M.Parssinen, "Popular Science and Society", p.2.

92 See George Combe, *Element of Phrenology*, (Edinburgh: Maclachlan & Stewart, 1836, 4th edition), pp.20-21.

93 T.M.Parinen, "Popular Science and Society", pp.2-3.

Phrenology began with the study of individual human differences, which could be correlated with differences in head structure, and moved away to study group behaviour and psychology in the same way. This slide from the study of individual human differences to the study of group differences was the first step by which phrenology moved towards a racial biology. The anthropologists were the most enthusiastic- Burton seemed to be one of them- for such a movement, finding their gratification in Spurzheim's writing who asserted that it was "of great importance to consider the heads of different nations" and emphasized that though

"all observations of this kind are very defective, they are yet rather for than against the physiology of the brain. The forehead of negroes, for instance, are very narrow, their talent of music and mathematics are also in general very limited. The Chinese, who are fond of colours, have the arch of the eyebrows much vaulted, and we shall see that this is the sign of a greater development of the organ of colour. Accordingly to Blumenbach the heads of the Kalmucks are depressed from above, and very large sideward above the organ which gives the disposition to covet. It is also admitted that this nation is inclined to steal... It is obvious that I speak only of the greater number of individuals in every nation; and only of any general type of their heads, for the modifications are infinite in all countries, but, generally speaking, there are nations⁹⁴ whose heads are longer or shorter, higher or lower, narrower or broader".

The slide of phrenology into the study of group differences made it offer an explanation for the inferiority of those who were non-Europeans in comparison with all Europeans. Supposed national traits were correlated with faculties of a race established by head measurements, and the faculties themselves were, in turn, used to explain national cultural styles. The philoprogetiveness, veneration, benevolence, temperance and intellectual abilities of the races of mankind were compared and arranged in a scale with the Europeans as a standard for comparison. Combe affirmed that owing to their inherent mental deficiencies the Africans, Asians and American Indians have never had a superior civilization, whereas the Europeans have always shown "an elasticity of mind incapable of being permanently repressed", resulting from their generally large and fully developed brains.⁹⁵ Savage and savagery, words used by Burton extensively to describe the Arab, were not out of the reach of phrenology. Savagery was the result of the predominance of animal propensities. Apart from their philoprogetiveness (love of children),⁹⁶ the savages had no faculties higher than sensuality, cunning, pride, venery,

94 J.G.Spurzheim, *The Physiognomical System of Drs Gall and Spurzheim Founded on an Anatomical Physiological Examination of the Nervous System in General and of the Brain in Particular; and Indicating the Dispositions and Manifestations of the Mind*, (London, Baldwin, Craddock and Joy, 1815), pp.287-8.

95 G.Combe, "On the Cerebral Development of Nations", *Phrenological Journal*, II,(1824-25), p.13.

96 Burton illustrated this notion in his description of Mohammad's meeting with his
(Footnote continued)

cruelty and covetousness.⁹⁷

Phrenology held the belief that human behaviour was the outcome of structures and functions of the mind that were fixed by heredity. Hence, the biological and mental differences between two races were almost unbridgeable. For Spurzheim, phrenology ought to become the basis of political economy as well as moral philosophy, education and legislation. Phrenology, according to him, "will exercise a great influence on the welfare of nations, in indicating clearly the differences between natural and arbitrary nobility, and in fanning the relations between individuals to each other in general, and between those who govern and those who are governed in particular".⁹⁸

Burton made extensive use of phrenology to account for the physical and moral attributes of the Arab. He criticized Burckhardt whose sole deficiency, according to Burton, was that of not giving a precise physical portrait of the Bedowin as a race (II,80). As we have already seen Burckhardt was not afflicted with the nineteenth-century obsession with race and approached them as a nation, a noble one. Burton, on the other hand, approached the Bedowin as a race and applied phrenology to account for their physical structure. The portrait he drew complied with the characteristics he imputed to the Arabs rather than with the Bedowin Arab themselves. His description begins with the following phrenological observations:

The temperament of the Hijazi is not unfrequently the pure nervous, as the height of the forehead and the fine texture of the hair prove. Sometimes the bilious, and rarely the sanguine element predominate; the lymphatic I never saw. He has large nervous centre, and well-formed spine and brain, a conformation favourable to longevity (II,80).

The cranium of the Bedowin, according to Burton's observation, is "small, ooidal, long, high, narrow, and remarkable in the occiput for the development of Gall propensity: the crown slopes upwards towards the region of firmness, which is elevated; whilst the sides are flat to a fault" (II,82). The face is 'a long oval', the forehead is high, broad, and retreating: its upper portion is moderately developed and the lower brow indicates bodily strength and activity of character; and the eyebrows are long and crooked. The eyes are small, round, restless, deep-set which denote keen inspection with an ardent temperament and an impassioned character. The lips are 'borders' denoting rudness and want of taste. Burton ends his account by emphasizing the

⁹⁶(continued)

mother (II,p.159), and the pilgrim mother, Maryam and her meeting her son (I,287-88, f.n.3).

⁹⁷ See "Observations on the Phrenological Standard of Civilization", *Phrenological Journal*, 9,(1834-36), p.360 & "Gall and the Phrenological Movement", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 21, (1977), p.302.

⁹⁸ "Phrenological Notes by Dr. Spurzheim", *Phrenological Journal*, 6,(1829-30), p.312.

phrenologists' notion of heredity by the following statement: "Such is the Bedowi and such he has been for ages. The national type has been preserved by systematic intermarriage" (II,84).

In his description of the physical characteristics of the Arab-Bedowin, Burton could not say exactly what he pleased, for he was constrained and restricted by Prichard, who, drawing on travellers' accounts such as Chateaubriand, M.d'Abbadie, Carsten Niebuhr, Bruce, Fraser and the surgeon Larry, who had been with Napoleon in Egypt, produced a physical description of the Arabs and accounted for the Arab genealogy.⁹⁹ Unlike Burton, Prichard had been captivated by the physical perfection of the Arab skull, the Bedowin being of the purest Arab, whose heads are almost spherical in form with remarkable elevation of the cranium.¹⁰⁰ He quoted Larry, who found the convolutions of the brain to be more numerous and more finely organised in the Arabs than among the Europeans. Prichard concluded by stating that the physical perfection, found in the head of the Arab, is apparent in other part of the skelton.¹⁰¹ As for the origin of the Arab, Prichard divided them into three classes, finding in the Bedowin the pure Arab race¹⁰² and separating the Egyptians from the Arab race, tracing them back to the Negro. On this point Burton was greatly influenced by Prichard¹⁰³

In his phrenological exercise,¹⁰⁴ Burton modified Prichard's portrait of the Arabs in order to emphasize the racial characteristics he implanted upon them. Let us take form four from his exercise, that is, the shaved Arab head and see the peculiarities he ascribed to him. The back of the brain, where the propensities- combativeness, destructiveness, and secretiveness- which man shares with animals are the largest portion of the skull, while the top of the brain where the sentiments- firmness, veneration and hope- which are proper to man alone occupied the least space. If we also compare Burton's exercise with Weaver's diagram of "Mental Groups", we will find that "Selfish Sentiments" and "Domestic Propensities" were growing larger than what is normal on account of "Reason" and "Moral Sentiments" which occupied but a very little space.

99 For more details see Prichard's *Researches in the Physical History of Man*, Vol.IV. pp.588-597.

100 Ibid, IV. p.595.

101 Ibid. Vol.IV. pp.548 & 595-96.

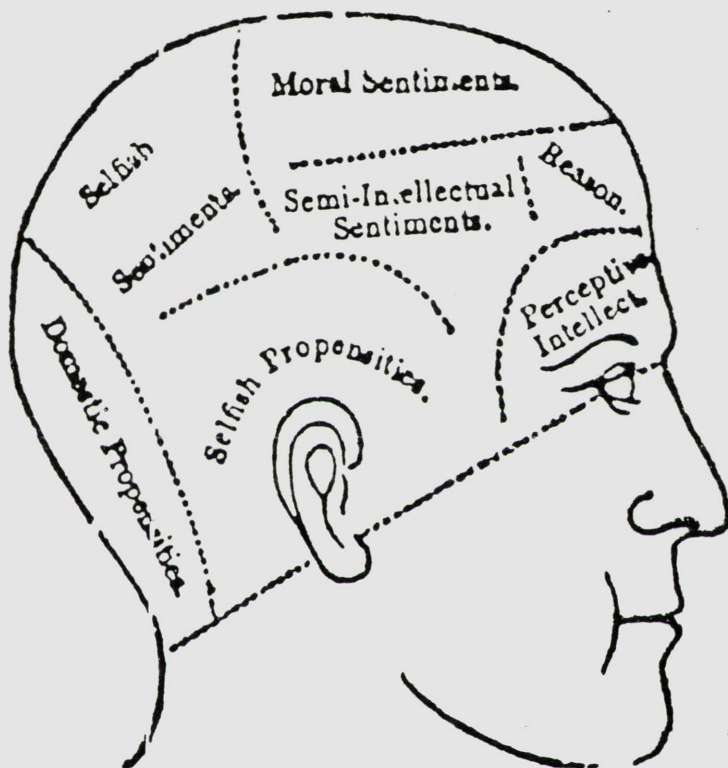
102 Cf. Prichard's *Researches*, IV. pp.293-94 & Burton's *Pilgrimage*, II. pp.76-79.

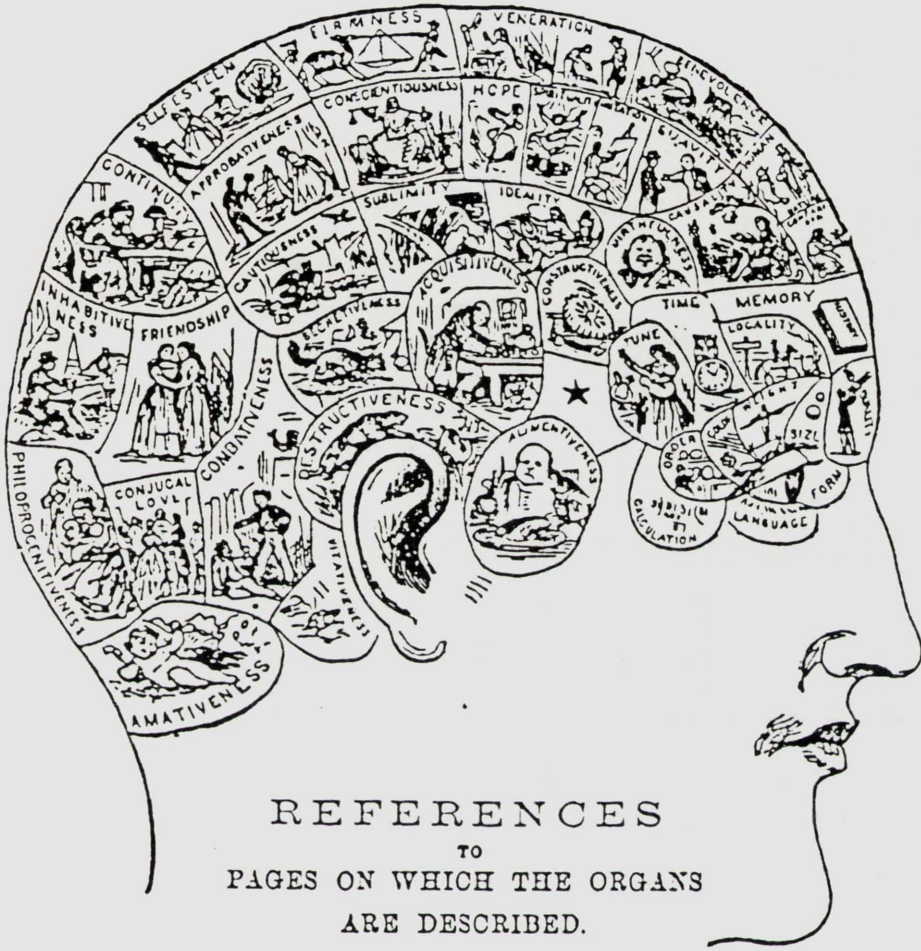
103 For more details Cf. Prichard's *Researches*, II, (1837). p.230 & Burton's *Pilgrimge*, I. 146; II,78; and the *Nights*, I,112. f.n.1.

104 See page 163.

MENTAL GROUPS

Copied from George Summer Weaver, *Lecture on Mental Science according to the Philosophy of Phrenology, Delivered before the Anthropological Society of Western Liberal Institute of Marietta Ohio in Autumn of 1851*, (New ed, London, J. Burns, 1876). p.49.

 MENTAL GROUPS.




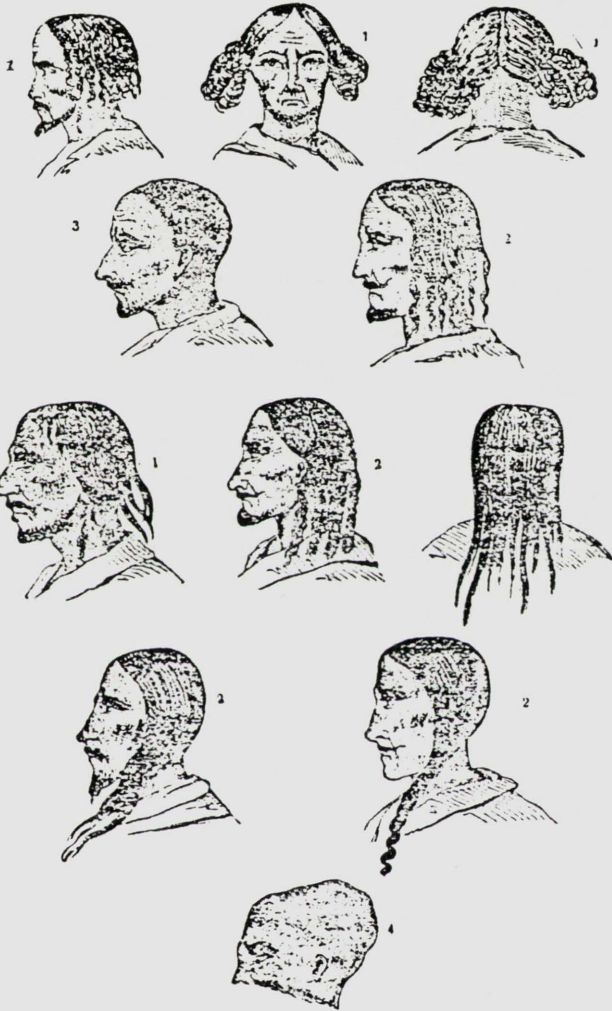
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Phrenological exercise by Burton, copied from his *A Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Al-Madinah and Meccah*, Vol.II.

BADAWI AND WAHHABI¹ HEADS AND HEAD-DRESSES.

To face vol. ii. page 81.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. This is the typical face.</p> <p>2. رینگلےتہ دالیک Ringlets called "Dalik."</p> | <p>3. شوشہ The hair on crown called "Shushah."</p> <p>4. Shape of shaved head: firmness and self-esteem high.</p> |
|---|---|

¹ The Wahhabi trite generally shave the head, whilst some amongst them still wear the hair long, which is the ancient Badawi practice.

Burton's fascination with race made him ignore the social changeable situation and approach the Arabs as a race, not as a nation. They possessed a certain unchangeable essence which made all the possibilities of their social progress unobtainable. They are savages, beasts, wild and primitive; and it is their primitive mind that accepts the main philosophical tenet of Islam without questioning. Islam, according to Burton, decreases man's ability to exploit his external environment and produces mobs of beggars and eunuchs.

Burton's imperial and racial attitudes controlled and directed his discourse on the Arab. They limited trimmed his observations in affairs Oriental and made him view the Orient through the European ideological concept. Being a European, an alien Oriental and holding the belief that the belief in things unseen, not subject to the senses and therefore unknown and unknowable, are temporary and transitory; that religious ideas may be traced home to the old seat of science and art; and that all revealed religions consist of a cosmogony more or less mythical, a history more or less falsified and a moral code more or less pure (*Nights*, 10,177), Burton manifested a European feeling of superiority and a lack of interest in understanding or conveying the spiritual meaning of the Islamic religious practices, whether before the pilgrimage or during or after it. His description of the Hajj concentrated on its outward actions without trying to take into consideration its real significance and inner value. He took Islamic practices out of their context and explained their physical appearance, centring his attack on them as superstitious and ascribing them to Muslim's '*Hukama*' (wisemen) and doctor (the latter word has no Arabic origin) without authenticating them, thus creating an unbridgeable gulf between the Occident and the Orient and widening the disparity between the two peoples

BURTON AND THE RITES OF HAJJ.

Arriving at Meccah and watching for the first time the pilgrims who clung weeping to the curtain, pressing their beating hearts to the Black Stone, Burton confessed that their feeling was "the high feeling of religious enthusiasm, mine was the ecstasy of gratified pride" (II,161). Had Burton explained the spiritual meaning of the Hajj, the spiritual meaning of Ramadhan which he fasted in Egypt, the spiritual meaning of prayer and the mosque,¹⁰⁵ he would have lessened the incredulity with which the East was accepted in Europe and would not have strengthened the feeling of superiority on the part of the Europeans by locating the Muslims on the level of primitivity and superstition. The physical practices of the Hajj have no meaning and are absurd, even in the eyes of the Muslims themselves, unless they were accompanied by

¹⁰⁵ For an account of the spiritual meaning the Hajj, prayer, fasting in Islam, and other practices see *Al-Ibada in Al-Islam (Worship in Islam)*, by Dr. Youssof Al-Kadhawi, (Beirut, Mu'assast Al-Risalah, 1978).

their historical and spiritual meaning, which goes back to Abraham who built the Ka'abah. Burton only presented us with the toils and hardships of the Hajj and its physical demands. Between Muna and Arafat he saw no fewer than five men fall down and die upon the highway. He was more concerned to show us that "dead animals dotted the ground" and the "scenes of contrast" which permeated the Hajj and other Islamic practices.

Burton's account of his pilgrimage to Meccah and visitation to Al-Madinah constitute the crux of his *Pilgrimage*. In following his practices of the rituals of the Hajj we are expected to derive new information to be added to the Western knowledge of Islam, but what we have is, in fact, a review of his predecessors of Muslim and non-Muslim travellers where things are given in a wrong sense. Everywhere, and in every circumstance he was marked with superficiality, prejudice and the lack of depth which he could have conveyed through the analysis of the spirituality of the physicality of the Hajj.

Islam has laid a great emphasis on the spiritual development of human beings. It introduced a workable ascetic formula into the daily life of the human being in the institution of prayer, fasting, Hajj and Zakat. Asceticism, in Islam, should be quite in keeping with the secular side of life. Fasting in Ramadhan requires the Muslim to give up food and drink for a complete day for a whole month, but not in a way as to make him unfit for carrying on his work or losing his temper and cursing others as Burton portrayed it (I,74-76). The Hajj stands for asceticism where the pilgrim is required to give up his regular work for a number of days, and many other amenities of life. It comes only once in lifetime for some days. It is worth mentioning here that Islam condemns asceticism as a way of life. The pilgrimage makes the Muslim pass through the highest spiritual experience and through an ascetic of life without abandoning his secular duties once and for all.

The Hajj to Meccah is one of the pillars of Islam and the most symbolic¹⁰⁶ of other Islamic ritual practices. These practices have got their historical, spiritual and even psychological signification. People of all races and of all countries meet together at Meccah as Allah's servants and as members of one divine family. They are clad in one dress (the Ihram sheet) that there remains nothing to distinguish the poor from the rich. People of whatever class or country they belong should speak one language, the language of Arabia, and wear one dress, the white clean sheet which signifies the state in which their soul should always be. All classes (but rather all kinds of people, for

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Ali Shariati states that the Hajj is a 'show of creation', a 'show of history', a 'show of unity', a show of the Islamic ideology', and a 'show of the Umma' [nation]. Hajj, tran. by Somayyah & Yaser (Published by Freec Islamic Literature Incorporation, U.S.A., 1978), p.ix. For the meaning of the Hajj see also *Islam, Its Meaning for the Modern Man*, by M.Zafrulla Khan, (New York, 1962) pp.17-26.

Islam is a classless religion) are to be taught, on this occasion, how to live in one way, how to act in one way and how to feel in one way. The object of the Hajj is that of concentrating all one's ideas on Allah, now not in solitude, but in the company of others and to remove temporarily comforts of life. In the Hajj a man may have the company of his wife and yet he must not have amatory talk with her, contrary to the romantic story which Burton invented with Flirtella on the Mount of Arafat in the presence of the pilgrims (II,189). Man may walk side by side with his adversary, yet he is not allowed to quarrel with him.

Burton had, indeed, observed this spiritual scene, but had not gone deep enough into the inner significance of this assemblage. On the contrary he wondered that in this vast concourse of humanity, there were sobbings and death on every side, there were tears flowing from every eye, but never had he given a thought to the inner charge which thus affected the pilgrims outwardly. The Ihram attire, which Burton equated with the European 'mortification' and "is applied to the toilette", a costume called Al-Eddeh in the baths at Cairo" (II,138-39), is significant only if put on in the ceremony of the Hajj, otherwise it would seem ridiculous. It is symbolic of the pilgrims' renunciation of all the vanities of the world. It also functions in removing all distinctions of rank. In the case of men, this is done by making them all put on two seamless sheets, and in the case of women by requiring them to give up the veil which was a sign of rank. It is a practical lesson in simple living. Burton's response to the Ihram attire was not different from that of Zamzam.

