THE TRANSLATION OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS AND ITS EFFECTS ON BRITISH LITERATURE IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

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Modern translation studies are originally embedded in linguistic studies before the expansion of their goals and methods in the 1970s. Since then they have assumed an interdisciplinary shape borrowing as much from linguistics as psychology , pragmatics, literary theories and other disciplines. For example, source-oriented theories of translation predominated in both Europe and the United States. But with the rise of literary theories emphasising reader-response, source-oriented models of translation were questioned and gave place to communicative models that take into account not only the "source-language/text" and the "receptor language/text" but their respective literary/textual systems as well the better to cater to the needs of the target audience. The communicative dimension of translation is achieved only if the translated text meets the criterion of "adequacy" to the source-text and that of "acceptability" by the target audience. (cf. Connor Ulla, 1997)

However, if so much has been written on the influence of literary theory on translation, so far rare are the studies which show what implications can be drawn from translation studies for the criticism of literature. And yet as early as the 1920s critics like Ezra Pound had compared criticism to a form of translation because both of them appeal to interpretation. Ruben Brower is even more explicit about the importance that translation could have for poetics. He writes that the "study of translation ...is one of the simplest ways of showing what is expected at

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various times in answer to the question ' What is poetry'". (Brower Ruben, 1959: 193) This is so because the translation of artistic works is not aesthetically value free. Translators display the spirit of their age in terms of both aesthetics and ethics. Finally, Walter Benjamin writes that "translation is so far removed from being the sterile equation of two dead languages that of all literary forms it is the one charged with the special mission of watching over the maturing process and the birth pangs of its own". (Benjamin Walter, 1969: 73)

If criticism is a form of translation and that translation is a literary mode it is then possible to take translation as a central paradigm in literary criticism. Before engaging the discussion on this topic we have to answer two important questions. What is translation for a literary critic? What is its relation to literary tradition? In *Money, Language, and Thought* , Marc Shell discusses Goethe's *Faust* in a chapter that he suggestively entitles "Language and Property: The Economics of Translation in Goethe's Faust". The purpose of Shell's book in general and this chapter in particular is to show the interaction of language and money and thought in Western literature. In his discussion of *Faust,* Shell draws attention to how the "general problem of acquisition in the play is expressed in terms of translation." He writes that in "this work of literature, as in German and the Indo-European languages in general, such words as *Ubertragung* (translation in German) means both "economic transfer of property" and "linguistic transfer of meaning". Translation thus includes the inheritance of intellectual property from previous generation." (Shell Marc, 1993: 85-86) What Shell calls the inheritance of intellectual property is commonly referred to in literary criticism and literary theory as tradition. In T.S.Eliot's redefinition of literary tradition, this concept loses its traditional connotation of the simple bequeathing of *tradita*, legacy from father and son, and links itself to individual talent which shows in the criticism or rather the translation brought to bear on the same tradition. Tradition is not to be bequeathed but earned through a translating or interpreting process of previous authors. To all evidence, this is the conclusion that Goethe had reached earlier than Eliot when he made one of his characters address Faust

as follows: "What you have acquired from your father, earn it, if you want to possess it".

One of the purposes of the present paper is to show that literary tradition in the modern sense of the word cannot be conceived of without translation. George Steiner writes that "the essence of art and reality of felt history in a community, depend on a never-ending, though very often unconscious, act of internal translation. It is no overstatement to say that we possess civilisation because we have learned to translate out of time". (Steiner George, 1975: 30-31) Steiner's statement of the importance of "internal translation" for literature holds true even for inter-lingual translation. For example, the translation of the classics in the Augustan period had not left the shape of English poetry unaltered. The implications in the relationship of Alexander Pope's translation to the tradition of English epic poetry as handed down through Virgil and Milton have been documented by Douglas Knight in "Translation: The Augustan Mode". (cf. Knight Douglas, 1959) It follows that critics cannot do without the paradigm of translation whenever they are involved in understanding the meaning of the dialogic/inter-textual world of language and literature.

