‘Future Scholars, Future Poets’
The Contemporary Reception of Sir William Jones’s Translations of Oriental Literature, 1770-1835

by

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Declaration

This thesis is submitted to the University of Warwick in support of my application for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It has been composed by myself and has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the contemporary reception of the translations of oriental literature by Sir William Jones (1746-1794), within the timeframe of 1770 to ca. 1835. Jones is often mentioned as one of the most influential orientalists of the eighteenth century. The influence of his linguistic hypothesis and his translations from Sanskrit are mentioned as the origins of what have become the studies of Comparative Linguistics and Indology. This thesis, however, asks the question of the influence of his literary translations, with which he planned to rejuvenate European literature by introducing Asiatic literature.

The initial responses to Jones's works are examined here, primarily in the shape of reviews published in journals, and letters written to or about Jones. Furthermore, the reprint and translation history of his work is taken into account. These sources establish an overview of who read Jones's translations and how they interpreted them. Since Jones balanced between being a scholar and a poet, this thesis evaluates these two sides of his work by examining his various audiences. A third audience considered are Romantic poets, who he attempts to inspire by making new oriental imagery available in Britain.

The analysis of these sources leads to the conclusion that the goal Jones formulates in his oriental translations was met, after a slow start. His first attempts at popularising eastern poetry were met with incomprehension, but early nineteenth-century poetry shows it is retrospectively being used. Jones's Sanskrit translations, after his arrival as a judge in India, indeed played a role in public interest in the earlier translations, but vice versa did the Persian and Arabic works prepare the audience for *Sacontalá* (1789). I conclude, moreover, that Jones's view on language acquisition played an important role in the institutionalisation of language study within the East India Company.

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the thesis

This thesis examines the contemporary reception of the translations of eastern literature by Sir William Jones (1746-1794).[1] Jones's fame at the end of the eighteenth century was large, but it took a big hit at the start of the nineteenth century, making him virtually disappear into oblivion, because of changing attitudes to eastern culture and literature. In the twentieth century, however, Jones was read again and recognised for the influence he had on late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century culture. His name and fame as an important orientalist or influential scholar in the development of comparative linguistics are often repeated in recent work. This thesis asks the question what this described influence consisted of, and what responses Jones's innovations received.

Jones's career, which will be analysed in more detail below, knew various stages - student of languages, lawyer, orientalist, judge – and the discussion of his contributions to knowledge in the eighteenth century and beyond likewise has seen various focal points. In this thesis I attempt to contextualise the images of Jones and his work that fill the scholarly debate by returning to the currently often overlooked original responses to his work and creating an overview of the contemporary influence Jones's work had. In doing so, the thesis will shine a light on various audiences of Jones's work in the different chapters, and will be comparing and contrasting their respective responses to his translated work. These audiences will be described and explained below.

In this chapter the corpus of seven published translations by Jones will be explained further. These translations all build towards a common goal Jones claims to envisage by unlocking eastern literature and culture to his western readership. This goal is described and worked towards throughout his translations, with its first mention in *Histoire de Nader Chah* (1770). Jones expresses this most clearly, and most famously, in this often-cited final paragraph from the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations.' I would like to argue this is the manifesto for his intentions, in which Jones exhibits his conviction of the need for the study of eastern languages:

[1] The terms eastern, oriental, and sporadically Asiatic are used interchangeably, as they are in Jones's various works.

> I must once more request, that, in bestowing these praises on the writings of *Asia,* I may not be thought to derogate from the merit of the *Greek* and *Latin* poems, which have justly been admired in every age; yet I cannot but think that our *European* poetry has subsisted too long on the perpetual repetition of the same images, and incessant allusions to the same fables; and it has been my endeavour, for several years, to inculcate this truth, *That, if the principal writings of the Asiatics, which are reposited in our public libraries, were printed, with the usual advantages of notes and illustrations, and if the languages of the Eastern nations were studied in our places of education, where every other branche of useful knowledge is taught to perfection, a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should be furnished with a new set of images and similitudes, and a number of excellent compositions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate.*[2]

In this extract he calls upon a European reading audience to expand their views towards the little-known poetry 'of the eastern nations.' European literature is saturated by Greek and Latin classics, and it needs a new impulse to produce interesting new works.

Notice that Jones calls on several groups to work towards the incorporation of these 'writings of Asia' into European poetry: not only does he envisage 'future poets' using its imagery to rejuvenate and enhance poetry, but he also calls upon 'future scholars' to study the texts and make them available from their manuscripts, deposited in libraries, neither read nor understood. A third audience can be added to these two, which is not mentioned here literally, but which Jones addresses as well: the general reading audience. This essay and in particular the work to which it is appended, *Poems*, is catering towards this audience. It is also this audience that needs to adjust its taste so the future poets can find fertile ground for their poetry, improved by these new eastern influences.

These three audiences will each be addressed in the chapters of this thesis, examining their responses to Jones's translations and considering them in the light of the goals Jones set himself with his translations. As Jones's translations were published in England and predominantly appeared in English, the main focus will be on his English readers. However, Jones had a clear vision to reach beyond the country's boundaries with his project, most

[2] William Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations II. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1772), pp. 198-199. Original emphasis *passim*.

clearly shown by his Latin commentaries on Asiatic poetry (*Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex*). The commission he received from the King of Denmark proved as well that his fame extended beyond these boundaries, so the influence of his translations beyond Britain will be considered where applicable.[3]

The temporal scope of this thesis will range from the appearance of the first translations in the 1770s to ca. 1835, when changing attitudes of the British towards India led to a diminished interest in Indian literature, which caused Jones to be largely forgotten until twentieth-century scholarship re-examined his work. What led to this change and the choice of the cut-off point of 1835 will be put in context below.

This period can be roughly divided into three sections. The first would be that of what I call Jones's 'early' translations, the translations from Persian and Arabic which he produced in England. Most appeared in the 1770s, although the 1782 *Moallakát* also needs to be grouped in this section. Responses to these early works are mainly analysed in chapters 2 and 3. The second section can be measured from his arrival in India in 1783 to his death in 1794, during which time Jones devoted himself to the study of Sanskrit and Hindu culture. The translations discussed in chapter 4 stem from this period. In the period from his death to 1835 Romantic poets used Jones's work, which they accessed through Jones's collected *Works*, as a source of inspiration and information for their own writing. This will be discussed in the fifth chapter.

This thesis will thus explore the responses to Jones's translations from these audiences and in these time periods. The following questions will be posed:

Who read Jones's work, and how did they read it? What was the value of Jones's work for the different audiences? Taking the context of the translations into account is an important part of these questions, because the translations are not operating in a vacuum. Although Jones is claiming to do something new and to start a new movement in English literature, the various chapters will consider not only the responses to Jones's interventions in the field, but also the state of the field before his arrival. Was Jones as revolutionary as he claimed, and as some of the later scholars examining his works have claimed?

In order to look at contemporary reception, my first sources will be reviews to Jones's works being published in journals. A start has been made for collating those by Cannon in his

[3] For foreign language sources both the original and a translation will be provided. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

Bibliography, but this list is neither complete, nor does Cannon analyse the contents of the reviews.[4] It does however provide a useful starting point. In further scholarship some reviews are quoted to provide contexts, particularly in the latest biography for Jones: Franklin's *Orientalist Jones*.[5] Although Franklin includes quotes from reviews to provide evidence for readers praising Jones's work, his work is rarely critical and often includes summaries of reviews to be 'laudatory', where analysis of the review shows the author is not fully positive.[6] In addition to the reviews, individual readers' reactions will be examined, where this is possible because of the existence of letters or other testimonies.[7] A further important source for measuring the impact of Jones's work is the examination of reprints and translations, which again has been aided by Cannon's *Bibliography*, which does provide titles for translations, but does not analyse their contents or, for example, added introductions, which have proved important sources for the opinion of readers and translators.

Particularly in chapter 5, where Romantic poets are examined, both scholarly critiques of their works and their own notes are important sources of information on their usage of Jones.

The research question for this thesis has been inspired by Jones's own statement about the goals of his work, as quoted above, but also by questions left open in recent scholarship. As described above, Franklin has produced much recent work on Jones, including a biography and an edition of some of his works with minor annotations, but a critical view is often lacking.[8] Furthermore, this and other scholarship, a full literature review of which can be found below, has left gaps in discussing Jones's literary work rather than including his more scholarly contributions as well, the *Persian Grammar* and *Commentarii*. In analysing all these

[4] Garland Hampton Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1979).

[5] Michael J. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[6] The most poignant example of which will be discussed in chapter 2, where James Robertson's review, which is summarised by Franklin as 'laudatory' actually makes a case for excluding Jones and other amateurs from the academic discipline of oriental studies.

[7] The most elaborate example can be found in chapter 3, where the correspondence of Elizabeth Montagu has made an interesting insight into responses to *Poems* possible. In general, access to letters has been more difficult and sporadic than was hoped, in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic.

[8] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*.
Cf. Michael J. Franklin, 'Sir William Jones. Selected Poetical and Prose Works', (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995).

translations, rather than just the poetry, this thesis attempts to give a full overview of the contemporary reception of Jones's oriental translations.

1.1.1. Chapter overview

Chapter 1

In this first introductory chapter, the context will be provided for answering the research questions of this thesis. After providing a short introduction into Jones's life, particularly situating the works included in this thesis, his works, and the corpus established for this thesis, previous scholarship will be introduced. The study of Jones's work has known various significant phases, which will be examined in a literature review. Furthermore, the boundaries of this thesis will be established as ranging from the 1770s, when Jones's first translations appear, to approximately 1835, when Utilitarian views and events like the declamation of Macauley's Minute influenced the English approach to the study of oriental languages and literature in a way that ended Jones's popularity. This first chapter will provide a further context for these boundaries.

Chapter 2

In the second chapter, the state of knowledge of oriental languages within academic disciplines at the time when Jones starts studying them, is examined. With his work, he creates both an intervention in the discipline, by publishing a *Persian Grammar* in English and aimed at non-academics, and an ambiguous attempt to be part of the academic tradition with his *Commentarii*. Both these works will be examined in this chapter. Jones's approach in *Commentarii* in particular will be discussed thoroughly as well, since this is not only his most elaborate theoretical work on oriental literature, but it is also often overlooked in modern scholarship, most likely because it is written in Latin. Therefore an overview of its contents is included in this chapter.

This chapter, more so than the others, shows Jones's dual position as a classically educated and inspired scholar, and one who wants to expand and innovate contemporary knowledge and practices. This tension is clearest in the review of his *Persian Grammar* by a contemporary academic, James Robertson, who both sees the use of the work and attempts to protect the traditional values of his discipline.

The *Persian Grammar* appears the starting point of a new genre of grammars, catering to East India Company employees and other non-specialists. This chapter will therefore also provide

conclusions about the part Jones played in the development of new approaches to language acquisition.

Jones considered the *Commentarii* his magnum opus and spent a long time writing and editing the work, which contains some of the same topics as his English and French works, but in a more elaborate manner. Despite this attitude, the work is often glossed over in modern scholarship, and a similar approach is shown in contemporary reviews. The work being composed in Latin proved problematic for its popularising purpose, which Jones implies the work should have beyond academia. It did solicit responses from other European orientalists, as will be analysed in the chapter.

Chapter 3

The true popularising of eastern poetry is discussed in chapter 3, which focuses on the place of Jones's translations in the fashion of the oriental tale of the eighteenth century, and its general readership. Central to this chapter is the discussion of *Poems*, which places a translated Persian and Turkish poem in a both domesticised and orientalised context, of orientalist poetry and even translations from Italian. The added essays, however, present original eastern poetry and literal translations, becoming a source of knowledge about the orient.

This chapter will not only analyse responses to *Poems*, but will also include an analysis of Jones's methods of providing a link between eastern and western poetry. By doing so, he attempts to create a context for the eastern examples to be understood.

In comparing and contrasting responses to *Poems* and *Moallakát* in this chapter, we can create an understanding of the extent to which the eighteenth-century English and European reader was willing and able to process the otherness of the translated Persian and Arabic poems. Whereas the responses to *Poems* show that the taste of oriental poetry Jones presents here triggers an interest in reading more and in particular reading more authentic eastern literature, the literal prose translations presented in *Moallakát* are found hard to interpret. The lack of notes with this publication means the reader needs to work harder to create their own context for understanding the poems, and responses show this is not something they are able to do with their limited exposure to Arabic poetry.

Chapter 4

The fourth chapter focuses on Jones's Indian work, featuring *Sacontalá* as his most important and influential translation. This chapter discusses the circumstances in which this translation

from the Sanskrit, which is often lauded as the first and most influential European translation, was published. Jones's translations and other works from India appeared in a context of expanding knowledge about Indian culture, driven by the colonial administrators' need to understand the Indian natives.

Although Jones is often credited as the most important influence on Indian culture, this chapter describes the context in which he was publishing his translations more broadly. Jones was not the only one publishing translations from Sanskrit, and his colleague Charles Wilkins was indeed the first European to do so, with his *Bhagavat Gita* (1785). Jones's prior fame, however, made his translations more successful to a broad audience, thereby influencing the type of translations others produced, as is shown by the example of Wilkins' 'Story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontala' (1794).

Furthermore, in this chapter an inventory is provided of the spread of *Sacontalá* across Europe, based on Jones's translation. This illustrates the further work influenced by Jones's translation, and the way he influenced European thought on India, the orient and beyond.

Chapter 5

The fifth and final chapter presents a literature review of scholarship on literary figures being influenced by Jones. As described, Jones's aim was to inspire authors to look to the east to rejuvenate European literature. In the Romantic period, this theme was indeed picked up and used by poets and authors in their work. Orientalism plays an important part in Romantic poetry, creating a countermovement to the neoclassicism and the fictional realism of the eighteenth-century novel.[9] These eastern influences are not Jones's doing per se, but follow from the translation and study of oriental literature by him and his contemporaries alike, as well as a larger interest in and understanding of eastern culture leading from enhanced contact with these cultures when British travelled to the east. There are, however, authors who explicitly claim their indebtedness to Jones, for example in notes or letters, or who echo Jones's translations in their own works. These have been studied in case studies and separate papers, and this chapter brings those discussions through time together to draw a conclusion about the influence of Jones's work: not just which of his works knew the largest reception, but also what aspect of his work was found most interesting to imitate.

[9] Nigel Leask, 'Easts', in *Romanticism: An Oxford Guide,* ed. by Nicholas Roe (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 137-48. (p. 140).

1.2. Sir William Jones

1.2.1. Life

Although Jones's professional career was that of the law, the epithets with which he was known by his contemporaries, 'Persian Jones', 'Oriental Jones', 'linguist Jones', are proof of his fame for his knowledge of and passion for languages. This started at a young age, when his mother, who was raising him on his own after the death of his father encouraged him to 'Read and you will know'.[10] This belief that all can be learned from reading, and that understanding language is the key to opening written sources, followed Jones throughout his life. He started at Harrow in 1753. At Harrow Jones studied Latin and Greek and went above and beyond the regular curriculum, encouraged by headmaster Robert Sumner, who recognised his potential. Jones composed poetry and plays in both Latin and Greek, and in the style of particular authors, some of which made it into his 'Limon', a collection appended to the 1774 edition of the *Commentarii*. Jones dedicated the *Commentarii* to Sumner, who had by then just passed away, as one of the main influences in his early learning.[11] It was also at Harrow that he started the study of Hebrew and Arabic which would shape his later scholarship.

Jones matriculated at University College, Oxford on 15 March 1764, and was elected Bennet scholar on 31 October of the same year.[12] In 1766 he was elected fellow of University College, and he graduated with a BA in Michaelmas term 1768. During his studies in Oxford, he expanded his knowledge of Arabic, which he had previously begun, under the supervision of Thomas Hunt, who encouraged him to look at the Hebrew Old Testament not just for its historical or theological value, but appreciating it as poetry and literature.[13] This shaped Jones's approach to oriental literature. Similarly Jones was mentored by Robert Lowth, the author of *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum* (1753) after which Jones would later model his own *Commentarii*. Lowth propagated the idea that Hebrew poetry, such as the sublimely inspired poetry of the Old Testament should be considered through the eyes of the old Hebrews.[14] This

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[10] William Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, (London: John Stockdale, Piccadilly; and John Walker, Paternoster-row, 1807), vol. 1, p. 21.

[11] William Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, (London: Richardson, 1774), p. ii.

[12] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 61.

[13] Ibid. p. 62.

[14] Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, (Cambridge MA, London: Harvard University Press, 2008). pp. 29-30.

idea of language learning and cultural understanding as the background to literature interpretation and appreciation echoes through all Jones's studies and works.

Because the regular college lectures were too elementary for Jones, he was allowed to read on his own, as was sometimes allowed talented undergraduates.[15] This provided him with the opportunity to study both Arabic and Persian, both of which, and particularly Persian, were not part of the standard curriculum.[16]

In the Bodleian Library Jones studied the oriental manuscripts that were collected by Pococke, and was introduced to Persian, in which he recognised similarities with Arabic and which stirred his interest. During his time at Oxford, Jones was aided by native informants in his studies. He started by translating Galland's *Arabian Nights Entertainments* into Arabic with the help of Mirza, whom he employed as a tutor. When an Indian intellectual, I'tisam visited, Oxford, he took this opportunity to be tutored by him.[17] Throughout his life he continued this approach, always seeking native tutors to aid him, as Rocher describes about his later language acquisition.[18]

That Jones had once attempted to make academia his career, before turning to the law, is evidenced by his attempt to gain the Regius Chair of Modern History and Languages in 1768, even before he had gained his BA.[19] This attempt remained unsuccessful, and two years later he devoted himself to his law career.

To finance his studies, he took up the post of tutor of George John Spencer, Viscount Althorp, in 1765. Although a difference of opinion about the nature of his education ended this employment prematurely, Jones kept up a regular correspondence with Lord and, in particular, Lady Spencer, to whom he owed introductions and sponsoring whenever he attempted to gain political posts. With the Viscount Althorp he developed a close friendship, which lasted until the end of his life. It is this friendship that has provided later scholars with a clear insight into Jones's life, as the letters he sent to his former pupil, and which are now

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[15] M.L. Clarke, 'Classical Studies', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. V: The Eighteenth Century,* ed. by L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 513-33. (p. 521-522).

[16] See chapter 2.

[17] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 63.

[18] Rosane Rocher, 'Weaving Knowledge: Sir William Jones and Indian Pandits', in *Objects of Enquiry. The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones (1746-1794),* ed. by Garland Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (New York and London: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 51-79.

[19] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 64.

part of the edited collection of Jones's letters by Cannon, often explained his daily routines and personal opinions in the various stages of his life.[20]

In a plan for a 'Treatise on Education' which he never finished, twenty-three-year-old Jones states the most important goal of education needs to be knowledge of the distinction between 'the real and the apparent good'.[21] To create an understanding of this distinction, one has to improve their reason by gathering as much knowledge as possible. In this discussion, Jones wrote the following about language acquisition:

> Now, as neither this knowledge can be perfectly obtained, nor the reason completely improved, in the short duration of human life, unless the accumulated experience and wisdom of all ages and all nations, be added to that which we can gain by our own researches, it is necessary to understand the *languages* of those people who have been, in any period of the world, distinguished for the superior knowledge; and that our own attainments may be made generally beneficial, we must be able to convey them to *other nations*, either in their respective dialects, or in some language, which, from its peculiar excellence and utility, may be in a manner universal. It follows, therefore, that the more immediate object of education is, to learn the languages of celebrated nations both ancient and modern.[22]

He thus considered languages the most important vehicle for both gathering and disseminating knowledge. This vision of language not as a goal, but as a means to a greater understanding of cultures and intercultural knowledge, is perpetually repeated in his translations.

After receiving his MA in Easter term 1773, he was called to the bar on 28 January 1774.[23] Although he remained interested in eastern languages, and used his holidays to continue his studies, his main focus shifted to the law. Therefore, in *Poems,* he includes the years when he composed his poems, so as to show that this has not happened while he was already pursuing

[20] William Jones and Garland Hampton Cannon, *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).

[21] William Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, (London: John Stockdale, Piccadilly; and John Walker, Paternoster-row, 1807), vol. 1, p. 155.

[22] Ibid. pp. 155-156.

[23] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 88.

his law career, 'for a man who wishes to rise in the law, must be supposed to have no other object.'[24]

In the period between his inclusion in the Middle Temple in 1770, but before his call to the bar, which lead to his travelling the English and Welsh circuits, Jones published most of his translations from Persian and Arabic, coming forth from his Oxford studies, which are part of the corpus for this thesis and will be elaborated on below. In these works he emphasises his departure from oriental language study, most tellingly in the *Commentarii* where he alludes to his example Cicero.[25]

However, he does return to this former love, language studies. During holidays he returned to Arabic studies, which ultimately led to his publication of *Moallakát* in 1782. In his law practice he saw an opportunity for combining his two talents as well. He approached his cases on the Welsh circuit as he would later approach his Indian judgeship; learning the Welsh language to create a better understanding of, and fairer circumstances for the people involved in these cases.[26]

After a failed attempt to gain a post in India in 1778, Jones was offered a judgeship in Calcutta in 1783. He married Anna Maria Shipley and together they travelled to India. Upon arrival Jones accessed a circle of orientalists who had been studying Persian, Bengali, and Sanskrit, such as Charles Wilkins and Nathaniel Brassey Halhed.[27] These men were involved in the project governor-general Warren Hastings had started with his Judicial Plan in 1772, of governing the Indian natives by their own laws and customs.[28] Halhed had already produced a translation of Hindu law texts, *The Code of Gentoo Law* (1776) via a Persian translation of an oral Bengali version of the laws.[29] To provide a more accurate translation of the original

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[24] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, vol. 1, p. 176. Letter to Hawkins, 5 November 1771.

[25] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber,* p. xviii.

See further section 2.3.2.1 below.

[26] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794,* p. 96.

[27] P.J. Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', in *Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants. Essays in Eighteenth-Century History Presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland,* ed. by Anne Whiteman, J.S. Bromley, and P.G.M. Dickson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 242-62 (pp. 249-250).

[28] Rosane Rocher, *Orientalism, Poetry and the Millennium : The Checkered Life of Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, 1751-1830*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983), p. 48.

[29] Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, *A Code of Gentoo Laws, or, Ordinations of the Pundits : From a Persian Translation, Made from the Original, Written in the Shanscrit Language*, (London, 1776).

Ordinances of Menu, without intermediaries, became Jones's introduction to the study of Sanskrit.[30] The process of studying this language introduced him to Sanskrit literature and with it Indian cultures. Jones recognised he was not the only 'gentleman amateur of science' active in India, and decided to gather his orientalist colleagues in a society.[31]

On 15 January 1784 the Asiatick Society of Bengal had its first meeting. Although Jones had proposed Warren Hastings as its first president, a function that would suit him as governor-general, Hastings had declined and returned the honour to Jones himself.[32] Therefore it was Jones who addressed the assembled members with a first discourse, explicating the aims and realms of interest of the Society. The new Society was to take as its example the Royal Society, but to bound their researches 'only by the geographical limits of Asia'.[33] These geographical boundaries were to be considered rather fluid, as even Egypt lies within them.[34] Within these loose boundaries, hardly anything is outside the interest of the Society, as Jones encourages its members to 'inquir[e] into the history and antiquities, the natural productions, arts, sciences, and literature of *Asia*.'[35] The central point of these researches was, unsurprisingly, to be 'Hindustan'.[36] Franklin even argues that with the institution of this society, 'scientific Indology' was inaugurated.[37] Kennedy credits the establishment of the society with the development of South-Asian archaeology.[38] Moreover, this drive to research and collect all there was to know about 'Hindustan', ultimately led to the codification of a wide range of

[30] The translation was not finished in his lifetime, and published posthumously: William Jones, *Institutes of Hindu Law: Or, the Ordinances of Menu, According to the Gloss of Cullúca. Comprising the Indian System of Duties, Religious and Civil. Verbally Translated from the Original Sanscrit. With a Preface*, (Calcutta, London: J. Sewell and J. Debrett, 1796).

[31] The term 'gentleman amateur of science' is borrowed from Marshall, who calls in particular the 1760s and 1770s 'the height of [their] age': Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', p. 254.

[32] O.P. Kejariwal, *The Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Discovery of India's Past*, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 33-35.

[33] William Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, (London: John Stockdale, Piccadilly; and John Walker, Paternoster-row, 1807), vol. 3, p. 4.

[34] Ibid. p. 5.

[35] Ibid. p. 3.

[36] Ibid. p. 4.

[37] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 205.

[38] Kenneth A.R. Kennedy, 'The Legacy of Sir William Jones: Natural History, Anthropology, Archaeology', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute,* 54-55 (1994-1995), p. 30.
This paper is re-published as Kenneth A.R. Kennedy, 'The Legacy of Sir William Jones: Natural History, Anthropology, Archaeology', in *Objects of Enquiry. The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones (1746-1794),* ed. by Garland Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (New York and London: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 116-28.

mythology, rituals, and beliefs into 'the faith now known as Hinduism', according to Majeed.[39] He recognises, particularly in Jones's hymns to Hindu deities, which were published with the discourses held at the Society meetings and built from the research unearthed by its members, this introduction into Hinduism, but specifically 'what Jones conceived to be the mythology of Hinduism.'[40]

Language acquisition gets a special mention in the institutional address of the society, because it seems to be lacking from this initial list. Jones explains this further in his address, stating that languages should always be an aid to further understanding, but never an aim in themselves: 'I have considered languages as the mere instruments of real learning, and think them improperly confounded with learning itself: the attainment of them is, however, indispensably necessary.'[41] This encouragement to study languages is in line with similar calls throughout his works, especially prominent in the translations to be discussed. These are always followed by an explanation of the value of language acquisition in their particular context: studying languages to understand a culture, literature, or a people's laws and customs. At the publication of this opening address, combined with his first charge and 'Hymn to Camdeo', responses were laudatory.[42]

During the Society's meetings, and in the journal published by the Asiatic Society, *Asiatic Researches*, Jones presented his ongoing scholarship on the full variety of topics his institutional address promised. These were not only published in London, but also translated into German and French, spreading the knowledge of the Asiatick Society through the continent.

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[39] Javed Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings : James Mill's "The History of British India" And Orientalism*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), p. 36.

[40] Ibid. p. 23.

For Jones's hymns, see section 5.2 below.

[41] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, vol. 3, p. 7.

[42] William Jones, *A Discourse on the Institution of a Society for Enquiring into the History, Civil and Natural, the Antiquities, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia, Delivered at Calcutta, January 15th, 1784 : A Charge to the Grand Jury at Calcutta, December 4th, 1783: And a Hymn to Camdeo, Translated from the Hindu into Persian, and from the Persian into English*, (London: T. Payne and Son, 1784).