He found the water of Zamzem to be salty, bitter and heavy for digestion, and created a long story on the origin of the meaning of the word Zamzam itself without relating it to its historical significance, that is, the story of Hajar and her son Ishmeal. Lady Hajar, while desperate to satisfy her son's thirst, prayed for water in the parched desert, and in her eager quest round the hills of 'Safa' and 'Marwa', found her prayer answered and saw water springing from the stone. Overwhelmed with joy, she cried Zamzam Zamzam, meaning hold, hold, or gather together.

The Sa'y (running between Safa and Marwa) is also performed in commemoration of Hajar's running to and fro to seek water for her baby Ishmeal. The Sa'y is not a punishment afflicted on the pilgrims as Burton's description implied. It is, to quote Shariati, a physical work which means exerting your efforts in running after water and bread to and fro in order to satisfy your thirst and feed your hungry children. It is the struggle and search for your needs out of the heart of nature, and it is an attempt to get water out of the stone.¹⁰⁷

The Tawaf (Circumambulation), the first act of the pilgrim on his arrival at Meccah and the last act he performed when leaving the holy places, is a symbol of the revolve of the Muslims' heart around the holiness of their Creator and their

107 Ali Shariati, *Hajj*, p.41.

willingness to obey his order without hesitation. It is not a modification of Hindu practices or "an imitation of the procession of the heavenly bodies" or "the motions of the sphere, and the dance of the angels", and it is not an imitation of the circular whirling of the Darwyses as Burton's analysis goes (II,165).¹⁰⁸ Circumambulation begins at the point where the Black Stone is located. Even this does not escape Burton's misinterpretation. He told us that according to the Hukama, the Black Stone represents Venus (II,162), and that "most Muslims agree that it was originally white, and became black by reason of men's sins" (II,300). Burton's account takes notice of its appearance as a stone and describes it without referring to any of its historical or spiritual meaning. The Black Stone, according to Islam, has nothing to do with Venus and its origin is obscure, but it was in the Ka'abah before the advent of Islam. Muslims believe that it has been there at least from the time of Abraham to whom the main feature of the Hajj are to be traced and that it is an ordinary stone and nothing more. Its story is parallel with that of Ishmeal. When the Ka'abah was rebuilt the Black Stone was there, but all the builders refused to build it and it was called the rejected stone. Ishmeal was rejected by the Jew because the divine covenant was considered to have been made within the children of Isaac, and was placed near the Ka'abah. The Jewish belief that Ishmeal was rejected became stronger and stronger by the fact that prophet after prophet appeared in among the Israelites, while none appeared among the progeny of Ismeal. At last it was from the progeny of Ishmeal that Muhammad was to rise and take part in placing the Black Stone in its temporary place when the Ka'abah was rebuilt by Quraish. By that time Muhammad, not being Messenger yet, was still a young man. During the construction of the Ka'abah a dispute arose as to who should place the Black Stone in its place. Every tribe was desirous to have this honour accorded to its representative. Finally they agreed that the decision of the man who made his first appearance in the Ka'abah should be accepted. It was Muhammad who first appeared and there was an outcry that Al-Amin (the faithful one) had come. Muhammad solved the dispute, placing the stone in a cloth, and then asking the representative of each tribe to hold a corner of the cloth and he himself lifted the stone to its position. The rejected stone was built by Muhammad, of the dynasty of the rejected Ishmeal, whose religion came to prevail over all Jewish religion in Arabia. The Black Stone is, after all, an emblem of the sagacity of Muhammad.

The 'Stoning of the Devil', which appeared to Burton as a dangerous act and made him provide himself with a dagger while performing this rite, is the core of

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Burton seems to have forgotten that the Daraweesh are Muslims and mostly Sufi, whose movement and practices was introduced hundreds of years after Islam was revealed. Tawaf was originated by Abraham and confirmed by Muhammad. For more details see *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed., by H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1961), pp.585-86.

Islamic tenet. The message of Al-Islam can be summarized in that man/woman should live in perfect peace, but there is no peace for he who makes peace with Evil. The throwing of the stones does not mean that the pilgrim is stoning a material devil living in Meccah; it is a lesson that man must learn to hate Evil which should be kept away from him; it also means that man has succeeded in killing the evil motives within himself and has gone to kill them outside the self.

The last rite of the Hajj, Burton witnessed, was 'the sacrifice'. This, according to Burton, made the surface of the valley resembling the dirtiest slaughter-house and was of great trouble to the pilgrim. He did not probe deeply and explain that Muslims perform it in commemoration of Abraham who endeavoured to obey Allah's order which he thought was to sacrifice Ishmeal. Another rite which Burton came across without explaining its spiritual or historical meaning is 'Ayyam Al-Tashriq' or what he called 'The Three Days of Drying Flesh'. These days were not timed by chance and are significant in explaining the levelling of any distinction between the members of the community. In the Pre-Islamic days and after the performance of the Hajj, men used to boast of the greatness of their fathers when gathered together in Ukaz and other markets. Islam discontinued this and set up apart these days for the glorification of Allah.

Burton knew that the pilgrimage was first issued by Abraham, modified by the pagan Arab and regenerated, as practised by Abraham in its main features, by Islam. He knows that every rite of the Hajj carries with it a spiritual significance as we have already mentioned. He knows, too, that the whole atmosphere of the Hajj is a demonstration of the greatness of Allah and the equality of man, but he brought none of these to the attention of the Europeans and instead deepened their conception of the superstitiousness of the East. His *Pilgrimage* indicates that he had read a lot on Islam and knew a lot, for sometimes he gave with minute details of secondary Islamic practices, but he did not offer a real account of Oriental society.

BURTON, THE *PILGRIMAGE* AND THE ORIENT.

Burton's *Pilgrimage* shows the victory of his racial and imperial attitude over his actual observations. This attitude taught him that the Oriental-Arabs are inferior to the Europeans and should be approached accordingly. His observations were trimmed by the nineteenth century ideology of the non-Europeans and his pilgrimage was an opportunity for him to cast his conception on the screen of the Orient. He worked hard to find and invent incidents to support his view that the Orientals were superstitious, irrational, depraved and sexual, meaning implicitly and explicitly that the Europeans were rational, virtuous, mature, and natural. His racial teachings made him endow the Arabs with an essence; this essence, being stamped with Islamic superstitious legislations, was stable and unchangeable regardless of the social situation. He located the Oriental-Arab world in a comparative frame work with the West, reducing the

former to a kind of human flatness which exposed its characteristics easily to scrutiny. All through his work the East was a victim; an object of study, non-sovereign with regard to itself; unable to speak, to defend itself and when it was allowed to say something or do something it would satirize itself, as was the case with Haji Wali and Ali Agha in the Wakalah.

Burton, a man close to being a positivist in his attitude towards religion, found Islam an obstacle to progress. He labours hard to show the disability of Islam in creating progress and embodies his conviction that the nature of Al-Islam as a system, instead of helping man to exploit his external nature, works as hindrance. This is reflected in the people adopting it. Al-Islam, according to Burton, does not appeal to the human nature that even the Bedowin of Al-Hijaz, who call themselves Shaf'i, are far from applying any of the Islamic pillars. They, Burton recorded, pray not because they say that they must drink the water of ablution; they give no alms, because they ask them; they do not fast Ramadhan, because they strive throughout the year; and they do not perform the pilgrimage, because the world is the House of Allah (II,110). Al-Islam, in Burton's *Pilgrimage*, increases rather than diminishes begging and beggars in society. Beggars, whose behaviour signifies man's disability to live, to wrest life's necessities from the material world, to extract subsistence from our external environment, are, in Burton's view, the product of Islamic religion. They exist in every Islamic society and institution. Arriving at Alexandria, Burton's first act was to brush the beggars from his way and leaving Egypt the last word he heard was *Bakhshish*:- "bakhshish was the last word as well as the first odious sound I heard in Egypt" (I,189). Beggars were crowded everywhere that sometimes he and Shaykh Hamid had to fight their way through a troop of them (I,309). Beggars are not only male but "female askers" as well (I,328) and of many kinds (I,331). In the Bakia, on their way to Meccah, in Meccah itself, in the Ka'abah, on Arafat and in every mosque beggars are crowded. His description of Natak Al-Nabi, a place of pious visitation in the suburb of Meccah, which Burton did not see and accordingly described from various sources (as Burton himself admitted) was meant to emphasize begging as Islamic practice. It is "a small oratory in the Zukak al-Hajar" where servants are "attached to it, and the street sides are spread, as usual, with napkins of importunate beggars" (II,253-54).

Islam, according to Burton, encourages not only begging, but castration as well. Burton's account of the eunuchs in the Muhammad's Mosque and in the Ka'abah is an attempt to show it as an Islamic institution, meant to diminish man

Eunuch, or castration, is not Islamic. It has been strictly forbidden by Muhammad for any of the Muslims to make themselves such, or to make others. Muhammad said: "He is not of my people [not Muslim] who makes another eunuch or becomes so himself. The manner in which my people
(Footnote continued)

physically.¹⁰⁹ Slavery and slave-markets are Oriental-Islamic institutions which dehumanize man and deprive him from his freedom. Woman is always portrayed as dominated by her husband and enslaved by Islamic legislations which are contradictory to human nature; she is "a marketable commodity" (II,111) and sensual. Fatimah, the female pilgrim, is "a person of polyandrous propensities" who "could support the weight of at least three matrimonial engagements" (I,175).

Burton tries to ascribe the social backwardness of the Orient and its superstitions to the religion of Al-Islam. He explained the superstition of the appearance of a splendid comet as being an article of Muslims' belief:

A splendid comet, blazing in the western sky, has aroused the apprehension of the Madani. They all fell to predicting the usual disasters- war, famine, and pestilence,- it being still an article of Moslem belief that show the Dread Star foreshows all manners of calamities (II,28).

Another superstition is that of his entering the holy cemetery of Bakia with "right foot foreward, as if it were a Mosque, and barefooted to avoid suspicion of being a heretic" (II,34). These and many others were ascribed to Al-Islam, such as his statement that "the spirit of Al-Islam is opposed to such precautions of common sense,- "Inshallah" and "Kismat" must take the place of prevention of cure. And at Meccah, the headquarters of the faith, a desolating attack of cholera is preferred to the impiety of "flying in the face of providence", and the folly of endeavouring to avert inevitable decrees" (II,224).

Smith, who made a voyage to Al-Hijaz between 1880 and 1881, observed this phenomenon of ascribing non-Islamic practices to Al-Islam stating:

It is characteristic of Mohammedanism that all national feeling assumes a religious aspect, inasmuch as the whole polity and social forms of a Moslem country are clothed in a religious dress. But it would be a mistake to suppose that genuine religious feeling is at the bottom of everything that justifies itself by taking a religious shape. The prejudices of the Arabs have their roots in a conservatism which lies deeper than his belief in Islam... . Yet many of the prejudices which seem to us most distinctively Mohammedan have no basis in the Koran.¹¹⁰

Burton's account of the Oriental society cannot be taken as a historical document. The vivid and pungent style of the *Pilgrimage* distinguishes it from other books of travel of its class. Its language is vigorous and literary and it is itself a work of literature in which the peculiarities of Oriental society are dramatized so as to make it attractive to Western readers. Burton's Alexandria, Cairo, Meccah, and Al-Madinah are more literary cities than real ones- like the Damascus and Baghdad of

¹⁰⁹(continued)

becomes eunuchs is to practise fasting". *A Dictionary of Islam*, p.110.

¹¹⁰ W.Robert Smith, *Lectures and Essays*, ed., by John Sutherland Black and George Chrystal, (London: Adam & Charles, 1912), pp.492-93.

the *Arabian Nights*- where he performs heroic deeds and passes heroic adventures. His description of the romantic Arab-Bedowin is more literary than real. His reading of other travellers' accounts of the people in question; his way of perceiving the Oriental life; his psychological response to power and despotism; his method in entangling his opinion, his observations, and reckless insobriety of opinion; and his uncouth and vivid language are all interrelated to undergo a process of condensation, displacement and secondary revision (to use the Freudian terminology) and produce a literary image of the Bedowin. Being literary such images will be found different from one European traveller to another or from one group of travellers to another. Burton's image is different from that of Blunt's and Blunt's from Doughty's and Doughty's from Palgrave's, and Palgrave's from Burckhardt's, and so on and so forth.

Burton begins his description of the Hajj with a language more poetic than prosaic. He describes the pilgrims in the Ka'abah as "worshippers who clung weeping to the curtain, or pressed their beating heart to the stone... as if the poetical legend of the Arabs spoke truth, and that the waving wings of angels, not the sweet breeze of morning, were agitating and swelling the black covering of the shrine" (II,161).

In describing the Indian Muslim drinking a glass of water, Burton dramatizes the situation so as to make it more interesting to his reader. Instead of saying that the Muslim is requested to drink a glass of water at intervals and thank Allah before and after drinking, or relating Muhammad's Hadith which reads: "Do not drink [your water] once like camels, but twice, three times, or four times", following in such a case the style of Burckhart or Lane, Burton says:

Look, for instance, at that Indian Muslim drinking a glass of water.... In the first place he clutches his tumbler as though it were the throat of a foe; secondly, he ejaculated, "In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful!" before wetting his lips; thirdly, he imbibes the contents, swallowing them, not sipping them as he ought to do, and ending with a satisfied grunt; fourthly, before setting down the cup, he sighs forth "Praise be to Allah!"- of which you will understand the full meaning of the desert; and, fifthly, he replies, "May Allah make it pleasant to thee!" in answer to his friends polite "Pleasurably and health!" (I,6).

In this passage we have an image of the way the Muslim drinks or should drink his water, but in no way does it conform or reflect the way he drinks. Burton, here as elsewhere, selects his words and metaphors: The Muslim drinks in a tumbler; he clutches, not holds, it like the throat of a foe, not firmly; and instead of sipping it he swallows it and instead of saying humbly, he sighs a sigh which conveys the "full meaning in the desert"; at last he replies in answer, not addressed first and answer second.

Burton enjoyed the atmosphere of Alexandria and accounted in a very sophisticated literary style for what he calls the Arab '*Kayf*':

The savouring of animal existence; the passive enjoyment of mere sense; the pleasant languor, the dreamy tranquility, the airy castle-building, which in Asia stand in lieu of the vigorous, intensive, passionate life of Europe.

It is the result of a lively, impressible, excitable nature, and exquisite sensibility of nerve; it argues a facility for voluptuousness unknown to northern regions... [where] damp chill air demands perpetual excitement, exercise, or change, or adventure, or disposition, for want of something better. In the East, man wants but rest and shade: upon the banks of a bubbling stream, or under the cool shelter of a perfumed tree, he is perfectly happy, smoking a pipe, or sipping a cup of coffee, or drinking a glass of sherbet, but above all things deranging body and mind as little as possible; the trouble of conversations, the displeasures of memory, and the vanity of thought being the most unpleasant interruption of his *Kayf*. No wonder that '*Kayf*' is a word untranslatable in our mother tongue (I.9).

This passage does not describe the Arab '*Keyf*' as much as Burton's response to it. He gives a literary image of the Arab '*Kayf*' in which his presence predominate the object he is describing. Burton's '*Kayf*' is more abstract than real. First he writes the word '*Keyf*' with 'a' in place of 'e', thus differentiating his spelling from that of Lane's. Second he finds the word to be untranslatable. '*Keyf*' is only untranslatable in the meaning it was given by Burton, otherwise it is translatable. Lane, who approached it scientifically, not in a literary way, translated it as "exhilaration".¹¹¹ He took it as a phenomenon and tried to trace its origin and effect on Eastern society. He explained that '*Keyf*' was what the Arabs term tobacco. This Tobacco, he argued, had induced particular changes in the character of the Arabs and the Turks who became addicted to its use. It made them more inactive than they were in earlier times and led them to waste over the pipe many hours which might be profitably employed. Tobacco had its benefit, according to Lane, that is of superceding the use of wine which is very injurious to the health of the inhabitant of hot climates. He also noticed that the mild kinds of tobacco used by Arabs and Turks have a very gentle effect; they calm the nervous system, and, instead of stupefying, sharpen the intellect. The pleasure of Eastern society are certainly much heightened by the pipe, and it affords the peasant a cup of cheap sober refreshment and probably often restrains him from less innocent indulgence.¹¹² A comparison of Burton's untranslatable '*Kayf*' with that of Lane's which he translated as 'exhilaration' is sufficient to show the literariness of the former's image.

Not only was Burton's style literary but his adventures were not far from being so. His perils and adventures are sufficiently curious and attractive as fiction well fabricated and well cited. His romances are as interesting as they defamiliarize real situations. On Arafat, while the preacher was giving his sermons and the pilgrims employed in their religious supplications, a red cashmere shawl of a tall Meccan girl, aging eighteen, fell upon Burton's shoulder. The girl was wearing a "yashmak" of transparent muslin, bound round her face, instead of the usual veil. Flirtilla, the name

111 *Modern Egyptians*, p.303.

112 *Modern Egyptians*, p.303-4.

of the Meccan girl, fixed a glance of admiration on his cashmere and he, in turn, directed a reply of interest at her eyes. Her response was immediate and "by the usual coquettish gesture, threw back an inch or two of head-veil, disclosing broad bands of jetty hair, crowning a lovely oval". Burton, then, entered upon the dangerous ground of raising his hand to her forehead (II,198). In this romantic story, Burton presents us with contrasting images which defamiliarize the reality of the stand on Arafat. The Muslims are doing their duty towards their Creator, while Burton, the pilgrim, is flirting with the female pilgrim who came to perform one of the pillars of Islam, in secret on the Mount of Arafat where nobody can do anything in secret. On this Mount, which is overcrowded and where a Muslim is not allowed to say amatory words even to his wife, Burton's flirtation was at its zenith. In the state of Ihram, where all Muslims are wearing the Ihram-garb, a white dress, and where women are not allowed under any circumstances to cover or veil their face and where they were not allowed to wear but white cloths over their dress,¹¹³ we see 'a red cashmere' of the girl, a 'yashmak' and Burton's own cashmere. We also see the girl's 'jetty hair' and Burton's hand rising to her forehead. What is more interesting in this story is the name of the Meccan girl. 'Flirtilla' is a romantic name which has no existence in either Arabic or English. It is an Anglo-Arab name. The first part 'Flirt', being an English word for making love for amusement, the second part 'illa', giving an Arabic sense to denote the feminine. This story is more fictional than real.

Burton's diary-book, being a long thin volume fitting into a breast-pocket and his slips of paper, designed to be put in a bottle of medicine, are more amusing than practical. His slip of paper which he hides with a pencil in his Ihram-garb, the later being a sleeveless sheet of cloth, to put down the heads of the rarely heard discourse on Mount Arafat, is more revealing of his adventure than reality. These and many other adventures of Burton are amusing as they remain just imaginary and far from reality. "Burton's pilgrimage to Meccah", Dearden noticed, "is one of the greatest journeys in romantic adventure",¹¹⁴ and an outstanding contribution to Victorian and European travel literature.

As a text the *Pilgrimage* is interrelated to almost all European texts written on the Orient. It is affiliated with other works on the Orient and with the European concept of the Orient. It shares Burckhardt on many points and depends on him in

113 Burton's text contradicts, sometimes, his appendices. For the strictness of Islam in preventing such a behaviour see his appendix, p.285. It is also worth mentioning, here, that woman is not allowed to veil her face in the Hajj and that Islam does not impose such a practice. The veiling of the face was a sign of aristocracy. It is also worth mentioning that the wearing of "cashmer" and "yashmak" is practiced in India, not Arabia, and emphasizes the fact that his story was imaginative.

114 Seton Dreaden, *The Arabian Knight: A Study of Richard Burton*, (London, 1936), p.7.

the details of some of the reports on the social life in the East.¹¹⁵ It also depends on Lane's *Modern Egyptians* in accounting for some aspects of the religious and social life in Egypt. Burton took his raw materials from Lane and transformed them in his own way so as to fit his ideology.

In his *Pilgrimage*, Burton appears as the hero of his literary text whose presence connects all the events and happenings together so as to give them a unity and make them appear as a unified whole. Burton's presence as a hero (whom we know as a real person) gives his description more credibility. His maps, his drawings, his dating and his footnoting spread an air of reality over his work so that the reader, sometimes, forgets that the map is a paper, the drawing is a picture, the date is a figure and the footnote is an addendum which spoils the text from its attractiveness.

As an author, Burton is not a creator; he did not imagine and describe an Orient which has no existence; he is rather a producer, a labourer and a worker. He worked hard on his raw materials- text on the Orient, his ideological conception of the Orient, his psychological reaction to the Orient and the Orient itself- to transform them into a determinate product, that is, his *Pilgrimage*, which is itself a work on the Orient; a work in which the Orient is not present but represented through Burton's ideology, making a reality of his own different from the social reality of the Orient itself.¹¹⁶ His portrayal of the Orient was limited by his imperialism and racialism adding more distortion and exaggeration to the image of the Oriental-Arab life and leaving more blanks to be filled in when Palgrave came on the scene of the Orient.

115 Cf. Burton's description of the way the Arabs eat locusts, *Pilgrimage*, II.117, and that of Burkharcdt in *Notes on the Bedowin and the Wahabys*, II.91-92. Cf. also Burton's description of the Holy Places of Al-Islam and those of Varthema, Pitts, Ali Bey, Burkharcdt, and even the Arab travellers Ibn Jubayer and Ibn Battuta. In some minor details, Cf. also the similarity between Ali Bey's journey from Cairo to Suez and then to Jeddah and that of Burton from Cairo to Suez and then to Yambou.