We shall take hold of the paradigm of translation as previously defined to continue the discussion of the influence of translation on British literature with relation to the English translation(s) of the *Arabian Nights*. *The Arabian Nights* was translated from French into English in 1712. Antoine Galland's French version appeared in France in 1704. It is only 22 years later that the George Sale's translation of the Koran with an introduction entitled *Preliminary Discourse to the Koran* appeared in England. First, one might ask the reason behind this belated appearance of the English version of the Koran in relation to the *Arabian Nights*. One of the reasons that we can advance to account for this fact is that *The Arabian Nights* lends itself more easily to the proprietary consciousness of the English writer even in second-hand translation than the Koran. In other words, the English writer can earn it as part of his literary tradition because it stands as a foil to the Koran. The latter is a sacred text whereas the former is a profane one to which concepts like eroticism, mysticism,

heresy and difference were attached. It is not without reason that *The Arabian Nights* appeared at nearly the same time as Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey.* The simultaneity of translation can be explained by the fact that the Arabian and Greek narratives appealed to the British writers/translaters in the context of the Enlightenment and the expansion of the British empire to the East. Ulysses and his oriental foil could well have stood at that time for the Augustan artist's alter-ego moving between land and sea representing the reality of the nascent English Empire, and between reason and fantasy at the Enlightenment period.

To substantiate these claims we shall first summarise the frame narrative of the *Arabian Nights* and then try to show how this frame has been appropriated by William Shakespeare before the translation of the *Nights* into English. The frame story to which other stories in *The Nights* are embedded goes as follows. Shahriar, the king discovering his wife's infidelity, kills her. Since then a succession of brides have met the same fate the morning following their marriage to Shahriar. Moved by this distressing situation, the Vizier's daughter, Sheherereazde has offered herself as a ransom to save her kind from extinction. Sheherazade's way out of this distressing situation is telling stories to the king and interrupting them when reaching their points of suspense, so that the king will spare her life that she may continue the tales. She has managed to survive in this way until the end of the one thousand and first night she asks that her life be spared. Not only has he granted her the request but he has decided to make her Queen as well. In the hands of some British writers this frame narrative of infidelity has become one of the grounds on which *The Arabian Nights* was translated for appropriation into the British literary tradition. From a story of "conjugal infidels" the narrative was misread as a story speaking for the "infidels", heretics, that is the European Christians.

It is one such "misreading" of *The Arabian Nights* to which Shakespeare had proceeded in his play *Othello , The Moor of Venice.* It is true that in Shakespeare's time *The Arabian Nights* had not yet appeared in English. However, imbued as Shakespeare was with the Italian Renaissance

literature, he could not have missed the echoes of *The Nights* in Boccaccio's *Decameron.* Nor could have he missed the same echoes in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Squire's Tales.* At least Shakespeare's *Othello, The Moore of Venice* develops the theme of infidelity in relation to an oriental character who boasts of royal ancestry and exploits of a Sindbad. Through the narration of his exploits he wins the heart of a Venetian princess Desdemona to the surprise of her kith and kin, especially her father who accuses Othello of having bewitched his daughter. What is worth underlining in Shakespeare's play is the background against which he enacts the drama. In the first scenes we are witness to a charivari , a medieval carnival organised to denounce the 'unnatural bonding" of a moor with a Venetian lady. Yet very quickly the charivari yields to discussion of the threats of war against Venice by the Turks referred to as the "infidels" in the play. The senators do not hesitate to choose Othello as the captain of the Venetian fleet to fight their infidels back from the Venetian colony of Cyprus. Against all expectations, Shakespeare resolves the conflict between the Turks (the infidels) and the Venetian by having the former defeated by a tempest, and at the same time moves the conflict between "infidels" to the domestic sphere. These infidels are Othello, who belongs to a different religion, and Desdemona suspected of being unfaithful to her husband. Othello's rage over the supposed infidelity of Desdemona to him echoes Shahriar's in *The Arabian Nights.*

Shakespeare finds a way of progressively diluting the religious dimension of his Arabian source text before finally presenting us an oriental character reminiscent as we have said of characters in *The Arabian Nights,* who abjures his religion and announces his own infidelity to Desdemona whom he has killed while in a fit of jealousy The trick is done, the oriental tale is credited as a western story about fidelity and infidelity. Just as Shahriar in *The Arabian Nights* regains faithfulness in women after being dismissed as infidels, so Othello declares that he has re-gained faith in Desdemona, a declaration equivalent to his conversion to a new religion. Othello dies leaving behind him the following testimony of having killed the infidel in himself:

Soft you; a word or two before you go./ I have done the state some service, and they Know't (sic)

No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,/ when you shall these unlucky deeds relate, Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,/ Nor set down aught in malice. .../

And say ...that in Aleppo once, / Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk

Beat a Venetian and traduc'd the state,/ I took by th' throat the circumcised dog,

And smote him – thus. (He stabs himself)

There are other reasons for the comparatively easy acceptance of *The Arabian Nights* in England. Its translation, as mentioned above, occurred in 1712, that is nearly thirty years after the Glorious Revolution, a revolution that definitively established the sovereignty of the English parliament and gave England a "Bill of Rights". The appearance of the English version of *The Arabian Nights also* took place twenty-four years after the publication of John Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* that undertook to explain, justify and popularise the new type of government in his country. Locke's work is rightly considered as the gospel of natural rights doctrine. One of the ideas of Locke consists of affirming the right of man to rebel against their despots ; his most important sin is to have overlooked the rights of women in the new political kingdom. Indeed women in Locke's essay appeared just one of the private properties of man to be protected by her husband so that his other properties would remain within the family. Many English women of the time took over the liberal thought and rhetoric developed by Locke to defend their rights. For example, Mary Astell, one of the earliest feminist writers, took over Locke's argument developed against the illegitimacy of absolutist rule in the state and turned it against tyranny in the family. This is a sample of what she wrote in an essay addressed to the Queen of England in 1700: "Again, if absolute Sovereignty be not necessary in a State, how comes it to be so in a Family? Or if in a Family why not in a State; since no Reason can be alleged for the one that will not hold more strongly for the

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other? If the Authority of the Husband, so far as it extends, is sacred and inalienable, why not that of the Prince? The Domestic dispute Sovereign is without dispute elected; and the Stipulations and Contract are mutual; is it not then partial in Men to the last Degree, to contend for, and practice that Arbitrary Dominion in their Families which they abhor and exclaim against in the State? For if Arbitrary Power is evil in itself, and an improper Method of Governing Rational and Free Agents, it ought not to be practis'd any where; nor is it less , but rather more mischievous in Families than in Kingdoms, by how much 100,000 Tyrants are worse than one."(Astell Mary anthologised in Kraminck Isaac,1995: 563)

In the context in which Mary Astell wrote, *The Arabian Nights* could not have failed to provide an escape for lettered English women from the undesirable realities of their own culture and society. Lloyd Spencer and Andrzey Krauze write that the ideas of Locke had become so much an indispensable properties of the fashionable intelligentsia of that time that a "young woman who was sitting for her portrait…wanted to be seen holding the collected works of John Locke" . (Spencer Llyoyd and Andrzey Krauze, 2000:16) It is scarcely possible to imagine that the female readers to whom most of the imaginative literature were addressed at the time could have missed to identify themselves with the new world of *The Arabian Nights*, a world in which men and women interacted freely without inhibitions, and in which the Lockean vision of the world finds extension in the private, domestic sphere of life. If female readers of the first half of the eighteenth century, as Walter Allen writes, had applauded the resistance of Pamela against her seducer/master Lovelace in Samuel Richard's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* how could they have overlooked to do the same for Sheherazade who not saved the virtue of her kindred but was also managed to get the status of a respected and respectable wife as well as the title of Queen? (Allen Walter,1982:44)

There are two other reasons for the success of *The Arabian Nights* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries England. First, *The Arabian Nights* were translated at the start of the Enlightenment period. One of the dominant features of its literature is satire, which is one of the outcomes

of the emphasis on reason and observation at that time. The beginning of the eighteenth century was not only the age of Daniel Defoe but also that of Jonathan Swift who founded the Scriblerus Club with other English satirists like John Arbuthnot, the inventor of the figure of "John Bull", and Alexander Pope, the writer of *The Dununciad* .. The reader cannot fail to identify *The Arabian Nights* as the source of the following satire that Pope addresses in a letter to one of his female contemporaries Mary Montagu: " I doubt not I shall be told (when I come to follow you through those countries) in how pretty a manner you accommodated yourself to the customs of the True Believers. At this Town they will say she practised to sit on the sofa; at this village she learnt to fold the Turbant; here she was bathed and anointed; and there she parted her black Fullbottome....Lastly I shall hear how the very first night you lay in Pera, you had a vision of Mahomet's paradise, and happily awakened without a soul. From which blessed instant the beautiful Body was left at full liberty to perform all the agreeable functions it was made for". (Quoted in Sari J. Nasir, 1976: 40)

It follows from the above that *The Arabian Nights* in eighteenth-century England did not only meet the needs of female readers for escape into freer imaginative world but also blazed the trail for the male satirical authors of the same period.