A discussion of these responses will follow in section 5.2.

One of the discourses that had the longest afterlife, and established Jones's fame as a linguist, is the third Anniversary Discourse, 'On the Hindus', which he delivered on 2 February 1786, and which was subsequently published in the first volume of the *Asiatic Researches.*[43]

The famous 'philologer passage' is part of this discourse:

> The *Sanscrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though no so forcible, for supporting that both the *Gothick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the *Sanscrit*; and the old *Persian* might be added to the same family.[44]

The common source Jones speaks of is in modern day linguistics called Proto-Indo-European, and Sanskit, Latin and Greek do all belong to the language family that sprung from it, as well as 'the *Gothick* and the *Celtick* […] and the old *Persian*', as Jones goes on to hypothesise.

Jones's approach to linguistic comparison, as described in 'On the Hindus', is often framed as a changing point in the history of linguistics. When Jones's work was starting to be re-examined in the 1940s, Hewitt claimed that this discourse, and more specifically, its 'philologer passage', was the only piece of his writing Jones was still known for.[45] Aarsleff calls it a 'decisive turn' from the *a priori*, philosophical approach to language comparison in the eighteenth century, to a historical approach, *a posteriori* or evidence based, in the nineteenth century.[46] Especially Jones's systematic comparison of cognates in various languages has contributed to this, making his comparison a structural one instead of speculative.

Another change this important passage inspired, was the decisive turn away from the study of Hebrew in search of the 'Ursprache', the language from which all others might have been

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[43] William Jones, 'The Third Anniversary Discourse, on the Hindus, Delivered 2d of February, 1786', *Asiatic Researches,* 1 (1788).

[44] Ibid. pp. 422-423.

[45] R.M. Hewitt, 'Harmonious Jones', *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association,* 28 (1942), p. 43.

[46] Hans Aarsleff, *The Study of Language in England, 1780-1860*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 127.

derived.[47] Sanskrit took its place as the prime candidate for this source language, and therefore its study gained popularity. App even argues the 'birth of modern orientalism', which will be discussed below, is inspired by this substitution of biblical history for Indian origins.[48]

Although comparative linguistics developed as a field in Germany, rather than England, in the nineteenth century, Jones is still an important starting point to the field, with Friedrich von Schlegel's important *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808) starting with a reference to the work of Jones and Wilkins.[49]

This observation has led to the mention of Jones as the father of comparative (Indo-European) linguistics, an epithet so persistent it even appears in the title of Cannon's 1990 biography for Jones, who calls him 'The Father of Modern Linguistics.'[50] The Indo-European hypothesis has indeed become an important part of modern linguistics, but Jones's interpretation of this language family and its components contain many faults, as described clearly by Campbell.[51] Moreover, even though Jones's statement is interpreted in the light of linguistics, he made this claim of related languages in the light of a larger project of researching Indian chronology and mosaic genealogy.[52] App goes even further and claims Jones's 'philologer passage', as well as the whole series of his Anniversary Discourses, was part of a theological programme.[53] According to this interpretation, Jones's Indian researches all had the goal of finding the source of the *prisca theologia*, the ancient theology that underlies all religions and leads to knowledge about an Ur-race of humans that spoke an Ur-language.[54] Although these themes can be applied to Jones's Indian work, it is hard to apply the same questions to his earlier translations, a task App does not undertake. I would therefore argue that, although Jones is

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[47] Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Race, Religion, and Philology in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 6-7.
[48] Urs App, *The Birth of Orientalism*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), p. 5.
[49] Friedrich von Schlegel, *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier. Ein Beitrag zur Gründung der Alterthumsfunde*, (Heidelberg: Mohr und Zimmer, 1808), p. iii.
[50] Garland Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[51] Lyle Campbell, 'Why Sir William Jones Got It All Wrong, or Jones' Role in How to Establish Language Families', *Annuario del Seminario de Filología Vasca "Julio de Urquijo",* 40 (2006).
[52] Thomas R. Trautmann, 'The Lives of Sir William Jones', in *Sir William Jones 1746-1794: A Commemoration,* ed. by Alexander Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 91-122.
Cf. Kapil Raj, 'William Jones (1746–1794): Relating of the Original Inhabitants of India to the Other Families of Humanity', *History of Humanities,* 4 (2019).
[53] Urs App, *William Jones's Ancient Theology*, (2009), p. 9.
[54] Ibid. p. 45.

indeed not free of Christian influences as a man of his time, to call all of his researches a 'Christian mission' would be to ignore his achievements before his move to India.[55] As I will argue in this thesis, his published works before and after this move, although different because of the type of material that became available to Jones in India, do show a shared mission.

Jones's time in India ended with his sudden death on 27 April 1794, which left both his researches and his translation project of Hindu law unfinished. After Jones's death Sir John Shore, later Lord Teignmouth, who had arrived in India as governor-general in March 1793, took over as the second president of the Society. The monument erected on Jones's grave in Calcutta still stands today.

1.2.2. Works and corpus

Six of Jones's works will form the core of this thesis, which are his translations from eastern languages or include translations within a wider explanatory or didactic context. Jones's career of publishing translations started with a French translation of a Persian manuscript, *Histoire de Nader Chah, connu sous le nom de Thahmas Kuli Khan, empereur de Perse*.[56] Jones took on this commission from the king of Denmark reluctantly, wanting to avoid the work because of the subject matter of the manuscript, the life of a dictator, as well as its literary quality. He found an opportunity, however, to turn the work into a source of information about eastern poetry by adding his 'Traité sur la Poésie orientale', in which he first made his ideas about the rejuvenating power of eastern poetry known. He published an English translation three years later: *The History of the Life of Nader Shah, King of Persia*.[57]

Central in Jones's mission to introduce eastern poetry to an English audience is the 1772 volume *Poems, consisting chiefly of translations from the Asiatick languages*, which not only

[55] Ibid. p. 4.

[56] William Jones, *Histoire de Nader Chah, Connu sous le nom de Thahmas Kuli Khan, Empereur de Perse. Traduite d'un manuscrit persanne par ordre de sa majesté le Roi de Dannemark. Avec des notes chronologiques, historiques, géographiques. Et un traité sur la poésie orientale*, (London: P. Elmsly, 1770).

[57] William Jones, *The History of the Life of Nader Shah, King of Persia. Extracted from an Eastern Manuscript, Which Was Translated into French by Order of His Majesty the King of Denmark. With an Introduction, Containing, I. A Description of Asia, According to the Oriental Geographers. II. A Short History of Persia from the Earliest Times to the Present Century: And an Appendix, Consisting of an Essay on Asiatick Poetry, and the History of the Persian Language. To Which Are Added, Pieces Relative to the French Translation*, (London: J. Richardson, T. Cadell, 1773).

consists of poetry, but also includes two important essays in which Jones expresses these goals in English for the first time.[58] The poems included in this volume consist of both translations and imitations, as well as original poetry, aimed to give the oriental poetry, rather literally, a place within the European canon. The methods Jones adapts to achieve this, such as intertextual references between the various poems in the volume, will be discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

In his largest theoretical work on eastern poetry, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex*, Jones provides more literal translations, although still often accompanied by imitations.[59] In his only Latin work on eastern poetry, Jones takes a broader European approach, setting out to spread knowledge and appreciation of eastern literature beyond England. Like *Poems*, the *Commentarii* include translations from Turkish, Persian and Arabic, but Jones also includes other examples as and when he finds them, such as Hebrew and even Chinese, making 'asiatic' a broad descriptor of non-western languages.

After the appearance of this magnum opus, which had been in preparation for many years, Jones devotes himself completely to his law career, so further translations don't appear, until 1782, when he publishes another translation that had been some time in the making: *The Moallakát, or seven Arabian Poems, which were suspended on the Temple at Mecca*.[60] Jones alluded to the Mu'allaqat in his essays in *Poems* and in the *Commentarii*, and ten years later his complete prose translation of these Arabic poems finally appeared. He did not have the time to prepare the notes to accompany the translations, and, although the advertisement suggests any buyers should wait until their appearance before binding the book, they were never published. This had an impact on the reception of the poems, as will be discussed in chapter 3.

Once in India, Jones translated Sanskrit texts in his studies to master the languages. The one full-length literary translation he published, first in Calcutta and the following year in London,

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[58] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations II. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*.

[59] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*.

[60] William Jones, *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems, Which Were Suspended on the Temple at Mecca; with a Translation and Arguments*, (London: J. Nichols for P. Elmsly, 1783); William Jones, *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems, Which Were Suspended on the Temple at Mecca; with a Translation, a Preliminary Discourse, and Notes*, (London: P. Elmsly, 1782).

is *Sacontalá, or the Fatal Ring, an Indian Drama by Cálidás.*[61] This is his most famous and most discussed translation in secondary literature, because not only did it introduce Sanskrit literature to England, but it also attracted the attention of famous readers, such as Goethe. This translation will be the focal point of chapter 4.

A slightly different position to the previously mentioned works, is taken in *A Grammar of the Persian Language*.[62] As the title explains, this work is not presented as a literary translation, but is a grammar. Its reception is, however, part of the discussion in this thesis, particularly in chapter 2. The inclusion of the *Persian Grammar* has two reasons: first, it is part of the same programme of promotion of eastern languages as the literary texts just described. The *Persian Grammar* has a different audience than Jones's other translations, since it is aimed first and foremost to be a practical guide for East India Company men in India, but the audiences aimed at in the other translations also are not uniform. Jones presents all of his translations to promote the study of the original languages, so this grammar as an educational piece of writing is no different. Moreover, the second commonality the *Persian Grammar* has with the other works in the corpus, is that it includes literary texts. Translating those is an important part of the didactic approach Jones takes to language study, and therefore he includes references to and translations of literary texts in his grammar. The 'Persian Song of Hafiz', which first appears in the *Persian Grammar*, becomes a popular example of Persian poetry and is reprinted in *Poems*, but also in journals and anthologies. Thus the *Persian Grammar*, although different in title to the other translations, is an important work in the corpus of Jones's oriental translations.

Five years after his death, Lady Anna Maria Jones edited a collection of her husband's works, in six volumes. She dedicated these 'to the honourable the directors of the East India Company, who have honoured the memory of the author with distinguished marks of respect and esteem,' once more showing the intimate links between Jones's scholarship and the Company.[63] The translations discussed in this thesis were all included in this edition of the *Works*, as well as Jones's discourses for the Asiatick Society, his translations of and essays on

[61] William Jones, *Sacontalá, or the Fatal Ring, an Indian Drama by Cálidás: Translated from the Original Sanskrit and Pracrit*, (Calcutta: Joseph Cooper, 1789).

[62] William Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, (London: W. & J. Richardson, 1771).

[63] William Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, in Six Cvolumes*, (London: G.G. and J. Robinson, and R.H. Evans, 1799).

law texts, his Hindu hymns and some other letters and poems. The 1807 edition of these *Works* opened with the 'Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Correspondence of Sir William Jones' by John Shore, Lord Teignmouth, in two volumes, but otherwise added few works to the overview of 1799; most importantly the translated 'Fables of Nezami' were added in the fourth volume. The 'Memoirs' were the same that had been previously published separately, in 1804. Collected volumes of Jones's poetry, both translated and original, appeared in the early nineteenth century, evidence of the esteem Jones inspired, not just as an orientalist, but as a poet too.[64]

A reprint of Jones's collected *Works* with a new introduction by Garland Cannon was published in 1993, containing all thirteen volumes.[65] The *Works* themselves are not annotated in this edition.

Modern editions

A part of Jones's works has been made available in modern editions with commentaries. In *The British Discovery of Hinduism*, Marshall includes what he considers the most important texts by the early orientalists. Jones papers for the Asiatick Society 'On the Gods of Greece, Italy and India', 'On the Hindus' (including the famous 'philologer passage') and 'On the Chronology of the Hindus' in *The British Discovery of Hinduism*, together with pieces by Alexander Dow, Halhed, Hastings, Wilkins and John Zephaniah Holwell.[66]

A 'Reader' was published, edited by Pachori, in 1993, of selected edited and annotated works.[67]

Franklin's selection of poetical and prose works also includes the former two discourses, together with five other essays and 'political writings.' The further 24 pieces included in this volume are poetical, and only four are translations: the two literary translations from Sanskrit, *Sacontalá* and the *Gita-Govinda*, the 'Persian Song of Hafez' and two of the seven poems from

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[64] William Jones, *The Poems and Life of Sir William Jones*, (London: Published by Suttaby, Evance & Fox...and Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, 1818).
William Jones, *The Poems of Sir William Jones*, (Chiswick: Press of C. Whittingham, 1822).

[65] William Jones and Garland Hampton Cannon, *The Collected Works of Sir William Jones*, (New York, N.Y.: New York University Press, 1993).

[66] P. J. Marshall, *The British Discovery of Hinduism in the Eighteenth Century*, (Cambridge England: University Press, 1970).

[67] William Sir Jones and Satya S. Pachori, *Sir William Jones: A Reader*, (Delhi; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Moallakát (Amriolkais and Tarafa, the first two).[68] A clear preference is shown for Jones's English work, leaving his French and Latin essays out of the volume.

In 2009 an online edition of Jones's *Poems* is published, edited by Beck.[69] Although it includes some critical notes to the text, the mistake in the title of the volume is an indication that it is of little value to modern scholarship.

An annotated edition of the *Commentarii* is currently being prepared by John T. Gilmore. This steady increase of editions is indicative of the growing interest in Jones's work and its place in the literature and scholarship op the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This thesis contributes to that research by analysing that context and providing an insight into the various uses of his works.

1.3. Previous scholarship: the faces of Jones throughout the ages

1.3.1. Contemporary fame and temporal scope

In his first address as new president of the Asiatick Society, John Shore, later Lord Teignmouth, gave a eulogy for Jones. The first he mentioned in this overview of Jones's accomplishments, was 'his wonderful capacity for the acquisition of languages, which has never been excelled,' listing thirteen languages in which Jones had gained some degree of proficiency.[70] This address by Shore was printed several times, as listed by Cannon in his *Bibliography*; twice in London in 1795 and in the first volume of *Works*, 1799.[71] It was also used as a character sketch in journals, such as *The Weekly Entertainer*, which excluded the two extracts quoted by Shore, as well as the concluding paragraphs.[72] *Scots Magazine* summarises Shore's words, focusing on literature and law, and leaving out the mention of other researches such as chemistry and botany, concluding that 'Humanity and Literature will long lament his loss!'[73] A full copy of the address is included in *New Annual Register* in January 1799.[74] In the *Monthly Visitor* Jones is

[68] Franklin, 'Sir William Jones. Selected Poetical and Prose Works'.

[69] William Jones, 'Poems, Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Tongues (1772)', ed. by Rudolf Beck (Augsburg, 2009).

[70] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, vol. 1, p. iv-v.

[71] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, p. 46.

[72] [Anon.], 'Character of the Late Sir William Jones', *The Weekly entertainer: or, Agreeable and instructive repository,* 25 (1795).

[73] [Anon.], 'Sketch of the Character of the Late Sir William Jones', *The Scots Magazine,* 60 (1798).

[74] [Anon.], 'Sketch of the Literary Character and Attainments of Sir William Jones', *The New Annual Register, or General Repository of History, Politics, and Literature,* (1799).

commemorated with both a sketch of his character and an engraving. The sketch mentions of his time in India only his founding of the Asiatick Society, not his translations; in particular his early works, *Nader Shah*, *Persian Grammar* and *Poems* are mentioned, as well as Jones's politics and *Law of Bailments*.[75] These and many other eulogies were published, and are collected in Cannon's *Bibliography*.[76]

A longer version of this eulogy is presented by Shore in his 'Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Correspondence of Sir William Jones', an overview of Jones's life in two volumes.[77] This overview of Jones's activities and achievements, supplemented with letters both to and from Jones, is also included in the second version of *The Works of Sir William Jones*, as the first two of thirteen volumes.[78] Teignmouth includes his own translations of letters in Latin or French, and from these becomes apparent that he does not translate all content. This raises the question as to the completeness of the other letters as well, and Cannon's edition of Jones's letters has indeed found some missing elements.

The following example provides an insight in the fame of Jones's talents and character even reaching America. In the second edition of John Blair Linn's didactic poem *The Powers of Genius*, Jones finds a place between Johnson and Virgil in the second part of the poem.[79] The first edition, which was published a year earlier, omits mention of Jones altogether, whereas in this edition he not only gets his own description, but his translations are also mentioned at various parts of the poem, for example when Jones's words are used as evidence for the genius of the Persian poet Ferdusi.[80] In discussing Jones's own genius, however, Linn uses Jones's merit as a poet, which is 'unquestionably great', rather than his translations as evidence, as well as his essays. The example he gives of *The Moallakát* provides two significant pieces of evidence: in his overview of the seven poems included, he uses the name 'Muriolkais' rather than 'Amriolkais' for the first poet.[81] This misspelling does not occur in editions of *The*

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[75] [Anon.], 'Sketch of the Life and Writings of Sir William Jones', *The Monthly Visitor, and New Family Magazine,* 6 (1804).

[76] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources,* pp. 39-41.

[77] Baron John Shore Teignmouth, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings, and Correspondence, of Sir William Jones*, (From the Classic Press, printed for the proprietors Wm. Poyntell, 1805).

[78] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*.

[79] John Blair Linn, *The Powers of Genius, a Poem in Three Parts. Second Edition, Corrected and Enlarged*, (Philadelphia: John Conrad and Co., 1802), pp. 59-60.

[80] Ibid. pp. 87-88.

[81] 'Amriolkais' is Jones's transliteration of a name currently most frequently transliterated as 'Imru'al-Qais', see below section 3.4.1.1.

Moallakát, but it is the spelling found on the contents page of the 1799 collected *Works of Sir William Jones*, eighth volume.[82] This must therefore have found its way to America before 1802, and Linn had had an opportunity to browse the work.[83] It is unsure, however, if he had read the book, since the misspelling occurs only on the contents page, and not in the title of the translation itself, so would he have read the translations, he would have recognised the mistake.

This thesis considers Jones's influence until ca. 1835, because by then changing attitudes of the British in India had diminished the interest in orientalist research profoundly. Certain developments in the early nineteenth century created an atmosphere in which Anglicist sympathies could grow to the point when the English Education Act of 1835 institutionalised an English curriculum for all Indian citizens of the British Empire, effectively stopping both the need for and the practice of education or research in any of the native languages of India.

This period was shaped by what Leask has termed 'anxieties of empire', which created an ambiguous approach to the translation and research by Jones and his colleagues.[84] This term represents the tension between the growing British Empire providing foreign influences, such as literature, which can be studied. This represents the global power and influence of the British, and more generally, Europeans. However, gathering this knowledge could provide the insight that other cultures are also highly sophisticated, or even superior.

These anxieties developed into a period of a gradual turn away from the interest in oriental research, and instead a rise of anglicist utilitarianism. Majeed argues that this rise was a symptom of revitalised conservatism in Britain, stirred up by the French Revolution and the threat this revolutionary thinking posed on British society.[85] The conservatism spread to India, where consistently more of British culture was imposed on the population.

This development started with a 'Pious Clause' in the India Act of 1813, which allowed legitimised missionary work in India, and challenged the indigenous religions, under the guise

[82] The misspelling remains in the tenth volume of the 1807 edition.

[83] From the 1805 reprint of *Sacontalá* in *The Monthly Anthology*, discussed in chapter 4 we learn that prints of Jones's *Works* appear rare in America. William Emerson, 'Sacontalá', *The Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review. Containing Sketches and Reports of Philosophy, Religion, History, Arts, and Manners,* 2 (1805).

[84] Nigel Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[85] Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings : James Mill's "The History of British India" And Orientalism*, p. 2.

of introducing 'useful knowledge, and of religious and moral improvement.'[86] Since many of Jones's works in India had been related to Hindu mythology and religion, this is indicative of a diminishing use for them and interest in them.

A second source of polemic against Jones and his orientalist goals is the publication of James Mill's *History of British India* in 1817. Mill takes a utilitarian stance again the study of Indian culture, arguing against research into Hindu culture, for example in his essay 'On the Hindus.'[87] Describing Hindus as an ignorant people, led by superstition, Mill makes a case against the study of their culture or languages.

These utilitarian arguments culminated in 'Macaulay's Minute', the Minute on Indian Education (1835) by Thomas Macaulay, who famously claimed that a single shelf of European literature was worth more than all the eastern literature combined, despite having no knowledge of oriental languages:

> I have no knowledge of either Sanscrit or Arabic. But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value. I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanscrit works. I have conversed, both here and at home, with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the oriental learning at the valuation of the orientalists themselves. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is indeed fully admitted by those members of the committee who support the oriental plan of education.[88]

This led governor-general William Bentinck to give effect to the English Education Act mentioned above, and exchanging a period of interest in Indian culture for one in which Indian subjects are taught the English curriculum. This went together with a change from Persian as the official administrative language in India, to English. Leask recognises these developments as an end-point to what he calls 'Jones-style imaginative sympathy for Asian cultures'.[89] With

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[86] Penelope Carson, *The East India Company and Religion, 1698-1858*, (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2012). Appendix 4: 'The Pious Clause.'

[87] James Mill, *The History of British India*, (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1817).

[88] The full text of 'Macaulay's Minute' is available via http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html (Accessed 27/04/2021)

[89] Leask, 'Easts', p. 146.

this change in attitudes to India and its inhabitants also comes a diminished interest in Jones's work, particularly his translations and other works arguing for a close understanding of eastern literature and culture.

A simultaneous development that De Meester argues contributed to the loss of interest in Jones's branch of orientalism, is the rise of more serious and organised scholarship in the eastern languages.[90] She recognises as one of the incentives towards this goal, the establishment in 1828 of the Oriental Translation Fund under the patronage of George IV. Its purpose was identified as 'translating and publishing such interesting and valuable Works on Eastern History, Science, and Belles-Lettres as are still in MS. in the Libraries of the Universities, the British Museum, and the East-India-House, and in other collections, in Asia and Africa as well as in Europe.'[91]

In this description, we recognise an echo of Jones's words in his 'manifesto', to make the manuscripts available that lay unread in the libraries. This encouragement for new scholarship and translations, however, might be a completion of Jones's mission, it also meant his own work would rapidly become obsolete, since his pioneering, but often faulty, translations would be overtaken by advancing scholarship.

1.3.2. The re-discovery of Sir William Jones

Jones's works had hardly been touched for a hundred years, when Hewitt rightfully noted in a 1942 paper that 'the dust lies heavy on the works of Sir William Jones'.[92] This moment marked, however, the start of renewed interest in his work. Particularly in 1946, to commemorate the bicentenary of Jones's birth, several papers appeared after a long period of relative quiet. This can be seen as the reinvention of studies into Jones's work, and although contributors focus on various aspects of Jones's life and work, the consensus seems to be on his neglected importance. Edgerton's focus is on the description of Jones's indological contributions, such as his recognition of the common source for Sanskrit and European languages: 'at this moment modern comparative grammar was born.'[93] There are two themes

[90] Marie De Meester, *Oriental Influences in English Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, (Heidelberg, 1915), p. 9.

[91] 'Oriental Translation Fund', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* 2 (1829), p. xxiii.

[92] Hewitt, 'Harmonious Jones', p. 42.

[93] Franklin Edgerton, 'Sir William Jones: 1746-1794', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 66 (1946), p. 232.

being emphasised in this short overview, which is based mostly on Lord Teignmouth's 'Life' in the 1807 *Works*: Jones as the first to make certain accomplishments, such as reading extensive Sanskrit works or translating the Gitagovinda, and his modesty and humanity.[94] Overall, this creates a paper filled with superlatives. The Royal Society of London published a paper for the same reason, Jones's bicentenary, but this consists solely of a description of the Asiatic Society and its developments after Jones.[95] The Royal India Society's proceedings of their Sir William Jones bicentenary conference equally do not contribute to knowledge.[96] The *SOAS Bulletin* included nine contributions on Jones in its 1946 volume, and out of the remaining seven, Bailey also dedicated his paper to Jones.[97] The themes discussed in this volume span the whole breadth of Jones's career. Arberry addresses his politics, in a paper based on at the time unpublished, letters of Jones to his pupil and friend Viscount Althorp, contradicting Teignmouth's downplaying of Jones's political activities and convictions in his 'Life'.[98] Setting out to contradict Shore, who, according to Arberry 'mitigate[s] the harshness of his [Jones's] uncompromising politics', Arberry draws a rather nuanced conclusion himself, settling on refusing to call Jones a republican, because he always put the constitution first in his political beliefs.[99] In this volume several topics of Jones's life are introduced, for the first time in modern scholarship, such as the insignificance of his Chinese studies, and moreover his unscrupulousness to speak and write about things about which he was no expert.[100] Jones's position as a classicist is introduced by Stewart, who confirms Jones as an established reader and even author of Greek, amending a poem by Anacreon in a meaningful way, later corroborated by other classicists.[101] The volume includes all aspects of Jones's oriental studies:

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[94] Ibid. pp. 232-235.

[95] L. L. F., 'The Bicentenary of the Birth of Sir William Jones, F.R.S., Founder of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London,* 4 (1946).

[96] Proceedings of the Sir William Jones Bicentenary Conference, Held at University College, Oxford, September 2-6, 1946', in *The Sir William Jones Bicentenary Conference,* (University College, Oxford: Royal India Society, London, 1946).

[97] H. W. Bailey, 'Gāndhārī', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London,* 11 (1946). p. 764: 'The following pages are dedicated to the memory of Sir William Jones, the seeds of whose sowing have borne an abundant crop in the world of Asiatic learning.'

[98] A.J. Arberry, 'New Light on Sir William Jones', *Bulletin of The School of Oriental and African Studies, London,* 11 (1946).

[99] Ibid. p. 673.

[100] A.D. Waley, 'Sir William Jones as Sinologue', *Bulletin of The School of Oriental and African Studies, London University,* 11 (1946).

[101] J.A.. Stewart, 'Sir W. Jones' Revision of the Text of Two Poems of Anacreon', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London,* 11 (1946).

Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit, as well as his work in the field of law.[102] De Sola Pinto adds to this collection an introduction into Jones's own poetry and some of the English poets, like Tennyson and Shelley to be discussed in chapter 5, who were influenced by Jones's translations and orientalist poetry.[103] This volume of the *SOAS Bulletin* thus gives an overview of Jones's work in all its aspects, but is hardly critical. Even when describing how Jones made mistakes in nearly all parts of his research into Arabic, such as his transliterations, his description of Arabic metre and his translations, Tritton ends his piece with the conclusion that 'there is little to set right in his [Jones's] general ideas.'[104]

The appearance of these studies in 1946 created a new starting point for Jones to be studied in the twentieth century, and papers started appearing again regularly. Through the second half of the twentieth century, in particular the work of Garland Cannon has done much to unearth information about Jones. Cannon composed a bibliography of both Jones's work and scholarship on Jones's life and work, and although some sources are missing, as will be noticed in this thesis, and new work has appeared since, this is still a valuable resource as a starting point for any scholar researching Jones.[105] Moreover, Cannon collected and edited Jones's letters in two volumes.[106] Although not a definitive collection, only very few letters have been uncovered since.[107]

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[102] A.J. Arberry, 'Orient Pearls at Random Strung', *Bulletin of The School of Oriental and African Studies* 11 (1946).
A.S. Tritton, 'The Student of Arabic', *Bulletin of The School of Oriental and African Studies, London University,* 11 (1946).
Alfred Master, 'The Influence of Sir William Jones Upon Sanskrit Studies', *Bulletin of The School of Oriental and African Studies* 11 (1946).
S.G. Vesey-FitzGerald, 'Sir William Jones, the Jurist', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 11 (1946).

[103] V. De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies,* 11 (1946).

[104] Tritton, 'The Student of Arabic'.

[105] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*.
27 years earlier, when he started his research into Jones, Cannon had already compiled a shorter bibliography, excluding the overview of reviews and translations he attempted in the later edition: Garland Hampton Cannon, *Sir William Jones, Orientalist, an Annotated Bibliography of His Works*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1952).

[106] Jones and Cannon, *The Letters of Sir William Jones*.

[107] Garland Cannon and Andrew Grout, 'British Orientalists' Co-Operation: A New Letter of Sir William Jones', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and Afrian Studies,* 55 (1992).
Michael Franklin, ''I Burn with a Desire of Seeing Shiraz': A New Letter from Sir William Jones to Harford Jones', *The Review of English Studies,* 56 (2005).

Cannon was a prolific author on Jones and his works. Throughout most of the second half of the twentieth century he published on Jones's position in oriental studies and published his work and letters whenever he found a new contribution. His discussions of Jones's various works, such as *Sacontalá* on which Cannon published several papers, culminated in his biography of Jones.[108] His attitude to Jones, however, is little critical, but his invaluable contribution to the study of the work and life of Jones consists mainly of the massive task of compiling and making available all of Jones's works, letters, and other contributions.

Jones and his contemporaries have received varied reception in the course of the twentieth century. With the appearance of *The Discovery of India* and *La Renaissance orientale* the image of the British orientalist was that of a hero, re-discovering culture in India that the Indians had forgotten about by their search for classical Sanskrit literature: 'To Jones and to many other European scholars India owes a deep debt of gratitude for the rediscovery of her past literature.'[109] This conviction resonates deeply in the work of Cannon, probably most strongly put in the following quote:

> Perhaps his [Jones's] greatest multicultural achievement was his helping give pride and general unity back to a subcontinent now containing more than a billion people, where otherwise, conceivably, one might envisage an impoverished Somalia spread over that vast area, albeit one where Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs confront each other today.[110]

Cannon attributes all learning and culture in modern day India almost to Jones personally, a highly contested viewpoint.[111] In the same publication to commemorate the bicentenary of

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Joshua Ehrlich, 'Empire and Enlightenment in Three Letters from Sir William Jones to Governor-General John Macpherson', *The Historical Journal,* 62 (2019).

[108] Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics*.

[109] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, (New York: Meridian Books, 1946), p. 31.
Cf. Raymond Schwab, *La Renaissance Orientale*, (Paris: Payot, 1950). And David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance : The Dynamics of Indian Modernization, 1773-1835*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

[110] Garland Cannon, 'Oriental Jones: Scholarship, Literature, Multiculturalism and Humankind', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate & Research Institute,* 54-55 (1994-1995), p. 19
This paper is re-printed as Garland Cannon, 'Oriental Jones: Scholarship, Literature, Multiculturalism and Humankind', in *Objects of Enquiry. The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones (1746-1794),* ed. by Garland Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (New York and London: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 25-50.
For Cannon's claims on the 'Oriental Renaissance', see also Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics*, pp. 298-315.

[111] See the discussion below, or e.g. Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India*, (London: Penguin Books, 2018).

Jones's death, Roychaudhuri presents a paper titled 'A Harbinger of India's Renaissance', in which he claims India was asleep for centuries until Jones woke her up.[112]

1.3.3. *Orientalism* and its aftermath

This idea of the benevolent colonial administrator introducing the native population to their heritage was challenged by the appearance of Said's seminal *Orientalism* in 1978. Said's specific criticism of Jones is that his goals when studying and disseminating knowledge about eastern languages and cultures were 'to rule and to learn, then to compare Orient with Occident […] which, with an irresistible impulse always to codify, to subdue the infinite variety of the Orient to "a complete digest" of laws, figures, customs, and works, he is believed to have achieved.'[113] Jones's practice of comparing east and west thus seems to become a vehicle to reduce the merits of for example eastern literature by describing them in terms dependent on western images. This problem is also acknowledged by Majeed, who describes a dichotomy in Jones's work on India, and he recognises this in his *Ordinances of Menu* in particular.[114] Jones attempts to both understand the foreign culture in its own terms, but also to measure it by neutral standards. This provides a problematic ambiguity, which Jones does not manage to solve, and which is the cause for Said's criticism of comparison leading to subduing the variety of the Orient. As Majeed's analysis illustrates, this response is based primarily on Jones's Indian work, and his earlier translations contain comparisons not to subdue the variety of the Orient, but to enhance the variety of western literature. I have argued that Jones's early works on Persian and Arabic include comparisons to create familiar cultural anchors for their readers, so they would be able to see the value of the newly introduced literature in a comprehensible context, rather than shockingly exotic texts they fail to understand.[115] The importance of this strategy is most evident in the discussion of responses to his translations meant for a general audience, as described below in the third chapter, where we will see that without a comparison to provide context, the *Moallakát*

[112] Chandan Roychaudhuri, 'Sir William Jones (1746-1794): A Harbinger of India's Renaissance', *Bulletin of the Deccan College Post-Graduate and Research Institute,* 54-55 (1994-1995), p. 73.
[113] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 78.
[114] Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings : James Mill's "The History of British India" And Orientalism*, p. 43.
[115] Catharina G.M. Janssen, 'Comparison as Context in Sir William Jones's Translations of Eastern Literature', in *Contact, Conquest, and Colonization: How Practices of Comparing Shaped Empires and Colonialism around the World,* ed. by Eleonora Rohland, et al. (New York: Routledge, 2021), pp. 225-41.

proves too foreign to understand and appreciate. Although Niranjana's argument that translation is automatically always a form of 'othering' is valid, I would counter that it is through the comparisons, which Said condemns, that Jones attempts to diminish the otherness of his translations by creating a familiar context.[116] This should help the reader, as Osterhammel argues 'come to grips with what otherwise would seem unfathomably alien.' [117] It therefore constitutes an indispensable part of Jones's strategy of popularising eastern literature.

In an attempt to save Jones from the harsh judgement of *Orientalism*, Kejariwal implicitly responds to the attack:

> It is often overlooked that Jones had established the Asiatic Society and taken to studies of the East not because he wanted to collect materials to explain or criticize the West, but because he wanted to *study the East as such*. He was the first scholar from the West to look at the East without a Western bias. This is evident in his selection of the subjects chosen for study. He was unlike other scholars, who studied those subjects that helped them to know the people of the colonies better so that they could either administer them more efficiently or equip themselves with enough knowledge to point out deficiencies in local customs and ways of thought, and propagate the Gospel. Thus Jones became the first scholar to study and translate a Sanskrit play.[118]

The case he makes for the study objects is a convincing one, since Jones's choice to translate *Sacontalá* was not politically or religiously motivated, and based on the knowledge of language and culture of his native instructors. However, that such literary works cannot be used 'to point out deficiencies in local customs' does not fit the analysis made by, among others, Ballaster, who shows that it is precisely these 'classical' texts of a fabulous past that facilitated a comparison with the eighteenth-century present.[119] Since local culture could never live up to the stylised ideals of literature, this was indeed used 'to point out deficiencies.'

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[116] Tejaswini Niranjana, *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context*, (Univ of California Press, 1992), p. 11.

[117] Jürgen Osterhammel, *Unfabling the East: The Enlightenment's Encounter with Asia*, (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018), p. 14.

[118] O.P. Kejariwal, 'William Jones: The Copernicus of History', in *Objects of Enquiry. The Life, Contributions, and Influences of Sir William Jones (1746-1794),* ed. by Garland Cannon and Kevin R. Brine (New York and London: New York University Press, 1995), pp. 102-15 (p. 109).

[119] Rosalind Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients : Fictions of the East in England, 1662-1785*, (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 32.

Similarly, the analyses below will show that Jones did not approach the East without a Western viewpoint, which I am however reluctant to call a bias. Contextualising the eastern literatures he studied without taking into account his educated background, was impossible, as the problem of comparison explained by Majeed above also illustrates.

Describing colonial administrators within the terms of the opposing schools of thought of the creation of a *Bengal Renaissance*, versus the reductive and oppressive *Orientalism*, has been problematic. These mutually exclusive theories have been mediated in recent literature. Nuanced discussions of Jones in this respect can be found for example in the work of Das, who juxtaposes Cannon's and Said's visions of Jones to create room for a more thoroughly contextualised middle ground.[120] Similarly, Osterhammel argues that the kind of imperialist orientalism criticised by Said does not exist yet in the eighteenth century.[121] This only occurs when the British power balance in India begins to shift, in the early nineteenth century as described above. The shift he recognises in engagement with the east at this time goes hand in hand with a professionalisation of knowledge about an expertise on Asia; this signals a move away from an 'encyclopedic gathering of knowledge' and towards this becoming specialised.[122] Jones's engagement with the east clearly falls in the first category, as is most evident from the description of the goals of the Asiatic Society: rather than narrowing down their interest into one area, the members of the society are encouraged to gather all information they can find to create as broad a view as possible.

In his publication of three previously unpublished letters of Jones to James Macpherson, Ehrlich makes a compelling case for the interpretation of both men, who have previously been categorised in opposing camps, as functioning in the same historical context.[123] Against the characterisation of 'Indophile' Jones and 'Indophobe' Macpherson, Ehrlich argues convincingly for the retirement of such terms, as they are 'reductive and ahistorical' and to move away from the unproductive study of cultural attitudes.[124] This is in line with Das's suggestion that Jones's works need to be examined further in 'the European socio-cultural

[120] Nandini Das, '[a] Place among the Hindu Poets': Orientalism and the Poetry of Sir William Jones', *Literature Compass,* 3 (2006), p. 1236.

[121] Osterhammel, *Unfabling the East: The Enlightenment's Encounter with Asia*, p. 10.

[122] Ibid. pp. 28-29.

[123] Ehrlich, 'Empire and Enlightenment in Three Letters from Sir William Jones to Governor-General John Macpherson'.

[124] Ibid. pp. 5-6.

contexts within which they were produced.'[125] This thesis attempts to create an analysis of such contexts, and to place Jones's works within the spheres for which they were written.

The work of Michael Franklin has been an invaluable source for this research, in particular his biography of Jones, which includes new sources such as letters and the analysis of some reviews to Jones's work.[126] Franklin approaches Jones from the perspective of Romantic literary studies, which also reveals some weaknesses in his work, for example the exclusion of what Jones considered his most important (early) work, the *Commentarii*. Moreover, Franklin's approach to Jones has been criticised by Ehrlich for creating an image of Jones that is too virtuous and leaves out any imperialist tendencies that are common for the time.[127] Although terms like 'indophile' and 'indophobe' are too sharp, it is still important not to ignore the context in which Jones operated, especially after his arrival in India. Examples throughout this thesis will show that Jones's attitude towards eastern languages might be one of curiosity and enthusiasm, his attitude towards eastern people contained as much prejudice as that of his contemporaries.[128] A clear description of his position towards 'the East', however, can be recognised in Marchand's general description of European orientalists:

> Of course those who wrote in European languages about eastern cultures were representing the Orient to, and largely for, themselves. But some at least were also trying to decipher and learn oriental languages so that they could hear the East speak for itself.[129]

I would indeed place Jones in this second group. His oriental scholarship is based on a European tradition, and his main instrument of describing the east is by comparison with the west; he is representing the orient to a European audience and within a European context. This is, however, born out of necessity, since that is the only context in which he and his audience can understand these new literatures and cultures. Jones does strive to 'hear the East speak for itself' though, and to have as many Europeans as possible listen as it speaks.

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[125] Das, '[a] Place among the Hindu Poets': Orientalism and the Poetry of Sir William Jones', p. 1244.
Cf. Osterhammel, *Unfabling the East: The Enlightenment's Encounter with Asia*, pp. 16-17.

[126] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*.

[127] Ehrlich, 'Empire and Enlightenment in Three Letters from Sir William Jones to Governor-General John Macpherson', p. 5.

[128] E.g. Jones description of eastern poetry coming forth from 'a state of inactivity' (section 3.2.1.3) or the discussion of Jones's mention of the rarity of finding 'a virtuous Hindu' (section 4.2.3.1).

[129] Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, (Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 16.

This is why he employs his constant reminders to his readers to learn the eastern languages and read the literatures in their original language. That is the only way to come to a full understanding of eastern cultures.[130]

[130] One of these explicit exhortations for example, discussed below (2.3.2.1), is a humourous dialogue between a Briton and an Arab (appended to the *Commentarii*). Often overlooked in modern scholarship, this provides the perfect illustration of Jones's plan to convince his readers to enjoy the beauties of eastern literature in their original languages.

2. Jones and the discipline of oriental studies

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter Jones's works will be analysed against the background of the academic study of oriental languages, and the responses of an academic audience to Jones's translations. Two of his works will receive the main focus of this chapter, the *Persian Grammar* and his only work in Latin, the *Commentarii.* Although Jones was one of the first Englishmen to study Sanskrit, the study of Persian and, even more so, Arabic, had already been developed for some time by the eighteenth century. First, an overview will be given of the history of the field of oriental studies in the decades before and in relation to Jones's work. The focus of this survey will be the study of the languages and the level of knowledge about those languages gained in Europe and, more specifically, in England by the time of Jones's contributions. This includes an examination of these disciplines in the universities of the eighteenth century, and the question of whether a discipline of oriental studies, or separate disciplines for the separate oriental languages, existed at all. Next, this chapter will shed a light on Jones's position within the aforementioned field; as a lawyer and later a judge who practises the study of these languages outside the universities, his position within the discipline is different from that of an orientalist scholar, affiliated with and working at a university. Therefore interactions with and reactions of his contemporaries, professionals in the field, working as professors of the various languages, will be examined to establish a view on the part Jones played in the discipline of oriental studies.

Once Jones starts his study of Sanskrit after arriving in India, and translates from this language, he becomes an important influence in the development of the fields of Indology and Comparative Linguistics. This chapter, however, focuses on his contributions before this breakthrough, and the way in which he attempts to approach an existing field, being that of the study of Arabic and Persian, in a new way. In order to establish an overview of Jones's place in this field, this chapter will primarily focus on two of his works, that fit the circumstances of the eighteenth-century academic discipline best, a definition of which will be discussed below. With his *Persian Grammar*, Jones provides a new, practical approach to language acquisition, offering the language not just to academics, but to those working in India and needing Persian in their day-to-day business. The work fits in this survey of translations, because Jones includes poetry in the grammar, such as 'An Ode of Hafez', which is said to be the first poem translated from Persian published in English.

Even though reprints, and a range of derived grammars of other eastern languages, and anthologies of Persian literature show that this is appreciated and needed at the time, there is also a negative response, in the shape of the review of the work by James Robertson, professor in Edinburgh. Responses to the *Persian Grammar* show the tension between specialist knowledge being preserved and guarded in the universities, and the popularisation of this knowledge.

Jones's *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex*, henceforth *Commentarii*, is his only Latin work on eastern languages and, possibly because of the language barrier, often neglected. With this work Jones intended to reach a broad readership, precisely because of the inclusive nature of Latin. Therefore this will receive an elaborate introduction in this chapter, providing an overview of Jones's plan with the work and how this fits in his larger agenda, despite appearing an exception in the overview of his work, before its reception by contemporary scholars and reviewers is discussed.

2.1.1. The question of academic disciplines in the eighteenth century

First, a few words on the definition and existence of academic disciplines in the eighteenth century are in order. Did disciplines exist in the meaning we apply to the word today, and if so, was there a discernible discipline of oriental studies? I will borrow here Robin Valenza's working definition of 'discipline' from her study *Literature, Language and the Rise of the Intellectual Disciplines in Britain, 1680-1820:*

> A discipline is a field of study that has a recognized community of researchers who have in common most of the following: an agreed-upon name, a loosely identified object of knowledge, shared research goals, a finite set of methods of inquiry, a generally accepted intellectual tradition, a group of institutions that persist and remain stable over time (such as university departments and academic journals), a system of working concepts and rules for adding new rules and concepts, and an established manner for communicating their findings.[131]

According to Valenza the enlightenment had posed a dichotomy for the intellectual disciplines: knowledge was more available than ever, and the newly developed possibilities of

[131] Robin Valenza, *Literature, Language, and the Rise of the Intellectual Disciplines in Britain, 1680-1820*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 5-6.

print and, moreover, the periodical press made it possible to spread this knowledge to more readers than ever before, but spending time on spreading knowledge took away the possibility of working on expanding knowledge.[132] Therefore a threefold division of labour took place, which ended with the division into separate academic disciplines.[133] Firstly, a division occurred between manual and mental labour. Secondly, those who perform mental labour were separated from those who consume it: the philosophers, scientists and other authors, the 'learned', were separated from the readers of their work, the 'conversable', as characterized by Hume in an essay on the topic in 1742. And, finally, the learned world itself split into groups working on the same field of study, causing discipline formation. This allowed scholars to become specialized in one discipline, instead of expecting them to be experts in many fields.[134] This development will become apparent in the next survey of Arabic and Oriental studies, which in the seventeenth and eighteenth century underwent a change from being a part of the field of classical languages and theology towards its own professorial chairs and claim to legitimacy in their own right, allowing oriental literature to be studied as well as the individual languages.

With the division of labour into disciplines comes a separate 'language' for each discipline, which becomes harder to understand for the non-specialist reader.[135] Allowing the new findings to be accessed by everyone still, demanded the 'translation' of the knowledge of the discipline to the 'conversed' world, the world of the general educated reader.[136] In the next chapter I will argue that in some of his works, especially in his *Poems, Moallakat* and *Sacontalá*, Jones actively plays the part of this 'translator' or populariser, trying to disseminate knowledge beyond the scholarly discipline.

In this chapter, however, the *Persian Grammar* and the *Commentarii* will play the biggest part, since I will argue these clearly originate from the disciplinary tradition. Especially in the latter work Jones takes up his place within the 'learned' of his discipline, as exhibited by his choice for the Latin language and his mimicry in style and terminology of Robert Lowth's *De Sacra*

[132] Ibid. pp. 1-2.
[133] Ibid. pp. 16-19.
[134] Ibid. p. 15.
[135] Ibid. pp. 27-28.
[136] Ibid. p. 50.

Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicae, Oxford 1753, which will be elaborated on below.[137]

2.2. The study of oriental languages in the eighteenth century

The study of Arabic in Europe has been developing as an academic subject since the fourteenth century.[138] Although its study decreased in the intermediate centuries, from the seventeenth century onward, a revival of the subject can be observed, especially in England and the Netherlands.[139] In this period the first chairs for Arabic are also established at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge,[140] the first ones being established in Cambridge in 1632 and in Oxford in 1640, respectively the Sir Thomas Adams Professorship of Arabic, held first by Abraham Wheelocke (1593-1653),[141] and the Laudian Professorship of Arabic, held then by Edward Pococke (1604-1691).[142] Before the establishment of these separate chairs, Arabic had been studied as part of the field of classics or theology. Nicknamed *ancilla theologiae*, the handmaiden of theology, the study of Arabic was mostly auxiliary to the study of old testament history or as a background for studying Hebrew.[143]

Despite its institutionalization in the early seventeenth century and the requirement to give lectures by the holder of the professorial chairs, the acquisition of Arabic consisted mostly of individual study by a small group of interested students, guided by a tutor, on occasion assisted by a native speaker of the language. Students studied available texts, such as the *Qur'an,* and discussed its language and grammar to obtain knowledge of Arabic.[144] The most prominent reason for the failure of Arabic to claim a place as a language taught at the English

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[137] Cf. Jan Loop, 'Arabic Poetry as Teaching Material in Early Modern Grammars and Textbooks', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* ed. by Jan Loop, Alistair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 230-51 (p. 235).

[138] P.J. Marshall, 'Oriental Studies', in *The History of the University of Oxford, Vol. V: The Eighteenth Century,* ed. by L.S. Sutherland and L.G. Mitchell (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 551-63 (p. 551).

[139] Mordechai Feingold, 'Learning Arabic in Early Modern England', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* ed. by Jan Loop, Alistair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 33-56 (p. 37).

[140] Ibid. p. 45.

[141] Ibid. p. 47.

[142] Marshall, 'Oriental Studies', p. 552.

[143] Arnoud Vrolijk, 'Arabic Studies in the Netherlands and the Prerequisite of Social Impact - a Survey', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* ed. by Jan Loop, Alastair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 13-32 (p.15).

[144] Feingold, 'Learning Arabic in Early Modern England', pp. 38-39.

universities, was the lack of prior knowledge of the students. Whereas students arrived at university with an understanding of Greek, Latin and other subjects, students arriving with a background in Arabic were sparse. As lectures, if held at all, focused on advanced subjects within their field, they were too advanced for many to follow. Because students first had to develop a basic understanding of the language, personal tutelage was necessary.[145] This practice had been in place before the chairs were installed at the universities as well, when students of Arabic were all privately taught. An important example is William Bedwell, who taught interested students in London, amongst whom were the first professor of Arabic in the Netherlands, Thomas Erpenius, Edward Pococke and probably, although not surely, Abraham Weelocke.[146] In the eighteenth century this way of acquiring an understanding of Arabic became even more important, as the focus for the study of Arabic and the East in general moved away from universities towards first-hand sources, such as travellers and merchants, writing accounts of their travels or providing tutelage.[147]

At the University of Oxford the study of Arabic in the eighteenth century, when Jones arrived to start his studies, was not a productive field. Although professorial chairs were held in the subject, lectures and seminars were not provided on a regular basis and were not in demand from students.[148] By the time of Jones's arrival at University College Oxford, in 1764, the Laudian professorship as well as the Hebrew chair was held by Thomas Hunt, who held the professorship from 1738 to 1774. Hunt's general legacy to the field of Arabic and oriental studies is not large, his only publications being his inaugural lecture and another lecture, although he is regarded as a highly learned scholar.[149] His ideas about the nature of Arabic, having the same antiquity as Hebrew, provoked those adhering to a more conservative school of thought to discredit him, as it was believed that Hebrew, the sacred language of the Old Testament, should be regarded and treated more highly than Arabic, the language of idolaters.[150] Nonetheless Hunt encouraged Jones to read the Hebrew Old Testament as a piece of oriental literature, appreciating its beauty and otherness.[151] In the Preface to his *Persian*

[145] Ibid. pp. 37-38.
[146] Ibid. p. 44.
[147] Marshall, 'Oriental Studies' p. 551.
[148] Ibid. pp. 551-554.
[149] Ibid. p. 559.
[150] Ibid. p. 559.
[151] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 62.

Grammar, Jones acknowledges his debt to Hunt, calling him 'a very learned Professor at Oxford [who] has promoted my studies with that candour and benevolence which so eminently distinguish him.'[152]

From the 1750s the main focus of British interest in Asia was shifting towards India. This produced a heightened interest in Persian as it was the court language in the Mughal-ruled Indian subcontinent from the sixteenth century onwards and it was still used as the administrative language after the arrival of the British. Communication, both oral and written, with Indian magistrates and merchants therefore benefitted from British knowledge of Persian. In order to educate the new generation of magistrates and East India Company officers in this language, Warren Hastings in the late 1760s attempted to found a chair for Persian at the University of Oxford. Not only were young men in service of the East India Company to be taught, but the Professor was also to interest the educated public in this civilization that was still largely unknown to them.[153] Lack of funds prevented this plan from becoming reality. Unlike the start of Arabic studies, which developed from an academic subject towards more practical applicability, the substantial study of Persian was initiated from mostly practical and economic considerations.[154]

Although not part of the university curriculum for students, the professors of Arabic at Oxford devoted some of their time to studying Persian as well; their work on translations of some of the Persian manuscripts in the Bodleian library, however, remains unpublished. In their inaugural lectures, the Laudian professors Edward Pococke (chair held from 1640 to 1691), Thomas Hyde (from 1691 to 1703), and Thomas Hunt (from 1738 to 1774) all made mention of the importance of Persian, especially of the study and appreciation of Persian poetry in the west.[155] Based on the Oxford Persian manuscripts, Hyde published the first western work on Zoroastrianism, *Historia religionis veterum Persarum*, in 1700, which for a long time remained the largest contribution to western understanding of this religion.[156] It was not until the Frenchman Abraham-Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron (1731-1805) deciphered, translated and interpreted the Oxford manuscripts in Avestan, that Zoroastrianism was truly uncovered to

[152] Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, pp. xvi-xvii.

[153] Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', p. 245.

[154] Gernot Windfuhr, *Persian grammar: History and State of Its Study*, (The Hague; New York: Mouton Publishers, 1979), p. 12.

[155] Marshall, 'Oriental Studies', p. 555.

[156] Ibid. pp. 557-558.

the western public.[157] Jones famously discredited his work on these manuscripts in his *Lettre à Monsieur A*** du P***.*[158] His objections, however, have since been disregarded by other scholars, and Anquetil-Duperron's work is now widely regarded as an important piece of scholarship. Schwab even goes so far as to call it the beginning of world history, in that it is the first translation of an Asian text independent from theology.[159]

The sensitivity of this subject is still discernible in the way this quarrel is presented by modern scholars. Kejariwal responds to Schwab by accusing him of 'forgivable pride in his own countryman' and of Anquetil-Duperron being 'Schwab's hero', making Schwab ignore the fact that *Histoire de Nader Chah* was the first non-religious translation.[160] Similarly, Marshall frames Jones's *Lettre* as a reaction to Anquetil-Duperron's 'ungrateful description' of his time in Oxford.[161] On the other hand, Anquetil attributes it to Jones's jealousy of not possessing Anquetil-Duperron's skill and knowledge.[162] It was, however, this piece of writing, claims Das, that created Jones's reputation.[163] At the same time, exactly because of this reputation Jones was believed, and Avestan studies were set back for about half a century, according to Franklin's estimation.[164]

The response of the person whose honour Jones's attempted to defend, Thomas Hunt, is similarly ambiguous. Hunt writes Jones two letters on the subject, explaining details Anquetil-Duperron got wrong about his time in Oxford, for example that Hunt supposedly told him he could read Persian, when he was incapable of this. He states that 'the whole nation, as well as the University and its members, are much obliged to you for this able and spirited defence.'[165] He also mentions, however, that not everyone agrees with Jones on the claims that Anquetil-Duperron has forged his findings, and that ancient Persian works could still exist.[166] Jones,

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[157] Jacques Anquetil, *Anquetil-Duperron. Premier Orientaliste Français*, (Paris: Presses de la Renaissance, 2005), p. 66.