116 The story of Burton's *Pilgrimage* seems to Burne to be "only partly about Arabia and its mysteries; it is also about the person, the thoughts and ideas, the emotions and attitudes, of Richard Burton. Everything is seen and described in details, but it is also shaped, classified, and evaluated by the omnipresent sensibility of the narrator", and Burton seems to him to be "very much in the centre of the stage, directing the drama, and arranging his experiences for the purpose of his narrative". He was "constantly aware of an audience and of the image he is presenting". G.S. Burne, *Richard F. Burton*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1985), pp.44-45.

CHAPTER FIVE

PALGRAVE'S *CENTRAL AND EASTERN ARABIA*

Ideas which, I regret to say, appear to me often distorted and exaggerated, prevail in the West regarding our Eastern fellow-men; ideas due in part to the defective observation, perhaps the prejudices, of travellers, too preoccupied by their own thought and fancies to appreciate or even understand the phrases of mind and manners among the nations other than their own; while at times an enthusiastic imagination has thrown a prismatic colouring over the faded East. My principal object and endeavour in this work has been, accordingly, to give a totally correct notion of the Arab race, -of their condition, intellectual and political, social and religious; such at least as it appeared to me.

¹ William Gifford Palgrave, *Narrative of A Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia (1862-1863)*, (Macmillan, 1865), vol.I, pp.vii-viii. Subsequent references will be to the same edition and will appear parenthetically.

The intellectual, political, social and religious conditions of the "Arab race", the main concern of *Central Arabia*, emerged within the context of Palgrave's mission, that is, within the European imperial interest in the Middle East and the Christian missionary enterprise, for Palgrave was himself a Jesuit missionary,² sent on a political mission.³ The French Government, which was anxious as to the political situation in Central Arabia as part of her interest in the area,⁴ paid him to do his journey for its political ends, and the Society of Jesuits authorized him to do it for their religious ends. His discourse on the Arab, as such, came therefore under the pressure of both politics and the ideology of Christian missionary in the nineteenth century and was institutionalized by them. Palgrave made no serious attempt to free himself from the European ideology, but rather gave himself up to it in accounting for the actual social reality of the Muslim-Arab world. His "correct notion of the Arab race" was, therefore, only correct inasmuch as it can be put in the service of the missionary enterprise and the European imperial political interest in the Arab world.

As a political agent of a European power, Palgrave was too much concerned with promoting the latter's imperial interests in the Arab world. Being an Englishman himself on a secret mission for the Emperor of France, England's most formidable European rival, Palgrave could hardly advocate publicly for the French occupation of Arabia, although he was desirous for such a happening since it would facilitate his missionary work. He found in the idea of an independent Arab state in Central Arabia

² In January 1847 Palgrave sailed to India to join the 8th Bombay Native Infantry. Later he had become a convert to Roman Catholicism and in March 1849 he resigned from the army to join the Society of Jesus. He entered the Jesuit college at Negapatam in the Madras presidency and was employed in missionary work in Southern India until June 1853, when he proceeded to Rome to finish his studies.

³ Hogarth finds that the role of European explorers in Arabia to be recent and to contain very few representative of certain categories of pioneers which have opened out the most dark places of the earth. He suggested three categories such as: "the soldier adventurer, the Christian missionary, and the trader". In the first category, he placed the French and Italian officers attached to the Egyptian armies between 1812 and 1840. In the second category, he finds that since the Jesuit Gifford Palgrave none seemed to have travelled neither ostensibly nor covertly for a genuine religious purpose. Hogarth also speaks of Palgrave, in conjunction with Wallin and Guarmani, in terms of political emissaries of foreign princes and bearers of wide commissions. D.G.Hogarth's *The Penetration of Arabia*, (London,1904), pp.5-6.

⁴ Following the great Syrian massacre of 1860, in which the Druse persecution of the Maronite broke out, and the European intervention on behalf of the Syrian Christian, France took a practical step and interfered militarily. Napoleon III was a pioneer in despatching his troops to Beirut and later showed no sign of withdrawal unless threatened by the British Lord Palmerston. France was desirous to occupy Syria, or secure it for the Egyptian government, and was, probably, thinking of building good relationships with the Wahabi government in Arabia which might ensure the success of the proposed Suez canal.

the best means of securing the French interest in the area, especially since France was not seriously considering the idea of military presence or occupation of Arabia. To build such a state Palgrave exported with him the idea of Arab nationalism, here being a forerunner of Blunt and Lawrence, and approached the Arabs as a race, different from, and superior to, other Oriental races and the negro.⁵ Arab nationalism meant for him a break with the Turk and an easy access to the Arab world on the part of the European rather than a genuine Arab independence.

As a missionary, Palgrave was a prisoner of Christian ideology in relation to the non-European and to the worldview and theorization which emerged from the mission field. The missionaries exported with them a basic understanding and certain beliefs and opinions about themselves and the world, a theory of civilization and history. They saw Christianity not simply as a belief but as civilization. This civilization was not relative, that is, as good and peculiar as any other, but rather one which formed the endpoint, the final result of a long stage of development, the terminus of a teleological model of human history. The missionary worldview included a developmental view of history in which humanity moved from "obedience", as for example the people of ancient Israel who obeyed the law of God or the Muslims who obeyed and applied the legislations of the Quoran; to "example", as the first Christians who followed the example set by the life of Jesus; and finally the stage of the "spirit".⁶ Missionaries believed they lived in this final stage of the "spirit". What this meant was that the legal aspects of the tribal past had been internalized by each and every individual, and their new society was guided by the spirit within each man, confirmed by his sense of sin and conscience. The individual, the person, was no longer guided by the external laws of do's and don'ts but by an internal sense of guilt, of right and wrong. There was no need of punishment or reward to make him or her conform. This final stage,

5 Palgrave was influenced by nineteenth-century racial theorization. He held the Negro type to be the lowest in human scale, and the black race in general to be much inferior to the Arabs in intellectual power and steadiness of will (I,452,457). He also held the Arabs to be an inferior race in relation to the European.

6 Temple speaks of three developmental stages of the world: "A childhood, a youth and a manhood of the world". In childhood he found that men are subject to positive rules which they cannot understand, but are bound implicitly to obey. In youth they are subject to the influence of example, and soon break loose from all rules unless illustrated and enforced by the higher which example imparts. In manhood they are comparatively free from external restraints, and if they are to learn, they must be their own instructors. "First comes the Law, then the Son of Man, then the Gift of the Spirit. The world was once a child under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the Father. Then, when the fit season had arrived, the example to which all ages should turn was sent to teach men what they ought to be. Then the human race was left to itself to be guided by the teaching of the Spirit within". Frederick Temple, "The Education of the World", in *Essays and Reviews*, (London, John W. Parker and Sons, West Strand, reprint 1970). First published in 1860.

it was supposed, described the realities of England or Europe, with its individualism and freedom ideology. Christian civilization, from this ethnocentric point of view, was thus considered final and superior to other religions and civilizations, which were stuck, in the missionary point of view, on a lower plane of development, an earlier stage of evolution and history. The Arab and Islamic world was viewed by them as in the stage of earlier civilization where legalistic and ethical teachings testified that there was not a sense of individualism. Harriet Martineau, for instance, who was influenced by Comte, expressed her belief that Islam lacked principles and that Muhammad taught by means of percepts and examples. Such a method was suitable for children, not for responsible adults. Islam therefore appeared to her to be "a religion for children".⁷ She also thought that if Christianity is no more than a stage in the evolution of religions, then "Islam is only a dead branch" (107). Similarly, the sway of Islam seemed to Ainsworth to be a "mere step in the retrograde descent to the savage state whilst the far West presented the aspect of an evolution (no doubt so ordained by Providence), tending daily to a higher degree of civilization, industrial, economical and religious".⁸

Bearing in mind this worldview and theorization of missionaries that the Christian religion had gone further in its development than other tribal,⁹ non-individualistic religions, Palgrave's repetitive and constant attacks on Islam show up a common ideology of his time which excludes his claimed objectivity in approaching the Arabs or Islam. His attempts to approach the question objectively from a historical point of view failed, because he was unable to conceive Islam otherwise than from a perspective of Christian ethics. All the series of value judgement explicit or implicit in his reasoning tended towards the idea that Islam is a religion inferior to Christianity.

Palgrave had consciously and purposely misrepresented Islam and had thus caused the grossest misunderstanding in the reader's mind about the reality of Islam. It was always in his interest and habit to seek and invent the dark and gloomy side of Muslim-Arab social life and ascribe it to Islam. His attitude towards Islam was largely egoistic fault-finding, instead of a wholesome criticism. Only bad things are broadcast as Islamic, while to good things bad interpretations are given. The purpose of Palgrave is to appeal to the missionary instinct of his compatriots, and by emphasising the dark side of Islam and Islamic institutions he hoped to renew his mission in Arabia.¹⁰

As a traveller, Palgrave appeared on the scene of the Orient as a European

⁷ Harriet Martineau, *Eastern Life, Present and Past*, (Philadelphia; Lea & Blanchard, 1848), 499.

⁸ W.F. Ainsworth, *A Personal Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*, (London, 1888). vol.ii, p.p. 381-382.

⁹ Palgrave approached the Bedowin not as Muslim but people practising tribal beliefs.

and a disguised Syrian Christian, Seleem Abou-Mahmoud-el-Eys. At first Palgrave was sincere in identifying himself with the whole of Europe, viewing Eastern populations as inferior human beings and contrasting Oriental backwardness with Occidental civilization. The disguised Oriental Palgrave seems to have felt a sometimes real identification with the Syrian Christians and expressed what he thought a Syrian Christian might feel, that is, a pride in the Arabs as a race and a deep aversion towards Islam and the Muslim-Arab. The latter feeling might explain what might be called his 'Arabophile' attitude.

Palgrave's assumed disguise in his travels in Arabia; his long years, the best part of his life, passed in the East; his claimed familiarity with Arabic language¹¹ till it became to him "almost a mother tongue"; and his professed experience in the ways and manners of "Semitic" nations, made him claim the privilege of telling everything about the Arab, their religion, their history, and their custom and tradition. He appointed himself a peculiar place among European travellers to the East, contradicting and correcting their notions of the Arab, and life in Arabia. He showed erudition in affairs Oriental attributing them to his actual observations and experiences in the

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About the time of the publication of his *Central Arabia* Palgrave was told that the mission to Upper Egypt would not reopen, and then came the news that the Jesuit mission to Arabia was not sanctioned. After that he announced his reconversion and separated himself from the Jesuit body. Later he was engaged with diplomatic work for the English government. For a detailed biographical account of Palgrave's life see *Palgrave of Arabia*, by Mea Allan (London, 1972).

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Despite his claimed prowess, Palgrave's mastery of Arabic was fragile as his text shows. He was almost always confused when he listened to two similar Arabic words. On one occasion, for instance, he reported to have heard one of the Bedowin saying to the other: "Will you not people the pipe for your brother?". Palgrave commented saying: "Bedowin language, like that of most Orientals, abounds with not ungraceful imagery, and accordingly "people" here means "fill" (i,26). Palgrave, here, seems to have been confused by the similarity between the two Arabic words "Sha'b" (شعب), meaning "people", and "Shub" (شُب), meaning "light". "Shub the pipe" means light it. Unlike English, in Arabic the noun can never, under any circumstances, function as a verb or vice versa. "Sha'b" = people is a noun, while "Shub" = light is a verb in imperative mood. Palgrave should have heard "will you not "shub" the pipe for your brother?. On another occasion he mixed up two Arabic words "Balaana", (بالانة), meaning tested, and "Balaa'na" (بالنا), meaning devoured, translating wrongly, "Balaana Allah" as "God devoured us' up" (i,176). The correct sentence for his translation is Allah sent something on us to test us. In describing the conditions of the Negroes in Arabi, (i,457-8) he also confused the two words "khudayri", meaning of green colour, and "Mukhadram", meaning somebody who lived the life of two generations; and "Al-Ibadiyah", an Islamic sect, or what he called "Abadeeyah" or "Biadeeyah" and translated the word to mean literally "White Boys". The name, according to him, is used in contradistinction to the green of the Fatimites and the black of the Abbasides (ii,262). The Ibadis are the followers of Abdullah Ibn Ibad and the name of the movement is derived from him. Palgrave, here, seems to have mixed up the words "Biadee", a follower of "Ibadiyah", and the word "Abiad", meaning white. He also mistranslated the word "Dook", or "Duk" saying that it is a familiar abbreviation of "Doonek" or "at your service"

(Footnote continued)

East.¹² But a close study of *Central Arabia* shows that his representation of the Arabs was not based on his practical experience as much as on his synthetic academic knowledge composed from historical, literary, and religious sources, adapted to his ideology of the Muslim-Arab. Palgrave's voluminous writings show that he relied extensively on his reading, rather than on his actual experience, to produce the material he offered, otherwise he would never have been able to account for very rare events, especially since he was disguised as a passing traveller.

With a theory and certain goal in mind, the Oriental scholar Palgrave set out to Arabia. The object of his travels was politico-religious inasmuch as religion was the handmaid of politics. He did not go there in the interest of science, nor was he funded by any scientific institute for any scientific object whatsoever. This makes his lack of accuracy in accounting for the physical structure of Arabia, especially in respect of geography, reprehensible. "Palgrave was not by nature a scientist. He was the imaginative poetic observer, more interested in spectacular views than compass bearings, and more readily involved with men and their cities than with watersheds and continental drainage", the authors of the *Explorers of Arabia* noticed. They also found *Central Arabia* to be a "superbly readable adventure story of the period", but Palgrave to be guilty of inaccuracy, and often wild exaggeration, and to have sometimes improved a good story with the aid of his imagination.¹³ Sykes ascribed Palgrave's "undoubted lack of accuracy in geographical matters" to the fact that he was sent on a political mission. However, he found his brilliant literary style worth setting against this weakness in his narrative.¹⁴ In fact, Palgrave himself recognized and admitted his topographical and geological inaccuracy, making no pretence of any regret at his incompetence in such matters. On his return to Europe, he was offered Wallin's and Welsted's memoirs of Arabia and central Arabia. He read them, confirmed their

¹¹(continued)

(ii,304). The word in question is not an abbreviation of "Doonek", nor could it be. "Dook" or "Duk" means "taste" as it came in Palgrave's text. The reader of *Central Arabia* can find more mistakes in the text.

¹² In his preface to *Central Arabia*, Palgrave divides the subject-matter of his information into three classes: First what he has himself seen in person or ascertained by actual investigation; second what he has merely inferred or conjectured; and thirdly what he has gathered at secondhand from the natives of the country. For the first he claimed that degree of certainty and reliance which can be placed on an Englishman saying "I have heard," and "I have seen," and no more; for the second he asked the reader to trust his long years of Oriental studies, observations and intercourse; and for the third he requested the reader to give what degree of value he thinks fit (I,viii-ix).

¹³ Zahra Freeth & H.V.F. Winstone, *Explorers of Arabia*, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1978), pp.154-155.

¹⁴ Sir Percy Sykes, *A History of Exploration*, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1950), p.286.

accuracy and made it clear that the "researches of these gentlemen having been mainly topographical, they naturally paid but subordinate attention to the circumstances of the inhabitants; and this blank in their narrative is precisely what I now desire to fill up" (I,vii).

PALGRAVE AND HIS PREDECESSORS.

Wellsted, and the Swede Wallin, two Arabian travellers and forerunners of Palgrave, the one in Uman the other in Arabia Central, forestalled him from the opportunity of contributing anything novel to knowledge of the physical structure of Arabia. They made their journeys for the sake of science and science only. Hogarth observed that in Wallin one recognize "a scientific explorer of the best modern type, thoroughly prepared, and determined to leave nothing for the man who might come after".¹⁵ He also described Wellsted as the "first scientific explorer of Oman".

Since 1830, when he was appointed as a second lieutenant in the East India Company's ship *Palinurus*, Wellsted, under Captain Moresby, was engaged in making a detailed survey of the Gulf of Akabah and the Northern part of the Red Sea. It was between 1835 and 1837 that he travelled in the South and South East of Arabia and made a scientific exploration of Uman,¹⁶ the final stage in Palgrave's travels, which began by following closely Wallin's first journey to Central Arabia.

In 1845, Wallin left Cairo to Maan, and thence he crossed to Jauf, where he stayed for two months. Then he recommenced his journey south-east towards the Nafud desert which he entered on the first of September. He crossed the desert to Jubba and resumed his march to Hail. From this city he proceeded to Al-Madinah and Meccah. Wallin made another journey in 1848. He landed on Muweila, on the coast of Midian, and made for Tabuk. He marched south-east to Teima and thence to Hail again. From the latter city he travelled north-west across the desert to Meshedi Ali in Iraq.¹⁷ Although Hogarth took him to have gone on a political mission, commissioned by Muhammed Ali to make a report on the rising power of Jabal Shammar, an allegation refuted by Trautz who considered his journey to be scientific and far from any political aim whatsoever,¹⁸ Wallin showed much interest in science and scientific

15 Hogarth's *The penetration of Arabia*, p.161.

16 For more details on James Raymond Wellsted's travel see his *Travels in Arabia*, (London, 1838).

17 For more details on George Augustus Wallin see his Notes Taken During a Journey through Parts of Northern Arabia in 1848, *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol.20, 1850, pp.293-344; and vol.24, 1854, pp.115-207.

18 Trautz reviewed Hogarth's book and tried to correct some of his shortcomings. For more details see "G.A.Wallin and *The Penetration of Arabia*", by Mrs. M. Trautz, *The Geographical Journal*, vol.76, 1930, pp.248-252.

method in approaching the Arab, one of the elements most lacking in Palgrave's narrative of his journey. It was agreed that Wallin's information in relation to the physical structure of Arabia was carefully researched and authenticated.

Unlike Palgrave, who made an interesting account of his own adventure, becoming himself a hero of an Odyssey, in a sometimes brilliant literary style, Wallin hits his target without delay, making no detour whatsoever, for his aim was to convey as much information as possible about the places he visited. Wallin's scientificity, precision and relative impartiality stand in sharp contrast to that of Palgrave's literariness, inaccuracy and prejudices. Unlike Palgrave, but like Lane, Wallin's consciousness submerges when he accounts for most aspects of social life in Arabia, and his tone becomes impersonal, trying to take a phenomenon and account for it scientifically. This made his narrative find less popularity and provided Palgrave with the opportunity, which Burkhardt offered to Burton, to improve on him and give the impression of being a pioneer explorer of Central Arabia. "Had the Swedish pioneer told the story of his journeys more promptly, more fully, with less learning and through the medium of wider appeal", Hogarth noticed, "he would probably have had more immediate followers, and certainly have robbed one follower [Palgrave] in particular of his opportunity for creating a great sensation".¹⁹

In creating "great sensation" and directing his attention to the "moral, intellectual, and political conditions of living Arabia, rather than the physical phenomena of the country" (I,vi), Palgrave distanced himself from his predecessors, Wellsted and Wallin, but not from other eminent and pioneer Arabian travellers such as Niebuhr, Burckhardt, and Lane who accounted for most aspects of Oriental-Arab life.²⁰ Palgrave regarded Lane's portrait of the "Arab race" in Egypt to have positive advantage over that of Niebuhr's of Yemen and its neighbourhood and to be livelier and fuller. Giving priority to Lane does not mean that Niebuhr's works were to him worthless. On the contrary, Palgrave dedicated *Central Arabia* to the memory of Niebuhr who appeared to him to be "truthful like an Englishman, judiciously accurate as a German and the *facile princeps* of all modern travellers in Arabia, both for correct observation and descriptive fidelity" (I,425). In his preface to *Central Arabia*, Palgrave admired Niebuhr's "cool and impartial style" and the "great truthfulness and judicious observation of that eminent traveller", nevertheless, he found him to be mistaken or misinformed on certain points (I,x).

Palgrave's admiration for Niebuhr was, in fact, limited to the latter's description

¹⁹ Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, pp.242-243.

²⁰ McNeill found that the writings of Niebuhr, Burckhardt, Wellsted, Wallin, Layard and Mengin to have left no room for Palgrave to add either to the physical structure of Arabia, or to any other aspect of Oriental life. For more details see John McNeill, "Palgrave's Arabia", *Quarterly Review*, 1866, 119, pp.182-215.

of the physical phenomena of Arabia. Concerning the social reality of Arabia, Palgrave's account was different, depending on his own occupations and age, especially in relation to Islam and Wahhabism, a new born movement at the time of Niebuhr's travels and a hundred-years old at the time of Palgrave's, and on the social reality of the Bedowin society. These were two points of considerable interest to Burckhardt who was criticized by Palgrave for not fully understanding Bedowin life. Although Palgrave claimed to have had insufficient acquaintance for much positive confirmation of, or dissidence from Burckhardt, the latter's works seemed to him to carry an exaggerated view regarding the Bedowin and the desert life (I,xi). Palgrave regarded almost everything seen by previous travellers such as Burckhardt, Poccoke, Wallin, and Welsted to be for the most part derived from the frontier provinces and the outer surface. Of the interior, whether physical or moral, they had less to tell. He also found the European reader to have been misled and to have formed his idea of Arabia and its people from the half-romantic and always over-coloured scenes of the wild Bedowin, painted as a sort of chivalresque knighterrants and representatives of unthralled freedom.