So far we have not tried to explain why the first translation of *The Arabian Nights* into English was not made from the original. This fact can easily lead to the conclusion that the English could not translate it from Arabic. It is good to remind the reader that the translation of *The Arabian Nights* was followed by George Sale's translation of *The Koran* and William Jones's translation of the *Mu'allaqat* under the title of *The Hanging Poems*. The translation of the *Arabian Nights* from French into English cannot bc accountcd for in terms of the quality of the French version either. According to Walter Benjamin translated works are "not translatable; because the relationship between content and language is quite different in the original and the translation". (Benjamin Walter, 1968:75) This holds true even if " the stories of *The Arabian Nights* are of many countries and times, (because) whatever their age and source all have been

so transformed that they are Moslem to the core, thoroughly Arabian in temper and spirit". (*The World Book Encyclopaedia)*

The explanation for the translation of the French version into English can be as simple as the fact that the English were not as lucky as the French in laying hand on the original *Arabian Nights.* Alexander Russel an eighteenth-century English traveller offers the key to the question. In his book *Natural History of Aleppo,* he makes reference to *The Arabian Nights* saying that it is "a scarce book at Aleppo…(and that) he found only two volumes , containing two hundred and eighty nights, and with difficulty obtained liberty to have a copy taken" . Hence the English finished getting hold of *The Arabian Nights* in the original and making various translations of it. Among the many translations of the book made in the nineteenth century we can mention Edward William Lane's annotated version *The Thousand and One Nights* , also referred to as *The Arabian Nights Entertainments,(* 1840), John Payne's version in verse and prose *The Book of the Thousand Nights and One Night* , and finally Richard Burton's translation *Thousand Nights and a Night* , which appeared in 1888.

The above background about the translation of *The Arabian Nights* allows us to agree with Benjamin's claim that contrary to the intention of the poet, which is " spontaneous, primary, graphic; that of the translator is derivative, ultimate, ideational" .(Benjamin Walter, 1969:76-77) If the English translators had not hesitated to translate Galland's version of *The Arabian Nights* in 1712, it was because their intention was primarily ideational; their interest was not in Arab literature for its sake but as a source from which ideas about Arabs could ultimately be derived. The quest of a George Russell for the tales in the original, therefore, could well have born out of the antiquarian English passion of the second half of the eighteenth century rather than an interest in having a good translation of the book. Indeed, some of the translated versions of the tales in the nineteenth century such as the ones mentioned above could well be motivated by the appreciation of the aesthetic dimension. However, many of them were the result of amateurish translators who manipulated the

tales, emboldened as they were by Lord Macaulay's assertion to the effect that a shelf of western books is worth all the lore that could be found in the East. The title of Louis Stevenson's book *New Arabian Nights* provides evidence as to the licence with which the British translators/writers dealt with the tales in the nineteenth century. This licence was also due to the absence of the "anxiety of influence" that the English translators/authors felt in front of anonymous tales. (Cf. Bloom Harold, 1975)

However, no matter the disregard of the criterion of fidelity in the various translations of the tales in eighteenth century and nineteenth centuries England, these translations deeply altered the British literary tradition. Writers as various as Charles Dickens, Lord Tennyson, Thomas Carlyle , Robert Southey, William Coleridge, Lord Byron, Walter Scott and Benjamin Disraeli have made allusions to *The Arabian Nights* in their works. For example, in *The Old Curiosity Shop* , Dickens has one of his characters, Richard Swiveller exclaim twice as follows: " If this is not a dream, I have woke up by mistake, in an Arabian Night, instead of London one" ; "It is an Arabian Night; that's what it is... I am in Damascus or Grand Cairo. The Marchioness is a genie and having had a wager with another genie and having had a wager with another Genie about who is the handsomest young man alive." There are many other allusions to *The Arabian Nights* that can be adduced as examples to support our argument that it is one of the rare non-western texts that has permeated the modern consciousness of the west. But no example can illustrate it better than the dedication that Tennyson addresses to it in his *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*.