[158] William Jones, *Lettre À Monsieur a*** Du P***. Dans laquelle est compris l'examen de sa traduction des livres attribués à Zoroastre*, (London: P. Elsmly, 1771).

[159] Schwab, *La Renaissance Orientale*, p. 17.

[160] Kejariwal, 'William Jones: The Copernicus of History', pp. 105-106.

[161] Marshall, 'Oriental Studies', p. 558

[162] Anquetil, *Anquetil-Duperron. Premier orientaliste français*, p. 66.

[163] Das, '[a] Place among the Hindu Poets': Orientalism and the Poetry of Sir William Jones', p. 1240.

[164] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 74.

[165] Letter from 28/11/1771, printed in Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, vol. 1, pp. 192-193.

[166] Ibid. pp. 194-195.

however, expresses only pride when he writes to Reviczky how he had 'flabbergasted the whole nation of Gaul' with his attack on 'some smart Nobody.'[167]

The study of Sanskrit had no history in the British universities, and developed out of practical necessity. In this chapter none of Jones's Sanskrit works are discussed yet, but changing views on language acquisition under influence of the publication of Jones's *Persian Grammar* will show that the development in these fields is related. The interest in the Sanskrit language and, with it, the rise of the academic discipline that at present would be called Indology, can be dated to the last two decades of the eighteenth century and revolves around Jones and his contemporaries, most importantly Charles Wilkins (1749-1816). The formal incentive for the inclusion of the Sanskrit language in oriental studies can be found in the project of translating Indian law texts, both Muslim and Hindu law, in order to judge all Indian people by their native laws. Jones's translation of *The Ordinances of Menu* (1796),[168] his largest translation from Sanskrit, originated as part of this project, that started during the governorship of Warren Hastings in India. Upon Hastings's arrival in Calcutta in 1772 as Governor he proposed a reform of the judicial system, leading to a new hierarchy of courts over which Europeans would preside. These courts were not, however, to rule under British law, but the Europeans involved were to administer Indian law, which needed therefore to be made available to them in translation.[169] In order to accomplish this, Hastings requested a group of Pandits to compile a Sanskrit code from Hindu treatises, which was then translated into Persian, since Sanskrit was not yet available to the Europeans. Nathaniel Halhed, educated in Persian at Oxford, who undertook the task of translating the Persian into English, was inspired by this project to continue his studies in the field of Hinduism after finishing the translation known as *A Code of Gentoo Laws*.[170] He attracted Charles Wilkins to work with him.[171]

After compiling a Bengali Grammar (1778) together, they moved on to studying Sanskrit, in which Wilkins made the most progress, allowing him to become the first European to have a

[167] Jones and Cannon, *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, p. 107.

[168] Jones, *Institutes of Hindu Law: Or, the Ordinances of Menu, According to the Gloss of Cullúca. Comprising the Indian System of Duties, Religious and Civil. Verbally Translated from the Original Sanscrit. With a Preface*.

[169] Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', p. 246.

[170] Halhed, *A Code of Gentoo Laws, or, Ordinations of the Pundits : From a Persian Translation, Made from the Original, Written in the Shanscrit Language*.

[171] Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', pp. 248-249.

complete working knowledge of Sanskrit.[172] His translation of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, published in 1785, is the first translation of a Hindu classic to be printed in a European language.[173] Apart from his other translations, Wilkins's *Grammar of the Sanskrita Language* (1808), for which he created the font himself, is an important piece of scholarship that helped promote and advance the field of Sanskrit studies. As Wilkins writes in the Preface to his *Grammar*, the study of Sanskrit is useful for many men:

> The lover of science, the antiquary, the historian, the moralist, the poet, and the man of taste, will obtain in *Sanskrit* books an inexhaustible fund of information and amusement. [...] To those who are destined to fill offices of importance in the political, the military, and the commercial departments of the East India Company in India, and to whom a knowledge of the common dialects of the country is absolutely necessary, and now insisted on as an indispensable qualification, a certain acquaintance with the parent, or rather, the vital principle of them all, is of the utmost importance.[174]

He explains that students at the East India College at Hertford are using his *Grammar* for the study of Sanskrit 'and have, under the instructions of its able and zealous Professor, already made a very considerable progress in the first four chapters of this work.'[175]

When the Laudian professor of Arabic at Oxford for the last decades of the eighteenth century, Joseph White (who held the chair from 1774 to 1814), wrote to his Dutch colleague Hendrik Albert Schultens in 1790: 'nothing can be lower than the state of Oriental literature in this country,' he was both right and wrong.[176] Although teaching and research of the oriental languages at English universities was indeed at a low point, the spread of knowledge of these languages was by no means stagnant. The center for acquiring this knowledge, however, had

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[172] Charles Wilkins, *The Bhagvat-Geeta, or Dialogues of Kreeshna and Arjoon; in Eighteen Lectures; with Notes. Translated from the Original, in the Sanskreet, or Ancient Language of the Brahmans*, (London: C. Nourse, 1785).

[173] Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', pp. 249-50

[174] Charles Wilkins, *A Grammar of the Sanskrita Language*, (London: W. Bulmer and Co., 1808), p. x.

[175] Ibid. p. xiv.

[176] Joseph White, 'Letter from Joseph White to Hendrik Albert Schultens, Dated 30.08.1790. MS. BPL 245:Xiii', (Leiden University Libraries, 1790).
Cf. Simon Mills, 'Learning Arabic in the Overseas Factories: The Case of the English', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* ed. by Jan Loop, Alistair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 272-93 (p. 287).

moved away from the traditional institutions, the universities, into the periphery, the field of educated individuals, whose interest in the languages was largely fueled by utility.[177]

This has implications for the conclusion whether or not a discipline of oriental studies existed in eighteenth-century England. Looking at aspects of Valenza's definition, a 'community' of scholars clearly existed, within England and throughout Europe, as evidenced by numerous letters between them.[178] The 'shared research goals' that define a discipline are in flux throughout the century. Whereas Arabic studies ought to have the goal of clarifying theological questions, the interest in India, and with it in Persian and Sanskrit, changed the goal of the discipline of 'oriental studies' towards utility on a daily basis. The oriental languages no longer served a higher goal, but became independent subjects, studied for practical reasons. This does upset, or at the very least, changes the 'intellectual tradition' within which this research operates. The combined tradition of Arabic with Hebrew, Classics and Theology was based on works published in Latin, aimed at colleagues. The eighteenth century sees a big change in this respect, as grammars and other scholarly works start appearing in the vernacular, making them available to a wider reading audience, as will also be discussed on the basis of the example of Jones's *Persian Grammar* below.

In conclusion, oriental studies as a field is in development in the eighteenth century, using the stable discipline of Arabic studies as a stepping stone. In this period, however, it is also quickly moving away from its academic base towards the professional in the field - in this case the East India Company men in India.

2.3. Jones's place in the discipline

From accounts of Jones's life, as well as from letters exchanged, it is known that Jones had a friendly relationship with several academics. His two most frequent scholarly correspondents were the Hungarian diplomat and orientalist Reviczki, who translated Hafez's ghazels.[179] And second Hendrik Albert Schultens, who was professor of Eastern languages, like his father and

[177] Mills, 'Learning Arabic in the Overseas Factories: The Case of the English', pp. 286-288.

[178] E.g. Jones's letters, edited in two volumes in: Jones and Cannon, *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, or the correspondence of the Schultens family, mentioned above (unedited, available in manuscript at Leiden University Libraries).

[179] Michael O'Sullivan, 'A Hungarian Josephinist, Orientalist, and Bibliophile: Count Karl Reviczky, 1737–1793', *Austrian History Yearbook,* 45 (2014).

grandfather before him, in Amsterdam and Leiden.[180] Despite not formally staying in academia, Jones had an academic network to inform him.

That his academic connections stayed strong, even after his death, proves the *oratio* of Hendrik Arent Hamaker, who, upon accepting his post as professor of oriental studies at Leiden University in 1823, still chose to speak about Jones's life and work (*Oratio de vita et meritis Guilelmi Jonesii*).[181] To summarise Jones's reputation, Hamaker says:

> qualis quantusque Vir fuerit Guilelmus Jonesius, cum suavissimis de Poësi Asiatica commentariis, aliisque operibus editis insignis, et magnorus in republica literaria virorum amicitia cumulatus, aetatis vix annum quintum et vigesimum compleverat.
>
> [What a great man was William Jones, with his charming commentaries on Asiatic poetry, and other distinguished edited works, and after he accumulated the friendship of great men in the republic of letters, he finished his life at only forty-five.][182]

Hence, Jones's name remained connected to both the academic discipline of oriental studies, and the *Commentarii*. Hamaker even comments briefly on the situation of the letter to *A*** du P**** by praising Jones for standing up to the 'intolerable' Anquetil-Duperron.[183]

The two publications discussed in this volume are the ones most tightly connected to Jones's own classical education, as they are based not only on his academic studies at Oxford, but also on the tradition of particular (Latin) grammars and commentaries. They receive divergent reactions within and outside of academia.

2.3.1 Knowledge outside the academic tradition: the *Persian Grammar*

The appearance of Jones's *Persian Grammar* marks an important development in the field of oriental studies, since this grammar is published in English. Earlier works of this kind, although hardly any works on Persian existed, have been published in Latin.[184] Hewitt remarks that the *Persian Grammar* appeared at exactly the right time, because of increasing European interest in the East, and because 'those were the golden days of 'the common reader': the pedants

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[180] Arnoud Vrolijk, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands: A Short History in Portraits, 1580-1950*, (Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), p. 88.

[181] H. A. Hamaker, *Henrici Arentii Hamaker Oratio de Vita et Meritis Guilielmi Jonesii: Habita die XXVIII Septembris Anni MDCCCXXII, cum in Academia Lugduno-Batava Ordinariam Literarum Orientalium Professionem Solennitur Auspicaretur*, (S. et J. Luchtmans, 1823).

[182] Ibid. p. 12.

[183] Ibid. p. 12.

[184] Windfuhr, *Persian grammar: History and State of Its Study*, pp. 12-14.

had been expelled and the specialists had not yet arrived to replace them.'[185] This middle ground is clear in the way the *Grammar* is set up, since it deviates from the previous academic tradition, and with its focus on literature rather than overwhelming descriptions of grammar and syntax, it caters to an interested non-specialist.

Jones presents *A Grammar of the Persian Language,* London, 1771, as an important aid for British diplomats or tradesmen working in the east, therefore claiming it as a piece of work not just for specialist scholars, but for laymen as well, who do not necessarily have any prior knowledge of oriental languages. Although Persian was used as the administrative language in India, not many of the British working in the country had mastered or even attempted to study the language.[186] Jones now presents the East India Company with a remedy for this problem. If the company officials use his *Grammar*, Jones proclaims, they will 'in less than a year be able to translate and to answer any letter from an Indian prince, and to converse with the natives of India, not only with fluency, but with elegance.'[187] His claims demonstrate that the most important reason for his compilation of the *Persian Grammar* is a practical one: the English in India will be aided by it in their everyday activities, bringing the study of oriental languages away from the universities into the field. The work does not only present an overview of the Persian grammar, but also contains a discussion on Persian poetry, which is illustrated with many translations, and ends with a catalogue of Persian books. The examples Jones includes are based on his own studies of manuscripts, mainly deposited in the Oxford libraries, and consist almost entirely of poetry by Hafez. This inclusion of poetry and literature in a grammar or other language instruction work is part of the tradition in which Jones places himself, which has been displayed in many earlier (Arabic) grammars.[188] That Jones has used these examples and wants to be part of the tradition becomes obvious in his introduction:

> I have carefully compared my work with every composition of the same nature that has fallen into my hands; and though on so general a subject I must have made several observations which are common to all, yet I flatter myself that my own remarks, the

[185] Hewitt, 'Harmonious Jones', p. 47.

[186] '... the servants of the company received letters which they could not read, and were ambitious of gaining titles of which they could not comprehend the meaning; it was found highly dangerous to employ the natives as interpreters, upon whose fidelity they could not depend; and it was at last discovered, that they must apply themselves to the study of the Persian language, in which all the letters from the Indian princes were written.' Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, p. xii. Cf. Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron'.

[187] Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, p. xxi.

[188] Loop, 'Arabic Poetry as Teaching Material in Early Modern Grammars and Textbooks', pp. 250-251.

> disposition of the whole book, and the passages quoted in it, will sufficiently distinguish it as an original production.[189]

Despite comparing his work to that of his predecessors, Jones also expresses the desire to compile a new product, which is a logical consequence of his aim with the *Persian Grammar* to cater to a non-specialist, non-linguist audience.[190]

In the introduction to his *Persian Grammar* Jones reflects upon the current state of research into and knowledge of the Persian language. Although manuscripts can be found in European libraries, these are not studied. Jones explains this with the following reasoning: the 'Asiatic writings' are unknown and found valueless; the books are too scarce to be studied well - 'they are shewn more as objects of curiosity than as sources of information'[191]- and 'the princes and nobles of Europe' have not encouraged the study of these manuscripts enough, meaning they have not played the part of patron for these particular studies and paid to have them executed.[192] Nonetheless there are a few scholars who have toiled to work on the knowledge of Persian:[193] Jones mentions Gentius, who printed Sa'di's *Golestan* in 1651; Laudian professor Hyde, translator of an astrological work in 1665; translator to the Habsburg monarchy Franciscus à Mesgnien Meninski, who published his *Grammatica Turcica* in Vienna in 1680;[194] and d'Herbelot, compiler of the *Bibliothèque orientale*, in which he includes translations from Persian, and which was published posthumously in 1697.[195] By referring to these earlier works, Jones shows his knowledge of the subject, and thus that his authority is to be believed, and he attempts to place his work in the context of the (non-existent) discipline of Persian studies. Although his *Persian Grammar* claims a very different aim and audience, Jones links himself to earlier academics to increase his credibility and to prove he has the knowledge and

[189] Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, p. xiii-xiv.

[190] This distinction is shown by the way he describes his method: 'But it has been my chief care to avoid all the harsh and affected terms of art which render most didactic works so tedious and unpleasant, and which only perplex the learner.' Ibid. p. xii.

[191] Ibid. p. iii.

[192] Ibid. p. vi-x.

[193] Ibid. p. ix-x

[194] Maurits H. van den Boogert, 'Learning Oriental Languages in the Ottoman Empire: Johannes Heyman (1667-1737) between Izmir and Damascus', in *The Teaching and Learning of Arabic in Early Modern Europe,* ed. by Jan Loop, Alistair Hamilton, and Charles Burnett (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), pp. 294-309.

[195] Sylvette Larzul, 'Herbelot, Barthélemi D'', in *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue francaise,* ed. by Francois Pouillon (Paris: Karthala, 2008), pp. 488-89.

therefore the right to insert himself in this field. His credibility and knowledge are questioned in responses to the work, as will be discussed below.

The system for language acquisition Jones uses in his *Grammar* is based on translating literary texts, even though he claims practical use in conversation and letter writing. This too is an indication of the grounding of the *Persian Grammar* in the academic tradition of Classical, Hebrew and Arabic studies, in which literature study as part of language acquisition was common practice. After his preface and an introduction of the letters, Jones moves through the various grammatical aspects of Persian. Each in turn is illustrated with a specimen of poetry. Jones states about this practice the following, after he has introduced his first two couplets of Hafez as part of the explanation of the case system in his chapter on nouns, the very first element of his grammatical explanations:

> I shall in this manner quote a few Persian couplets, as examples of the principal rules in this grammar: such quotations will give some variety to a subject naturally barren and unpleasant; will serve as a specimen of the oriental style; and will be more easily retained in the memory than rules delivered in mere prose.[196]

This promise not to be 'barren and unpleasant' is a theme reviewers of the *Persian Grammar* reflect on, as will be discussed below. The couplets are introduced first in Persian and followed by a translation. Jones ends all sections of the work in this manner with poetry. After a discussion of the grammar and a shorter section on syntax, Jones ends the work with more attention to literature. First a fable is presented, with an example of its grammatical analysis. The student of Persian is encouraged to use this to practice translating, with the aid of a dictionary.[197] The *Persian Grammar* end with a large section 'Of versification', in which Jones not only provides Persian examples with transliterations and translations, but also compares Persian poetry with Graeco-Roman classical poetry.[198] In this section the *Persian Grammar* is a clear precursor of both the discussion and practice in *Commentarii*, discussed below. The section ends with the translation of 'A Persian Song', Hafez's ghazal 3, before the *Persian Grammar* ends on 'A Catalogue of the most valuable books in the Persian language.' This emphasis on literature and poetry specifically shows both Jones's interest in these topics and the origin of the *Persian Grammar*: the tradition in which Jones operates is used to

[196] Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language*, p. 21.
[197] Ibid. p. 104-120.
[198] E.g. p. 123, where the meter used by Hafiz is compared with examples from both Catullus and Aristophanes.

grammatical works built on literary examples, and the sources Jones works with are all literary. Despite his claims for a practical grammar, Jones is thus still firmly rooted in the academic tradition of classicist and Arabic studies.

2.3.1.1. Reprint and translation history

Jones's *Persian Grammar* does seem to be the 'first influential grammar, practically, rather than linguistically oriented' as shown by its many reprints.[199] Windfuhr, in his survey of Persian Grammars, finds that, although Jones's is not free of mistakes, 'this work had a great effect and was republished many times perhaps largely because of the commercial need for such a practical work.'[200] This not only corroborates the conclusion of the review of James Robertson, discussed below, that the work is 'the most useful work', but also substantiates the view that Jones's style of writing with a practical purpose, allowing non-scholars to take part in the oriental languages, was new at the time.

The many reprints and other additional works show the use of and the demand for the *Persian Grammar.* It went through eight English editions, with new editions appearing in 1775, 1778, 1797, 1801, 1804, 1809, 1823, and 1828, some of which also knew reprints.[201] That many of these had additions and improvements, shows the rapid development of the field of Persian studies, as well as the status of the work as a living document. Some of the later changes are summed up in the eighth edition.[202] In the sixth edition, for example the editor claims to have adapted the transliteration of Persian words to these spelling used in the latest edition of *A Dictionary, Persian, Arabic, and English*, by John Richardson, so as to make cross-referencing easier for the user. The additions made in the eighth edition were an inclusion of explanations of Arabic grammar, based on the *Grammar of the Arabick Language* by John Richardson, to be discussed below. Jones's discussion of Persian prosody, however, is completely removed, because it lacks 'utility'.[203] For those who are interested in that subject, Lee recommends the

[199] Windfuhr, *Persian grammar: History and State of Its Study*, p. 14-15.

[200] Ibid. p. 15.

[201] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, pp. 11-13.

[202] William Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language. The Eighth Edition with Considerable Additions and Improvements by the Rev. Samuel Lee, M.A. D.D.*, 8 edn (London: W. Nichol, 1823), pp. xiv-xviii.

[203] Ibid. p. xvi.

Commentarii, which is almost fifty years after its publication still the work to consult on 'Persian versification.'[204]

To accompany Jones's *Persian Grammar* with literature, anthologies of poetry were printed. In 1801 *The Flowers of Persian Literature* was published, with the express purpose to be a companion to the *Persian Grammar* with the literature Jones referred to, but which 'never appeared.'[205] Jones is extensively quoted throughout, and nine of his translations, among others from Ferdusi and Sadi, are used in the overview of literature.

Another work intending to give an overview of Persian literature, however, is not that clear with its sources. In *The Persian Interpreter*, which seems to have similar aims to Jones's *Persian Grammar*, there is mention of Jones as an expert predecessor.[206] Moises, however, does not mention a heavy indebtedness to Jones's work, but in his review Halhed interprets this otherwise:

> Among all the instances of plagiarism, the new Persian Grammar [part 1 of *The Interpreter*] is certainly by far the most indecent. From the first line of its preface to the end of its last page of syntax, there is not one rule, not one observation, nay not a single word either English or Persian, which cannot be traced (and most commonly *literatim*,) in the excellent Persian grammar of Sir William Jones: to which it is professedly intended as an *Introduction*.[207]

Halhed goes on to describe how Moises has not only attempted to copy Jones, but he has copied him badly, changing 'for instance… *'of the composition and derivation of words*' [into] '*of compounds and derivative words*.'[208] The tone of the review is enraged, as is also illustrated by an abnormally large quantity of exclamation marks, and this image is confirmed by the letter Halhed writes to Griffiths, in which he addresses the issue yet again. It seems Griffiths has asked for a confirmation of the judgement in the review, perhaps checking the legitimacy

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[204] Ibid. p. xvi.

[205] Samuel Rousseau, *The Flowers of Persian Literature: Containing Extracts from the Most Celebrated Authors, in Prose and Verse; with a Translation into English. Being Intended as a Companion to Sir William Jones's Persian Grammar. To Which Is Prefixed an Essay on the Language and Literature of Persia*, (London: Printed at the Arabic and Persian Press, 1801), p. vi.

[206] Edward Moises, *The Persian Interpreter: In Three Parts. A Grammar of the Persian Language. Persian Extracts, in Prose and Verse/ a Vocabulary: Persian and English*, (Newcastle: S. Hodgson, 1792).

[207] Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, 'Review: The Persian Interpreter: In Three Parts, &C', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825,* 13 (1794), p. 133.

[208] Ibid. p. 134.

of the claims before printing the hostile piece. Halhed reaffirms this, adding 'that more than 16 pages of the Persian extracts are taken from Sir W. Jones's Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarii, & his Life of Nadir Shah. – Can a strong confirmation be required of our first appreciation of the merit of the "Persian Interpreter"?[209]

This blatant plagiarism is a clear indicator of the popularity of these works on Persian. Moreover, it is evidence that over twenty years after their first appearance, Jones's works are still so relevant that is seems a marketable idea to plagiarise his early publications. In a time when new information about Persian literature was developing constantly, Jones remained an important source. The third conclusion to be drawn is that, as Halhed states in his letter, and his immediate recognition of Jones's work illustrates: 'certainly an English learner [of Persian] ought to be as versed as he is in Jones's Grammar.'[210] For those whose ambition it was to study Persian, and perhaps all oriental languages, Jones's works had to be familiar.

2.3.1.2. Reviews and Robertson's critique

The review of Jones's *Persian Grammar* in the *Monthly Review* gives an important insight into its position within the discipline of oriental studies.[211] This review is one of four accounts of the work published in 1771, two of which consist of only one paragraph.[212] *Critical Review* also prints a full review of the *Persian Grammar*, which consists of 8.5 pages, about five of which are filled with excerpts from Jones's work.[213] The reviewer shows evidence of a thorough knowledge of Jones's work to date, by quoting Jones's French *Dissertation sur la Litérature*

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[209] Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, 'Letter from Nathaniel Brassey Halheld to Ralph Griffiths, Dated 1794. Ms Add C. 89, No. 143', (Bodleian Libraries, Oxford, 1794).

[210] Ibid.

[211] James Robertson, 'Review: Jones's *Grammar of the Persian Language*', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 46 (1772).

James Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 46 (1772).

[212] 'The extensive erudition of Mr. Jones in the eastern languages, has enabled that gentleman to give us in this production a clear and easy introduction to the Persian tongue, which may be studied to advantage by all engaged in the trade to the East-Indies.' in [Anon.], 'An Account of New Books and Pamphlets: A Grammar of the Persian Language', *The Town and Country Magazine, or, Universal Repository of Knowledge, Instruction, and Entertainment,* 3 (1771).

A paragraph copied from [Anon.], 'Review: A Grammar of the Persian Language', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature,* 32 (1771). can be found in [Anon., 'An Impartial Review of New Publications: A Grammar of the Persian Language', *Hibernian Magazine, or, Compendium of Entertaining Knowledge,* (1771).

[213] [Anon.], 'Review: A Grammar of the Persian Language'.

Orientale in a page-long footnote.[214] Moreover, he articulates one of the most important points Jones makes in all his works, i.e. the role Greek and Latin classics play in European literature and how eastern literature could take over this role and rejuvenate it:

> The admired writers of Greece and of Rome have attracted with so much force, the attention of modern times, that the efforts of eastern genius have been neglected and despised. What men did not understand, they ventured to condemn; and prejudice and ignorance were the foundation of the undistinguishing censure, which was lavished on an enlightened and respectable people.[215]

This call for the study of the undervalued eastern literature is almost exactly the same as the famous paragraph with which Jones ends his 'Essay of the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', which was to appear in *Poems* the following year.[216]

Although the reviewer recognised this rejuvenating possibility, the *Persian Grammar* is mostly valuable for its commercial utility: 'While it will extend the bounds of literature […] it will open to our island, new sources of trade and of wealth.'[217] And this practical use that Jones claims for his *Grammar* is what the reviewer recognises in the work. He emphasises, in a rather long paragraph that forms the core of the review, that the *Persian Grammar* is useful specifically because it is aimed at a non-academic audience and presents language acquisition in a non-academic way:

> In reducing his instructions for the Persian language, into method and form, he has laid down the clearest, and most accurate rules; and he has been careful to illustrate them by proper and select examples from the most approved writers. […] He displays not that operose industry, and that idle parade of erudition, which almost perpetually disgrace the labours of grammarians. His performance is clear, simple, and comprehensive. He has not deviated into jargon, and the endless repetition of the terms of art; and disgusts not his student with the learned toil of obscure definitions, and unmeaning distinctions.[218]

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[214] Published in London in 1771; p. 7-8 and 11-12 are quoted in the review.

[215] [Anon.], 'Review: A Grammar of the Persian Language', p. 241.

[216] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations II. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, pp. 198-199.

[217] [Anon.], 'Review: A Grammar of the Persian Language', p. 242.

[218] Ibid. p. 243. This paragraph also serves as the review in [Anon.], 'An Impartial Review of New Publications: A Grammar of the Persian Language'.

It is precisely this deviation from the academic norm to which Robertson's review in *Monthly Review* responds. James Robertson (1714-1795),[219] was himself an educated orientalist, studying with amongst others Jan Jacob Schultens (1716-1778), professor of Eastern languages in Leiden from 1749.[220] Robertson was appointed professor of Hebrew at Edinburgh in 1751 and published works on Hebrew and the Old Testament, e.g. *Grammatica Linguae Hebraeae* (1758)[221] and *Clavis Pentateuchi* (1770).[222] After returning to Edinburgh he continued corresponding with the Schultenses, both Jan Jacob and his son Hendrik Albert, with whom Jones also maintained a correspondence.