To invent something novel out of a theme so well known to every European who was read in Arabian travel literature and to create more amusement, Palgrave broke with Burckhardt and all other European travellers who viewed the desert as a place of romance and the Bedowin as noble, hospitable, and freedom-enjoying people. Palgrave expressed his deep aversion to the Bedowin and the desert, criticizing all European writers for a lack of knowledge in approaching them. Few writers appeared to him to have arrived at a just appreciation of the wandering, fewer still of the settled, population of Arabia, and few to have well understood the working of the clan-system in either element of society (I,xi). In his *Eastern Question*, Palgrave speaks of three kinds of Arab: Arab-Badoo, the genuine and thorough-going Bedowin; Arab-Deereh, the Arabs of the cultivated land, a Bedowin in the transition stage of becoming a civilized being, though not yet; and the Arabs of the cities.²¹ He also added that the experiences and tales of most Eastern travellers, stated by them to have occurred amongst the Bedowin and to be illustrative of their life, to be in reality refering to the Arab-Deereh rather than to the Arab-Bedoo. Both classes, according to him, have been easily confounded by the stranger under the generic denomination of Bedowin, while in fact they bear to each other a dog and jackal affinity. However, between the former and the domesticated animal, which may stand for type of the Deereh, and the latter wild beast, the appropriate emblem of the unreclaimed Bedoo, there is a wide divergence.

In breaking with, and distancing himself from, Burckhardt and others, by turning the traditional portrait of the Bedowin on its head, one of the main novelties of his *Central Arabia*, Palgrave was, in fact, approaching and coming closer and closer

²¹ Palgrave's *Essays on Eastern Questions*, pp.98-99.

to the French traveller Lamartine. Palgrave read Lamartine's *Voyage en Orient* and was, most likely, influenced by him.²² Lamartine expressed deep loathing of the Bedowin and a bitter hatred of Islam, two major themes of Palgrave's two volumes on Arabia. The fact that both Lamartine and Palgrave expressed similar ideas makes one either think in terms of the influence of the one on the other, or of the fact that they share a similar religious background; for both of them were devout Christians when they travelled to the Orient. Lamartine's instinctive aversion for the Bedowin and the desert was, most likely, inspired by their representation in the Bible, and seems to have reinforced Palgrave's religious conviction and encouraged him to elaborate the Biblical image. Palgrave relied, too, on their image as it occurred in the Quoran on certain occasions and in the context of Ibn Khaldoun's philosophy of history, which speaks of two stages of civilization in which the Bedowin society is the deterioration of the urban society.

The writings of Wellsted, Wallin, Niebuhr and Burckhardt concentrate on the subject under consideration without that higher level of personal intervention, making serious attempts to account for their object of study scientifically. In Palgrave's *Central Arabia*, on the other hand, the writer's personality, with its erudition in affairs Oriental, which is the result of intensive reading, especially, in Arab history and literature, and his presence as a European, a missionary, a political emissary and as an artist, whose aim is to amuse and open to his reader a new field of recreation on the scene of the Orient, predominate in his narrative, from beginning to end, and isolate him from his predecessors and some other eminent Arabian travellers. "The range of [Palgrave's] interest and knowledge, his intellectual capacity, and his extraordinary adaptability to the special conditions of the land he visited", according to Hogarth, "distinguish him from all travellers but the very elect". Hogarth found that the "qualities devoted to the composition of his narrative were such as rarely go to the making of travel book".²³ Everything on the Arabs is transmitted and processed through Palgrave's ideology, interests and personality which has already been constructed in such a way as to give a certain product. Every minute incident is given after a long process of transformation, condensation, displacement, meditation and reshaping. Having been tested in relation to the traveller mission and interest, the incident will either be rejected and reshaped, or accepted- in the latter case accepted only if it is revealing an exotic and superstitious side of Oriental life. This presence of the writer in his text does not, by necessity, mean that Palgrave was an individual. On the contrary, he is

22 B.M.Braude found Lamartine's *Voyage en Orient* to have had special influence on Palgrave's aspiration to travel to Arabia. See his *The Spiritual Quest of William Gifford Palgrave a Jesuit Mission to Arabia*, B.A honour degree dissertation, Harvard College, 1967.

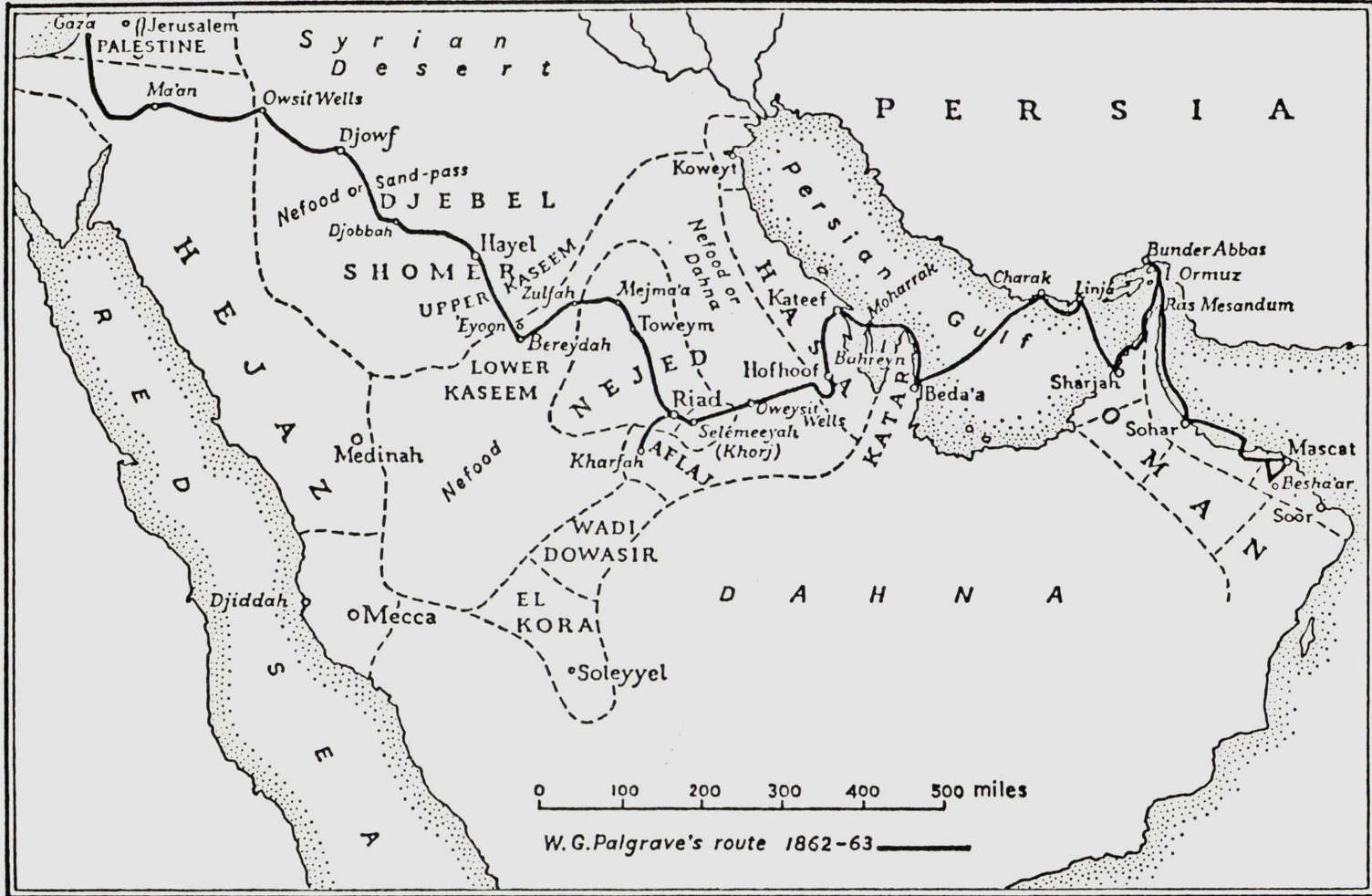
23 Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, p.307.

less an individual than a type. His feeling of superiority is not only his but that of every nineteenth-century European. He is a type of the Jesuit missionary and the cooperation between missionary enterprise and the European imperial power in non-European countries.

With a political and proselytising aim in mind, Palgrave commenced his journey. Like Niebuhr, who travelled as Oriental Christian, Palgrave claimed to have assumed the character and appearance of a Syrian doctor of Christian religion. He considered his disguise to be successful because it appeared to him that "though the qualities of Christian and of European may be in fact united in the wayfarer's person, they are by no means necessarily conjoined in the Arab mind" (I,264). Unlike Wallin, his immediate predecessor to Hail, who travelled in disguise as a Muslim Sheikh, concealing both his nationality and religion, Palgrave concealed the former and avowed the latter. His disguise, as such, was not essential to his end, for he avowed his Christianity in a place where nationality was not known and the only difference between men was identified through religion. His disguise was decorative to his narrative, revealing and shedding light on his past and real personality; providing the reader with entertainment; and exposing the skilful and heroic side of the traveller, rather than a means helping him to render the reality of the Orient and the Muslim-Arab life explicit.²⁴ At Hayel, for instance, when passing a kind of preliminary examination before the court chamberlain, Palgrave heard three persons professing to have recognized him as an old acquaintance. One of them, a man with "a face well known to him scarcely six month before in Damascus", greeted him with a "cheerful salutation, in the confidential tone of an old acquaintance". The second claimed to have seen him somewhere in Damascus, but Palgrave did not recall that event or place. The third professed to have met him "at Cairo, where he lived in great wealth in a house near the Kasr-el-Eyne: his name is Abd-el-Saleeb, he is married, and has a very beautiful daughter, who rides an expensive horse". Palgrave convinced the audience that all three were mistaken, although he was convinced that the first was telling the

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By the time of Palgrave's travels disguise had become an old-fashioned practice and a classical method through which a Briton or even a European travelled to the Arab world. Feeling it to have become repugnant, Doughty and Blunt, after Palgrave, did not assume it. In her *Europe's Myths of Orient*, (Macmillan, 1986), Ms Kabbani handles this point in detail. She finds in disguise a means of infiltrating into a society in order to gain information; a means which allows the traveller a deeper access to a cloistered world which he thought guarded its secrets closely; and a means of affording both the wearer and his audience with entertainment, making the journey East more exotic. She also finds that it enabled its wearer to move from one racial category to another as if by magic; and to be reflective of the severe regimentation of Victorian society, where any serious divergence from the consecrated hierarchies would lead to complete ostracism (pp. 89-91).



Palgrave's route of travel.
 (From Allan's *Palgrave of Arabia*)

truth, the second might have been telling the truth, while the third was a liar. His disguise, here, provides the narrative with the element of suspense and adventure and reveals some aspects of the traveller's character. It tells that Palgrave had lived in Damascus and was known for a Christian, but not married. He denied that he had had a fine house, beautiful daughter, and expensive house in Cairo and convinced the audience that they were existing only in the teller's imagination, but did not touch upon his name as being "Abd-el-Saleeb", meaning in Arabic "the slave or servant of the Cross", which is a pure Christian name. This also emphasizes that he was known abroad as Christian.

Following the tradition of his predecessors, Palgrave's disguise was endangered by penetration. At Hayel, Obeyed-ed-Deeb, or "Obeyed the Wolf", uncle of Talal, a partisan, "an excellent warrior, of undisputed skill and valour, versed alike in all the resources of deceit and violence, of bloodshed and perjury"(I,203), and an agent of the prince of the Wahhabees, penetrated his disguise. He gave Palgrave a letter of introduction to the chief Wahhabee potentate, Abd-Allah, son of Faysul, at Riad their next station after Hayel. Following the practice of Hamlet, Palgrave undid the the seals, with precautions admitting of reclosing them in proper form, and found it to contain a warning that Palgrave and his company were of assumed character, skilled in magic, a capital crime in the land of the Wahhabi.

PALGRAVE'S JOURNEY.

Coming from Damascus and following Wallin's route to Hail, Palgrave and his companions, Barakat²⁵ and three Bedowin, set out from the Eastern gate of Maan, a city to the south-east of the Dead Sea on the 16 June 1862.²⁶ They were bound for

25 In France, Père Beckx assigned Frère Elias, who was a convert from Islam and was admitted to the Society of Jesus, to accompany Palgrave in his travels in Arabia. They left France together to Syria and in 1861 they were commissioned by France to contact the Bedowin in the Syrian desert. They left Zahleh for Hama where they would enter the desert. There Elias fell ill and was confided to a European friend of Palgrave. Looking for a new companion, Palgrave found a young Frenchman at the French consulate, who was Syrian-born and familiar with Arab language and customs. Palgrave was also introduced to a sub-chief of the Sebaas tribe, and the three travelled together into the north-east Syria, visiting Palmyra and crossing the desert to Euphrate. When recovered Elias went back to Damascus and related his story. Palgrave was reprimanded for his conduct and was asked to look for another priest to accompany him to Arabia since Elias was unfit to travel. Looking for somebody, who could pass himself as an Arab, Palgrave chose Geraigeri, Barakat as-Shami, a young Greek schoolmaster at Zahleh. They spent the winter of 1861-2 in Zahleh until the latter was duly ordained in February by the bishop of his Jesuit order.

26 In his *The Penetration of Arabia*, Hogarth noticed that "since Wallin's time every European traveller who has made any considerable journey in the interior of the (Footnote continued)

the Jauf, a valley or oasis, the nearest inhabited district of Central Arabia, a distance of two hundred miles if traversed in straight line. Both Barakat and Palgrave, now Seleem Abou Mahmoud el-Eys, travelled as Syrian Christians, not drawing attention to their religion, but not denying it. The three local Bedowin were "a strange set", led by Salim-el- Atneh who belonged to the Howeytat Arab. He was "a member of a powerful family among the Howeytat, and nearer akin to the chief of the clan; but he had rendered himself so unfortunately conspicuous by repeated acts of robbery and pillage, with supplementary murder now and then" (I,3). Although Salim was unprincipled, he was a brave and fore-sighted man, a kind of person Palgrave took to be trusted to a certain extent. The other two Bedowin Alee and Djordee were Sherarat Bedowin, "and utter barbarians in appearance no less in character, wild, fickle, reckless, and the capacity of whose intellect was as scanty as its cultivation" (I,4).

Travelling as a Syrian Christian, half-merchant and half-physician, Palgrave made provision for acting the part of merchant and that of doctor in case circumstances might occur in which the medical profession would be of little service and it might seem expedient to alternate the role of a doctor with that of travelling merchant. To sustain the profession of physician, he provided himself with about fifty small, light-fitting tin boxes, filled with drugs enough "to kill or cure half the sick men of Arabia", and a few volumes of Arabic medical lore. His mercantile stock consisted of cloth, beads, neckless, pipe-bowls, hand-kerchief, and two large sacks of coffee.

On the 24 June, that is, the seventh day of their travel, and while they were on their way to cross the desert to the Oasis of Jauf, they reached "Wadi Sirhan", the "Valley of Wolf" which lies in the direct route to Central Arabia. This valley was inhabited by the Sherarat Bedowin whom Palgrave took as "a fair specimen of the genuine and unalloyed Bedowin species" (I,10). By now Palgrave began to cast his conception of the Bedowins and the desert, scattering all romantic notions as to the dignity of the Bedowin and their chivalry and the desert as a place of rest and escape. The desert, for him, was not a place of romance, but a place of suffering which he detested very strongly. It was high summer and he and his companions were overtaken by the dreaded Simmom which made the atmosphere so dark, and the heat so burning, that "it seemed that hell had risen

from the earth, or descended from above. But we were yet in time, and at the moment when the worst of the concentrated poison-blast was coming around, we were already prostrated one and all within the tent, with heads well wrapped up, almost suffocated indeed, but safe; while our camels lay without like dead, their long necks stretched out on awaiting the passing of the gale" (I,18).

²⁶(continued)

peninsula has touched or crossed, if he has not followed, the track of predecessor" p.171.

The few days he spent in the society of Sherarat Bedowin increased his aversion to them. The Sherarat are, according to him, the most degraded of the Arab nomads and the most miserable; a sorry specimen of humanity with little about them to admire, and much to disgust.

Palgrave and Barakat continued their journey and as they approached the Jawf, where Talal ebn Rasheed, prince of Shomer, governed, they had to look for a new guide. Salim could not enter the Jawf because of a murder he had committed there. He assured Palgrave that they could travel unmolested since they were in the domain of Talal, who ruled with a rod of iron, and managed to find a new leader for them to take over their guidance, the latter being Suleyman-el-Azzamee, "a good-natured but somewhat timid individual".

They kept on the march, passing a narrow gorge, down which the sun of July was beating with terrible power. Exhausted by travel, especially now that Palgrave's camel had several times fallen down, foodless and waterless, they arrived at the Jauf,²⁷ an oasis sixty or seventy miles long, lying between the northern and southern desert and being the gateway to Jabal Shomer. They were received by two horsemen, who later turned out to be Ghafil-el-Haboob, the chief of the once reigning family of the Jauf, and one of his kinsmen. They offered them dates and water and made them their guest in their fortnight's stay there.

Palgrave described the features and the society of the province of Al-Jauf in detail. His account adds nothing to that of Wallin's, but rather tallies with it, and is designed, as Hogarth noticed, to be more descriptive and more impressive.²⁸ Kiernan concurs with Hogarth and states that Palgrave's account of this section of his route, though much fuller, adds nothing of value to Wallin's account. He also adds that Palgrave's Jauf is larger and more luxuriant, as though the writer were remembering it only in contrast to the wearying scenes he had passed in the hard, stony, monotonous desert and that Palgrave's account was impressionistic.²⁹ Being a missionary, Palgrave expanded in his account on the inhabitants' religion, but added nothing in the main to Wallin's. They were, according to him, originally Christians who were converted to Islam at the point of the sword, first at the hand of Ali and Khalid ebn Al-Walid and then by the Wahhabbi when Jawf was conquered by Talal, who subjugated it and appointed one of his men Hamood in name. At this stage Palgrave worked as a merchant and he and Barakat were known to all as Christians. Before their departure,

²⁷ Both Palgrave and Wallin agree on the meaning of the word Jauf in Arabic. According to Palgrave Jauf means belly and owes its name partly to its central position and partly to its excavated form(I,57). With Wallin, Jauf means belly or centre (138).

²⁸ Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, p.250.

²⁹ R.E. Kiernan, *The Unveiling of Arabia*, p.146.

they paid a visit to Hamood, Talal's vice-governor, and presented him with a gift of fine coffee which he accepted and offered his services to them.

Their departure was accelerated by the arrival of a party of Sherarat Arab en route to Hayel with the purpose of securing the good will of Telal by paying their allegiance to him. Provided with "letters commendatory" from Hamood and hiring two camels and their master as a guide and companion, Palgrave and Barakat joined the party and set out on the 18 July for a march through the burning sand-passes of the Nefood desert.

On the second morning of their departure, they arrived at Bir Shakik, or the "well of Shakik", their last water-supply until they reach Jubba, whence they filled their water-skins. Then they entered the Nafud, or sand-passes in the desert, a place so hated by Palgrave that he felt he was traversing "an immense ocean of loose reddish

sand unlimited to the eye, and heaped up in enormous ridges running parallel to each other from north to south, undulation after undulation, each swell two or three hundred feet in average height, with slant sides and rounded crests furrowed in every direction by the capricious gales of the desert. In the depths between the traveller finds himself as it were imprisoned in suffocating sand-pit, hemmed in by burning walls on every side; while at other times, while labouring up slope, he overlooks what seems a vast sea of fire, swelling under a heavy monsoon wind, and ruffled by a cross-blast into little red-hot waves. Neither shelter nor rest for eye or limb amid torrent of light and heat poured from above on an answering glare reflected below" (I,91-2).

As a traveller insistent on his identity as a Christian, Palgrave held an essentially negative view of the desert, focusing on its nihilistic feature of disorder and chaos. Here as elsewhere, where he faced the Summom Winds, Palgrave's experience, and confrontation and struggle, with the desert is portrayed as a ritual suffering from which the individual emerges purified and enlightened. His sufferings in the desert are deliberately made to recall the agony of Christ in the wilderness. The desert is depicted as a testing-ground by presenting its hardships as a personal adversary. Nature stands here against man. In such a situation Palgrave conceives of himself a Christ figure, a lone man, in the midst of chaos. His encounter with the desert is set in the context of a spiritual task. His endurance as a Christian has been tested and prevailed and his Westernity has proved its superiority to its surroundings.

After many days of suffocating heat, they crossed the desert, leaving the Nafud behind and reached Jubba. They had a short rest of one day and then recommenced their journey to the town of Hayel. The journey from Jauf to Hayel deepened Palgrave's aversion to the desert and the Bedowin who were all threatening. Later, he came to know that his Bedowin escort had seriously proposed to pillage Palgrave and Barakat and leave them, without camels and water, to perish in the desert. But the plot broke down only through the refusal of some of the Bedowin to join in it, fearing the ferocity of Telal's justice.

Upon entering Hayel, they passed to the open square in front of the palace and took their place on the stone bench along the wall facing the palace main gate. They were greeted by the citizens and then by Seyf, the court chamberlain, whose special duty it was to receive and present strangers. Palgrave and his companion presented themselves as Syrian physicians, but their disguise was shaken when three bystanders claimed to have seen Palgrave in Damascus and Cairo- as we have seen, a situation Palgrave managed to escape. They were led to the K'hawa of the palace where Talal's guests were usually received and were offered coffee. Talal came later from his evening stroll in the garden accompanied by his prime minister and treasurer, Zamil, and his friend and confidant Abdul Mahsin. They approached him saluting him and he, in turn, returned their salutation.