The translation of *The Arabian Nights* into English could be held as one of the major cause behind the emergence of the oriental tale in British literature. One can doubt whether such British oriental tales as William Beckford's *Vathek(1786)* and Dr Johnson's *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia (1759)* could have appeared without the place that *The Arabian Nights* had carved for itself in the age of sensibility that is the eighteenth century. *The Arabian Nights* presented values more or less

uncorrupted by the cult of sensibility, and by embracing its exoticism writers like Dr Johnson and Beckford could launch their attacks against the values of perfection, progress, and rationality characteristic of eighteenth-century modernity. If Dr. Johnson's book is often compared to Voltaire's *Candide, or Optimism* and Beckford to Volltaire's *Zadiig (1748)* it is because they are all of them satires of the spirit of their own age.

The scope of this article does not permit to show the influence that *The Arabian Nights* could have exerted on Dr. Johnson's and Beckford's books. It is enough to point to the parallel histories of Beckford's story about the "ninth Caliph of the race of the Abassides" and *The Arabian Nights* to be convinced of the prominent place that oriental tales held in the British literary tradition as a result of the popularity of the teales in eighteenth-century Britain. Beckford wrote *Vathek* in French, probably thinking that it would meet more the expectations of a French readership than the British ones. Attracted to the French Enlightenment as he was, Beckford did not know that Harun El Rachid, the Caliph of Baghdad, Ali Baba with his Forty Thieves, and Sindbad the Sailor had become some of the archetypal characters in the British "collective unconscious", and that some of its settings Baghdad and Cairo were established in the same "collective unconscious" as settings of plots and plotters like the ones he had elaborated around Vathek the ninth caliph of the Abassides. Therefore, when an anonymous English translation appeared in 1786, a year before the publication of the French edition, it circulated very easily and became enormously popular capitalising as it did on the popularity already achieved by *The Arabian Nights.*

The translation of *The Arabian Nights* continued to exert its influence on British literary tradition In the nineteenth century, it was at the fountainhead of most of the romantic and gothic narratives superseding its association with the satiric mode of writing characteristic of the British literature of the eighteenth century. This displacement in the mode of use of *The Arabian Nights*, a displacement that made it assume a more prestigious status in British literature was due to the displacement in Western narratives in general, as a result of the rehabilitation of demonic figures in

Western romantic and gothic literature. Cain, Satan and Prometheus were some of the rebelling figures that had witnessed their rehabilitation at the hands of writers like William Blake, Percy Shelley and Victor Hugo.

The Arabian Nights had played a major role in the thinking of the English people about the orient in general and the Arabs in particular. Indeed, the hold that it exerted on the English imaginary was so strong that it filtered even the accounts of English travellers in Arab/Islamic countries. This is, for example, how Mary Montagu rendered her travelling experience in Constantinople: " Now do I fancy that you (her sister) imagine I have entertain'd you all this while with a relation that has receiv'd many embellishments from my hand. This is but too like says you the Arabian Tales; these embroider'd napkins and a jewel as large as a Turkey's egg ! You forget dear sister, those very tales writ by an author of this country and excepting the Enchantments are a real representation of the manners here". (Quoted in Sari J.Nasir, 1976: 40)

The association of the Arabs with the world of *The Arabian Tales* was emphasised by one of its nineteenth-century translators Johne Payne who writes that the world it describes is "mainly that of the people, those Arabs so essentially brave, sober, hospitable and kindly, almost hysterically sensitive to emotions of love and pity, as well as to artistic impressions, yet susceptible of being aroused to strange excesses of brutality, to be soon followed by bitter and unavailing repentance" (Ibid.,56) Another nineteenth-century English author who finished producing another translation of *The Arabian Nights* after his travelling in the orient is Richard Burton. According to him, the tales are "unfailing source of solace and satisfaction… a charm, a talisman against ennui and despondency". He put on a par the experience that he had reading and translating the tales with that of his travelling to the orient. In the opening sentences to *The Gold Mines of Midian* , he writes: " Once more it is my fate to escape the prison-life of civilised Europe, and to refresh body and mind by studying nature in her noblest and most admirable form – the nude. Again I am to enjoy a glimpse of the glorious desert; to inhale the sweet pure breath of translucent skies that show the red stars burning upon the very edge and

verge of the horizon; and to strengthen myself by a short visit to the Wild Man and his old home. (Ibid., 71)