Robertson uses his orientalist education to present a nuanced view of Jones's *Persian Grammar*, in his review for *Monthly Review* in two parts. He uses the first of his two articles (in January and February 1772, which together consist of nineteen pages) to give an overview of the contents of the *Grammar*, in which article he commends Jones for having 'endeavoured to lay down the clearest and most accurate rules which he has illustrated by select examples from the most elegant writers. In this respect undoubtedly he merits the highest praise and encouragement of the public. It must be allowed that he has contributed, in a great degree, to facilitate the acquisition of the Persic, by giving a very clear and distinct view of its genius and constitution [...] so that his Grammar, on this account, must prove very useful to every student of that language.'[223]

This first part of the review, with a length of seven pages by far the shorter part, gives an overview of the structure of the work with short quotes taken generally from the preface. In this part, Robertson seems to agree with Jones's approach to the Persian language and his discussion of the study thereof, repetitively stating 'our Author justly observes...'.[224] Robertson claims to be looking forward to more of the work Jones promises in his preface,

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[219] Benjamin Christie Nangle, *The Monthly review, First Series, 1749-1789: Indexes of Contributors and Articles*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), pp. 36-37.

[220] Arnoud Vrolijk, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands : A Short History in Portraits, 1580-1950*, (Boston, MA: Boston, MA: Brill, 2013), pp. 79-83.

[221] James Robertson, *Grammatica Linguae Hebraeae*, (Mundell and Wilson, 1758).

[222] James Robertson, *Clavis Pentateuchi, Sive, Analysis Omnium Vocum Hebraicarum Suo Ordine in Pentateucho Moseos Occurrentium, Cui Praemittuntur Dissertationes Duae; I. De Antiquitate Linguae Arabicae, Ejusque Covenientia Cum Lingua Hebraea, &C. Ii. De Genuina Punctorum Vocalium Apud Arabes Et Hebraeos Antiquitate, Contra Clariss[Imos] Capellum, Waltonum, Masclefum, Hutchinsonium, Aliosque, Ex Ipsius Linguae Hebraeae Ejusque Dialectorum Indole Deprompta*, (Edinburgh: Fleming and Neill, 1770).

[223] Robertson, 'Review: Jones's *Grammar of the Persian Language*', p. 40.

[224] E.g. Ibid. p. 39.

but did not have the time to include in this edition: 'The learned world will also be obliged to Mr. Jones for the General History of Asia, and an account of the geography, philosophy, and literature of the Eastern nations.'[225]

The phrasing of this sentence, the use of 'the learned world will be obliged', demonstrates that Robertson believes Jones has knowledge to offer to the other specialists in the discipline. Aside from the missing glossary, the first part of Robertson's review reads as a recommendation and approval of the *Persian Grammar*.[226]

In the second part of the review, however, Robertson exhibits more of his own knowledge of the Persian language, which goes hand in hand with criticism on Jones's way of presenting his *Grammar*:

> Having, in our last month's Review, given a general idea of the design of this Oriental Grammar, and done that justice to the learned and very ingenious Author, to which he is amply entitled, we think ourselves obliged also, in justice to the public, to observe that his work seems more deficient, with respect to proper and adequate instructions, as to the syllabication and reading of the Persian language, than in any other circumstance.[227]

With this introduction Robertson outlines exactly what he will be doing in this second part: explaining the two biggest subjects of his criticism, being Jones's lack of explanation of the syllabication of Persian[228] and the fact that Jones encourages students of Persian to study only Persian, without starting by learning Arabic first, which would make Persian easier to understand, according to Robertson.[229] Using elaborate descriptions and examples of Persian, including citations from the works of other orientalists, Robertson substantiates his criticism and simultaneously provides the reader of the review with a short introduction into Persian. Moreover, this extensive quoting and name-dropping establishes the authority of Robertson

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[225] Ibid. pp. 42-43.

[226] Ibid. p. 42: 'and it had undoubtedly been for the interest of the learner, if he had added a glossary or analysis of the whole parts of speech contained in it.'

[227] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', p. 81.

[228] E.g.: 'There are a vast number of words in which the consonants are the very same, and they are distinguished only by the vowels subjoined to them. The Author's rule in this case is very vague, and must perplex the learner.' Ibid. p. 84

[229] On the other hand, in the first part of the review Robertson states the following: 'Our Author hath observed, with great propriety, that since one of the nouns and a compound word is often borrowed from the Arabic, a man who whishes to read and understand the Persian books, ought to have a competent knowledge of both languages', Robertson, 'Review: Jones's *Grammar of the Persian Language*', p. 42.

as a specialist in the field; he is aware of the tradition of the discipline and knows how to use his sources to determine the value of Jones's contribution to the field. The review seems to be written more to benefit either Jones or their mutual colleagues, than a non-specialist reader, who would not be able to read and understand the quotations in Persian and Ancient Greek, nor the references in French and Latin. In choosing this format, Robertson distances himself actively from the practice of engaging a wider reading audience, but instead he focuses on oriental scholars and their understanding of the Persian and other grammars.[230] By choosing the technical language of the discipline instead of the popularised language suited for the audience for whose benefit Jones wrote his *Persian Grammar*, Robertson is actively obscuring the text for those not versed in Latin, Arabic, Persian, and the terminology of oriental languages.

In the second part of the review Robertson quotes and mentions the works and names of other orientalists. He quotes three Latin works by Dutch scholars: Thomas Erpenius *Rudimenta Linguae Arabicae*, Leiden, 1733;[231] Jacobus Golius *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, Leiden 1653;[232] and Ludovicus De Dieu, *Rudimenta Linguae Persicae*, Leiden, 1639.[233] Also quoted are Meninski, *Grammatica Turcica*, Vienna, 1756;[234] Jean Chardin *Voyages du chevalier Chardin en Perse, et autres lieux de l'Orient,* vol. 4, 1711;[235] and Savilian professor of astronomy at

[230] Cf. Valenza, *Literature, Language, and the Rise of the Intellectual Disciplines in Britain, 1680-1820*, p. 50.

[231] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', pp. 84-85.
Thomas Erpenius (1584-1624) was the first professor of Arabic in Leiden when the chair was established in 1613, the official starting point of the teaching of Arabic in the Netherlands. His *Rudimenta* were first published in 1620. Cf. Vrolijk, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands : A Short History in Portraits, 1580-1950*, pp. 31-40.

[232] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', p. 83.
Jacobus Golius or Jacob Gool (1596-1667) was the second professor of Arabic at Leiden University, from 1625. His work is mentioned, but not quoted by Robertson. Cf. Vrolijk, *Arabic Studies in the Netherlands : A Short History in Portraits, 1580-1950*, p. 41-47.

[233] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar'. p. 84 and 87. Ludovicus or Louis de Dieu (1590-1642) was a pupil of the Leiden professors Erpenius and Golius. Cf. Wilhelmina Maria Cornelia Juynboll, 'Zeventiende-Eeuwsche Beoefenaars Van Het Arabisch in Nederland', (Utrecht : Kemink en Zoon, 1931), p. 200-204.
His work was the first published Persian grammar. Cf. Windfuhr, *Persian grammar: History and State of Its Study*, p. 13.

[234] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', p. 82 and 85. The *Grammatica Turcica* was first published in Vienna in 1680. Cf. Boogert, 'Learning Oriental Languages in the Ottoman Empire: Johannes Heyman (1667-1737) between Izmir and Damascus'.

[235] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', pp. 82-83. Jean Chardin (1643-1713) travelled around the orient as a salesman and spent several years in Persia and India, learning the Persian language as well as Turkish and Arabic. After his travels he went to England and joined the East India

Oxford Johannes Gravius, *Elementa Linguae Persicae*, London, 1649.[236] About his teacher Jan Jacob Schultens Robertson states the following:

> The late Professor Schultens, who not only read, but wrote with his own hand, more manuscripts than any other European of the present age, asserts, in the strongest manner, that no man could pretend to read many of the Arabian poets, or the works of Hariri, without being in danger of mistaking the sense of the Authors, if the copies were not pointed.[237]

Leaning on the authority of the Leiden professor, Robertson implies that Jones might be overreaching in assuming that his knowledge of Arabic and Persian, or that of his intended students would be good enough to do what even Schultens could not. Emphasising the importance of the vowel point even more, he quotes from his own *Clavis Pentateuchi*, which has a treatise on exactly this topic prefaced: 'De Genuina Punctorum Vocalium apud Arabes et Hebraeos Antiquitate' [About the authentic antiquity of the vowel points with the Arabs and the Hebrews].[238] This topic was clearly part of his personal specialism and Robertson appears indignant that Jones decided to leave out a proper discussion, implying that a text cannot be properly read or the language properly learned without an understanding of this aspect of the language.[239] In a letter to Hendrik Albert Schultens Robertson mentions the same criticism about John Richardson's *Arabick Grammar* (1776), which was modelled after Jones's *Persian Grammar* and also reviewed by Robertson for *Monthly Review*. Clearly, the lack of a discussion of the vowel point is an indicator of inexperience or carelessness for Robertson:

> I imagine that Mr Richardson has had no great experience at least in teaching the Arabick language; otherwise he would have added the vowel points to the extracts

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Company. Cf. Lucette Valensi, 'Chardin, Jean', in *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue francaise,* ed. by Francois Pouillon (Paris: Karthala, 2008), p. 195.

[236] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', p. 84. Johannes Gravius or John Greaves (1602-1652) was Pococke's contemporary, both learned Arabic in London under the personal tutelage of William Bedwell. Cf. Feingold, 'Learning Arabic in Early Modern England', p. 44.

[237] Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', p. 86.

[238] Ibid. p. 87. Cf. Robertson, *Clavis Pentateuchi, Sive, Analysis Omnium Vocum Hebraicarum Suo Ordine in Pentateucho Moseos Occurrentium, Cui Praemittuntur Dissertationes Duae; I. De Antiquitate Linguae Arabicae, Ejusque Covenientia Cum Lingua Hebraea, &C. Ii. De Genuina Punctorum Vocalium Apud Arabes Et Hebraeos Antiquitate, Contra Clariss[Imos] Capellum, Waltonum, Masclefum, Hutchinsonium, Aliosque, Ex Ipsius Linguae Hebraeae Ejusque Dialectorum Indole Deprompta*.

[239] James Robertson, 'Letter from James Robertson to Hendrik Albert Schultens, Dated 31.03.1778. MS. BPL 245:XIII', (Leiden University Libraries, 1778).

from the Arabick writers in prose and verse for the sake of novices and such as begin to learn that language.

Omitting the vowel points, like Jones does, proves to Robertson that Richardson has no experience in teaching Arabic, which he, Robertson, as well as Schultens, of course does have. It therefore excludes Richardson from the community of academics, who not only understand these eastern languages more thoroughly, but also appear to be the only ones properly equipped to teach them.

Three observations are immediately noticeable when considering the list of references. Firstly, Robertson uses almost exclusively seventeenth-century sources to refute Jones's work: only his own work is recently published. This can be seen as a commentary on the state of the discipline of oriental studies: hardly any significant works were published in the eighteenth century, compelling Robertson to rely on the scholarship of his predecessors from over a century earlier, whose works were reprinted regularly.

Secondly, with the exception of Chardin's *Voyages*, written in French, the cited works are all in Latin. This reflects the general practice in the seventeenth century, when these works were compiled. The juxtaposition with these scholarly, Latin works, moreover, also underscores the novelty of Jones's *Persian Grammar*, written in English for a professional, rather than academic, readership.

And finally, and notably, Robertson cites only one English scholar, John Greaves, but relies more heavily on the Dutch scholarly tradition in which he himself was educated as well. This indicates the decline of academic output among the English Arabists and orientalists, who, as mentioned before, hardly published in the eighteenth century.

While commending Jones's own abilities and the attribution of his *Grammar* to the understanding of Persian by the English, Robertson claims his goals for teaching Persian to a wider audience are unrealistic, as is evidenced by the following remarks:

'The exercises recommended by Mr. Jones will surely be attended with great benefit to the learner; but we are afraid that six months is too short a space for learning a language with "ease and pleasure."'[240] And:'... we are afraid Mr. Jones measures the assiduity of other students by his own...'[241] Here Robertson implies that, unlike Jones himself, not every man

[240]Robertson, 'Conclusion of the Account of Mr. Jones's Persian Grammar', p. 89.

[241] Ibid. p. 90.

has the ability of learning such an exotic language as Persian easily, especially in such a short amount of time. Moreover, as the 'other students' mentioned will be East India Company men and not Oxford-educated orientalists such as Jones himself, this remark can again be interpreted as an emphasis on the difference in users of the work and the inaccessibility of the oriental language to non-specialists, according to Robertson.

Even though he finds the *Grammar* can be improved upon, Robertson summarizes his review in the following words and with a clear recommendation to those wishing to study Persian:

> Having thus given a general review of this Persian Grammar, we heartily recommend it as the most useful work that has hitherto appeared on the subject, notwithstanding the Author's having passed over, in too cursory a manner, the rules with respect to the syllabication and reading of the language. Its deficiency, in this respect, must indeed strike every one who begins to peruse the Grammar in order to learn the language. It were to be wished, also, that the Author had recommended to his student to begin learning the Arabic language first, as a little acquaintance with it would not only facilitate the reading of the Persian, but furnish him with a stock of words which he will find in every page of a Persian writer, cloathed in their native dress.[242]

The reason for this conclusion may be twofold: firstly, since Jones's *Persian Grammar* was the first of its kind, there was no other way of acquiring the Persian language for the East India Company men or others who wanted to study the language outside the universities and without the personal tutelage of a specialist. It is therefore rightfully 'the most useful work that has hitherto appeared on the subject.' Secondly, Jones's targeted audience wanted to use Persian in everyday life and business, not necessarily to study literature and poetry. Therefore, a less academic approach to the subject and the fact that the author 'passed over' some aspects of the language might not hinder its user too much. Robertson himself, however, being an academic in this specific field, does notice the deficiencies and argues that for the use in academia, the *Persian Grammar* has clear flaws.

The eighth edition of Jones's *Persian Grammar* edited by Samuel Lee, addresses precisely these points raised by Robertson:

> The principle addition consists in an abstract of the Arabick Grammar, sufficiently extensive, it is hoped, to give the learner an insight into the principles of that language;

[242]Ibid. p. 91.

> but not so much so, as to perplex him with subtleties, which, at his first contact, he can neither want nor understand.[243]

Furthermore, 'in this edition the vowel points have been added throughout.'[244] This means the *Grammar* can be used for self-study, without the need for a teacher to provide the vowel points, which Lee states the Indian munshis who function as Persian teacher are 'extremely defective' in doing.[245] With these adaptations, eight editions into its publication process, the *Persian Grammar* has been updated to meet the demands of James Robertson.

The opposite view to Robertson's is expressed in a letter by the Polish prince Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski, who thanks Jones for taking his particular approach in the *Persian Grammar*.[246] Czartoryski, who had been educated in England and was therefore able to read Jones's English works and correspond with him in English, was not only a patron of the arts and the first minister for education, but was also interested in language study himself. This is illustrated by the questions he posed in his letter to Jones, asking him about the etymology of Persian words and their similarity to English and German words. He uses Jones's Persian and Richardson's Arabic Grammar to learn these languages and approves of the approach Jones has introduced, as he describes in a letter from 26 November 1778:

> to them [both Grammars] I owe to be rescued out of the hands of Erpenius, Guadagnola, and the rest of those unmerciful gentlemen who never took the least trouble about clearing the road, or plucking out one single thorn from the many with which the paths of the study of Eastern languages are covered.[247]

These 'unmerciful gentlemen' are exactly the authorities Robertson references, those who 'disgust the student' as mentioned in the *Critical Review*. Although Jones mentions them as his predecessors in the research of the Persian language, his deviation from their method appears to be helpful for the student who is inexperienced in eastern languages, or who is studying the languages like Czartoryski, on his own without a teacher to interpret the difficult jargon.

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[243] Jones, *A Grammar of the Persian Language. The Eighth Edition with Considerable Additions and Improvements by the Rev. Samuel Lee, M.A. D.D.*, p. xiv.

[244] Ibid. p. xv.

[245] Ibid. p. xv.

[246] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, pp. 292-296.

[247] Ibid. p. 293.

2.3.1.3. Following in Jones's footsteps: further grammars adopting the Persian Grammar*'s didactic approach*

After the appearance of Jones's *Persian Grammar* for the use of the East India Company, this approach was copied by others, who also published grammars of eastern languages outside of academia, with the express aim of being used by company employees in the east. The grammars discussed below are of Arabic, Bengal and Sanskrit, and show both a strong link to Jones's example, which they all claim to follow, and clear developments of this trend. The first development is to be seen in the involvement of the East India Company. As discussed, Jones recommends his *Persian Grammar* to their use. Next is Richardson, who not only recommends, but dedicates his *Arabick Grammar* to its directors in an opening letter. The further examples are funded by the Company, and written by Company employees.

There is a strong link here to the second important development in these examples: the authors of the first two grammars in this series, Jones and Richardson, write their works in England. They are dependent on the knowledge available in university libraries, and therefore are strongly embedded in the academic tradition, although they have no formal connection to any university at the time of publishing. Halhed and Wilkins however both work in India and are aided by native informers and teachers to study languages that have not been studied before in traditional English universities. They become part of the creation of new disciplines, rather than deviating from the constraints of existing ones.

The three grammars mentioned will be discussed in more detail, paying attention specifically to how they present their aims and methods. Another point of interest is the way in which they describe their dependence on Jones's work.

Richardson's Arabick Grammar

The first grammar with strong links to Jones's method of language acquisition is *A Grammar of the Arabick Language*, published in 1776 by John Richardson.[248] This grammar, clearly modelled after Jones's *Persian Grammar*, has the obvious goal to be used by tradesmen and East India Company men working in the East, as is signalled not only by its being composed in English, and being modelled after Jones's *Persian Grammar,* which had the same aim, but this

[248] John Richardson, *A Grammar of the Arabick Language. In Which the Rules Are Illustrated by Authorities from the Best Writers; Principally Adapted for the Service of the Honourable East India Company*, (London: William Richardson, for J. Murray, No 32 Fleet Street; and D. Prince, Oxford, 1776).

is also immediately made clear on the title page, which states: ‘A Grammar of the Arabick Language. In which The Rules and illustrated by Authorities from the best Writers; Principally Adapted For the Service of the Honourable East India Company.’[249] Not only is the Grammar adapted for the East India Company, a dedication on the first pages also addresses the 'Directors for managing the affairs of the Honourable United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies'[250] by name and explains to them why this grammar is compiled and what its use will be. Like Jones in the *Persian Grammar*, Richardson mentions that Arabic is studied too little and that his grammar will hopefully change this.[251] Richardson seems to agree with Robertson, who in his Review of the *Persian Grammar* points out Arabic is to be studied to understand Persian, and so Richardson explains that his grammar will be 'peculiarly essential to the just understanding of that great Eastern language of correspondence and state affairs, the Persian.'[252] He seems to be filling a gap Jones left when deciding not to link the study of Persian to that of Arabic.

In his Preface, Richardson clearly shows his views on the education of oriental languages and the direction this should be taking. He argues for practical language education, following in Jones's footsteps but daring to take this a step further and being completely candid about his views:

> With a view to lead the way to a more simple mode of instruction this Grammar has been undertaken; with what success, the candour of those who can judge must determine. The Persian Grammar has been the model I have attempted to follow; and, whilst I have endeavoured to imitate the perspicuity with which the sensible author explains the difficulties of that study, I have pursued his method of illustrating the different rules by authorities from various writers; a method which, at the same time that it instructs, softens the drudgery unavoidable in a beginning study; unites practice with theory, and introduces the learner imperceptibly to some acquaintance with the genius and manner of several respectable Arabian authors.[253]

[249] Ibid. p. i.

[250] Ibid. p. iii.

[251] 'A language [i.e. 'The Arabick language'] hitherto conceived so difficult, that few of your servants have had courage to begin it, and fewer perseverance to proceed.' Ibid. p. iii-iv.

[252] Ibid. p. iv.

[253] Ibid. pp. viii-ix.

Not only does Richardson make a case for more comprehensible and practical language education, he also takes a stand against earlier forms of presenting oriental grammars, 'delivered in an obscure Latin idiom', which would not be practical enough for non-academics and non-orientalists to understand:

> As abstract theoretical disquisitions, delivered in an obscure Latin idiom, tho' worthy perhaps of the attention of those who make philological learning the study of life, are by no means calculated for gentlemen, whose chief views are necessarily directed to commerce, war, and political government; to whom languages must of consequence be objects merely secondary, and the means of acquisition proportionably the more important, as they tend to promote, without greatly interrupting, their more interesting pursuits; I have given Arabick Grammar an English dress [...] from a conviction that this practical mode of accompanying the grammatical rules will be found far more satisfactory than volumes of theory alone, which few minds, without infinite labour, can either comprehend or retain.[254]

This extract shows the clear distinction Richardson tries to make: 'those who make philological learning the study of life' - i.e. scholars, or probably more specific oriental scholars, those studying Arabic as part of biblical exegesis as described above - are positioned opposite 'gentlemen, whose chief views are necessarily directed to commerce, war, and political government' - i.e. tradesmen and magistrates in service of the East India Company. To cater to the latter group, Richardson argues, language education needs to be practical and clear, stripped from theoretical and obscure language. He clearly has the opposite viewpoint from Robertson, who strives to protect the study of oriental languages for an academic audience, while Richardson states his 'gentlemen' will have more interesting things to do, and their language study is merely instrumental to this. There is a clear echo here to the opinion also expressed in the previously discussed review of Jones' *Persian Grammar*, which praised the same lack of 'operose industry', 'jargon' and 'obscure definitions' which made the work of academic grammarians so hard to read.[255]

Richardson's view on previous Arabic scholarship and the way he would like to see it done become apparent throughout this preface. He describes how, so far, the Latin descriptions

[254] Ibid. pp. xi-xii.

[255] [Anon.], 'Review: A Grammar of the Persian Language', p. 243.

and translations have been neither beautiful and pleasant to read, nor useful for a better understanding and instruction of the language.[256] We see both of Jones's goals reflected in this statement: an appreciation of oriental literature for its literary value, and the spread of knowledge about the oriental languages so they, and their literature, become available to more Europeans. Moreover, we see reflected in this statement Jones's practice of translation, when Richardson states scholarly Latin translations, 'without elegance, and often without accuracy, possess neither the beauty of an ingenious paraphrase, nor the usefulness of a literal translation.'[257] Jones presents the reader with various options to understand the translated poem: a literal one to give an idea of the content of the poem, and a literary one to allow the European reader to appreciate the beauty of the work.[258] Richardson not only approves of Jones's method, but he prefers it to earlier scholarship, because it is a more practical way of approaching the poetry.

While attributing this style of language representation to Jones, Richardson calls him 'Author of *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarii*, and other learned and ingenious works'.[259] The mention of specifically this work to describe Jones's background is remarkable, since by then he has published five works on or translated from the oriental languages. In a preface that means to explain why these languages should be written about in English, mentioning this Latin work - Jones's only Latin work on this subject - seems a contradictory choice. He has, however, already mentioned the *Persian Grammar* by this point, which seems the most logical of Jones's

[256] 'Many of our European editors and commentators, it may also be observed, have been men merely learned in language, with little taste, or general science, to direct their learning to proper objects: the books they have published, therefore, have not all been chosen with skill; for, whatever motives might invite them to become Arabick editors, instruction or entertainment appears by no means to have been always in view: chance more than discernment appears often to have selected their publications, and an unnecessary display of learning seems the only point of their ambition; whilst their Latin versions, without elegance, and often without accuracy, possess neither the beauty of an ingenious paraphrase, nor the usefulness of a literal translation.' Richardson, *A Grammar of the Arabick Language. In Which the Rules Are Illustrated by Authorities from the Best Writers; Principally Adapted for the Service of the Honourable East India Company*, p. viii.

[257] Ibid. p. viii.

[258] In the Persian Grammar we don't find many full translations, but ghazal 3 of Hafiz is fully included. The Persian, with a transliteration into Latin script, is included in the Grammar, pp. 12-14, but the translation is inserted 'in its proper place' (p. 12), which is at the end of the work, pp. 135-140, first as a literal translation, followed by a verse translation, because 'the wildness and simplicity of this Persian song pleased me so much' (p. 137). This is Jones's common practice, which is most clearly visible in *Poems* and *Commentarii*, both of which appeared shortly after the *Persian Grammar*.

[259] Richardson, *A Grammar of the Arabick Language. In Which the Rules Are Illustrated by Authorities from the Best Writers; Principally Adapted for the Service of the Honourable East India Company*, p. viii, note.

works to refer to in this context. The *Commentarii*, in style and language anchored in the tradition of Arabic academic scholarship, might be used here in an attempt to placate the scholarly reader; by showing awareness of the tradition before deviating from it, Richardson aims to persuade his reader to trust his authority. Mentioning his collaboration not only with the highly esteemed Jones, but also with two Oxford scholars contributes to this claim of authority: 'Rev. Mr. White of Wadham College, professor of Arabick, and the Rev. Mr. Winstanley of Brazen-Nose College, Oxford'[260]

Halhed's Bengali Grammar

Jones's *Persian Grammar* was recommended for those in service of the East India Company, and Richardson dedicated his *Arabick Grammar* to the Company, but the first grammar in this tradition to be financially supported by the Company itself and published in India by one of its service men was the *Bengali Grammar* by Nathaniel Brassey Halhed.[261] Halhed arrived in India in 1772, where he worked as a Persian translator, after having studied Persian and Arabic, probably also in Oxford with Jones.[262] He had played a big role in executing governor-general Warren Hastings's plan of translating Indian law texts, so the English could use those to judge the Indian people by their own laws. As part of this project Halhed worked on his *Code of Gentoo Laws*, together with a team of indigenous pundits.[263] Although this translation, being created on the basis of an intermediary Persian translation, was an improvement on having to use native informers to settle court cases, it was not accurate enough. This led to Jones's translation project of *Institutes of Menu*, and therefore to his study of Sanskrit, which will be discussed further in chapter 4.

Shortly after the appearance of this translation, Halhed presents the Company with his *Bengali Grammar*, again explaining in the preface why this is so important and why middlemen – native interpreters and translators – should be cut out. This grammar is more than just dedicated to the East India Company, however; Halhed was working with and for Governor

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[260] Ibid. p. ix, note.

[261] Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, *A Grammar of the Bengal Language*, (Hoogly in Bengal, 1778).

[262] Rocher, *Orientalism, Poetry and the Millennium : The Checkered Life of Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, 1751-1830*, pp. 37-38.