At this point of his narrative, Palgrave accounted for Talal's liberality and management of state affairs and sums up the story of the fall and rise of the Rashid family which he claimed to have acquired from the Hayliti. Palgrave and his companions gave Talal their letter of introduction from Hamood. Talal passed it to Zamil and later provided them with a private audience. He was satisfied with their interview and accepted their disguise as Syrians, but was suspicious of their profession. He took them to have come to buy horses.³⁰ Then he provided them with a dwelling where they opened a shop and began doctoring in Hayel and its immediate neighbourhood for a period which lasted from the 27 July to the 8 September. Like Burton in Alexandria, his profession helped him to mix with the Hayelite from all walks of life and gather his information by personal observation and unrestrained intercourse. Like Wallin, Palgrave was impressed by the urban society of Hayel, and like him he spoke of Talal in the highest terms reminiscent of that of Wallin's to Abdullah. Palgrave pronounces an eloquent eulogy of Talal's administration, justice, open-mindedness and kindness. His description of Hayel and the Haylite was vivid and his narrative was at its best, although not as precise and as scientific as that of Wallin to whom Hogarth gave every credit.

Having spent about six weeks in Hayel, Palgrave felt it was time for them to go to Riad, the capital of the Wahhabee and the main goal of his enterprise. But such a journey was impossible without a passport from the ruler of Hayel, especially since there were suspicions concerning them. Accordingly Palgrave requested a private audience with Talal, at which he and his companion, Barakt, gave a full account of themselves and the object of their journey. Talal furnished them with a passport and a letter to the ruler of Riad and Zamil arranged for their escort.

On 8 September they left heading for Buraidah. They began in fairly good

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Palgrave seems to have based this conclusion on the fact that Wallin had preceded them with the ostensible purpose of buying horses when Abdullah Ibn Rashid was ruling.

spirit, hoping now that they would not suffer the fatigue, discomfort and risks of their previous travels, especially that they had no desert to traverse, for the district of Upper Kaseem is an elevated plateau and of moderate weather. They made about thirteen hours march daily and passed eight villages out of forty of Upper Kaseem halting in four of them. On their way to the town of Uyun, where they were to have their supper at Foley's house, they saw:

huge stones like enormous boulders, placed endways perpendicularly on the soil, while some of them yet upheld similar masses laid transversely over their summit. They were arranged in a curve, once forming part, it would appear, of a large circle, and many other like fragments lay rolled on the ground at a moderate distance; the number of those still upright was, to speak by memory, eight or nine. Two, at about ten or twelve feet apart one from the other, and resembling huge gate-post, yet bore their horizontal lintel, a huge block laid across them; a few were deprived of their upper traverse, the rest support each its head-piece in defiance of time and of the more destructive efforts of man. So nicely balanced did one of these cross-bars appear, that in hope it might prove a rocking-stone, I guided my camel right under it, and then stretching up my riding-stick at arm's-length could just manage to touch and push it, but it did not stir. Meanwhile the respective heights of camel, rider, and stick taken together would place the stone in question full fifteen feet from the ground (I.251).

They halted in the shade of these huge pillars, which were proved by Philby to have no existence, to rest after a long march. In Uyun they went to Fulaih's house and enjoyed their supper. They commenced their journey, their next stage being Ghat, "the non-existent oasis of Ghat" to use Philby's expression. At last they sighted Buraidah and before entering it they spent the evening in one of its suburbs, Doweirah, situated a league or rather less from the Buraida. Investigating Palgrave's track in the area, Philby found this suburb to be another creation of Palgrave's own imagination.³¹

In Buraidah they faced the problem of finding a new guide, because the mission of their guide who accompanied them from Hayel was over, and accordingly an unexpected delay resulted. Buraidah had the reputation of being ruled in the strictest Wahhabi manner by a wicked governor named Muhanna, one of Faysal's vice rulers in Najd, who cheated a caravan of Persian pilgrims and was engaged in blackmailing in the most outrageous manner. After six days of extensive search for a guide, they fell in with Abu Isa, a Syrian like themselves and a native of Aleppo, a very liberal and open minded man, the kind of person whom Palgrave admired most. He was bound for Riad and Hasa, and was known to the Wahhabi. He agreed to take them to Riad. They spent another two weeks more in Buraidah before Aboo 'Eysa gave his starting signal, for he was engaged in negotiation with the Na'ib of the Persian caravan who also wanted to go to Riad. Owing to the Wahhabi military operation against Anaiza,

³¹ St.J.B. Philby, *The Heart of Arabia*, (London, 1922), p.141-2.

Palgrave did not follow exactly the reverse route of Sadlier, making a rather circular way via Zilfa, in the province of Sudair, and from thence to Riad. Of his progress between Buraida and Zilfa Hogarth says that he could not make head or tail of it. After ten days of their march they arrived at Riad, the main object of Palgrave's long journey, "the capital of Nejed and half Arabia, its very heart of hearts" (I,388).

The penetration of Riad is Palgrave's real achievement, for he was the first European to go there after it had been established as a capital of the Wahhabi.³² Knowing that his fame and the originality of his work would depend on the description of the capital of the Wahhabi and its people, he presented the reader with long chapters dealing with almost everything his eyes saw, or his ears heard: the geography of the city; the agricultural and commercial situation; the social and religious life; the Wahhabi system of government; the Royal family; the Arabian horses and their breeding; and most of all, his skilfulness in doctoring, which gave him access to all that he desired, and finally his personal adventures and escape from Riad.

No sooner had he entered Riad, passing, what he termed, "the lion's den", then he received the King's message that the latter did not consider Riad a suitable place for him to practise medicine, and consequently it would be preferable he and his companion continued their journey to Hufuf. The messenger, Abdul Aziz, also told them that the King, Faisal, would give each of them a camel, a new suit of clothes and sum of money. This message was disappointing to Palgrave who was determined not to quit Riad till after fully satisfying his curiosity relative to government, people and whatever it contained. Thinking of a proper way of prolonging their stay, Abu Eysa suggested that a gift to an influential minister might clear the way. They agreed and bought two pounds of scented wood (ud) which they left at the door of Mahbub and Abdul Aziz in the name of the travelling doctor and his assistant. The gift, or rather the bribery, for Palgrave intended from this story to imply that bribery, in one way or another, operates in the most sophisticated offices of Islamic government, proved quite correct and permission was given for them to remain in the city and exercise doctoring under Faisal's personal patronage.

Palgrave and Barakat were given a house at a decorous distance from the palace and began their doctoring. They were visited by patients from all walks of life in Riad, and fortunately most of them were Wahhabi. Palgrave discoursed with them mostly only on religion and Wahhabism. He, in fact, used them as a means to state and support his prejudices against the Wahhabi. He cured people of different ranks in

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Sadlier preceded Palgrave to Nejd in 1819. He visited Riad, not yet capital, and proceeded to Darayah, the former capital, by now devastated and ruined by the Egyptian army of Ibrahim Pasha. He passed through Nejd by Darayah, Shakra, Anaiza, El-Rass, and Hanekayah traversing from east to west almost the same parts of that province traversed from west to east by Palgrave, with the exception of Jabal Shammer and Jauf.

the palace and befriended them. He also built a friendly relationship with Abdullah, the prince and son of Faisal, who extended to him a large share of confidence and sought, in return, information on matters of medical science.

Palgrave's profession gave him access, not only to the Najdi and the royal palace in Riad, but to the royal stable as well. This happened when he was asked by Abdullah to visit it to cure a mare, a visit which introduced him to the Najdian horses. He wrote about them saying that he had never seen, or imagined so lovely a collection. His celebrated remarks on this point were taken seriously in the West and were one of the factors which promoted Blunt's curiosity to travel to the East. "I had hardly as yet visited the East, but Eastern travel had interested me from the day I had read Palgrave's journey in Arabia", Blunt recorded in his *My Diaries*.³³ Palgrave seems to have derived his notion of Arab horses from Wallin, who found the horses of Shammar to be "the finest and the swiftest of the noble Arab race",³⁴ rather than on his experience and direct observations. Indeed Blunt dismissed Palgrave's observation as absurd.³⁵

Palgrave series of his almost daily visits to Abdullah did not lead to a satisfactory conclusion. Their break up came when the prince tried to persuade him to settle in Riad, offering him a house and a wife, and later requesting from him some of his medicine, namely strychnine. Palgrave refused both offers and aroused the anger of Abdullah. By now, Palgrave thought it was time he left and began to consider a plan to escape safe. On the evening of 21 November Palgrave was summoned by the prince and was accused of being spy, Christian and a revolutionary. Fortunately his skill proved not less than that of other disguised travellers such as Burton and Burkhardt, and he was shrewd enough to manage the situation.

Although Palgrave claimed that his disguise was very successful and that he mastered not only Arabic, but the Damascene accent as well, a most unlikely claim, everywhere he felt that he was in danger and suspected by most of the Arabs he conversed with. In Hayel he felt that his disguise might have been penetrated for a spy, and consequently he revealed himself to Telal. In Riad, no sooner had he arrived than he had a similar feeling and resolved to give the same confidence, which he gave to Telal, to his guide Abu Isa. He and Barakat explained to him who they were, the purpose of their journey, and everything requisite for him to know in case they needed

33 W.S.Blunt, *My Diaries*, p.544.

34 *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol.24, 1854, p.188.

35 Hogarth says that he had a letter from Blunt in which the latter speaks strongly of the absurdity of Palgrave's account of the Arab breeds of horses, in which he professed particular interest. Hogarth also quotes Blunt as saying that "Palgrave's chapter on horses is just as might have been written as an after thought to supply an important omission in his account of the country. See Hogarth's *The Penetration of Arabia*, p.249n.

any help. The tide of events proved that the latter appreciated their confidence and stood by them in their latest trial to escape from Riad. With Abu Esa they left Riad on 24 November by the small northern gate, heading south-east to Hufuf.

Guided by Mubarak, Palgrave and Barakat left towards Hasa. They arranged to meet Abu Isa in Wadi Sulai, from which place they proceeded to Hufuf, passing by the sand-belt of Dahana and encountering the desert once more. Palgrave expressed his aversion not only to the desert, but to the Bedouin of Al-Murra with whom they fell in. He described them as the most savage and primitive-looking of all tribesmen that he had seen. After a five-days' march from Wadi Sulai, they arrived at Hufuf, leaving behind the Arab caravan to catch the locusts they encountered the night before. In their three weeks' residence in the town they enjoyed Abou Isa's hospitality and lived peacefully away from the fanatic Wahhabi. Philby said later that he had made the reverse journey of Palgrave following his tracks from Hasa to Riad and from Riad southward to Kharfa in the Aflaj. In the farther north he said that he journeyed over the ground traversed by Palgrave between Buraida and Qusaiba and between the first named and Mudhnib and Zilfa. His conclusion was that in every section of the journey within his ken Palgrave stood convicted of the grossest errors, the cumulative effect of which was overwhelming.³⁶

Palgrave and Barakat headed to Bahrein where they met Abou Isa again. Palgrave did not extend his description of Bahrein because he could "hardly imagine this island to be altogether a novel topic of description to my reader, after the many Europeans, and our own countrymen in particular, who have visited its shores" (II,208).

From Bahrein, now parting with Barakat and Abou Isa, Palgrave sailed for Qatar and thence to Uman. Apart from Palgrave's heroic achievements and adventure, especially his shipwreck, Palgrave has nothing novel to say in the last part of the narrative of his travels in Arabia. Colonel S.B. Miles, the British resident and Consul-General at Muscat, is reported to have said that there was not a word of truth in Palgrave's account of it, and that he introduced, for instance, villages and palm-groves that did not exist, and a purely imaginary road down a precipice at Mascat harbour.³⁷

PALGRAVE, *CENTRAL ARABIA* AND THE ORIENT.

In 1865 the finished product of Palgrave's travels and amusing adventures in Arabia appeared in two volumes under the title of *Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia*,³⁸ adding considerably to the Victorian literature on

³⁶ Philby, *The Heart of Arabia*, p.120-1.

³⁷ *The Unveiling of Arabia*, by R.H. Kiernan, (London, 1937), p.258.

the Orient and expressing more of the ideology through which the European used to view the Oriental population. Palgrave's first public communication of his travels in Arabia had been made to the Royal Geographical Society on 22 February 1864. Sir Roderick Murchison, the president of the Society, described it ambiguously as "The Thousand and Second Arabian Tales". With the exception of Sadleir, Murchison found Palgrave to be the only explorer who crossed the very heart of Arabia, emerging from the Persian Gulf. He found Palgrave's narrative to be of no significance to science and commended it instead as a graphic and attractive account of the habits and life of the people of the inland kingdom of the Wahhabites and their capital Riad, and useful for the clear distinction he drew between the wandering Bedowins and the regularly governed, civilized, and the strict Wahhabite Muslims who lived at the centre.³⁹ The Society's Council followed Murchison's lead and did not vote a medal for him, though the French Geographical Society did award him such a distinction. According to Philby, the Paris Geographical Society awarded Palgrave its gold medal, not necessarily for his services to geographical science, but because of his political services to the French interests in the Middle East. He also suggested that the story of his Arabian travels was designed to provide Palgrave with an alibi at a time when he was engaged in political activities which had little connection with geographical exploration.⁴⁰ Later in 1878 Palgrave was elected by the Royal Geographical Society as a fellow.

Palgrave's *Central Arabia* had raised more questions than it solved and produced more blanks than it was originally aiming to fill in. It raised, first and foremost the question of the Arabs *and* Palgrave, and the Arabs *of* Palgrave; for his account on 'living Arabia', revealed the 'living Palgrave' and the 'living ideology' through which the Christian missionary and the European imperialist viewed the East, and produced certain Arabs and a certain Arabia which does not exist outside Palgrave's literary imagination. It also raised the question of his scientific inaccuracies and untruthfulness to the extent that some were reluctant to accept his claim that he performed the journey he described; others questioned his disguise as a Syrian Christian; and many others launched hostile and bitter criticisms disarming him from his professed originality of being a pioneer explorer of Central Arabia. McNeill accused him of untruthfully claiming to be the first explorer of Central Arabia and drew attention to the contributions of Palgrave's forerunners and the latter's shortcomings, finding "no sufficient reason to doubt that the outlines of what [Palgrave] depicted from personal observation are for the most part faithfully drawn [by other writers]".⁴¹ Philby, a great

38 In 1868 it was republished as *Personal Narrative of a Year's Journey through Central and Eastern Arabia*, (Macmillan, London, 1868).

39 *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol.34, 1864. p.111.

40 Philby, "Palgrave in Arabia", *The Geographical Journal*, 1947, 109, 283.

modern authority on Arabia, considered much of Palgrave's Arabian story to be pure fiction and expressed his belief that Palgrave was commissioned to investigate the political situation in Jabal Shumar and had no need to travel the area described in his narrative. Philby had travelled the country covered by Palgrave's journey and discounted his claim to have visited Kharj and Aflaj stating:

Having travelled all over the country myself, I can only state here my conviction that Palgrave not only never saw Kharj and Aflaj, but never even reached Riyadh or the Qasim. If he ever reached Hail, that was the farthest limit in Arabia, and I do not think that he even did that. His clever and romantic story has taken the fancy of⁴² the world, but it is little more, in my opinion; than a "traveller's tale".

Cheesman, who re-read both Palgrave and Philby while travelling in Hasa, decides that both must have been there. "Philby rightly challenges many of Palgrave's statements", Cheesman observes, "but when he suggests that he never went there I cannot agree". Cheesman also adds that the "picture Palgrave painted of the Hufuf, its gardens and its industries, is to my mind exactly as I saw them, and could only have been composed by an eye-witness".⁴³ This 'eye-witness', as Philby's second attack⁴⁴ implied, could have been an Arab reporter. Basing his criticism on the 'test-case' of Palgrave's visit to the oasis of Uyun in Qasim, where the latter found a great megalithic monument,⁴⁵ Philby again tried to prove his point and to discredit Palgrave's claim of visiting Central Arabia. Palgrave, as his description implied to Philby, thought that he might have been in the presence of an Arabian 'stonehenge'. Philby went to look for it, first of all by scanning the area by aeroplane, and secondly by car in an expedition with Rushdi Mulhis, the King's Political Secretary, a man deeply interested in in Arabian archaeology. His conclusion was that the monument, described by Palgrave, "does not exist and never has existed". In addressing the Royal Geographical Society, Philby made a great challenge stating: "If it is found not to exist, the probabilities are that Palgrave never saw it and never saw Uyun; if, on the other hand, its existence can be established, there is every reason to believe that he did visit the

⁴¹ John McNeill, *Quarterly Review*, 1866, 119, p.215.

⁴² H. STJ. B. Philby, *Arabian Days*, (London, 1948), p.167. Philby's criticism, which cast doubts upon the authenticity of Palgrave's travels over the South-Central (Aflaj) and Eastern (Hasa) parts of Arabia, is detailed in *The Heart of Arabia*, (London, 1922), vol.II, pp.117-156.

⁴³ R.E. Cheesman, "The Desert of Jafura and Jabrin", *The Geographical Journal*, 1925, 65, p.120.

⁴⁴ Philby made a second attack on Palgrave in a paper to the Royal Geographical Society in 1947, published in *The Geographical Journal*, 1947, 109, pp.282-285.

⁴⁵ For details on Palgrave's description see pp. 219-220 of this chapter. See also *Central Arabia*, vol.I, p.251.

locality".⁴⁶ Mea Allan, Palgrave's biographer, came to his defence to prove that the monument had existed. Her evidence was that an aerial survey by archaeologists in Saudi Arabia in 1966 had revealed that at Sakak there existed a megalithic circle, dating possibly from the fifteenth century B.C.. She also said that she had written a letter to Dr. Abdulla Wohaibi, Secretary- General of the University of Riad, and received the following answer:

The paragraph concerning the stone circle near Eyoon (al-'Uyun) is correct. The people of al-Uy'un call it Mawain 'Antar, literally the cooking and eating utensils of 'Antar, hero of the 'Abs, the tribe that lived in the area fifteen centuries ago. The circles at Rass and near Henakeeyah are also still there, although their appearance marred year after year because of⁴⁷ the ignorant amateurs who do not know how to respect such valuable.

Allan's defence is a challenge to Philby's statement and a proof that the monument had once existed in history, but not in Uyun and at the time of Palgrave's travels. It, on the other hand, strengthens Philby's argument and asserts the fact that Palgrave's information was academic, derived from the books of history and literature,⁴⁸ rather than practical, extracted from the personal observations of an eye-witness. This makes us accept Philby's feeling that Palgrave's account of Arabia "was not the work of an eye-witness and was built up at second-hand out of information supplied by Arab agents employed by him in the course of his political work".⁴⁹

Philby also criticized Hogarth's *Penetration of Arabia* in which the latter stated his conviction that "Palgrave without doubt made the journey which he described". Hogarth supported his opinion by citing certain remarks from Doughty, Nolde and Blunt.⁵⁰ Philby, rightly, argued that of Palgrave's route, Blunt never went south of Hayel; Nolde touched Palgrave route slightly between Qusaiba and Buraida; and that Doughty's line of travel touched that of Palgrave only at Buraida. Their accounts, accordingly, cannot be used to prove that Palgrave travelled in Central Arabia, as described by him, or in Hasa, or Uman, and Philby concluded that Palgrave political

⁴⁶ Philby's "Palgrave in Arabia", *The Geographical Journal*, 1947, 109, p.282.

⁴⁷ Mea Allan, *Palgrave of Arabia*, (Macmillan, 1972), p.209.

⁴⁸ Palgrave could have derived his description of the monument in question from the story of *Antar*. His obituary in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* claims that "an early passion for mission work among the Arab race, aroused by the translation of the old Arabian romance, *Antar*, now returned upon him with overmastering force" (1888, 10) p.713. Palgrave was widely read in Arabic literature, history, philosophy of history and religion. For a list of his readings see his preface to *Central Arabia*, pp.ix-x.

⁴⁹ Philby, *The Geographical Journal*, 1947, 109, p.284.

⁵⁰ See *The Penetration of Arabia*, pp.249-250.

mission did not necessitate his travels in those area. Philby's expeditions have, as Kiernan observed, "entirely modified the picture of Central Arabia drawn by Palgrave, and proved much of it to be fantastic".⁵¹

Doughty accepted Palgrave's alleged travels across Arabia to the Persian Gulf and dismissed the idea that he went as spy for Napoleon, an assumption which is groundless. But he questioned the idea that Palgrave travelled as Christian. He reported to have heard from most respectable missionaries in Beirut that Palgrave was a prig and a liar and he believed Palgrave to have "called himself Abdullah and played the Moslem" in his travels in Arabia.⁵² Doughty based his conclusion on three incidents. At Hayel, Hamud mentioned a traveller, called Abdullah, who came to Hayel in Talal's time and cured Bundar, and since nobody had heard of Abou Seleem el-Eys (Palgrave), Doughty took that Abdullah to be Palgrave. In Buraida, which was visited by Palgrave, Doughty was told that no Nasrany (Christian) had ever entered it and they named a certain traveller called Abdullah.⁵³ Doughty also said that El-Khenneyny said to him at Aneyza something like this: "How can you go about in such a lawless land and call yourself a Nasrany and Inglezy? ...(that name I cannot recall) did not so when he journeyed through the country".⁵⁴ Doughty's conclusions were not backed by conclusive evidences from Palgrave's text and its validity is dependent on the degree of trust the reader gives him. They could be accepted on the grounds of Palgrave's inaccuracy and Doughty's truthfulness, or they could be dismissed on the grounds that Doughty's accusation would make him a pioneer traveller to Arabia, travelling as Christian and English, and would give his account more advantage over that of Palgrave's.