There is a convergence between Burton and Payne in their visions of the Arab as a "Wild Man" and his " old home" as a sublime setting. The idea of the Arab as a " Wild Man" inspired mostly from *The Arabian Tales* found its way to the romantic and gothic literature of the nineteenth century in the form of orientalised and Byronic characters. Perhaps no writer of that period had celebrated this idea of the Wild Man than Emily Bronte in her novel *Wuthering Heights*. (1847) Its story is set in the "outlying hills and hamlets in the West Riding of Yorkshire" , a setting that reminds us of the desert landscapes that Burton describes as the "nude", which in the romantic imagination is linked to the literary convention of the sublime. Emily Bronte populated this setting with eccentric characters like Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw. The latter is a foundling brought by Mr Earnshaw from Liverpool in one of his journeys there. The features that are assigned to him make of him a Wild Man. First, the narrative describes him as a "dark-skinned gipsy (sic) ".(Ibid.,21) Gypsies at that time were supposed to be "vagabond Egyptians". The identity of Heathliff can be established further by a comparison of Bronte's character with Shakespeare's othello the moor. Finally, Mrs Dean, the narrator, in an attempt to cheer up Heathliff who is oppressed by Hindley at the death of his foster father addresses him as follows: " Who knows but your father was Emperor of China, and your mother an Indian Queen, each of them able to buy up with one week's income, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange together? And you were kidnapped by wicked sailors and brought to England. Were I in your place, I would frame high notions of my birth; and the thoughts of what I was should give courage and dignity to support the oppression of a simple farmer ! (Hindley)"

The narrative told by Mrs Dean, some sort of disguised Sheherazad, to Mr Lockwood the tenant of Thrushcross Grange, who has moved to the Yorkshire heaths to escape the ennui of London echoes *The Arabian Nights.* That Bronte had read the latter and that her central characters and her setting are made to evoke those of the tales is confirmed in the text

when Mrs Dean tells how one morning Catherine, the daughter of Catherine Earnshaw and Edgar Linton " came to (her), and said she was an Arabian merchant, going to cross the Desert with his caravan: and I must give her plenty of provision for herself and beasts: a horse, and three camels, personated by a large hound and a couple of pointers." Mrs Dean was so accustomed to the playing at Arabs in her own society that she did not hesitate to enter the Arabian world of her ward: She " got together good store of dainties and slung them in a basket on one side of the saddle". Mrs Dean and her ward remind us of the various English travellers who well before T.E. Lawrence, Lawrence of Arab, in the twentieth century had assumed the identity of Arabs. We can mention John Louis Burkhardt who went under the name of Sheikh Ibrahim Ibn Abdullah, Edward William Lane known in Egypt as Mansour Effendi, Sir Richard Burton who disguised himself as an Arab Dervish and merchant, and of William Gifford who assumed the disguise of Salim Abu Mahmud Al-ays , a Syrian Doctor.

Mrs Dean's narrative is interspersed with words like "ghoul" , "genie" , "devil" , "wolf" when referring to Heathcliff as a Wild Man. At the level of the plot he is involved in the usurpation of the Earnshaws' and Lintons' ancestral properties, a usurpation rendered in terms that smack of what in the West is called the *Ghazzu* (the raid), because his sweetheart has traded off his love for the love of Edgar Linton. Hence, the Yorkshire wilds in *Wuthering Heights* are transformed in the "wilder shores of love" one of the titles given to the Orient ; Writing under the spell of *The Arabian Nights,* she transformed the Arabia *deserta* of her own Yorkshire into an Arabia *felix* wherein the passion of love is given full expression through orientalised characters like Heathcliff and Catherine Earnswhaw. We shall conclude this paper on the translation of *The Arabian Tales* into English , its causes and its effects on British literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by saying that though its translation was at first ideational, it had gradually permeated and energised English literature before looming up in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* as the narratological model, as the reference and as the model of the pleasure of

narration and of narrative performance. *The Arabian Nights* is the 'magical carpet' which has permitted a secluded Victorian author like Emily Bronte to escape her prudish environment and write a text that reads like a symposium on love and evil. (Cf. Bataille George, 1957)

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