[263] Ibid. p. 48.

Halhed, *A Code of Gentoo Laws, or, Ordinations of the Pundits : From a Persian Translation, Made from the Original, Written in the Shanscrit Language*.

Warren Hastings at the time of its compilation, and Hastings managed to ensure funding for its publication, proving that the need for language education for its officers is now getting acknowledged by the Company.[264] Halhed recognises that there are three 'different dialects' in use in Bengal, of which Persian is 'an almost indispensable qualification for those who were to manage the extensive affairs of the East India Company' since the language plays such a large role in administration and government.[265] To meet this requirement, Jones has therefore supplied a useful resource to Company officials: 'the accurate and elegant grammar composed by Mr. Jones does equal honour to the cause of learning, and service to his countrymen in Asia.'[266] Halhed's remark here is twofold: he acknowledges the use of the *Persian Grammar* to the East India Company as an operative in India, which proves Jones's aims with the *Grammar* are being met. Furthermore, Halhed mentions the scholarly side of the work: it contributes to learning in a field that has previously been little studied.

Whereas Persian is the language of administration, however, Bengali is 'used by the body of the people', so Halhed makes a case for this to be studied as well 'if vigour, impartiality and dispatch be required to the operations of government, to the distribution of justice, to the collections of the revenues and to the transactions of commerce.'[267] His *Bengali Grammar* will furnish the next step in the movement Jones's *Persian Grammar* has started, in the development and education of the East India Company employees. Jones was only able to study Persian, because of the small number of manuscripts he had available in Oxford, and could only imagine the use of Persian because, on paper, that seemed the most useful language to have in the field in India. Halhed, however, uses his experience in India to recognise that Persian is not the only language used in everyday interactions with the local peoples; there is a bigger need to speak Bengali. So he uses the foundation laid by Jones to develop the knowledge of Indian languages further. He takes Jones as an example and adapts his system of translating literature to practice the language.

> When the learner has made some proficiency in the first rudiments, he cannot follow a more able or more expeditious guide than Mr. Jones: who in the preface to his Persian Grammar has prescribed an admirable system of study, the utility of which is

[264] Rocher, *Orientalism, Poetry and the Millennium : The Checkered Life of Nathaniel Brassey Halhed, 1751-1830*, pp. 74-75.

[265] Halhed, *A Grammar of the Bengal Language*, pp. viii-ix.

[266] Ibid. p. ix.

[267] Ibid. p. xvii.

> abundantly proved by the wonderful extent of his own attainments. By an adherence to his plan this language may soon be acquired so far as to open the way to conversation and short correspondence with the natives; after which the progression of knowledge will ever be proportionate to the assiduity of the student.[268]

In the introduction to the *Bengali Grammar*, Halhed notes that 'the grand Source of Indian literature, the Parent of almost every dialect from the Persian Gulph to the China seas, is the Shanscrit', a language that is, he describes, similar to Persian and Arabic, and even Latin and Greek.[269] This comparison is later developed further by Jones, especially in his third Anniversary Discourse for the Asiatic Society, in which he claims kinship between Sanskrit, Persian, and European languages such as Latin, Greek and Gothic – now known as the Indo-European language family.[270] Because of the similarities between their remarks and the facts that Halhed did not only mention his observations earlier than Jones, but they were also picked up by readers and the two men knew each other, there have been remarks accusing Jones of plagiarism of his most famous 'discovery'.

Wilkins's Sanskrit Grammar

In his *Bengali Grammar*, Halhed included some descriptions and explanations of Sanskrit grammar as well, because he recognised the importance of this language when one was studying the modern Indian dialects.[271] His colleague in the Company, and the creator of the Bengal type for this *Grammar*, Charles Wilkins, was studying Sanskrit and became the first Englishman to master the language and to publish a translation from Sanskrit, the *Bhagavad-Gita* in 1785.[272] In 1808 Wilkins, who was by then back in England, published a *Sanskrit Grammar*, which he dedicated 'to the honourable court of directors for the affairs of the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies.'[273] He had started the work for this grammar much earlier, in 1795, but misfortunes, such as his house with in it his Devanagari types burning down, had prevented him from publishing it earlier. This means that

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[268] Ibid. p. xx.

[269] Ibid. p. iii.

[270] Jones, 'The Third Anniversary Discourse, on the Hindus, Delivered 2d of February, 1786', pp. 422-423.

[271] Halhed, *A Grammar of the Bengal Language*, pp. xix-xx.

[272] Wilkins, *The Bhagvat-Geeta, or Dialogues of Kreeshna and Arjoon; in Eighteen Lectures; with Notes. Translated from the Original, in the Sanskreet, or Ancient Language of the Brahmans*.

[273] Wilkins, *A Grammar of the Sanskrita Language*, p. v.

by the time Wilkins published his *Sanskrit Grammar*, this was not the first to appear. H.T. Colebrooke's *Grammar of the Sanscrit Language*, in two volumes, had been published in Calcutta in 1805.[274] Colebrooke has taken up a professorship at Fort William College by the time his *Sanscrit Grammar* appears, and his grammar intends to take its place in the Sanskrit scholarly tradition, being based on the work of the ancient Sanskrit grammarian Pānini.[275] Wilkins, on the other hand, places his *Sanskrita Grammar* in the tradition of Halhed and Jones, by quoting both in his preface and stressing the practical value of his work:

> To those who are destined to fill offices of importance in the political, the military, and the commercial departments of the East India Company in India, and to whom a knowledge of the common dialects of the country is absolutely necessary, and now insisted on as an indispensable qualification, a certain acquaintance with the parent, or rather, the vital principle of them all, is of the utmost importance. He who knows *Sanskrit* has already acquired a knowledge of one half of almost every vernacular language of India; while he who remains ignorant of it, can never possess a perfect and critical understanding of any, though he may attain a certain proficiency in the practical use of them.[276]

He explains that students at the East India College at Hertford are using his *Grammar* for the study of Sanskrit 'and have, under the instructions of its able and zealous Professor, already made a very considerable progress in the first four chapters of this work.'[277] This illustrates how this grammar, intended for practical rather than academic study, already found an audience in the practical setting of the education of recruits for the East India Company.

[274] H.T. Colebrooke, *A Grammar of the Sanscrit Language*, (Calcutta: The Honourable Company's Press, 1805).
[275] Garland Cannon, 'Sir William Jones, Persian, Sanskrit and the Asiatic Society', *Histoire Épistémologie Langage,* 6 (1984), p. 86.
[276] Wilkins, *A Grammar of the Sanskrita Language*, p. x.
[277] Ibid. p. xiv.

2.3.2. Jones placing himself in the tradition: the *Commentarii*

In 1774 Jones finally publishes his *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex*, henceforth *Commentarii*, an accumulation of his research into Asiatic poetry during and before his time at Oxford.[278] He had started working on this in 1766, and completed a first version in 1769, but it had taken him five more years to get the full work published, during which time he had allowed manuscripts to circulate in order to receive feedback from his orientalist colleagues.[279]

As briefly discussed in the previous chapter, Jones has identified the *Commentarii* as the accumulation of his research, declaring that his earlier critical discussions in *Histoire de Nader Chah* and *Poems* were introductions to the *magnum opus* that the *Commentarii* are meant to be:

> Both these Dissertations were intended only as introductory to a much larger work, on the *Asiatick Poetry*, written in *Latin* for the convenience of learned foreigners, and entitled, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarii*, which will be offered to the publick in the middle of next March.[280]

The *Commentarii* is the only Latin work of oriental literature published by Jones. It consists of twenty chapters, divided into six parts, discussing various topics relating to Asiatic – mostly but not exclusively Arabic, Persian and Turkish – poetry, followed by several appendices. Although this is his most elaborate work on Asiatic poetry, and Jones plans for this work to create international impact and spread interest in these literatures throughout Europe, in modern scholarship this is his most overlooked work. In the most recent full biography for Jones, Franklin devotes one paragraph to the *Commentarii*, despite calling it 'a groundbreaking book in the history of comparative literature'.[281]

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[278] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, pp. viii-ix.

[279] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, p. 200.

[280] Jones, *The History of the Life of Nader Shah, King of Persia. Extracted from an Eastern Manuscript, Which Was Translated into French by Order of His Majesty the King of Denmark. With an Introduction, Containing, I. A Description of Asia, According to the Oriental Geographers. Ii. A Short History of Persia from the Earliest Times to the Present Century: And an Appendix, Consisting of an Essay on Asiatick Poetry, and the History of the Persian Language. To Which Are Added, Pieces Relative to the French Translation*, p. 123.

[281] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 88. The following page includes the closing poem, 'Ad Musam', not in Jones's Latin, but in the translation published in

When considering contemporary responses, however, the reception varies widely. The reviews to be discussed below engage little with the work, possibly because of its language and style. The *Commentarii* are Jones's most scholarly work, and are therefore not attracting the same audience as for example his *Poems*, which gets many reviews.

The fact that Jones was attempting to place this work in the academic tradition of the time, is emphasised by the dedication at the start of the book:

> Florentissimae Academiae Oxoniensi, literarum, atrium, scientiarum, cultrici, fautrici, magistrae, almae matri suae, quae tamdiu academiarum omnium erit illustrissima, quamdiu omnium liberrima permanserit, hos Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarios, quos adolescens olim contexuit, in animi gratissimi testimonium, d[ono] d[edit] d[edicavit] Gulielmus Jones
>
> [William Jones gave and dedicated these Commentaries on the Poetry of the Asiatics as a gift to the most illustrious Academia of Oxford, cultivator, patron and master of letters, arts and sciences, his alma mater; who, as long as she will be the most illustrious of all academies, will also remain the most free.]

Although modern scholarship engages very little with this work - Franklin's most recent and complete biography only mentions the *Commentarii* in one short paragraph - it was cause for Jones's fame at the time, which becomes evident in references to the *Commentarii* in later descriptions of Jones's accomplishments. In a discussion of Jones's publications from India, more than ten years and several publications later, Jones is still referred to as 'the Author of the Oriental Commentaries'.[282]

A similar emphasis on the *Commentarii* is expressed by John Shore, later Lord Teignmouth. In his first presidential address to the Asiatick Society on May 22nd 1794, a month after Jones's death, he enumerates Jones's accomplishments. The very first of his works he mentions is the *Commentarii*, framing it as the epitome of his work:

> this work, if no other monument of his labours existed, would at once furnish proofs of his consummate skill in Oriental dialects, of his proficiency in those of *Rome* and

Gentleman's Magazine: [Anon.], 'List of Books: 71', *The Gentleman's Magazine: and historical chronicle,* 44 (1774), p. 624.

[282] John Parsons, 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*, Nos I and Ii', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 76 (1787).

Greece, of taste and erudition far beyond his years, and of talents and application without example.[283]

The modern lack of interest in this work is therefore inexplicable, and will hopefully be made right by this discussion of the *Commentarii* below, but more so by the publication of an edition with translation by John T. Gilmore.

A second edition of this work is printed by Jena orientalist Johann Gottfried Eichhorn.[284] He starts his editorial preface by lauding the many talents of Jones. He has kept the text of the reprint faithful to the first edition, except for the correction of some mistakes. Furthermore he claims to have added some Arabic examples. This reprint is evidence for the demand there was for the *Commentarii*, despite underwhelming reviews.

2.3.2.1. Jones's aims and an overview of the work

In the *Prooemium* to the *Commentarii*, Jones describes why this work is in Latin, rather than in French or English like his previous publications. He 'confesses' that he has committed not only this 'grave crimen' [grave crime], and the worse crime of adding Greek as well, for one simple reason: 'fateor me sermone Latino esse usum, ut ab omnibus in Europa gentibus legerer' [I confess that I have used the Latin language, so I can be read by all peoples in Europe].[285] He continues to give examples of the people with whom he could not communicate, or at least not without spending much time studying 'sermones difficiles et dissimiles' [difficult and different languages] (those people are the 'Dani, Russi, Germani, Poloni, Hungari') if everyone insisted on using their own language.[286] Therefore he claims, despite the French pushing for literature in French, Latin is still the language in which knowledge can be most easily exchanged, in particular internationally. And this is exactly the aim Jones has with the *Commentarii*. In his 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', which appeared two years earlier, he had claimed that he wanted all of European literature, not just

[283] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, p. v.

[284] William Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex Cum Appendice. Auctore Guilielmo Iones, A.M. Recudi Curavit Io[Hannes] Gottfried Eichhorn, Professor Ienensis*, (Leipzig: Weidmann & Reich, 1777).

[285] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*. p. xii.

[286] Ibid. p. xii

English literature, to be rejuvenated by the study of eastern language and literature.[287] The *Commentarii*, then, are his attempt to indeed spread this knowledge across the continent, rather than 'in una tantum insula' [merely on one island].[288] His intention to reach an international academic audience with this work is corroborated by his mention that 'you cannot conceive how few English gentlemen understand Latin', in a letter to Reviczki in March 1771.[289] Jones mentions this when he discusses the publication of translations of Hafez by Reviczki in London, and gives him the advice to translate either into English or French for his translation to be read by an English audience. He even thinks that French 'will be more acceptable even to your own countymen, than a Latin translation', which implies that he has little confidence in European readership of Latin work, outside of the academic world.[290]

He explains, furthermore, that this work is not going to be an instruction for those wanting to learn the languages discusses:

> si quis, in his literis [Arabibus et Persaris] nondum imbutus, speraverit à meis versionibus, locorum, qui citantur, σύνταξιν ordinemque grammaticum perspicere, nae ille se turpiter falli videbit; non enim in hoc opera philologus, sed criticus, non interpres, sed poeta esse volui; non quasi in ludo pueros instituere, sed cum viris undequaque doctis de poesi in genere, ac speciatim de Asiatica, colloqui.
>
> [If someone, who is little known with these literatures, was hoping that in my version of the cited places, the syntax and grammatical rules would be discussed, he will see that he is truly badly mistaken; since I did not want to be a philologer in this work, but a critic; not a translator, but a poet. I did not want to instruct like I would schoolboys, but to converse with men everywhere, learned about poetry in general, and Asiatic poetry specifically.][291]

Jones shows he has a clear audience in mind with this work, and it is not for the starting orientalist. He wants to be part of the republic of oriental letters, the one we have seen

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[287] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, pp. 198-199.

[288] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. xiv.

[289] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, vol. 1, p. 165.

[290] Ibid. p. 165.

[291] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. ix.

Robertson claim he is an outsider to. His consciousness of this audience must also be the reason he spends two full pages of his introduction listing all the reasons why this publication is imperfect.

Jones ends his *prooemium* with a description of himself as a gladiator, stepping into the arena: 'Satis jam in umbra prolusisse videor; nunc in pulverem atque aciem vocor' [I appear to have practiced enough in the shadows, now I am being called into the dust and the battle, i.e. into the arena].[292] This reference to Cicero's *De Oratore* 1.157 is the conclusion to a discussion of who is the *maximus* or *optimus hominum*, with which Jones ends his *prooemium*. The conclusion is that it is not he who studies in the comfort of his home, but he who steps into the world and puts those studies to good use for humanity. Therefore, Jones states, he must leave the 'dilectissimos Academiae' [pleasantness of Academia] in which he has been withdrawn, and step forward into 'curriculum hoc forense' [this forensic career]. This is only one of the places in which Jones announces to stop his publication of eastern literature, a similar announcement can be found in the *Moallakát*. However, after the appearance of the *Commentarii* his work on the circuit does prohibit further research into eastern poetry, and there is a gap of almost ten years until the *Moallakát* is published in 1783.

The *Commentarii* therefore play an ambiguous role as Jones's attempt to become part of the European republic of (eastern) letters, and adding his knowledge and research to the existing scholarship and debates, while he simultaneously claims that scholarship does not lead to the best life and action is required to be of merit to one's fatherland.

Most of the chapters of the books describe the various aspects of Asiatic poetry, such as the various metres used, different styles of poetry and figures of speech. The first chapter, however, which is also the first part or book of the work, explains why he thinks the study of this poetry is important. It is titled 'Asiaticos fere omnes Poeticae impensius deditos' [That almost all Asiatics are exceedingly dedicated to poetry] and indeed argues for the study of poetry from all languages from Asia, rather than just Arabic and Persian, about which he states he will write the majority of this work.

In order to argue the importance of poetry in Asiatic languages, Jones uses a method that he applies more often in his work, of comparing Greek and Roman authors, which would be well known to his European audience, with eastern poets. In this case he lists twelve Greek poets

[292] Ibid. p. xviii.

and states ‘neminem unquam scribendo consequi posse censendum est’ [It has to be thought that no-one could even reach their level in writing].[293] Thus, he placates his audience, showing them that he is aware of the literary value they place in these European classics, and he does not advocate deposing them. This is an argument that is often repeated, most clearly in the ‘Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations.’ After reassuring his readership in that way, Jones continues to say: ‘negari tamen non potest, quin suae sint poetis *Asiaticis*, à naturalibus eae quidem rebus deductae, proprietatis; *sui*-que pulchritudinis colores, ad quorum laudem poesis *Europeae* haudquaquam accedit.’ [However, it cannot be denied, that some Asiatic poets have *their* abilities, brought out by their natural circumstances; and a lustre of their beauty, the glory of which European poetry can by no means approach.][294]

A Chinese example

In this first chapter Jones gives examples from various languages. The most elaborate example is that of his ‘Ode Sinica Antiquissima’, an ode by Confucius (‘Platone illo, si ita dicere liceat, Sinensium’ [He is the Plato of the Chinese, if I may say so]) of which he presents a transcript that he created himself, with interlinear translations of the individual characters. He also includes a verse translation in distichs. The characters, however, are ‘distorted in form, some have too few strokes, others too many; but they are not beyond recognition.’[295] Even though Jones’s knowledge of Chinese was hardly enough to transcribe the poem, and his further work shows he has not acquired this language in any way worth mentioning, Fan does recognise that it was due to Jones’s endeavours that Sinology in England started developing: it needed the orientalist’s input to become an interest beyond the realm of the Jesuit missionaries who dominated it before.[296] Even though Jones does not develop his study of Chinese much further, this ode appears again in the discourse ‘On the Second Classical Book, where a transcript of the ode is accompanied by a ‘verbal translation’ – including interlinear numbers referring to the characters translated – and a ‘paraphrase’.[297] Overall, we can therefore find five different versions of this ode in Jones’s works (six, if the two transcripts are counted

[293] Ibid. p. 5.

[294] Ibid. p. 5.

[295] T.C. Fan, 'Sir William Jones's Chines Studies', *The Review of English Studies,* 22 (1946), p. 308.

[296] Ibid. p. 304.

[297] William Jones, 'On the Second Classical Book of the Chinese', in *The Works of Sir William Jones,* ed. by Anna Maria Jones (London: John Stockdale and John Walker, 1807).

separately); as with many other poems this shows Jones's commitment to presenting his reader with as much information as possible for them to study the texts themselves, rather than just providing a translation for the reader to browse through. This ardour even applies when discussing topics and languages of which he had very limited knowledge.[298] The possibility of disseminating a small piece of information and possibly creating the curiosity in others to further this research must have been the most important to Jones. Indeed, it was this curiosity in his own studies that allowed him to make progress in fields he had never before studied.

Lay-out of the work

As the title of the work suggests, the *Commentarii* are divided into six parts, the first of which has just been discussed. The following parts are: 'De poematum Asiaticorum forma' [About the shape of Asiatic poetry], chapters 2-4; 'De poeseos Asiaticae figuris, ac dictione' [About the figures and style in the poetry of the Asiatics], chapters 5-11; 'De Poematum Asiaticorum Argumentis' [About the narratives of the Asiatic poems], chapters 12-18; 'De variis Arabum, Persarum, ac Turcarum Poetis' [About various poets of the Arabs, Persians, and Turks], chapter 19; 'De Asiatica Dictione' [About Asiatic style], chapter 20.

These themes are divided further into smaller topics in the separate chapters, creating a well-structured overview of the various aspects of eastern poetry. For example, the part about the topics of Asiatic poems has separate chapters describing among others heroic, funeral and love poetry. These chapters consist of some theoretical backgrounds of the topics, but for the larger part of examples from various poems. Jones gives excerpts from an original Persian, Arabic, Turkish or occasionally Hebrew poem, translates this literally, and in many cases also adds a literary translation. This fits his description of wanting to approach this translation work as a poet, rather than a schoolteacher. Not only does he turn his translations into poetry, but he also attempts to create the translations in the style of a particular Latin, or occasionally Greek, poet. This will be illustrated in the following example.

In the chapter on 'reliquae figurae' [further stylistic devices] (chapter 8), Jones discusses ghazal 254 by Hafez. It was introduced in a discussion of apostrophe – 'cum rem vita ac ratione carentem poeta alloquitur' [when a poet addresses an object that lacks life or reason] – and

[298] Waley, 'Sir William Jones as Sinologue', p. 842.

the poem by Hafez is deemed the best example.[299] Jones gives the original Persian in couplets, which he then translates one by one into Latin, creating an almost interlinear, literal translation.[300] After this translation, Jones compared the imagery used - 'Quam pulchrae imagines!' [What beautiful images!] – to that used by the Greek lyric poet Alcaeus (ca. 6th century BCE). The discussion of the poem ends with a translation of the entire poem in Greek, in the manner of the lyric poet Anacreon.[301] This style of translation, first literal or even interlinear, then literary in the style of a particular poet, is a method Jones used throughout his *Commentarii*. As a literal translation of poetry could be hard to appreciate, the comparison with and even adaptation of a recognisable poetic style, was meant to make it easier for the reader to understand the poetic form of the original. Jones did not imitate the style of the original poem, since this would also be foreign to the reader, but chose a style with which they would be familiar, and which is comparable to the style of the original to give them a version they could recognise and therefore appreciate.

Moreover, the multiple published versions of the poem were intended to make it easier for the reader to start studying the poem in its original language, which as mentioned is Jones's ultimate goal. This particular ode by Hafez appeared in five different versions throughout Jones's work: in *Poems* a transliteration was followed by a literal English translation; the original Persian, an interlinear literal Latin translation and a poetic Greek translation in the style of Anacreon can be found in *Commentarii*.[302] The reader is also shown that the imagery

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[299] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 212.

'Sed nullum hujus generis exemplum mihi occurrit insignius, quam illud *Hafezi* carmen, quo adolescentuli pulchritudinem, sub puellae scilicet persona, venustissime describit, versa perpetuo oratione ad auram, ad rosam, ad narcissum, ad herbas, ad cupressum, et, quod audacius esse videbitur, ad intellectum.' (*Commentarii*, 212)

[But no example of this kind [of stylistic device] seems as prominent to me, as this poem by Hafez, in which he describes the beauty of a young man, obviously under the guise of a girl, in the most beautiful way, in verse, with an uninterrupted speech directed at the wind, at a rose, at a narcissus, at herbs, at a cypress, and, which seems to be quite daring, at wisdom.]

[300] Ibid. pp. 212-216.

[301] 'Hanc odam (utpote quae ad *Anacreontis* laudem prope accedat) versibus Anacreontis Graece reddidi.' [I have translated this ode into Greek Anacreontic verses, seeing that it closely resembles Anacreontic praise.] Ibid. p. 215.

[302] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*. pp. 191-192 and Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, pp. 212-216.

of the poem could be compared to Alcaeus (in *Commentarii*), who would be well-known to an international and classically trained audience. And in *Poems* the comparison is made with Shakespeare, even better known to the English audience. All this information provided the poem with a thorough and comprehensible context, creating a starting point for the study of the original. Furthermore, such thorough translation and comparison embeds the poem in its new European context, facilitating its incorporation in the European literature it is meant to strengthen and rejuvenate.

Appendices: embedding eastern poetry in a western context

The *Commentarii* end with three appendices, which all again contribute to Jones's plan of making eastern literature part of the western canon. First there is the 'Persarum regis antiquissimi Testamentum Morale, seu, De Regum Officiis' [The Moral Testament of an ancient king of the Persians, or, About the Duties of Kings].

The second appendix is an elaborate metaphor about the study of eastern languages in the form of a dialogue called *Arabs, sive De Poesi Anglorum Dialogus* [The Arab, or Dialogue About the Poetry of the English]. Jones claimed to have written this dialogue some time ago 'to have available whenever people make an inept judgement about the poetry of foreign people.'[303] This statement shows he was addressing a known problem, that of misinterpreting poetry because of a lack of knowledge, which he illustrated in a humorous and entertaining way. In this five-page dialogue a well-read British merchant tries to convince an Arab of the merit of English poetry. The Arab starts the discussion by emphatically stating he has no high expectations of the poetic skills of the English: 'cum credidero urbem hanc amoenissimam a maris hujus piscibus extructam fuisse, tum demum poetas, ut tu ais, venustos in Anglia credam floruisse.' [When I will have been convinced that this most pleasant city has been built by the fish of this sea, then I will also believe that elegant poets blossom in England.][304]

The Englishman of course has to defend his heritage, and quickly comes up with a literal translation of the opening lines of 'Paradisus Amissus' (Milton's *Paradise Lost*) into Latin as a

[303] 'Ut pateret, quam inepte de gentium exterarum poesi judicent ii, qui fidas tantum versions consulant, colloquium, quod sequitur, olim contexui.' [To have it available whenever people, who consult very literal versions, make an inept judgement about poetry of foreign people, I have once upon a time composed the conversation, that follows.] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 493.

[304] Ibid. p. 493.

taster. The Arab responds by laughing and saying he has never heard something less tasteful. Some more Milton is translated, and Pope is used as an example, but the Arab cannot be persuaded. Finally, and just before the friendship between the two is jeopardised, he makes the following decision:

> Ohe, inquit *Arabs,* desine, si me amas: heacine poesis dici potest? […] Haec cum dixisset, videretque graviter ferentem [et] stomachantem *Britannum*, pollicitus est, se ad linguam *Anglicam* condiscendam aliquot menses impensurum, ut poetas, quos ille laudaret, sermone proprio loquentes posset perlegere.
>
> ['Enough!' said the Arab, 'stop, if you have any love for me: is it even possible to call these poems? When the Arab had said this, and saw that the Briton took it seriously and was annoyed, he promised to spend so many months at learning the English language, until he could read the poets, whom the Briton had praised, in their original language.][305]

By turning the tables around, Jones attempts to persuade his reader to study eastern poetry. Much like the Arab in the dialogue, who recognises he has to study English to be able to appreciate Milton, they might at first find it hard to understand the poetic style of poetry with which they are not familiar. So instead of giving up on the poetry after a first encounter, this means they have to try harder to understand its background. In particular, Jones's never-ceasing agenda for the study of eastern languages plays a big part here; when one is able to read a text in its original language, he claims here through his comparison, appreciation of its aesthetic value becomes easier, or perhaps even natural.