In *Central Arabia* and elsewhere Palgrave made certain statements which leave the reader in no doubt that Palgrave had travelled as a Muslim, not as a Christian as he claimed. The first evidence is his disguise name. He claimed to have travelled as a Syrian Christian under the name of Seleem Abou-Mahmoud-el-Eys. Had Palgrave really travelled as Seleem Abou-Mahmoud-el-Eys, he would have certainly travelled as a Muslim, for the name is used by Muslims and identifies a Muslim. With the advent of Islam, some, if not all, of Arab proper names which occurred in the Quran or were introduced by it, or were those of some later Muslim leaders, were rejected by the Arab Christians or Jews. The names Muhammad, Ahmad, Mahmoud, Mustafa etc. are foremost examples, because they are the names of the Messenger of Islam, who is mostly known as Muhammad. If we examine Palgrave's assumed name, we will find it

⁵¹ R.H. Kiernan, *The Unveiling of Arabia*, p.328.

⁵² *The Life of Charles M. Doughty*, by D.G.Hogarth, (London, 1928), pp.151-152.

⁵³ Doughty, *Arabia Deserta*, Vol.II, 604, & 326.

⁵⁴ *The Life of Charles M.Doughty*, by Hogarth, p.152.

a name signifying that its bearer is a Muslim. The initial 'Seleem' is an Arab name used by Muslims and non-Muslims. The surname 'Abou-Mahmoud-el-Eyse' is Islamic. 'Abou-Mahmoud', meaning the 'father of Mahmoud', could mean that either Seleem (Palgrave) has a son called Mahmoud, one of the names of Muhammad, and that he is called after the Arab fashion Abou Mahmoud with a surname Eys, or that his family name is Abou-Mahmoud-el-Eys. Again 'Eys' is the diminutive form of Isa (Jesus Christ). Palgrave's name could signify that he travelled either as a born Muslim, or as converted one and would be identified from his name in this context in Arabia as Muslim, but never as a Christian. In Jauf, he said he and Barakat were known for Christians; nevertheless he once attended a Friday sermon in the mosque. For a non-Muslim this sounds sensible, but for a Muslim and for Palgrave, who bitterly criticized Burton for performing the Muslims' duty of Hajj and prayer, it is not. The noon prayer is four prostration Ruka'. The Friday prayer is the same noon prayer, but it is two prostration Ruka'. Two Ruka' are omitted because of the sermon, which precedes the prayer, and hearing the sermon is like praying the first two Ruka' of the noon prayer on Friday, something which Palgrave should have rejected because it is against his principles. Next, it is not customary for anybody, whatever his aim is, to attend the Friday sermon, which comes before prayer, and to leave when people stand for prayer. Palgrave would never ever be allowed into the mosque for a Friday sermon only without performing the prayer. Unless he was pretending Islam, or asking to be taught to become a Muslim, otherwise he would have had no other reason to do so. In Riad he reported he had enjoyed a free access to the Wahhabi mosque and that prince Abdullah had tried to persuade him to settle in Riad, offering him a house and a wife. Had Abdullah really offered Palgrave a wife, the latter, without any doubt must have been travelling as a Muslim. Abdullah, as depicted by Palgrave, was a fanatic Wahhabi who could, in no way, ignore the Islamic Shari'a which strongly and clearly prohibits the marriage of a Christian to a Muslim woman.⁵⁵ In an article entitled "The Mahometan Revival" published in 1872, Palgrave was to boast that he had twice, "once in the village of Rowdah on the frontier of Woshem, once in the town of Jelajil, in the most orthodox province of Sedeyr, been invested for the nonce with the character and duties of Imam, and as such [had] conducted the customary congregational worship".⁵⁶ How could he lead a prayer without himself being a Muslim?

This last remark of Palgrave's seems to have been noticed by Burton, who, in his preface to the third edition of his *Pilgrimage*, made a counter-attack on Palgrave's criticism of his disguise as Muslim Darweesh. Burton implied, indirectly, that Palgrave

55 The Islamic Law (Shari'a), on the other hand, allows a Muslim to marry a Christian woman.

56 Palgrave, "The Mahometan Revival", in *Essays on Eastern Questions*, (London, 1872), p.126.

travelled as a Muslim when he stated: "Did not Father Cohen [Palgrave] proved himself an excellent Moslem at Wahhabi land?". Burton, who detested Palgrave for being a popular preacher who denounced his own nation [Britain] openly at Beirut and elsewhere, described him as an "Englishman by birth who accepted French protection, a secret mission, and the liberality of the French Emperor".

Palgrave was deeply interested in religion and politics, and Burton's remarks can be taken to explain much about his involvement with the imperial ambition of Napoleon III. As a Jesuit missionary, involved with political activities, Palgrave put religion in preference to nationality and accepted a mission from the Emperor of France,⁵⁷ who supported the Maronite Christians in their conflict with the Druse in the Syrian massacre of 1860. Palgrave's first contact with Napoleon was the result of this massacre. By that time Palgrave was engaged with missionary work in Zahalah and was resident for about five years in Syria. He escaped the massacre and went to Europe. In France he was summoned by Napoleon III, who obtained from him a full report on the Syrian massacre and later sent him back on a political mission to Central Arabia.⁵⁸ According to Allan, Palgrave had planned for this journey even before his interview with Napoleon III, for it was while he was in Lisse, after his return from Syria, that he presented Père Fouillot with his project to "penetrate the unknown region of Arabia Petra, and to bear with him the light of the Gospel".⁵⁹ Palgrave's mission to Arabia recalls to memory Ignatius Loyola who founded the Jesuit order in the Roman Catholic Church in Paris on 15 August 1534 with the "hope and expectation that this new Company should work among the Muslims in the Holy Land."⁶⁰ Allan also noticed

57 Allan noticed that Napoleon, on the other hand, "was a cosmopolitan: brought up in Switzerland, sent to school in Germany, living and fighting in Italy to free Romagna from the Pope. He had grown up serious, well informed and bound to no country.... He was trying honestly to reign for the good of France and of Europe, to reconcile nationalism and internationalism". Mea Allan, *Palgrave of Arabia*, 149-50.

58 Palgrave also delivered lectures in various parts of Ireland on the Syrian massacre, which afterwards were republished under the title of *Four Lectures on the Massacre of the Christians in Syria*, (London, 1861).

59 Mea Allan, *Palgrave of Arabia*, p.148.

60 Christopher Collis, *A History of the Jesuits*, (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1968), p.15. In his *A History of the Christian Missionary*, S.Neil described the Jesuit as the new militia of Christ and a "strange new body of men who were neither secular priests nor religious, who were to be bound by the most rigid vows of obedience, were to be utterly subject to the Pope, and were to be devoted to the reconversion of heretics, and the conversion of Pagans, to the Catholic faith". p.148. Pages 148-214 of Neil deals with the Jesuit. A more recent book dealing with the history of the Jesuit is *The Jesuit: A History*, by David Mitchell, (London: Macdonald, 1980). For an account on the Jesuits in England see *The English Jesuits From Campion to Martindale*, by Bernard Basset, S.J., (London, 1967). See also "An Unobserved Centenary" *The Month*, (Footnote continued)

that Palgrave's journey was a revival of that mission confided by the first Napoleon to the Cavalier de Lascaries to establish good relation between France and the peoples in the north of Arabia Petra with a view to opening the way to the French influence from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.⁶¹ Almost all critics agree that Palgrave's immediate task was to secure the friendship of the Wahhabi kingdom on the Red Sea for the French or their friends, the Egyptian Government, in order to help further the success and security of the opening of the Suez canal, which was made with a heavy French investment. But Palgrave kept his reader in the dark as to the reality of his secret mission, and was content to say in his preface to *Central Arabia* that the special object of his journey was "the desire of bringing the stagnant water of Eastern life into contact with the quickening stream of European progress" (I,viii),⁶² that is, certain relationships between the Arab world and Europe at a time when the latter was moving towards the former with the aim of colonizing it.

With the rise of imperialism, the nineteenth-century European interest in the Middle East and the world abroad increased and the interconnection between political and religious thoughts among Westerners in the non-European countries was deeply established. Both the missionary and the imperialist realised that they had a common purpose and that they should cooperate to achieve their goal, despite their differences. The French, for instance, who dismissed the Jesuits from France and stopped all their activities inside France itself, were their main supporters in the world abroad, encouraging them and spending very generously on their missionary activities.⁶³ France, the enemy of the Jesuit in France itself, was the god of the Jesuit in the world abroad. She sent them as political agents and culture spreaders, doing their best to facilitate any future military occupation of the land they were working on. The missionary saw in the imperial power a bridge to reach the non-Christian countries and a means of paving the way for its activities and protecting its field of operations. And the imperialist saw in the missionary a tool for alienating the indigent population from their own religious and cultural background, preparing them to look to the imperialist,

⁶⁰(continued)

Vol.115, 1910, 449-461; and "The Restoration of the English Jesuits 1803-1817" Vol.116, 1910, 585- 597 and "The recognition of the Jesuits in England", pp 23-36.

⁶¹ Mea Allan, *Palgrave of Arabia*, 148-9.

⁶² J.H.Kennedy noticed that the Jesuits' reports, or what he called Relations, to the public were intended primarily for public consumption; and that as suited their complex organisation they had other regular means of communicating information concerning personnel, administration, and finance. See his *Jesuit and Savage in New France*, (Archon Books, 1971), p.78.

⁶³ By the time of Palgrave's travels the Jesuits in France were not in an unfavourable situation. For more details on the history of the Jesuits in France see Kennedy's *Jesuit and Savage in New France*.

the invader, as a brother, civilized and superior, rather than an enemy, aggressor and occupier.

By condemning the religion and customs of the natives, the missionary, or the Church, serves the colonial power ideologically. It tries to distort the natives' beliefs and values by taking them out of their context and exposing them as superstitious. By converting people into Christianity it seeks to weaken the resistance of the natives who will view their religion and thereby their culture and history as something alien. "The Church in the colonies", to quote Fanon, "is the white people's Church, the foreigner's Church. She does not call the native to God's way but to the ways of the white man, of the master, of the oppressor".⁶⁴ The missionary is one of the instruments of Western infiltration and control which makes the rule over the native easier. It also serves the imperial power by giving details about the political, social, and cultural situation of the native population in a systematic and regular reports and extensive studies. Palgrave's *Central Arabia* was an attempt to fulfil the first stage of the imperialist/missionary cooperation in which the latter's main purpose would be to explore the region geographically and to study the people's life and thoughts.

Palgrave was an enthusiast imperialist whose devotion to the imperial imperative explains his alliance with the French, who after the Syrian massacre took practical and swift steps by sending their troops to Syria, the area where his mission field operated, with the ostensible purpose of protecting the Syrian Christians. He seems to have been attracted by "the *mission civilisatrice* of French imperialism and perhaps looked in vain for a similar interest on the part of the English".⁶⁵ It is in the light of his enthusiasm for the building up of a European Christian empire and certain elements of the Crusaders' mentality, carried into the nineteenth century, that one can interpret Palgrave's cooperation with the French. In the service of the French interest and the Jesuit he was commissioned to Arabia. On his way he halted at Cairo to meet Halim Pasha, the son and successor of Ibrahim Pasha, and investigated the possibility of the latter being made the Viceroy of Egypt under the French suzerainty. He later wrote in a letter to Gladstone describing his mission saying:

In 1861, I was charged by Napoleon III to visit Egypt, while on my way to Syria &c., and there to confer privately with Halim Pasha on the Emperor's project of making him Viceroy of Egypt &c under French suzerainty. I was of course in possession of the whole plan, which had indeed been in the main elaborated between the Emperor and myself.⁶⁶

On his return from Arabia, Palgrave wrote a report, still to be found in the archive

⁶⁴ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, tran. by Constance Farrington, (The Penguin Books, 1983), p.32.

⁶⁵ Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling araby*, p.90.

⁶⁶ Quoted from Allan's *Palgrave of Arabia*, p.156.

of Affaires Etrangères in Paris, in which he set forth a detailed plan for the organization of Syria as a province of Egypt and the control of France over both. He also set up details for the system of government and drew up plans for the standing army, for the administration of the law and for road-construction to facilitate trade and ordinary travel.⁶⁷

Palgrave's involvement with the imperial interests of France, England's greatest rival, does not mean that his nationalism was lacking. On the contrary, he was extremely proud of his country, England, and of his Englishness as his writings in *Central Arabia* and elsewhere show. He expressed much pride in England as his country and as an imperial power:

O England! O my country! thou whose birth
To Greece, to Rome, a nobler sister gave,
Empress of nation, crown of the whole earth⁶⁸

He also showed a pride in the the British ability to rule over Eastern populations and in British military prowess. In Uamn, for instance, he met a certain Yakoob,⁶⁹ a British agent employed to prevent the slave trade, and expressed his confidence in British forces to interfere directly and replace such agents. He finds that "half-a-dozen tight cruisers would be more to the purpose than sixty Yakoobs" (II,303). Palgrave's Englishness and the "naturally imperialist bent of his mind," to use Tidrick's phrase,⁷⁰ made him give a natural and special role to the British in the East. They are desired by the Umani to come and rule over them:

I was much amused by hearing one Soharee say in a moment of familiarity, "if matters came so far that either the Muslims or the English must be masters of our country, we should decidedly prefer the latter, or even the devil in person to rule over us, rather than the Muslims. The juxtaposition in this latter clause was not over flattering, but it expresses a feeling widely spread throughout Oman" (II,336).

He also found that the "great gulf fixed between Eastern and Western, if not bridged over, is at least perceptibly narrowed down where England forms the opposite brink". In spite of the fact that the governing of Muslims (his example is the Egyptians) is a task difficult enough for a non-Muslim of whatever stamp and kind, it would be easier and far more easier for English rulers than any others. This appeared to him to be a fact and a general persuasion among the Muslims in the East.⁷¹ In another place

67 For more details see *Ibid*, pp.191-2.

68 Palgrave, *A Vision of Life: Semblance and Reality*, (London, 1891).

69 The story of Yakoob is another version of Kinglake's story of Osman Effedi. Like Osman, Yakoob's name, face and entire manner convinced Palgrave that he was Armenian and consequently of Christian origin, though he passed for a Muslim and proved himself one in point of polygamy (II,302).

70 Tidrick, *Heart beguiling-araby*, p.106.

Palgrave criticized the policy which would sever "our Indian from our Imperial government" as idle and reminded the rulers that their solitude ought not to be limited by the Bay of Bengal on the one side and the Persian Gulf on the other; no nor even the Red Sea".⁷² He also gave advice how to rule Muslims and Eastern populations. Concerning Syria he found that the 'Arab-Bedoo' (Bedowin) to be of little imperial consequences and that any leader or paymaster, whether Islamic or non-Islamic might command their allegiance easily, while the 'Arab-Deereh' must be a real item in the calculation of any government that occupies or would occupy Syria.⁷³ Unlike Burton, he called, not for iron and despotic measures to subdue the Muslims, but rather for toleration. "Whoever becomes ruler in the East, and thereby finds himself in the presence of Sonnees, Shiy'ees, Pagan...", he noticed, "would do well to make 'absolute toleration'" (II,217). He also found that the measures required at the hands of the British in their Indian heritage to be simply mercy, justice, and judgement.⁷⁴ Palgrave's imperial thoughts seemed to have attracted General Gordon who is reported to have said: "Give me Palgrave and I will govern the Arabs".⁷⁵ Had Gordon been offered Palgrave, he would no doubt have realized that his knowledge of the Arabs was not formed from his experience with the Arab, but from his professional interests.

In approaching the Arab, Palgrave's main problem was that he was too much concerned with what he brought with him, rather than with what he found in the field of his operations. He embodied the cooperation between the imperialist and the missionary and revealed more of their ideology in relation to Oriental peoples than to the reality of the Orientals themselves. The ultimate goal to which he set himself, that is, his account on "living Arabia", was determined not by the various conditions which he encountered but by the beliefs in which he, especially as a missionary, was reared and the preconceived European ideology which he made his own. His discourse on the Arabs and Islam, as such, was controlled and directed by what politics and religion dictated him to say rather than by what he really saw. His wide knowledge of Arab history and literature was carefully used in this process.⁷⁶

Palgrave's main novelty and originality in *Central Arabia* is not that of

71 *Eastern Questions*, p.62.

72 *Ibid*, p.128.

73 *Ibid*, 102.

74 *Ibid*, p.140.

75 Quoted in Allan, *Palgrave of Arabia*, p.257.

76 Palgrave was widely read in Oriental studies. He had been to the Collegio Romano in Rome, a college founded by St. Ignatius in 1551, to specialise in Oriental studies.

introducing to the European public the Arab society as composed of two portions, the Bedowin and urban societies, but of reversing the way they were presented by most European travellers. A reviewer in the *Athenaeum* considered the new presentation of desert life and character to be the novelty of Palgrave's *Central Arabia*, and another reviewer in *The Nation* said that Palgrave had exposed the radical incorrectness of the readers' notion of the peninsula.⁷⁷ The other novelty which he also introduced was the idea of Arab nationalism and a racial re-classification of the Oriental-Arab, which revealed more of the nineteenth-century obsession with blood relationship in determining the identity of a nation and Palgrave's unquestioned acceptance of such a theory, rather than with the actuality of the Arab, who do not make race a necessity in determining their nationality.⁷⁸ Drawing on history, rather than on the people occupying the Arab countries, who were known to the world for being Arab, Palgrave states:

The European public is deluged with accounts of Arab customs, Arab ways, Arab qualities, houses, dresses, women, warriors, and what not; the most part from materials collected in Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Irak, perhaps Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco; or at best in Djiddah and on the Red Sea coast. Sometimes a romantic spirit will furnish scenes among the hybrid Bedowin of Palmyra as a portrait of Arab life; sometimes we are invited to study Arab society in a divan at Cairo or Aleppo. Such narratives, however accurate they may be for the localities and races they describe, have not an equal claim to the title of correct delineations of Arabs and of Arab customs.... Syria and Egypt, Palmyra and Bagdad, even less Mosoul and Algiers, are not Arab, nor are their inhabitants Arab. The population alluded to are instead a mixture of Curds, Turcomans, Syrians, Phoenicians, Armenians, Berbers, Greeks, Turk, Copts, Albanians, Chaldaeanian, not to mention the remnants of other races, with a little, a very little Arab blood.... That all more or less speak Arabic is a fact which gives them no claim to be counted among Arabs.... For the popular figure of the Bedowin, I must add, that even were he sketched, as he rarely is, from the genuine nomade of Arabia, it would be no juster to bring him forward as an example of Arab life and society.... Arabia and Arabs begin south of Syria and Palestine, West of Basrah and Zobeyr, east of Kerak and the Red Sea. Draw a line across from the top of the Red Sea to the top of the Persian Gulf; what is below that line is alone Arab: and even then do not reckon the pilgrimage route, it is half Turkish; nor Medinah, it is cosmopolitan; nor the sea-coast of Yemen, it is Indo-Abyssinian; least of all Mecca, the common sewer of Mahometans of all kinds, nations, and lands, and where every trace of Arab identity has long since been effaced by promiscuous immorality and the corruption of ages. Mascat and Kateef must also stand with Mokha and 'Aden on the list of exception.

77 *The Athenaeum*, June 10, 1865, p.775; *The Nation*, 1865, I, p.596. Almost all Palgrave's reviewers found that his main originality was in reversing the image of the desert and the Bedowin as presented by other European travellers. For a list of the reviews of *Central Arabia* see the bibliography.

78 In the Pre-Islamic period the Arabs were obsessed with blood relationships in determining their identity, but with the coming of Islam this habit had been abolished. Muhammad was once asked: Who is the Araby? "The Araby is in his tongue", he answered. This means that any body who speaks Arabic, or acknowledges Arabic as his language, or even says in his tongue that he is an Arabi becomes Arabi.

(II,162-3), my emphasis.

Palgrave limited the existence of the genuine Arab race to the inhabitants of Central Arabia and drawing upon Ibn Khaldun,⁷⁹ he approached it as composed from two portions, the Bedowin and the urban societies. From the very earliest times Arab nationality, according to Palgrave, has been based on the divisions of families and clans, or what the Arabs call tribe. The greater section of Arabs remained as townsmen or peasants in the districts best susceptible of culture and permanent occupation. The other and lesser portion devoted themselves to a pastoral life for which the desert affords ample scope. Like the townsmen the Bedowin retained their original clannish and family demarcation, but unlike them they remained unsoftened by civilization and unblended by the links of close-drawn society (I,35).

From times immemorial the Arabs had been, indeed, divided, not by race, but by locality into the Bedowin and the people of the cities and cultivated land. Ibn Khaldun, a 14th century Arab historian and sociologist, observed this phenomenon and analyzed it in the process of outlining the development of the state and the building up of the civilization. He made a historical analysis to explain the relationship between the Bedowin/urbanite society, taking labour and production as his point of departure. He differentiated between two basic types of population, *Al-Badw* (Bedowin) and *Al-Hadar* (urbanites). These are distinguished from each other according to their different modes of production. The *Badawa* stage, according to him, is a primitive and backward one in relation to the *Hadara* stage, which is civilization itself. The *Badawa* precedes the *Hadara*, the latter being generated from the former. He also finds that in the process of building the state the *Badawa* finds its consummation in the *Hadara*, and that in the latter one witnesses a steady erosion of the former.⁸⁰ The *Badawa* in Ibn Khaldun's study is a stage in the process of the development of society towards civilization rather than certain people endowed with an unchangeable essence. His study was not an attack on Bedowin society, but rather a historical analysis of the interrelation between the Bedowin and the sedentary societies and the share and place of each in civilization. This theorization of Ibn Khaldun seems to have been taken on its face value by Palgrave, who idealized the urban society of Central Arabia and expressed deep aversions towards the Bedowin's.

Ibn Khaldun was also aware of the way the Bedowin had been presented in the Quran and, rightly, quoted it when required. He was a good Muslim who would never ever deal with the Bedowin or any human being as sub-human, whatever his

⁷⁹ In his preface to *Central Arabia* Palgrave stated clearly that he read Ibn Khaldun's work.

⁸⁰ For more details on Ibn Khaldun's theory on the Bedowin/urbanite society see his *The Muqaddimah*, tran. by Franz Rosenthal, (Princeton University Press, 1967), 2nd edition, vol.I, 249-310 & vol.II,279-80, 335-36.

religion or nationality be. But Palgrave seems to have missed the points of both Ibn Khaldun and the Quran when he stated, in the process of proving the irreligiosity of the Bedowin, that:

The fact is that, among the great mass of the nomade population, Mahometanism during the course of twelve whole centuries has made little or no impression either for good or ill; that it was equally ineffectual in this quarter at the period of its very establishment, we learn from the Coran itself, and from early tradition of an authenticated character. Not that the Bedowin on their part had any particular aversion from their inspired countryman or the Divine Unity, but simply because they still are, incapable of receiving or retaining any of those serious influences and definite forms of thought and practice which then gave a permanent mould to the townsmen of Hejaz and many other provinces (I,9. my emphasis)

Either purposely or unconsciously, Palgrave seems to have misinterpreted the context of the Bedowin's mention in the Quran. They were not accounted for here in the sense of being people endowed with certain unchangeable characteristics in isolation from Arab society, but in conjunction with urbanites to show the lack of understanding of the Message of Al-Islam, when it was first revealed to Muhammad, which led a number of the population to become hypocrites. When Islam was first promulgated, the Bedowin, people living in a backward situation in Arabia, thought of Allah in terms of their idols and began to bargain on some central concepts of the Islamic creed. Unless directed by Allah, Muhammad was not in a position to exempt them from anything. Accordingly Allah revealed few verses in the Quran dealing with them.⁸¹ Once they came to Muhammad asking to be exempted from their duty to fight in the cause of Allah (ix,90). As a result they were described in the following verse: "The Araab (desert Bedowin) are the worst in unbelief and hypocrisy, and most fitted to be in ignorance in the command which Allah has sent to his Messenger" (ix,97). Their presentation in the Quran was sometimes misunderstood as if they were people filled with hypocrisy and weak belief, but the Quran was not meaning that, for in the following verses Allah speaks of some of the Bedowin in terms of real Muslims and believers. Allah mentioned them in the context of hypocrisy in conjunction with the people of the cities: "Certain of the Araab (Bedowin) round about you are hypocrites, as well as among the Madina (city) folk, they are obstinate in hypocrisy. You do not know them. We (Allah) know them... (ix,101).

Prior to Ibn Khaldun and the Quran, the Bible, Palgrave's most powerful guide and instructor, deals with the theme of the desert and the Bedowin.⁸² The desert or

81 The Bedowin were mentioned in the Quran in Sura IX, 90-99, 101-106; XLVIII, 11-12; and XLIX,14.

82 The desert and the Arabs are mentioned in the Bible in many place. For more details see the Bible: Genesis: 4:16, 9:25, 21:14&20; Isaiah:13:21, 35:1,2,6, 40:3, 41:19, 43:19,20, 51:3; Jeremiah: 17:6, 25:24; Exodus: 3:18, 4:27, 5:3, (Footnote continued)

wilderness has been traditionally viewed as a place where there is nothing, except the devils who dwells there because they are despised by God, and where nothing is produced but hardship:

Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After spending forty days and nights without food Jesus was hungry. Then the Devil came to him and said, "If you are God's son, order these stones to turn into bread" (Mathew,4:1-3).

As a place for outcasts, the desert is also mentioned as the theatre for Christ's temptation and the place to which Adam and Eve were banished. The image of the Bedowin is that of a vicious plunderer: "God speaks to Israel "you wait for lovers along the roadside, as an Arab waits for victims in the desert" (Jeremiah,3:2). This last image was reinforced by almost all European travellers to the East.

Palgrave's pre-knowledge of the Bedowin, constructed from Ibn Khaldun, the Quran and the Bible, seems to have been reinforced with his first, and almost only, contact with the Sherrarat Bedowin with whom he had a very short-lived experience. He took them as "a fair specimen of the genuine and unalloyed Bedowin species" (I,10), and at the same time he himself admitted that they are the most miserable tribes of nomads that infest Arabia:

I only wish that those who indulge their imagination in ideal portrait of desert life, and conceive the Bedouins and their condition to be worthy of admiration or of envy, would pass but three days in Sherrat encampment, and see, not through the medium of romancing narratives, written *a priori*, as they say, for ready currency, but with their own eyes, to what a depth of degradation one of the noblest races [Arab] earth affords can descend under the secular influence of nomade life. (I,22-24).

Palgrave designed his account of the Bedowin, mainly, to be "corrective to the romances of many authors, especially French, on the score of the desert and its indwellers" (I,38). His views, therefore, were in complete contradiction to the commonly accepted ideas of his time.

By the time of his travels, and with some minor exceptions, on the credit side the Bedowin had been described to the European public as representing the pure and original Arab stock, embodying the spirit of independence and freedom; a free gentleman of blood and lineage; a warrior and a knight-errant; the desert song-master; and the most generous and hospitable. His image was that of a noble person possessing those simple virtue of the nomad race and having higher moral standards than his neighbouring city dwellers, the latter having been gradually degenerated from the Bedowin, the pure Arab race.

In Palgrave's *Central Arabia* the two pictures are absolutely reversed. The Arabs

82 (continued)

7:16, 16:2&10, 19:2, 23:31; Numbers: 20:1, 27:14, 33:16; Chronicles: 26:10; Job: 24:5; Psalms: 78:40, 102:6, 106:14; Ezekiel: 47:8; Mathew: 24:26; John: 6:31.

of inhabited lands and organized government, who are "identical in blood and in language with the nomades of this desert", are immeasurably superior to the Bedowin (I,24-25). The latter are throughout his voluminous writings the object of his utmost contempt and aversion. The first chapter of *Central Arabia*, entitled "The Desert and its Inhabitants", was a systematic attack aiming at destroying what Palgrave regarded as the prevailing fallacies on the desert and the Bedowin, who seemed to him "utter barbarians in appearance no less than character". He found them to be capable of cold-blooded treachery and far from being faithful to pledges. They often lead travellers, entrusted to their protection in the desert, astray till they fall exhausted by thirst and weariness and plunder them and then leave them to die. They are not Muslim as were portrayed, but rather sun-worshippers. They style themselves Muslims and go through some prayers, or religious formula, only because they are surrounded by, and dependent on, "begoted follower of Islam". When they feel themselves quite at home and free from fear and restraint, Palgrave claimed to have observed, they venture to hoist their true colours, which can seldom be seen by a stranger. But Palgrave claimed to have himself witnessed the main act of worship in their own land. This was on the first morning of the journey:

Hardly had the first clear rays struck level across the horizon, than our nomade companions, facing the rising disc, began to recite alternately, but without any previous ablution or even dismounting from their beasts, certain formula of adoration, nor desisted till the entire orb rode clear above the desert edge. Sun-worshiper as they were before the days of Mahomet, they still remain such (I,8).

The statement of several travellers, which took them to be Muslims whose observance of Islamic duties was lax, were applicable, according to Palgrave, to the half-Bedowin of the Syrian, Egyptian, or Hejaz frontier, whose constant intercourse with towns and populations, where Islam is a faith and law, made them familiar with Islam. The latter were classified in his *Eastern Questions* as Arab-Deereh, whose account of daily prayer was often sadly in arrears; whose Ramadam was of uncertain observance; whose women were not over-scrupulously veiled; and whose children were occasionally uncircumcised.⁸³ In this latter work, he persisted in his belief that the Bedowin are scarcely, if at all, Muslims: "Sun-worship, tree-worship, grave-worship, any or no worship, are to be met among them".⁸⁴ They do not perform prayer and are totally indifferent to the obligation of fasting Ramadan and the pilgrimage; of the latter they knew nothing, except in the way of plundering pilgrims. Plunder, whether of traveller or of villagers, forms one of the characteristics of the Bedowin. The Bedowin is a warrior, according to Palgrave, but he does not "fight for his home, he has none; nor for his country, that is anywhere; nor for his honour, he never heard of it; nor for his religion, he owns

83 Palgrave, *Eastern Questions*, p.100.

84 Ibid, p.98.

and cares for none. His only object in war is the temporary occupation of some bit of miserable pasture-land or the use of brackish well" (I,34). The Bedowin are remarkable for extreme licence of manner which renders the restriction or relaxations of Islamic law on certain subjects superfluous or unavailable. Marriage, for instance, in the Islamic definition, had no existence among them and their connubial condition would be expressed by community rather than polygamy. They are fickle and accustomed to no moral or physical restraint. Although they know how to distinguish between virtue and vice, at least in their broader forms, and admit that murder, treachery, robbery and adultery are shameful, they allow such doings. Their mind is uncultivated and characterized with aimlessness. They must not be taken for a true sample of Arab race, or for its genuine type or for its root or main stock, but for a degenerated branch of that great tree. Palgrave also disarmed them from their wide reputation for being hospitable, a theme, which seemed to Palgrave, to be much "dilated and oft repeated". The open-handedness of the Bedowin, he observed, often seemed to spring more from the childish levity of the savage than from true praiseworthy liberty of character. In the Bedowin Palgrave found an ill-educated child, where one can see human nature at its lowest stages.

Palgrave seems to have been biased against the Bedowin and to have constructed their image before he met them, for he lived with the Sherarat Bedowin, whom he used to exemplify the desert life, only for a few days and then spent almost all the time of his travels in the towns of Arabia among townsmen. His description of desert life, therefore, in no way expresses the actuality of the Bedowin life in Arabia at the time of his travels. The desert was a vehicle and a screen which provided him with the opportunity to cast his preconception which was designed more from library material and history to justify the missionary work among them and prepare the way for intervention of the imperial power and missionary endeavour.

Having done with Bedowinity and established his conviction that the Bedowin were not the most genuine type of Arab race, but a degenerate branch of that tree, Palgrave's camel traversed the desert and entered the towns of the settled Arab of Central Arabia, where the pure and genuine Arab race, according to him, dwelled. The first theme to attract Palgrave, the Jesuit, is the "religious aspect of the Arab race". He took the Arabs to be a believing, rather than, a religious nation, and protested against any right of the Arabs to be in any way entitled a religious nation. He differentiated between reverential and religious people and grouped the Arabs with the English as belonging to the former. His analogy is that just as the Italian, the Spaniard and the Greek are more religious nations than the English (who are more reverential), the Turk, the Mogol and other Eastern populations are more religious than the Arab, the latter being more reverential. Palgrave takes the analogy even further by asserting that the Arabs are the English of the Oriental world:

A strong love and a high appreciation of national and personal liberty, a

hatred to minute interference and special regulations, a great respect for authority so long as it be decently well exercised, joined with remarkable freedom from anything like caste-feeling in what concerne ruling families and dynasties; much practical good sense, much love of commercial enterprise, a great readiness to undertake long journeys and voluntary expatriation by land and sea in search of gain and power; patience to endure, and perseverance in the employment of means to end, courage in war, vigour in peace, and lastly, the marked predominance of a superior race over whomever they come into contact with among their Asiatic or African neighbours, a superiority admitted by these last as a matter of course and an acknowledged right;- all these are features hardly less characteristics of the Englishman than the Arab; yet that these are features distinctive of the Arab nation, taken, of course, on its more favourable side, will hardly, I think, be denied by any experienced and unprejudiced man (I,68-70).

He also contradicted those who represented the Arabs of the interior as incapable of any real attainment or progress in practical and material science and regarded the Arabs to be hardly less adapted "to the railroad, to the steam-ship," or any other nineteenth-century invention or natural research than the natives of Sheffield or Birmingham (I,175).

This account by Palgrave, and his suggestion of the ability of the Arabs to rule themselves, which I shall discuss later, has been taken by almost all critics to mean that Palgrave admired the Arabs and was sympathetic with them. Those who hold this opinion seem to have not read Palgrave's book as it was designed to be read as a whole: "My book is- at least I mean it to be- a whole and cannot be taken otherwise, under penalty of misunderstanding; nor do I believe that I have advanced anything in one page which is not fairly borne out by the content of the other (I,177). Taking it as a whole, we will find that Palgrave's admiration and sympathy is illusory and unreal, and meant only to highlight the greatness of the English and their superiority not only over European, but over Asiatic races as well. The Arab, according to him, are superior only to other Asiatic races, but they are inferior to European and the English, who are the most superior of all:

Occidental has much more the advantage over the Oriental hemisphere in the combination of work than in the quantity of the work itself gone through. Thus it might be shown that an Arab and an Englishman, take them man for man, perform each about the same portion of day's-work in twenty-four hours, with this difference, that the Arab works for himself and by himself, while the Englishman works for society, and with all the assistance and durability of result that society affords, like one who builds with the cement and mortar, compared with him who merely piles up loose stones on stones. (I,162).

Palgrave also associated the good attributes of the Arabs with what he, incorrectly, assumed to be their irreligious natural tendency and conditioned their superiority on their abandoning Islam. They are a master race only if they shake themselves free from the grip of Islam.

Palgrave has, indeed, described a would-be Arab race which did not exist in

Arabia, but only in his imagination. He speaks of irreligious and non-Muslim Arabs inhabiting the town, not desert, of Central Arabia, the centre of the Islamic Wahhabi movement, where he himself confessed that the religion of Al-Islam had "a real import, being interwoven into every fibre of the national, nay, almost of the individual fame" (I,179). He met in Central Arabia Muslim-Arab whom he found to be in a backward situation which he ascribed to "the stifling influence of Islam"; to "the Mahometan drug which paralyzes whatever it does not kill" and "have kept them in the intellectual race, to be outrun by others more favoured by circumstances, though not perhaps by nature" (I,175).

At different points throughout *Central Arabia*, Palgrave analyses the reasons for which Islam has retarded the intellectual, moral, material and political development of the Arab. He claimed that Islamic immobility and its misplaced supernaturalism had effectually closed and cross-barred the first glimmerings of science (I,147); the deadening fatalism of the Islamic religious system, "that narcotic of human mind" and the "Judaical narrowness and ceremonial interference of his law" had stopped the very progress to which Muhammad had himself opened the way by his momentary fusion of Arabia into a common nation with a common aim (I,195); and the Islamic doctrine of "predestination", or what he called "predamnation" (I,367), had prevented the Arabs from progress.

Palgrave's notions of Islamic immobility and the deadening fatalism of Islamic religious system reflected his unquestioned acceptance of the missionaries' ideology in relation to other religions and Islam,⁸⁵ for he himself expressed a quite different view after he abandoned missionary work and renounced the Jesuit order and Catholicism once and for all. This was in his *Eastern Questions* when he says:

Islam, rightly understood, is neither so flexible nor so inflexible as an outsider would have it. It can heartily admit all introduction of material improvement and control, and has no serious objection, special causes apart, to any given form of dress or habitation, of science or government. But Western speculation and utilitarian positivism run off from it like rain from a waterproof (129).

His other notion of Islamic predestination and its relation to progress expresses, in no way, the true concept in Islam. Palgrave, like most nineteenth-century advocates of certain conceptions of progress, considers predestination as an obstacle to progress and therefore condemn it. He found the concept of "predestination" to have existence in Islam and immediately applied his acquired and preformed idea of predestination/progress

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Rodinson noticed that Christian missionaries had attributed the success of European nations in the nineteenth century to the Christian religion, just as they attributed the failure of the Muslim world to Islam. They also made out Christianity to be by its very nature favourable to progress, and Islam to mean cultural stagnation and backwardness. Maxime Rodinson, "The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam", in *The Legacy of Islam*, by J. Schacht & C.E. Bosworth (editors), (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p.52.

formula and ascribed the backwardness of the Arabs to the Islamic concept of predestination.

The progress of the Arab, according to Palgrave, does not come through the revival of an Islamic state which had degenerated under the Turks and was represented by the Wahhabi movement- a real movement towards Islamic revival and civilization- but by shaking free from Islam and all its restraints:

When the Coran and Meccah shall have disappeared from Arabia, then, and then only, can we seriously expect to see the Arabs assume that place in the ranks of civilization from which Mahomet and his book have, more than any other individual cause, long held him back (I,175).

Historically speaking, the Arab, especially in Arabia, were in a backward situation in the Pre-Islamic period. They made no real progress and civilization, until the advent of Islam when they were faithfully applying the Quran and the conduct of Muhammad to every single movement in their life. The question which poses itself here is: Why did Islam appear to Palgrave as a stationary and an anti-progressive a religion and to be the reason behind the Arab backwardness in the mid-nineteenth century? Is it because of the nature of Islam itself, or the nature and interests of Palgrave himself?

Unlike the Lane of *Modern Egyptians* who made a real attempt to appreciate Islam in its own context, in relation to itself, and gave a relatively encyclopaedic and impersonal description of almost all aspects of Islamic life in Egypt, leaving the reader to form his own conclusions, Palgrave was a committed constant critic of Islam. It is Palgrave's reaction to Islam, not Islam itself, and Islam as defined by Palgrave the missionary, not Islam as defining itself, that we find in *Central Arabia*. Palgrave defined Islam, not in terms of its historical actuality as being a complex cultural, political and social entity, but in a contrastive sense with Christianity from a missionary point of view, aiming at emphasizing the superiority of the latter, which he connected with national well-being and advancement. Palgrave's only standard of reference, in confronting Islam, is Christianity and the missionary worldview of Christianity as being in its historical manifestation a superior religion to all other non-Christian religions. Christianity, according to this stream of thought, is the crown of all other religions and the meaning of any religion derives only from its drawing nearer and nearer to it. His views, therefore, do not contribute to the knowledge of Islam, but were based on comparative religious studies from a Western viewpoint which set Islam in antagonism to Christianity.

Palgrave conceived Islam as a Christian heresy, an ineffectual and futile religion, whose ultimate goal is to devoid Christianity, its antithesis, the true religion of God, of its meaning. The main feature of Muhammad's plan, appeared to Palgrave, to be that of setting his followers in diametrical opposition to Christianity and the Christians (I,430). Islamic legislation is also designed to oppose those of the Christians.

Wine, for instance, is prohibited only because of Muhammad's antipathy to Christianity and his desire to broaden the line of demarcation between his followers and those of Christ (I,428). The genuine reason behind Muhammad's disapproval of prayer offered up between sunrise till the forenoon or Duha, and also of the adoration addressed to the Divinity between the afternoon and sunset, was because those were the very times at which Oriental Christians assemble to the daily worship of mass and vespers (I,340). Palgrave, incorrectly, ascribed to Muhammad an antithetical disposition to Christianity and discouragement of commerce (I,340). Palgrave's observations usually concern the different aspects of Islam which are in contradiction with certain elements of Christianity. He always contrasts Islam and Christianity in favour of the latter. To Islam he opposes Christianity, a religion of vitality, of progress, of advancement. The difference between Christianity, with its begetter and begotten God sending his son in human form into the world to die on the cross so that men, his friends and sons, might be free from sin and achieve salvation, and Islam, with its "egoistic", "tyrant", and "sterile" God, whose creatures are slaves and servants, is that between movement and fixedness, participation and sterility, development and barrenness, and life and petrification. Everywhere in *Central Arabia* and on every occasion, Palgrave approached Islam in a contrastive sense with Christianity:

Islam is in its essence stationary, and was framed thus to remain. Sterile like its God, lifeless like its principle and Supreme Original in all that constitutes true life- for life is love, participation, and progress, and these the Coranic Deity has none- it justly repudiates all changes, all advance all development. But Christianity with its living and loving God [is]... a religion of validity, of progress, of development. The contrast between it and Islam is that of movement with fixedness, of participation with sterility, of development with barrenness, of life with petrification.... Now Christianity is living, and because living must grow, must advance, must change, and was meant to do so; onwards and forwards is a condition of its very existence.... Islam is lifeless, and because lifeless cannot grow, cannot advance, cannot change, and was never intended so to do; stand-still is its motto and its most essential condition. (I,372-3).