The dialogue can therefore be read as a simile to Jones's own situation: he is the Briton, trying to make foreign poetry accessible to an uninformed reader. The Arab, who embodies the British or European readership, does not understand and ridicules his attempts, out of a lack of knowledge. He has his own frame of reference, poets he knows and loves and therefore uses as a measuring stick against which to judge the translations he is offered: 'don't you have a poet, who compares with Ferdusi?' and 'Move on to the Lyris poets. Can you produce anything to compare with Hafez, a favourite of us both?'[306] The Briton, who knows Milton's

[305] Ibid. p. 497.

[306] 'Sed ullumne habes poetam, quem cum *Ferdusio* compares?' Ibid. p. 494.
'Perge porro ad Lyricos. Ecquem professe potes cum *Hafezo*, meis tuisque deliciis comparandum?' Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 495.

poems *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are in style and beauty comparable to Hafez's lyric poetry, produces a translation from the former, but since the Arab lacks knowledge of the original and can only see the, perhaps somewhat clunky, literal translation and its lack of beauty, this makes him burst out laughing even more. In the same way Jones translated and compared eastern poetry, to persuade the English audience of its beauty, but also in the same way they often mis-understand those texts. By showing that the aesthetic value of English canonical poets such as Milton is not self-evident either, Jones hoped to open the eyes of his reader to the possibility of appreciating foreign literature after putting in the effort of learning about it. The third and final appendix seems at first glance the furthest removed from the topic and aims of the *Commentarii*: 'Guilielmi Jones Limon, seu, Miscellaneorum Liber' [William Jones's Limon or Book of Miscellanies], named after a book of poetry supposedly written by Cicero. Jones describes its contents as follows: 'constat autem è poematiis quibusdam partim à me scriptis, partim è Latino & Anglico sermone conversis, quorum pleraque omnia ante annum aetatis meae vicesimum sunt composita' [It consists however of poems, part of which are written by me, and part are translated from Latin and English, most of which are written before my twentieth year].[307] Added to his own poems, such as the Latin 'Ad Musam' with which the book closes or a Greek idylle in the style of Theocritus, are translations of Greek, Latin and English works into another of those languages. Examples are: a monologue from Shakespeare's *Henry IV* into Greek in the style of the playwright Aeschylus, Callimachus translated in the style of Catullus *Epithalamium*, and Terentius' *Adelphoe* into the style of Menander. These might seem like schoolboy exercises, especially since Jones comments on their origin with comments like 'hoc […] cum essem olim Oxonii, ludens composui' [I composed this once as a joke when I was at Oxford].[308] Their addition, however, to this book is more significant than that. The way Jones presents his translated eastern poetry is exactly the same as the exercises, or 'games', in this final appendix, which are the kind of translational exercises other learned men will have done in their schooldays as well, to master Latin and Greek. Jones is treating the eastern poems in exactly the same way as he does the very familiar European classics, embedding them in this familiar practice of studying the texts by translating them. The next step would be to translate European texts into eastern languages, which is not

[307] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*.
[308] Ibid. p. 500.

a step Jones takes here, but it is part of his system for language acquisition which he describes in his *Persian Grammar*.

The second edition of the work, which appears in 1777, leaves out 'Limon'.[309] In the same year the second edition of *Poems* appears, which includes the 'Carminum Liber' of eleven Latin poems, five of which are part of 'Limon' in the first edition.[310] This might be the reason this appendix was not included again.

2.3.2.2. Reviews and responses

Shortly after the appearance of the *Commentarii* Hunt, who has received a copy of the work, writes Jones a congratulatory letter. Hunt has previously seen the manuscript version of the work, and notices that it has improved since. He praises Jones's beautiful style, which makes it 'next to impossible […] to lay it aside again' for a person interested in oriental literature.[311] He expresses his hope that it will be used by many:

> I hope this new key to the Asiatic poetry, with which you have obliged the world, will not be suffered to rust for want of use; but that it will prove, what you intended it to be, a happy instrument in the hands of learned and inquisitive men, for unlocking the rich treasures of wisdom and knowledge which have been preserved in the Hebrew, Arabic, Persic, and the other Oriental languages, and especially the Hebrew, that venerable channel, through which the sacred compositions of the divinely inspired poets have been conveyed down to us.[312]

So, although the Hebrew quotations in *Commentarii* play a smaller part than the Arabic and Persian examples, Hunt creates a strong link between oriental and biblical poetry. Whereas Jones attempted to steer away from theology and towards an esthetic appreciation of oriental poetry, this response of Hunt's, in a similar but less explicit way to Robertson's discussed above, interprets Jones's work in the context of the tradition of Hebrew studies and theology.

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[309] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri Sex Cum Appendice. Auctore Guilielmo Iones, A.M. Recudi Curavit Io[Hannes] Gottfried Eichhorn, Professor Ienensis*.

[310] William Jones, *Poems Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages. To Which Are Added Two Essays; I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations. Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, 2nd ed. edn (London: printed by W. Bowyer and J. Nichols; for N. Conant (successor to Mr. Whiston), in Fleet Street, 1777).

[311] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, pp 208-209.

[312] Ibid. p. 208-209.

In a letter of 9 September 1774, H.A. Schultens comments on his reception of the *Commentarii*, stating that both he and his father J.J. Schultens, were impressed by the work and enjoyed reading it: 'Accept my sincerest thanks for your finished and most elegant work, which I have eagerly read again and again with admiration and astonishment.'[313]

Other orientalists who congratulated Jones with his accomplishments were Francisco Pérez Bayer (1711-1794), professor of Hebrew at the Universities of Valencia and Salamanca successively. Jones actively sought these connections, by sending him a copy of the *Commentarii* when it appeared, in March 1774. Although he did not receive a personal letter in return, but one via a mr Waddilove, Bayer gifts Jones a translation of Sallust by the Spanish prince Gabriel.[314] This exchange of works showed Jones as being part of the network of European orientalists.

A remarkable use of the *Commentarii* confirms its status in the academic tradition of Lowth's *De Sacra Poesi Hebraeorum Praelectiones Academicae* (Prelections on Hebrew Poetry, 1753). Carl Benjamin Schmidt edits a selection of lectures from Lowth's work, in German translation (1793). Added to these are notes from the *Commentarii*, because Jones had created 'einer richtiger Analogie zwischen Persern, Arabern und Israeliten' [a true analogy between Persian, Arabs and Israelites], and therefore his notes can help understand the poetry of the Old Testament.[315] Added to theses examples from the *Commentarii*, quotes from Herder are also used as a source for further annotation of Lowth's *Praelectiones*. This example therefore shows how Jones's work becomes completely integrated in the academic tradition.

Reviews of the *Commentarii* in English journals show the difference in audience between this and Jones's other works, as well as the issues the work being written in Latin posed. Only two journals print a review to the *Commentarii*, compared to four for the *History of Nader Shah* and six for *Poems*, which appear one and two years earlier respectively. The lack of reviews therefore does not seem to be a reflection on Jones's fame or the topic of eastern poetry, but

[313] Jones, *The Works of Sir William Jones, with the Life of the Author by Lord Teignmouth, in Thirteen Volumes*, p. 212.

[314] Ibid. pp. 226-228.

[315] Robert Lowth and others, *Auszug aus D. Robert Lowth's Lord Bischofs zu London Vorlesungen über die Heilige Dichtkunst der Hebräer: mit Herders und Jones's Grundsätzen Verbunden: ein Versuch, zur Beförderung des Bibelstudiums des alten Testaments, und insbesondre der Propheten und Psalme*, (Danzig: Bey Ferdinand Troschel, 1793), p. 4.

the big difference between these previous works and the *Commentarii* is that the latter is in Latin.

The two reviews appear in the *Monthly Review* and the *Gentleman's Magazine*.[316] Both show very different approaches to introducing the English reader with this Latin scholarship. Langhorne, who reviews the *Commentarii* as well as the second edition of *Poems* for the *Monthly Review*, starts by summarising the first and second books. Although his description of these books is accurate and enthusiastic, one wonders if he has read any further than the first three chapters of the work. He presents no further comments about chapters IV and onwards, but ends with quoting the literary translation of a poem by Ibn al-Farid (whom Langhorne calls 'Faredhi' and Jones 'Ebno'l Faredh').[317] This is followed by a translation in English, in rhyming distichs, because 'our *English* readers would hardly think us excusable, if we did not, in some form or other, give them a translations of this beautiful Arabian elegy.'[318] Langhorne gives no further explanation of the contents of the work, or translations of other poems, but refers the reader to the work itself.[319]

A different, if not opposite, approach is found in *Gentleman's Magazine*, where the reviewer quotes a poem by Hafez in Latin and states he 'will not injure this beautiful ode by a prose translation, seeing by many instances, even in this work, how much of the spirit of poetry evaporates by such transfusions.'[320] He does, however, include a translation of 'Ad Musam', after having given the Latin poem as well, 'if the poet will forgive us.'[321] These extracts are printed in the second part of the review, where they are surrounded by explanations and summaries based on, and at times translated from, the *Commentarii* themselves, some with and others without recognition of the passages being quoted. This implies the reviewer has

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[316] John Langhorne, 'Review: Jones's *Commentaries on the Asiatic Poetry*', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 51 (1774).
[Anon.], 'List of Books: 65', *The Gentleman's Magazine: and historical chronicle,* 44 (1774).
[Anon.], 'List of Books: 71'.
Cf. Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, pp. 23-24.

[317] Langhorne, 'Review: Jones's *Commentaries on the Asiatic Poetry*', p. 22.
Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 92.

[318] Langhorne, 'Review: Jones's *Commentaries on the Asiatic Poetry*', p. 23.

[319] Ibid. p. 24.

[320] [Anon.], 'List of Books: 71', p. 623.
The poem quoted can be found in Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, pp. 222-223.

[321] [Anon.], 'List of Books: 71', p. 624.

read and interacted with the *Commentarii* to be able to write this review, whereas the first part indicated that the reviewer had not read the work (yet), since that review only consists of a translation of part of the 'prooemium' and a full translation of the table of contents. The reviewer either went on to read the work between writing the two reviews, or the second review is by another reviewer; since the reviews are anonymous this is unfortunately impossible to tell.

The distinction made in the introductory chapter about Jones's different audiences, is nowhere clearer than here. The academic community is in awe of the *Commentarii*, whereas reviewers find it too complex. Except for the small number of quoted excerpts, the reviewers hardly interact with the work. Jones had meant for the *Commentarii* to be the apotheosis of the project he started with *Histoire de Nader Chah* and *Poems* (see next chapter), to have this volume spread his message of the rejuvenation of literature across Europe. If the English audience can be a benchmark for common readers in other European countries, it seems unlikely this message reached them. It instead stayed within the academic republic of letters, where Jones's reputation grew.

2.4. Conclusion

The interest in and knowledge about eastern languages Jones developed, mostly during his time in Oxford, has its foundation in the academic world, even though no formal disciplines existed researching Arabic or Persian. Without the academic context, however, and particularly the encouragement of the professors Hunt and Lowth, and the availability of manuscripts in the university's libraries, Jones would not have been able to develop his deviating vision on language study. His conviction that language acquisition should always be secondary to its proper goal, either understanding a culture or its literature, shows in his work, in particular the *Persian Grammar*. It is not surprising, therefore, that this break with tradition was not popular with more traditional academics, as is evident from the response Robertson gives to the *Persian Grammar*, and less publicly also to Richardson's *Arabick Grammar*.

His practical approach to language acquisition proved timely, as is clear from the string of grammars in a similar vein it initiated. However practical in intention, the underlying structure of his grammar, based on literary examples, was firmly grounded in academic tradition.

With the *Commentarii* Jones presented a work even more closely related to traditional academic study, in particular because of his use of the universal academic language Latin.

When considering the reviews, aimed at a more common audience, this showed to create a distance from Jones's popularising agenda. However, even within this context of academic language and systematic study of eastern poetry, Jones created room for literary translation. He claimed not to be a philologer, but a poet; not to read the poetry as evidence or sources, as a traditional theologist would look at Arabic poetry as background to his study of the Hebrew bible, but as literature.

When modern scholarship mentions Jones in the context of the development of academic disciplines, this is usually based on his study of Sanskrit and its influence on the development of Indology, or how the Third Anniversary Discourse created a starting point for Comparative Linguistics.[322] His earlier work on Persian and Arabic is mostly considered in the context of popularising eastern literature in translation. The survey completed in this chapter has shown that these early works have also played their role in the changing attitude towards eastern languages.

[322] See section 1.2.1.

3. Jones and the eighteenth-century reading audience

3.1. Introduction

Jones's translations seem to be aimed at a larger audience than the orientalist scholars described in the previous chapter. This chapter will therefore focus on a wider reading public, asking the following questions: who were part of the 'general' reading public in the eighteenth century and who did Jones's works reach? In what tradition did Jones's translations find a place and what was the place of these works within the tradition of the period? How did he influence or change this tradition?

To answer these questions, three of Jones's translations will be at the core of this chapter: his *Poems*, *History of Nader Shah,* and *Moallakát*. All three of these translations are meant to be read by a non-specialist audience and to inspire them to look to the east for literature and expand the audience's viewpoint beyond the western classics. As part of the analysis of their influence, first an overview of the 'common reader' or 'general reading audience' will be established, as well as their knowledge of and taste for that popular genre of the eighteenth century, the oriental tale. After this consideration of the context in which Jones's works appeared, they will be considered one by one. Not only will Jones's aims with the volumes be discussed, but the analysis of their first responses, especially in reviews, will form the core of this chapter. We will see that Jones's approach of showing similarities with European literature, either by adding notes to his translations or by westernising the translations themselves, as is his method in *Poems*, leads to interest, acceptance and praise. Bare translations however, without additional context or guided interpretation, are found difficult to digest, as we see in the responses to *Moallakát*. The reasons for this can be twofold: Jones's audience is not used to the poetics of eastern poetry yet, and therefore is unable to understand its beauty without being taken by the hand, and the choice for *Moallakát* was not the best Jones could make. Especially this second reason becomes apparent when *Sacontalá* is discussed in the next chapter: this is also a translation without context, but its first responses are the exact opposite to those of the *Moallakát*. Similarly, *The History of Nader Shah* proves that popular uptake is about the content of the translation: Jones makes this translation into a vehicle for knowledge, presenting more notes and essays than translation, but the subject of the translation prevents it from receiving a positive response.

3.1.1. The reading audience in the eighteenth century

As will be discussed below, Jones aimed the translations discussed in this chapter to be read by a non-specialist, general audience. In the eighteenth century, reading became available to a wider audience, and especially reading for pleasure became more widely practised. Of whom would this audience have constituted, and would this have been a considerable group?

Klancher speaks of a 'cultural boom' in the eighteenth century.[323] The publication of books for a general audience increases. Before an author would rather write for an audience they know and are a part of themselves as well, such as professional colleagues or sharers of the same political views. Still, the common reader did not consist of every part of English society; the working class was not expected to take part in literature. Therefore an ordinary reader would be at least middle class, and well educated in grammars schools, and thus familiar with the Latin curriculum.[324] However, by the late eighteenth century the time of relatively few, elite readers is over and audiences have become wider and more mixed, which creates a broader audience for the works appearing during that time, including Jones's.[325]

In reaching these unknown audiences without an obvious link to the author, journals and magazines played an important role. Since these were not only read by their subscribers, but copies were also read in coffee houses, reviews had the possibilities to bring a new work to the attention of tens of thousands of readers.[326] This way reading audiences for new topics and genres were created by their authors and reviewers, by creating the taste for their topic.[327] Since reviews play this important role in creating an audience for works of literature, these first reactions to Jones's translations will be discussed below. Not only do these reviews show the opinion the reviewers had of Jones and his project, but they also aimed at influencing the readers of the journals to pick up Jones's works and read them themselves. Therefore, not

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[323] Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), p. 19.

[324] Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader : A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 41-42.

[325] Barbara M. Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 182.

[326] Altick, *The English Common Reader : A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, p. 47.

[327] Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832*, p. 33-36.
Cf. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 82, who discusses this particular practice for Jones's *Poems.*

only the content of the reviews is important, but the fact itself that Jones's works are mentioned, would have made them more well-known.

The largest part of the reviews in this chapter are from the *Monthly* and *Critical Review*, also simply known as 'the two Reviews' in their time.[328] These review journals set themselves the goal of reviewing everything that was published. The aim of all of these journals in reviewing new works was first and foremost to show the public what to expect when they purchased a work, therefore presenting their readership with large extracts as a preview to the work, and less so to give a highly analytical review of the work. Still, since the volume of published books was drastically increasing throughout the eighteenth century, the journals saw it as their task to make the public aware of the merit of a work before they bought the, often expensive, volumes.[329]

3.1.2. The fashion for the oriental tale

The appearance of *The Arabian Nights Entertainment* in its English 'Grub Street' edition marked the start of an interest in the oriental tale in the English common reader. The anonymous translation published by Andrew Bell started appearing in 1705-1706 and remained the only English translation of the work until the nineteenth century. The work was translated from the French translation rather than any Arabic originals.[330] This practice of secondary translation was common for the first oriental works to appear in English at the end of the seventeenth century, not only for the Thousand and One Nights, but also for example the Persian work *Les Fables de Pilpay*, which appeared in English in 1699 as the first work 'translated' from Persian.[331]

The *Arabian Nights* remained an important work throughout the eighteenth century, and remained in print. In 1793, when the work had been in print in English for nearly ninety years, the eighteenth edition appeared and the rate of publication doubled. By this time, more

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[328] Antonia Forster, *Index to Book Reviews in England, 1749-1774*, (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1990), p.3

[329] Ibid. p.9.

[330] Robert Mack, '*The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* and Other 'Oriental' Tales', in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English, Vol. 3: 1660-1790,* ed. by Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 470-473.

[331] Stuart Gillespie, 'The Developing Corpus of Literary Translation', in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English. Vol. 3: 1660-1790,* ed. by Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 121-46 (p. 141).

travelers had come back from the east with their stories, verifying and creating context for the tales in the collection.[332] Other translations had also been published, such as those by Jones. The availability of other translations and first-hand accounts of the Arabic world can be seen to increase the popularity of the *Arabian Nights*, as well as the genre of the oriental tale in general.

With the fashion for these translations, the genre of the oriental tale was also expanded. Orientalist works were written that had no origin in translation, or that were pseudo-translations: works that claimed an origin in for example Persian or Arabic, but were invented by their western authors without any knowledge of the cultural background they claimed for their writing. Not only did the oriental style appeal because of its ability to sell well, but the distance provided by the genre also created opportunities to create settings and discuss topics that would not have fit into a western context, such as erotic, moral or political themes.[333] In Gillespie's words: '[the Arabian Nights' Entertainment] is a clear example of how a translation extended the range of possibilities in eighteenth-century English literature'.[334] This is precisely the opportunity Jones saw and hoped to expand with his translations, as will become clear in particular from the description of his agenda with *Poems* below.

The first use of eastern imagery in English poetry is ascribed to Collins' *Persian Eclogues,* 1742.[335] In his preface, Collins also pleads for external stimulation of English poetry, by the addition of different sources to its cannon, although he wonders if the English national taste might not be 'too cold' to allow this.[336] It is precisely this issue that Jones addresses, first and foremost in *Poems.*

Jones was writing in a time when the 'gentleman amateur' was being threatened by the expert.[337] This means that Jones had to provide evidence for his claims, and build a reputation

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[332] Peter L. Caracciolo, 'Introduction: 'Such a Store House of Ingenious Fiction and of Splendid Imagery'', in *The Arabian Nights in English Literature: Studies in the Reception of the Thousand and One Nights into British Culture,* ed. by Peter L. Caracciolo (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1988), pp. 1-80 (p. 6).

[333] Mack, '*The Arabian Nights' Entertainments* and Other 'Oriental' Tales'.

[334] Stuart Gillespie and Robin Sowerby, 'Translation and Literary Innovation', in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English,* ed. by Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 23-24.

[335] James Watt, *British Orientalisms, 1759-1835*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 675.

[336] William Collins, *Persian Eclogues. Written Originally for the Entertainment of the Ladies of Tauris*, (London: J. Roberts, 1742), p. iii.

[337] Das, '[a] Place among the Hindu Poets': Orientalism and the Poetry of Sir William Jones', p. 1236.

as an expert in the field for his position to be tenable. This is a reversal of the appeal the earlier Oriental tales had. Sitter argues these were 'marketable precisely because of [their] alienness', whereas Jones attempts to create a market for works based on 'linguistic authority, empirical verification, and the domestication rather than exoticization of the Orient.'[338] This is nowhere as clear as in *Poems*. Jones's later work, starting with the *Moallakát* discussed below, moves away from this tendency to domesticise, and allows the Oriental poetry to be alien. The emphasis on linguistic authority in his work, however, only grows stronger, aided for example by the inclusion of the original texts and transliterations in the *Moallakát*.

3.2. Poems

3.2.1. Outline of the work

3.2.1.1. Poems

William Jones's collection of oriental imitations, based on translated poetry and published under the title *Poems, consisting chiefly of translations from the Asiatick Languages* (Oxford, 1772), henceforth *Poems*, is his first attempt to make oriental poetry available for a larger audience. As described in the previous chapter, his 1771 *Persian Grammar* to an extent discussed eastern literature as well, in its addition of the catalogue of Persian literature, but its audience and aim was a different one. In *Poems,* Jones presents translated poetry in an adapted form, picking and choosing passages to create new poems that will present an intelligible product for an English reader, and adds essays in which he describes the importance of oriental poetry for the rejuvenation of European literature. In further works he will persist in describing this aim, but his approach to translation changes; later translations do consist of translations in the literal sense of the word. With his first published volume of translations in English, Jones set out to inspire the English public to read and eventually study, eastern literature.

In the preface to the work Jones discusses the nine poems in the volume one by one, and explains how their English versions came to be. Although the title of the work implies that the poems are all translated literally from their Arabic or Persian originals, the preface informs the reader that they have a different origin. The poems are based on eastern originals, but are not

[338] Zak Sitter, 'William Jones, "Eastern" Poetry, and the Problem of Imitation', *Texas Studies in Literature and Language,* 50 (2008), p. 391-392.

translated literally. *Poems* consists of adaptations and poems written by Jones in previous years. In the preface and appended essays Jones proclaims his aim with the work is to familiarise his readers with eastern poetry. Moreover, *Poems* is set out to show the reader real eastern poetry, against the existing forgeries of the time.[339] His main reason for presenting these poems is to entice readers to take up language study themselves, as Jones describes at the outset of the volume: 'I only mean to invite my readers, who have leisure and industry, to the study of the languages, in which they are written.'[340]

Appended to the poems, which will be discussed below, are two essays to aid the reader in exactly that pursuit: 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', and 'Essay on the Arts commonly called Imitative'. In these Jones describes both his vision on eastern poetry, mainly in the first essay, and his poetics in the second, which is likened by Lessenich to the poetics of Romanticism *avant la lettre.*[341] In the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations' Jones exhibits his conviction of the use of the study of eastern languages, especially in the final paragraphs of the essay:

> I must once more request, that, in bestowing these praises on the writings of *Asia,* I may not be thought to derogate from the merit of the *Greek* and *Latin* poems, which have justly been admired in every age; yet I cannot but think that our *European* poetry has subsisted too long on the perpetual repetition of the same images, and incessant allusions to the same fables; and it has been my endeavour, for several years, to inculcate this truth, *That, if the principal writings of the Asiatics, which are reposited in our public libraries, were printed, with the usual advantages of notes and illustrations, and if the languages of the Eastern nations were studied in our places of education, where every other branche of useful knowledge is taught to perfection, a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should be furnished with a new set of images*

[339] 'The reader will probably expect, that [I] should prove the authenticity of those *Eastern* originals, from which I profess to have translated them: indeed, so many productions, invented in *France*, have been offered to the publick as genuine translations from the languages of *Asia*, that I should have wished, for my own sake, to clear my publication from the slightest suspicion of imposture.' (original emphasis passim) Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. i.

[340] Ibid. p. vii.

[341] R. P. Lessenich, 'Sir William Jones and Romantic Poetics', *Archiv Fur Das Studium Der Neueren Sprachen Und Literaturen,* 252 (2015).

and similitudes, and a number of excellent compositions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate.[342]

In this extract, that can be interpreted as Jones's manifesto for the study of eastern languages and an explanation for his efforts to publish eastern literature, he calls upon a European reading audience – notably, not just his English audience, hence the reiteration and expansion of this work in Latin two years later[343] – to expand their views towards the little-known poetry 'of the eastern nations.' European literature is saturated by Greek and Latin classics, and it needs a new impulse to produce interesting new works. Jones argues for what Sitter has called, an 'expanded classicism', in which not only Latin and Greek, but also Persian, Arabic, and later Sanskrit, are considered classics and find their place in the European canon.[344] In the first English poetical work to use eastern images, Collins's *Persian Eclogues* (1742), a similar appeal had sounded.[345] Collins, however, had considered English taste 'too cold' for this influence, and had distanced himself from it.[346] Jones now made a similar appeal in this essay filled with carefully selected examples of eastern literature. And the call to action is answered by later authors and poets, in particular the Romantics, who picked up Jones's translations and the work of his contemporaries to create a new kind of Oriental tales and Orientalist poetry, based on authentic research rather than exoticised tropes. De Sola Pinto calls *Poems* 'one of the starting points for lines of advance in English poetry which were to continue for at least half a century.'[347] Leask concludes that by 1800 the eastern influence on English literature was 'exactly as Jones had hoped.'[348] These authors and their indebtedness to Jones will be discussed in chapter 5.

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[342] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, pp. 198-199.

[343] This plan to engage a complete European audience is confirmed in the prooemium of the *Commentarii*, where Jones states his choice of Latin should make sure he reaches all the peoples of Europe: 'fateor me sermone Latino esse usum, ut ab omnibus in Europa gentibus legerer.' Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. xii.

[344] Sitter, 'William Jones, "Eastern" Poetry, and the Problem of Imitation', p. 399.

[345] Collins, *Persian Eclogues. Written Originally for the Entertainment of the Ladies of Tauris*, p. iii.

[346] James Watt, 'Orientalism and Hebraism', in *Oxford Handbook of British Romanticism,* ed. by David Duff (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 675-90.

[347] De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', p. 688.

[348] Leask, 'Easts', p. 143.