Any movement generating from Islam, such as Wahhabism, will, therefore, be regarded by Palgrave to be lifeless, aimless, fruitless, futile and directionless. The Wahhabi movement, which strived to regenerate Islamic civilization, is viewed by Palgrave as void and shapeless. Governed by tyrannic fanaticism and despotic rulers, who are robbers and spoilers, the Wahhabi government is bad and was preceded by worse- "by utter anarchy, by the feuds of local chieftains, by civil wars among townsmen, and the unrestrained insolence of the Bedowins" (I,317). The organization of the Wahhabi empire is built on centralization, whose mainsprings and connecting link are force and fanaticism and its "atmosphere is sheer despotism, moral, intellectual, religious, and physical". It is "incapable of true internal progress, hostile to commerce, unfavourable to arts and even to agriculture, and in the highest degree intolerant and aggressive, it can neither better itself nor benefit others." Palgrave's conclusion is that

"so long as Wahhabism shall prevail in the centre and uplands of Arabia, small indeed the hope of civilization, advancement, and national prosperity for the Arab race" (II,83).

Hogarth thought Palgrave to have certain interests to make the worst of the matter in accounting for Wahhabism. He also stated that the success of the Wahhabi Movement had not only threatened the safety and the religious supremacy and integrity of the Ottoman Caliph and empire, but that "Christian Europe began to speculate on a new convulsion of the East which might gravely affect it". Hogarth also added that the European who came in contact with the Wahhabis in the great days of the movement unanimously recognised in their doctrine a true reform, and in men, however rude and fanatical, devotees of better purpose and purer conduct than the mass of Muslims.⁸⁶

The genuine Wahhabi country, according to Palgrave, was the central provinces of Nejd. Djabal shumar, the North Central of Arabia, with its capital Hayel, had undergone "the short-lived tyranny of the first Wahhabee" and was subordinate to the Wahhabee of Nejd by the time of Palgrave's travels. The Arab prince Talal Ibn Rashed, to whom Palgrave was commissioned, to whom he revealed the secret of his mission and in whom he found an ideal Arab ruler, was in possession of Hayel and its province. He was connected to the Wahhabee rulers of Arabia and was himself a Wahhabee, but only in appearance as Palgrave observed. He found that the liberal-mindedness of Talal and his laxity in applying the principles of Wahhabism and Islam were behind his success and potentiality in administration. He seemed to Palgrave the very type of what an Arab prince should be. Palgrave said he had known few equals to Talal in the art of government, and classified him as one among all rulers or governors, European or Asiatic, that he had ever chanced to be honoured:

[Talal] possessed, in fact, all that Arab ideas require to ensure good government and lasting popularity. Affable towards common people, reserved and haughty with aristocracy, courageous and skilful in war, a lover of commerce and building in the time of peace, liberal even to profusion, yet always careful to maintain and augment the state revenue, neither over strict nor yet scandalously lax in religion, secret in his designs, but never known to break a promise once given, or violate a plighted faith; severe in administration, yet averse to bloodshed.

Palgrave found in Talal an Arab governing Arabs after their own native Arab fashion, possessing the ability of running self-administration and creating happiness and progress which no Ottoman administrator could afford. Hence nationality appeared to him a good thing and foreign rule, meaning the Ottoman's, but a poor compensation for it. He also suggested that Syria, Bagdad, the valley of Moosol, and the Mesopotamian upland follow the example of self-administration applied in Hayel, and suggested that the specific remedy for Asia, at least so much of it as lies from Kara-Dagh and Aden, was to be found in the reintegration of its nationality (I,142-3).

⁸⁶ Hogarth, *The Penetration of Arabia*, pp.77-79.

Taking Palgrave's suggestions at their face value, one would immediately jump to the conclusion that Palgrave was too much concerned with Arab nationality and independence for the sake of making progress to rank the Arabs among the most civilized nations. Gleig criticized Palgrave bitterly and with contempt and asserted that universal experience was opposed to that theory of nationality, especially in the East.⁸⁷ Palgrave seemed not to have been fully understood by some Englishmen, and those who did were repelled by his mission. In accounting for Talal, Palgrave had many objectives in mind, none of which aimed at the goodness of the Arab. First, he was highlighting the inability of Islam to create any progress; secondly the superiority of the English administration as second to none: "Talal's administration is in no respect less unquestionably superior to the Ottoman than the English or Prussian may be to Talal's" (I,142); and thirdly he was a forerunner of T.E. Lawrence, who found in the idea of Arab nationalism the best means of European infiltration and control in the Arab world. Palgrave wanted the Arabs to break with the Turks only to make the French intercourse with the Arabs of Arabia as direct as it was with Egypt, and not via Turkey. The idea of Arab independence and self-administration, especially the Hayel of Talal, revealed more of Palgrave's political interest than the Arab's real need to break with the Turks. Again Hayel and Talal were chosen by Palgrave to exemplify the Arabs' potentiality of ruling themselves not because of a certain essence of Arabism residing in them, for Talal was a Wahhabee in principles and behaviour, but because of the strategic situation of Hayel, being between the "Wahhabee Scylla and the Ottoman Charybdis", and because Talal was a direct link between the Wahhabee and the Ottoman, working under the Ottoman Sultan on the northern and western frontier and under the Wahhabi on the southern and eastern frontier. The independence of Talal, as such, would mean a lot to the French interest and open, if not a direct intercourse with a powerful government in Central Arabia, an indirect one via their allies the Egyptians. Again in idealizing Talal and stressing that his Islam is a mask used to satisfy the Wahhabi, Palgrave might have recalled the story of the sunworshiper Akbar, who ruled the Grand Mogul and invited the Jesuit to do missionary work in his kingdom, and thought of the Jesuit principle that "nations could best be converted through the conversion of their rulers",⁸⁸ and found in Talal that ruler.

It was not the Arabs and their interests which were of great concern to Palgrave, but his kin the Europeans. His work, as such, found a wide approval among them. That Palgrave's *Central Arabia* won the applause of the European audience reflected less the fact that it was a truthful report on life in Arabia, as that it was a faithful version of the way the European used to see the Muslim-Arab. Its fame also

⁸⁷ G.R. Gleig, "A Brace of Travellers", *Blackwood's Magazine*, 98, 1865, pp.736-737.

⁸⁸ Christopher Hollis, *A History of the Jesuits*, p.38.

came less from what he said about the Arab, than by the virtue of how what he said would occupy a new place in the literature of travel and be adopted by the European reader, who found entertainment and recreation in following Palgrave's heroic and imaginary adventures in the Orient. Palgrave's obituary in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* described his *Central Arabia* as "one of the most interesting and romantic books of travels and adventure that has ever delighted the public" (1888,10, 714). In addressing his audience, Palgrave's high qualities as a narrator; his dramatic interest, lightness of touch, and sense of style coloured his ideas and made his assimilation of pure literary stories which he adapted to Oriental life seem spontaneous and natural. He transformed the myth of Oedipus into a fact lived in the Wahhabee society when devastated by the cholera in the 1850s. Like the people of Thebes, who ascribed their misery to a sin committed against god in their kingdom by one of the Thebians, the Wahhabee viewed the cholera as a punishment Allah inflicted on them for offending him by wearing gold and silk, and by smoking and by their neglect of prayer. Just as Oedipus found the solution for his plight to be in finding and punishing the offender so that the god would be satisfied, the Wahhabee found the "remedy for the epidemic was a speedy reform, and an efficacious return to the purity and intolerance of better days" (I,408). Again like Oedipus, King Fayal convoked an assembly of all principal men in the kingdom and addressed them concerning the new situation of his kingdom. The outpost of their meeting was that they confessed that they had done something wrong and were rendered responsible for the longer duration of the cholera. As a result, a committee, called "Meddey'yeeyah", "men of zeal," or "zelators", emerged with the object of bringing people to the exact orthodoxy of the letters of the Coran by inflicting punishment and the death sentence, when required, until the cholera disappeared.

In reading Palgrave's *Central Arabia* one must keep in mind that Palgrave was more of a dramatic writer, intent on making colourful literary stories from certain scenes and happenings in the East than a researcher traveller set to investigate fact or to give correct ideas of Arab life as he claimed. His description of the Nafud recalls a passage from Dante's *Inferno*,⁸⁹ where one of the circles of hell is conceived as a plain of burning sand, and is itself offered in a very sophisticated literary style. It appeared to him as an "immense ocean of loose reddish sand", where the "traveller finds himself as it were imprisoned in a suffocating sand-pit, hemmed in by burning walls on every side" (I,91-92). He also described and introduced the Simum Winds in

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Palgrave was a learned student of Dante. His obituary in the *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society* explained that, besides his familiarity with the extensive poetical treasures of Arabia, Palgrave knew the 'Commedia' of Dante almost by heart; and that English poetry of the highest order was constantly in his hands and on his lips. It also considered the lucid brilliancy of style, remarked in his Arabian narrative, to be due to these studies (1888, 10, 715).

a dramatic and literary way. The reader is first introduced to the unclouded Arabian sky over the scorched desert in a noon summer; then a burning gusts of wind begins to blow at a time when the oppressiveness of the air increases. Next we have the scene of the Bedowin, Salem and his friends, taking protective measures, then the party heading to a black tent of a hundred yards distance and the wind itself making from the whole desert a black tent where the "horizon rapidly darkened to a deep violet hue, and seemed to draw in like curtain on every side" (I,18). And finally Palgrave and his fellow in the tent, lying with their heads wrapped and almost suffocating, while the camels are outside, prostrating on the sand like dead beasts.

In many places in *Central Arabia* the reader lives in an entirely literary world, where Palgrave, the man, is transformed into a fictional hero and loses his identity as a real traveller existing in actual reality. His tales among the Arab, such as his fictional shipwreck and escape from Riad and many other heroic achievements, ranks with Bruce's narratives of his mighty deeds of war and policy among the Abyssinian;⁹⁰ his shipwreck and miraculous survival recalls the adventure of Robinson Crusoe; his discovery of Obeid's letter of recommendation to the prince Abdulla in Riad and his Hamlet-like practice is a piece of fiction; his skilful manipulation of the Arabs he met sounds like Prospero of the *Tempest*; and his description of many happenings puts the reader in a pure literary atmosphere. For instance, the paragraph describing the hours of their departure from Ma'an reads like a piece of poetry or fiction:

It was the evening of of the 16th June 1862; the largest stars were already visible in the deep blue depths of a cloudless sky, while the crescent moon, high to the west, shone as she shines in those heavens, and promised us assistance for some hours of our night march. We were soon mounted on our long-necked beasts [camels], "as if," according to the expression of an Arab poet, "we and our men were at mast-heads,".... Behind us lay, in a mass of dark outline, the walls and castle of Ma'an.... Before and around us extended a wide and level plain, blackened over with countless pebbles of basalt and flint, except where the moonbeams gleamed white on little intervening patches of clear sand, or on yellowish streaks of withered grass, the scanty product of the winter rains, and now dried into hay. Over all a deep silence which even our Arab companions seemed fearful of breaking; when they spoke in a half whisper and in a few words, while the noiseless tread of our camels sped stealthily but rapidly through the gloom, without disturbing its stillness (I,2).⁹¹

90 For more details on the adventures of the African traveller James Bruce (1730-1794) see his *Travels to Discover the Sources of the Nile in the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, and 1773*, (London, 1790).

91 The reader must remember that Palgrave's style is not always the same. In some parts the narrative is boring and undigested, especially when he enters upon lengthy arguments in support of his prejudices, or when he recounts every possible religious, historical and political association of a certain scene or subject. On such occasions it is clear that he is anxious to show off his learning in affairs Oriental, especially history, which might help to impose his views on his readers.

Central Arabia is the starting point of Palgrave's literary career.⁹² Here was yet another contribution to the European literature on the Orient very frequently based on the writer's personal experience, and exposing the European ideological concept of the Arab world. Palgrave viewed Islam in the light of missionary enterprise and evoked the idea of Arab nationalism and self-determination to promote European imperial interest in the Arab world. In this field he was the forerunner of T.E. Lawrence, to whom Arab nationalism meant more a break with the Turk, a process which would give way to European infiltration and rule in the area, than the genuine intention to offer the Arabs the opportunity to enjoy self-administration and independence. In idealizing Talal of Hayel as a potential Arab leader capable of ruling Arabs in Arab fashion, Palgrave was also a forerunner of Philby and, probably, his inspiration in the search for a strong Arab leader under whose patronage Arabia could be united. Philby found this leadership in Ibn Saud, the founder of Saudi Arabia.

Palgrave was one of those English travellers who went to the East, not to widen their experience or learn more about Eastern populations, but to vindicate or realize the ideology he had formed in Europe and from European sources. His account, as such, was marred by its partiality and deficient philosophy. He showed great interest in the political, social and religious affairs of the East but his self-consciousness and prejudices caused him to obtrude his own nationality and religion at every point. Contrary to his claims of giving correct notion of the Arab, Palgrave's views, being formed in the interest of his mission, added more distortion and exaggeration to the ideas prevalent in the West regarding Eastern populations.

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Later Palgrave produced some more literary works. In 1872 he published *Herman Agha*, a conventional Oriental romance. It was a chronicle of a Saxon boy carried into slavery who later became an officer in the service of 'Alee Beg and who fell in love with Zahra the beautiful daughter of Sheikh Asa'ad; In 1887 his *Ulysses or Scenes and Studies in Many Lands* appeared; and in 1891 his epic poem *Vision of Life: Semblance and Reality*, was published posthumously.

CONCLUSION

By the time when Kinglake's *Eothen*, Burton's *Pilgrimage*, and Palgrave's *Central Arabia* appeared, that is, between the 1840s and 1860s and even before, travel writing was not a new form. Travellers' chronicles had been widely read in England since the time of the geographical Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616). All the places Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave visited had been thoroughly described and over described by European writers. Their real achievement was that of making something new out of a relatively commonplace experience. They achieved this goal by adopting a personal narrative in a literary form in which they were subjective and selective, rather than objective and reflective. Their personal experiences were addressed directly and indirectly to their European readers from different walks of life. To the politician, they did their best to account for the Orient in a way which secured his interests; to the man in the street, who took Islam for granted to be the enemy of the Christians and the Europeans, they gave the desired image that would show the hateful character of Islam by presenting it in cruel terms; and to the man of letters, they offered a literary Orient to satisfy his literary taste. By concentrating on what is exotic in the Orient, they satisfied their readers and by expressing in their texts the European ideological concept of non-Europeans they spoke to all Europeans who wanted somebody to confirm for them the conception they had of their enemy at a time of the decline of Islam, represented by the Ottoman, and the rise of missionary Christianity, represented by Europe. Because they knew their European readers and knew their feeling of superiority towards non-Europeans and knew that their presentation of English and European superiority in their work would find ready acceptance, they made every effort to portray the Arabs as an inferior race.

Kinglake, Burton and Palgrave accepted the basic distinction between the Orient and the Occident as the starting point for their literary texts at a time when European studies on the Orient were put to the service of the Empire and when the Europeans were developing a sense of racial superiority. This situation limited their observations to account for Oriental life in a way that was adapted to current ideology rather than their own actual observations. As Goldmann's theory leads us to expect, this situation

makes the reader more and more aware of the presence of the travellers' European ideology or world-view and the absence of the "reality" of the East itself. As a result, sometimes, they saw things in erroneous ways and skipped over what did not interest them. They rarely offered a real description of the meaning of Oriental-Arab society and its cultural dimension, presenting the reader with the look of the place, the people, the society and the impression left upon them after being tested by the "world view" they took with them to the East.

Kinglake, Burton, and Palgrave had no genuine interest in rendering explicit the "fact" and "reality" of the Orient and accounting for them impartially, nor were they interested in finding the "truth". Instead they had a ready-made conception of themselves and "Others" and were looking for something to testify it. They applied their own standard to everything they saw and everything they did to the extent that their works stand more for their own presence than the Orient itself, setting up realities of their own different from the actual social reality of the Oriental-Arab world. They produced the Orient through their own ideology and transmuted it by their personalities, creating Orients and Orientals different from the real ones.

Although Kinglake, Burton, and Palgrave adopted and expressed the Victorian ideological concept of the Orient and Oriental "Other" in their approach to the Arabs and Islam, rather than their own actual observations, their individual views vary according to their education; their occupation; their social and professional interest; and their psychological reactions. They saw aspects of the Orient and Oriental life in three different ways in which each of them was reflecting his differences from the other, rather than the difference in the Orient or Oriental life itself. They reacted towards the same object, the desert and its dwellers, for instance, in different and contradictory ways. Kinglake, a wealthy middle-class gentleman who left his country for recreation, fleeing European industrialization and who was influenced by the romantic movement, enjoyed the desert as an antithesis of the European industrial city. He was deeply attracted by the desert, the sand, the sun, the camel (the ship of the desert), the sense of freedom he enjoyed there, and the Bedowin life as an expression of romantic escape, but never to the Arab-Bedowin themselves or to Oriental society and populations. In the desert Kinglake was at home in the sense that as an English gentleman he had been forced to live in a very rigid society, while in the desert he was completely free to follow his repressed instincts and desires which had been suppressed by the rules of society in his homeland. Burton, who was at odds with his society, who felt oppressed by the morality of the Victorians and alienated by the impersonal industrial society, and who was violent by nature, found the desert and the Bedowin appealing, but not the settled Arabs of the town. The desert appeared to him as a place where one was free from the restraint and prohibitions of civilized Europe, and the Bedowin appeared to him as the pure Arab race, the gentlemen of the East. He admired their chivalry and bravery, and in identifying himself with the Bedowin he

felt he was enjoying the gentrification that was denied to him in his own society.

The same desert, which practised its charms upon Burton and Kinglake, appeared to Palgrave in a completely different and contradictory way. Unlike Burton and Kinglake, who idealized it as a romantic place, Palgrave criticized bitterly the romantic notion of the desert as a place of escape and portrayed it instead as a place of suffering. And unlike Burton, who found in the Bedowin the pure Arab race, the gentlemen of the East, and who found the Bedowin system to have been endowed with an inherent order which the observer could train himself to observe, Palgrave turned up side down the idea of their chivalry and gentry, and found them to have been endowed with inherent disorder and chaos. He felt a deep aversion and contempt toward the desert and found in the Bedowin the degenerated Arabs of the city. The desert, therefore, functions for the three travellers as a stage where they act out their psychological and social reaction to one and the same thing. With the texts of the three travellers we have three deserts, none of which seems to have reflected the fact of the Arabian desert, but only, and most certainly, the literary desert of the traveller himself.

The writings of the three travellers do not present the "reality" of the East or Eastern life, but represent it in a literary way in accordance with the romantic and classical notions and ideological theses which were prevalent in the nineteenth century in relation to the non-Europeans, the Arabs and Islam. Their Orient is permeated by their own personalities and reveal more of the observers than the observed. They transformed the East to represent it to Europe as the Europeans wished to see it according to their preconceptions. Their transformed East (Orient) is by necessity different from the "real East", for the process of transformation always implies change whether radical or slight.

The greatness of Kinglake's *Eothen*, Burton's *Pilgrimage* and Palgrave's *Central Arabia* lies in the fact that they, to use Goldmann's theoretical analysis, brought to the point of maximum coherence the collective thought of the Victorians in relation to non-Europeans. Their writings, therefore, can be of great significance and value to the student of literary history, in the sense that they are a faithful record, not of Eastern life and thought, but of the thoughts and ideology of Victorians' attitude to the Orient and Oriental populations. They are an expression of the sentiments of a nineteenth-century gentleman, a missionary, and an anthropologist, together with a biographical record of the travellers' characters, tendencies, aspirations and idiosyncrasies. Their writings are also of great value in that they reflect both the changing intellectual atmosphere at home and certain elements dominant in Victorian society.

The works of the three travellers, discussed in this thesis, developed a consensus which was congruent with the interest and ideology of their British readers and accordingly they found a wide applause. Their popularity, as such, reveals the attitude of the majority of the reading public and emphasizes the fact that they were an

echo of the ideological theses of the Victorian period in relation to non-Europeans. And the literariness of their works, and the literary Orient produced in their texts, make the phrase "literature of travel" acquire its final meaning and leads us to call the writings of pre-nineteenth century travellers "a record of travel", rather than travel literature.

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ABSTRACT

THE ORIENT AND THREE VICTORIAN TRAVELLERS: KINGLAKE, BURTON AND PALGRAVE

This thesis is concerned with the travel writings of three Victorian travellers to the Middle East, Alexander William Kinglake, Sir Richard Francis Burton and William Gifford Palgrave. Its main aim is to show how the three travellers viewed the Orient through their own ideology which was tainted by the idea of the Empire and the European feeling of racial superiority and how such ideology limited their actual observations to the extent that they expressed in their literary works on the Orient more of their own ideology than the reality of the Orient. The thesis will, therefore, show their works not so much as knowledge of the "reality" of the Orient, but as an expression of their ideology in relation to non-Europeans and of the writers themselves and their unique sensibility. It will also show how their writings reveal more of their inner conflicts and psychological reaction to certain happenings and become more literary to the extent that they wrote a species of "fiction"; how they did much to create a blurred image of the Orient in the nineteenth-century British mind; and how they added practically nothing to the European knowledge of Arabia, though certainly to the literature on Arabia.

The thesis consists of two parts comprising in all five chapters and a conclusion. The first two chapters are introductory ones dealing with the Europeans' image of the Orient till the nineteenth century and the main factors which encouraged travel and exploration in the Victorian era. The three other chapters deal respectively with Kinglake's *Eothen*, Burton's *Pilgrimage*, and Palgrave's *Central and Eastern Arabia*. These chapters analyze the way the nineteenth-century European ideology directed and limited the three travellers' observations in relation to the Orient.

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