It is not a coincidence Jones adds his strong-worded manifesto to this volume of translated and orientalised poetry, since as described in his preface, these poems are introduced to whet the reader's appetite for eastern poetry. His method to achieve this goal is to present the reader with imitations, rather than literal, metaphrase, translations. The terms used here are adapted from Dryden's description of three modes of translation:

> All Translation I suppose may be reduced to these three heads. First, that of Metaphrase, or turning an Authour Word by Word, and Line by Line, from one Language into another. […] The second way is that of Paraphrase, or Translation with Latitude, where the Authour is kept in view by the Translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly follow'd as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not alter'd. […] The Third way is that of Imitation, where the Translator (if now he has not lost that Name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion: and taking only some general hints from the Original, to run division on the Ground-work, as he pleases.[349]

The terms metaphrase, paraphrase and imitations can be applied to categorise the nine poems Jones includes in this volume, as Jones, being a classically educated scholar was familiar with Dryden's works and translations.[350] The three categories can be distinguished in the different approaches Jones takes to translation in this volume, as well as his other works. Jones even uses the term imitation to describe the process of creation for some of the poems in this volume as well, although there is no direct reference to Dryden's translation theory included.

'A Persian Song of Hafez', the fourth poem in the volume, and 'A Turkish ode on the spring', the seventh, are the only two poems that are, as the title to the volume promises, translations from Asiatic languages. They are mixed in with the other poems, without further mention of their distinctive background. In both cases, Jones provides the reader with a transliteration. Moreover, the 'song of Hafez,' ghazal 3, has already been published in four versions in the *Persian Grammar*: the original Persian there is accompanied by an interlinear transliteration, and a metaphrase translation precedes the paraphrase translation which can also be found in *Poems.*

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[349] John Dryden, 'Preface', in *Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Several Hands,* (London: Jacob Tonson, 1680). Unnumbered eleventh and twelth page of the Preface.

[350] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 54.

The 'Turkish Ode' is a translation of an ode by Mesihi, the four-line stanzas of which Jones adapts to stanzas of six verses, changing the rhyme pattern as well to make it sound more poetic to the English ear. Not only is a transliteration of the poem provided, but in smaller print the paraphrase translation is also included. This approach to both of these poems is intended to stimulate the reader to compare the translations and start their own study of the source language. Moreover, the aforementioned inclusion of transliterations with the poems, as well as in the preface and the essays, is meant to strengthen the claim to authenticity. The practice of providing the source of the translation with the finalised product was prevalent in the case of translations from other, well-known, languages, such as Latin. Their inclusion allowed the reader to compare the translation to the original and distinguish and judge any liberties the translator had taken. Although Jones's reader would not be able to understand the Persian or Turkish immediately, this practice would place the poems in the context of other classics and aid their acceptance of the new poetry.[351]

These two translated poems are embedded amongst three imitations, two translations from the Italian and two original inventions, 'Caissa' and 'Arcadia', that make up the end of the volume (poems eight and nine). Both of these are classicised poems, written by the author ten years earlier and based on his study of Latin and Greek poetry.[352]

'An ode of Petrarch, to the Fountain of Valchiusa', one of the paraphrase translations from Italian, is a translation of Petrarch's *canzone* 27, and the fifth poem in the volume. Like in the case of the aforementioned translations from Persian and Turkish, the original Italian is added at the bottom of the page here, for the reader to compare. In addition to the Italian, Jones adds Voltaire's paraphrase of the first stanza, although Jones adds 'it is certain that he had

[351] Sitter, 'William Jones, "Eastern" Poetry, and the Problem of Imitation', p.396.

[352] 'Arcadia, a pastoral poem' is written in 1762, and based on an allegory by Mr. Addison in the 2nd Guardian. Jones references many authors throughout the eclogue, whom he says he has imitated: Virigl, Theocritus, Bion of Smyrna, Moschus, Tasso, Guarini, Fontenelle, Camoens, Garcilasso, Lope de la Vega, Spenser, Sannazaro, Ongaro, Phineas Fletcher, Pope and Gay are mentioned by name, but Jones has also been inspired by 'other writers of pastorals in Italian, French, Portuguese, and Spanish.' Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*. p. 133. This mixture of sources not only shows his knowledge of the genre, but also how he uses sources from various languages (Greek, Latin, English, Italian, French, Portuguese) to create a new piece of poetry. On a small scale 'Arcadia' does what *Poems* aims to do on a larger scale: combining translation and inspiration from various languages into a new piece of art.
'Caissa, or, The Game of Chess', from 1763, is based on the *Scacchia Ludus* by Vida, which in turn has been translated into Italian by Marino. Jones's notes inform the reader when he uses these to imitate, or includes other examples, such as Ovid, Lucretius and Pope.

never read the ode in the original.'[353] Jones explains, this poem is 'added, that the reader might compare the manner of the *Asiatick* poets with that of the *Italians*, many of whom have written in the true spirit of the *Easterns.'*[354] 'Laura, an Elegy' immediately follows the 'Ode', and has the same objective. This poem is put together out of 'imitations' from twelve different Petrarchan sonnets, all of which are mentioned in the notes, and a poem by Madame Deshoulieres (Antoinette Du Ligier de la Garde Deshoulières, 1638-1694), via a clear referencing system that shows the Italian and French source texts for each part of the poem. The same system of compilation underlies the three orientalist poems, the ones that can be categorised as imitations, that open the volume; 'Solima' (first poem), 'The Palace of Fortune' (second) and 'The Seven Fountains' (third). Apart from mention in the preface, however, there is no precise reference to the sources. In the case of 'The Seven Fountains' for example, Jones explains his exact method and the sources he used to produce this imitated poem:

> I have taken a still greater liberty [compared to the previous poem, 'The Palace of Fortune'] with the moral allegory, which, in imitation of the *Persian* poet *Nezami*, I have entitled *The Seven Fountains*; the general subject of it was borrowed from a story in the collection of tales by *Ebn Arabshah*, a native of *Damascus*, who flourished in the fifteenth century […] but I have ingrafted upon the principal allegory an episode from the *Arabian* tales of *a thousand and one nights*, a copy of which work in *Arabick* was procured for me by a learned friend at *Aleppo*.[355]

Although Jones explains he has taken 'great liberty' with the eastern source texts he uses, not only mixing various works but also authors from various ages and texts from various languages, he does stress the originality of these sources; his works are not to be construed as forgeries, but are meant to provide insight into genuine eastern literature. This is again emphasised by the last sentence quoted: 'a copy of which work in *Arabick* was procured for me by a learned friend at *Aleppo*.' The *Arabian Nights Entertainment*, or 'The Tales of One Thousand and One Nights', was well known and well read by the time of the appearance of

[353] Ibid. p. 77, note.

[354] Ibid. pp. iv-v.

[355] Ibid. pp. iii-iv. The authors Jones references are Nizami Ganjavi, a twelfth-century Persian poet and Muhammad ibn Arabshah, a fifteenth-century Arabic author, whom he credits with his 'most celebrated work […] *An history of the life of Tamerlane*.'

Poems, having been printed in its first English version in 1706.[356] Jones, however, stresses he has not used a translated version as his source, but has acquired his own Arabic original. The interested reader will be able to compare 'The Seven Fountains' to this original text using the specifications provided in the footnote: 'See the story of Prince *Agib*, or the *third Calandar* in the *Arabian Tales*, Night 57.'[357]

In the following remarks about 'Solima', Jones clearly describes his twofold aims with presenting these imitations. On the one hand, Jones stresses the authenticity of the sources for the poems, not implicitly anymore like in the examples provided above, but with a clear claim to authenticity, saying that even though they are imitations, the poems are not to be interpreted as forgeries:

> '['Solima'] is not a regular translation from the *Arabick* language, but most of the figures, sentiments, and descriptions in it, were really taken from the poets of *Arabia.*'[358]

Although Sitter claims that 'Jones's explanations utterly fail […] to prove that his "Eastern originals" existed prior to his "translation" of them', this detailed discussion of his method of assembling the poems does provide evidence of their authenticity on a level of detail, rather than the whole poems.[359]

On the other hand, Jones strives to provide an accessible introduction into eastern poetry: 'I selected those passages, which seemed most likely to run into our measure, and connected them in such a manner as to form one continued piece.'[360] While his aim is to have Europeans read authentic eastern poetry in time, these texts are too foreign for them without any prior knowledge. Introducing too much otherness too fast, could put them off the taste for eastern

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[356] The English version is a translation of Antoine Galland's *Les mille et une nuits, contes arabes traduits en francais*, published in twelve volumes between 1704 and 1717, and therefore a translation twice removed from the original. On its popularity in eighteenth century Britain cf. Saree Makdisi and Felicity Nussbaum, 'The Arabian Nights in Historical Context, between East and West', (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[357] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. iv.
Cf. *Arabian Nights' Entertainmnent*, (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1998), pp. 106-125: 'The History of the Third Calander, a King's Son.'

[358] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. ii.

[359] Sitter, 'William Jones, "Eastern" Poetry, and the Problem of Imitation', pp. 391-393.

[360] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. ii.

literature altogether, since they might find these poems, their poetics and their style hard to understand. Jones adapts the eastern originals to fit European taste in order to 'create a public taste for the genuine ethnic commodity.'[361] The practice of imitation, rather than metaphrase translation, becomes a means through which the eastern originals become more accessible to a European audience.[362] Also termed 'Cultural Transplantation' by Franklin, this method is making the poems less foreign and closer to the poetics of the target language.[363] Not only the adaptation of the three imitated poems is part of this cultural transplantation, but the described context in which the paraphrase translations of the poems by Mesihi and Hafez are presented, is meticulously planned by Jones to show his European audience the beauty of the originals, as well as their similarities with well-known European poetry, such as Petrarch's odes.[364]

Pearls strung together: an example of Jones's east-west connection

An example of the way in which Jones tries to emphasise the similarities between the poems, can be illustrated by considering the following recurrent metaphor that echoes throughout the translations, tying the Persian, Turkish, Italian, and Jones's imitated poems together. The mention of (orient) pearls or gems occurs in almost every poem in the volume, with the exception of 'Laura'. When comparing its use, we can recognise Jones's aim of showing the similarities between eastern and western poetry.

In 'Solima', the first poem of the volume, we find the first occurrence of the metaphor of pearls as dewdrops: ''Till morn with pearls has deck'd the glowing east' (p. 3). Jones uses this image in his chess poem, 'Caissa' as well, in a less straight-forward manner (p. 141):

> So when the morn, by rosy coursers drawn,
> With pearls and rubies sows the verdant lawn

[361] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 82.

[362] Sitter, 'William Jones, "Eastern" Poetry, and the Problem of Imitation', p. 393.

[363] Michael J. Franklin, 'The Transcultural Commerce of Sir William Jones: Transplanting and Translating Oriental Beauties', in *The Internationalization of Intellectual Exchange in a Globalizing Europe, 1636-1780.,* ed. by Robert Mankin (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2018), pp. 211-34 (pp. 215-216).

[364] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 82.
Hewitt, in his analysis of *Poems*, however, calls everything but the two paraphrase translations and essays, 'padding.' Hewitt, 'Harmonious Jones', p. 48-49.

'Morning', or Aurora, is depicted in both cases to metaphorically sow gems into the lawn, dewdrops making it sparkle when the sun comes up. This metaphor is seen again in the 'Turkish Ode', where is it made more explicit (p. 90):

> The sparkling dewdrops o'er the lilies play,
> Like orient pearls, or like the beams of day.[365]

In the following stanza the comparison is reversed, when actual pearls are compared to dewdrops:

> The fresh blown rose like Zeineb's cheek appears,
> When pearls, like dewdrops, glitter in her ears.[366]

As seen in Jones's added metaphrase translations, the pearls only appear here in the second instance, where actual pearls are present and they glitter like dewdrops. In his reversal of this metaphor, which he takes the liberty to add to the poem, Jones includes the qualifier 'orient', which has a double meaning. In the case of the dewdrops, these orient pearls signify the connection with the morning, and sun rising in the east. Moreover, they confirm the eastern background and oriental character of the poems. The phrase 'orient pearls' echoes through the volume: 'The Seven Fountains' starts with a description of a ship on which a young man sits in a decorated throne (p. 33):

> High on the burnish'd deck, a gilded throne
> With orient pearls and beaming diamonds shone

Although this occurrence of the phrase is not a metaphor, but a description of pearls used as decoration, the combination of words creates a clear link with the previous examples. In 'The Palace of Fortune' pearls are likewise used as decoration (p. 12):

> To four bright gates four ivory bridges led,
> With pearls illumin'd, and with roses spread.

The 'Ode of Petrarch', one of the included translations from Italian, has the same addition in a description of flowers decorating the poets love, Laura (p. 69):

> Some on her mantle hung,
> Some in her locks were strung,

[365] This corresponds with Jones's metaphrase translation as follows: 'Again the dew glitters on the leaves of the lily, like the water of a bright scymitar. The dewdrops fall through the air on the garden of roses.'
[366] The metaphrase translation which Jones reworks here is: 'The roses and tulips are like the bright cheeks of beautiful maids, in whose ears the pearls hang like drops of dew.'

Like orient gems in rings of flaming gold

A comparison with the Italian ('Ch'oro forbito e perle' [like clear gold and pearls]) shows not only that 'orient' has been added by Jones, but that the original spoke of pearls here, whereas Jones has changed this to the more general 'gems'.

Even Jones's original poetry contains this image and thus links in with this theme. In 'Arcadia', as in the 'Ode of Petrarch', a graceful youth's hair 'that o'er his shoulder wav'd in flowing curls, with roses braided, and inwreath'd with pearls.'[367]

In the 'Persian Song' the 'orient pearls' take yet another meaning (p. 63):

Go boldly forth, my simple lay
Whose accents flow with artless ease
Like orient pearls at random strung:
Thy notes are sweet, the damsels say;
But O! far sweeter, if they please
The nymph for whom these notes are sung.

In this final stanza the 'pearls' signify the stanzas, and various themes in them, that are strung together by the poet to create the poem.[368] Although 'pearls' is used in the original as well, the addition of 'orient', again, is Jones's.

Through this example we are shown how Jones ties his 'translations' together not only by the decisions he makes in which poems to include, but also by his choice of words within the translations. The claims he makes in the introduction, that eastern poetry is not unlike western poetry and can therefore be enjoyed by his European audience, is strengthened by the literal echoes that course through the poems in this volume.[369] This practice is an example of the kind of connection between the eastern and western poetry he describes in his introduction, where he quotes Petrarch (sonnet 227, first stanza), stating 'one would almost imagine the

[367] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. 108.

[368] The use of 'at random strung' here is criticised by Arberry, 'Orient Pearls at Random Strung', p. 703, who claims it devalues the merit of the poem, in claiming there is no logical order in the themes discussed in the poem.

[369] For other examples of the explicit connections Jones makes between eastern and western poetry in this volume, but also in his other works, see also Catharina G.M. Janssen, 'Comparison as Context in Sir William Jones's Translations of Eastern Literature', in *Contact, Conquest, and Colonization: How Practices of Comparing Shaped Empires and Colonialism around the World,* ed. by Eleonora Rohland, Epple, Angelika, Flüchter, Antje, Kramer, Kirsten (New York: Routledge, 2021).

following lines to be translated from the *Persian*, since there is scarce a page in the works of *Hafez* and *Jami*, in which the same image, of *the breeze playing with the tresses of a beautiful girl*, is not agreeably and variously expressed.'[370] The similarity in metaphors used is therefore an important criterium for Jones to argue for similarity and recognisability between the various literary styles. He creates these similarities in his poems for the reader to recognise.

3.2.1.2. Second edition

Modern critics of Jones's work seem to neglect the second edition of *Poems*, which appears five years later. The English content of this edition is the same as the first edition, the same translations in the same order, but Latin translations have been added in two places.[371] After the translation of the 'Turkish Ode', a Latin translation of the same poem is added. Jones thinks Mesihi's ode is 'not unlike the *Vigil of Venus*' (Pervigilium Veneris, a 3rd century Latin poem) as he already claimed in the preface to the first edition, because 'the measure of it is nearly the same with that of the *Latin* poem; and it has, like that, a lively burden at the end of every stanza.'[372] Therefore he has created a Latin translation of the Turkish in the style of that poem, 'The same in Latin Trochaicks'. This translation, like the other Latin additions, had been printed three years earlier in Jones's *Commentarii*, where it was accompanied by the original Turkish and an interlinear, metaphrase translation.[373]

Twelve more Latin poems can be found at the end of the volume, before the appended essays, in 'Carminum Liber' [Book of Poems]. All of them have been published in the *Commentarii* before, either as examples in the main text, or in the appended 'Limon, seu Miscellaneorum Liber' [Limon, or Book of Miscellanies]. They consist of two categories: paraphrase translations

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[370] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. xii

[371] That the translations have been revised, rather than reprinted, can be seen in small differences between the two editions:
'The damsel wak'd' (p. 32) is changed to 'the damsel rose' (p. 27);
'Then said' (p. 48) to 'And said' (p. 41);
'Rose-bosom'd' (p. 53) to 'lily-bosom'd' (p. 45);
'Leads to a gloomy dungeon, and no more' (p. 59) to 'Leads to a cave where raving monsters roar p. 51' (p. 51);
'The king, who found it useless to complain' (p. 60) to 'The king, who wept, yet knew his tears were in vain' (p. 51).

[372] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. xiii

[373] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, pp. 222-229.

and poems composed by Jones himself. The seven translations all appeared in the main text of the *Commentarii*, where first their originals were printed, and both a metaphrase translation, sometimes in the shape of an interlinear translation, and the paraphrase translations were given. The poems are translated from Chinese, Persian and Arabic. The other five are poems are inspired by classical Latin poetry and all appear in 'Limon'.

3.2.1.3. Essays

The two essays appended to the volume have the object to create a context for eastern poetry and to provide a critical approach to poetry in general. The first essay, 'On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations,' discusses the poetry of the Arabians, Persians, Turks, and Indians in that order, and their respective characters and living circumstances as perceived by Jones. His stance is that their poetry is influenced by their surroundings, and these descriptions can therefore help the reader understand their poetics. By understanding that Arabian poets live in a dry land for example, and 'have so much need of being refreshed by *the dew*', metaphors with this image gain more meaning than when they are used by city-dwelling westerners who do not know what drought means.[374]

The Persians are also good poets because of the way they live: according to Jones they 'constantly sink into a state of inactivity and pass their lives in a pleasurable, yet studious, retirement.' (p. 177). This leisure time leads to well-polished poetry, other than the volume at hand Jones had to finish in the midst of other commitments. Their leisure also reflects upon their language which is 'the softest, as it is one of the richest, in the world. (p. 180) To prove this Jones transliterates ghazal 254 by Hafez, so the reader could have an idea of the sounds and rhythm of the poem, before providing a 'word for word' translation. (pp. 191-192) To allow the English reader to appreciate the quality of the poetry, he then continues with a comparison to Shakespeare, stating that '[t]his little song is not unlike a sonnet, ascribed to Shakespear [sic], which deserves to be cited here, as a proof that the Eastern imagery is not so different from the *European* as we are apt to imagine.' (p. 192) The complete text of Shakespeare's sonnet 99 is printed next. To counter the belief that Persian style is 'ridiculously bombast' a transliteration and translation from Sadi's *Bostan,* or *The Garden,* follows.

[374] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, pp. 167-168.

Jones clearly considers the audience for these essays to be slightly different from that of the poems in the volume. The transliterations and translations are not made to look like western poetry, but are intentionally close to their originals, to show their style and to prove their merit. Even though prejudice about the eastern peoples comes to the forefront in Jones's descriptions, this is also countered in the case of the 'bombast' of the Persian language. Descriptions like the ones used in this essay, where Jones claims the leisure of the Persians makes them better poets, lie at the basis of longer tradition of the contrast between western 'rationality' and eastern creativity or 'spirituality'.[375] As shown here, these arguments were used by both those who would promote the study of oriental languages, such as Jones, as well as anglicists opposing this, like James Mills, which led to a thorough belief in the softer character of eastern people, and with it an underestimation of their traditions.

In the second essay, On the Arts, commonly called Imitative, Jones argues that fine arts actually do not deserve the name imitative, but are a true expression of passions. Although this is true for the visual arts, with an emphasis on painting, Jones's core argument focuses on music and poetry. His thesis is the following:

> Though *poetry* and *musick* have, certainly, a power of *imitating* the manners of men, and several objects in nature, yet, that their greatest effect is not produced by *imitation*, but by a very different principle; which must be sought for in the deepest recesses of the human mind. (p. 192)
>
> Thus will each artist gain his end, not by *imitatin*g the works of nature, but by assuming her power, and causing the same effect upon the imagination, which her charms produce to the senses. (p. 206)

The highest forms of art thus express the passions and create sympathy in the beholders' minds.

The essays have a life of their own as important critical documents, rather than just contextualising Jones's orientalised poems. Gaspar María de Nava Alvarez, count of Noroña, translates the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations' into Spanish as the starting point of his discussion of Asiatic Poetry, *Poesias asiaticas, puestas en verso castellano* [Asiatic

[375] Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. xxxvi.

poems, put into Castillian verse].[376] In this volume an introduction into Asiatic poetry in general and the author's claim of its rejuvenating powers on European poetry, a view he shares with Jones, are introduced with a full translation of the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations'.[377] In the following 'Addiciones', Jones's other works are all cited, showing a knowledge of all his work on Persian and Turkish literature, the languages Noroña focuses on. Although the provenance for the Persian poems included is explicitly mentioned for each of them, there are only two Turkish poems included, and the author/translator does not state their provenance. It is no coincidence that the first of these poems is Mesihi's 'Ode to Spring', the Turkish ode included in *Poems*.[378] Whether the Spanish translation is based on Jones, the original or another source is impossible to determine. Jones's influence is however clear, and he will have influenced the choice of poetry to be translated.

3.2.2. Reviews and Responses

To measure responses to this tactic, reviews published in English journals will be considered. These first responses to Jones's work by experienced readers are meant to influence their audience. Eight reviews considering Jones's *Poems* are known, among which two reviewing the second edition of the work published in 1777. Three of these reviews have been previously acknowledged by Cannon in his *Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*.[379] In addition to the reviews in *Universal Magazine* and *Monthly Review* (both first and second edition) Cannon lists, reviews of *Poems* can be found in *British Magazine, Critical Review*, *London Magazine* and *Universal Catalogue,* as well as a review of the second edition in *London Review*.[380]

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[376] Gaspar María de Nava Alvarez Noroña, *Poesias Asiaticas, Puestas En Verso Castellano*, (Paris: J. Didot, 1833).

[377] Ibid. 'Discorso sobre la poesia de los orientales', pp. 3-25.
Noroña's belief in the rejuvenating power of Oriental poetry is shown by the epigraph on the title page, taken from Horace: '… Carmina | non prius audita … | viriginibus puerisque canto.' [I sing songs of girls and boys that have not been heard before]. Hor.Od.3.1.

[378] Ibid. pp. 351-355.

[379] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, pp. 16-17.

[380] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Poems*', *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure,* 50 (1772).
Gilbert Stuart, 'Review: jones's *Asiatic Poems*', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 46 (1772).
John Langhorne, 'Review: jones's *Asiatic Poems*', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 57 (1777).
[Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Poems*', *The British Magazine and General Review of the Literature Employment & Amusements of the Times,* 1 (1772).

In addition to their own opinions, the mostly anonymous reviewers discussing Jones's work often choose to include extracts from *Poems* as well, giving the reader an example of the contents of the work. Comparing the choices the reviewers make, provides both an insight in what according to them is most representative of the volume, and into which pieces the reviewers personally preferred. Five of the reviewers make the decision to include a specimen of Jones's poetry; three reviewers choose 'The Turkish Ode of Mesihi' as their sample of Jones's work, which not only makes that the most quoted of the nine poems, but also shows the interest of the reviewers in the genuine translation as opposed to the imitations. Whereas the *British Magazine* simply includes the text of the poem, the *London Review* also provides the transliterated Turkish and the metaphrase translation Jones appended to the poem. In the *Universal Magazine* the poem is included separately from the review in the section 'The British Muse, containing original Poems, Songs &c.', as an example of newly printed poetry.[381] This shows on the one hand the appreciation for the quality of the poem, but on the other hand it lacks the context Jones tries to provide with his preface and essays, and therefore it will be less likely to accomplish its goal of popularising original eastern poetry.

Out of the seven remaining extracts, three are of imitated poems: 'Solima' is included completely in Stuart's review in the *Monthly Review*, and partly in *Critical Review* (68 out of its 104 lines), which also cites part of 'The Palace of Fortune' (54 out of 496 lines). Only two of the chosen extracts do not represent translations or imitations from eastern originals, and those are the inclusion of 'Ad Musam', a short original poem in Latin included in the 'Carminum Liber' of the second edition, in the *London Review*, and Stuart's inclusion of 'Laura', complete with the notes in which Jones quotes the original Italian and French poems he is imitating. These are both included, however, in reviews in which there is also a cited example of eastern poetry, and both these reviews include a third extract from the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations': Stuart chooses the end of the essay, the so-called manifesto quoted above, whereas the reviewer for *London Review* cites all of pages 173-175 and 179-184, which

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[Anon.], 'Review of *Poems Translated from the* Asiatic *Languages*', *The Critical Review; or, Annals of Literature,* 33 (1772).

[Anon.], 'On New Publications X', *London Magazine, or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer,* 41 (1772).

[Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Poems*', *Universal Catalogue,* 1 (1772).

[Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Asiatic Poems*', *The London Review of English and Foreign Literature,* 6 (1777).

[381] [Anon.], 'A Turkish Ode of Mesihi', *The Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure,* 50 (1772).

includes two further transliterated and translated pieces of poetry.[382] Comparing these choices clearly shows the preference the reviewers have for the genuine paraphrase translations (three out of ten) and imitations (another three), and their eagerness to share these poems with their readers.

'Laura' is spread further, without the context of Jones's *Poems* in a Dutch translation of around 1780. *Laura, door Petrarcha beweend. Eene Elegie* [Laura, bewept by Petrarch. An Elegy] is a verse translation which follows Jones's rhyme scheme, but leaves out his references to the original Italian and French texts.[383] The translator, Pieter van Winter, states he has translated the poem 'from the English of William Jones', but *Poems* is not mentioned as the source of the elegy. The poem therefore loses its entire context of being a western counterpart to eastern poetry, and becomes a piece of translated English poetry. The fact that it travelled to the Netherlands to be translated, however, does illustrate both Jones's international fame, and the appreciation of his poetic talents; he stands alongside for example Pope, Horace and Virgil in the list of authors translated by van Winter.

Similarly, the example of 'Laura' is used by John Blair Linn as a source of information about Petrarch's love Laura, stating that 'Petrarch has celebrated her virtues and accomplishments, in an exquisite elegy, which bears her name, and which has been admirably translated by Sir William Jones.'[384] A confusion has clearly occurred, since 'Laura', although subtitled 'An Elegy from Petrarch' and based on fragments from Petrarch's own sonnets, was not a translation of any elegy ever composed by Petrarch himself. In a confusion similar to that of Elizabeth Montagu, to be discussed below, Linn interprets the pasticcio poetry Jones presents as paraphrase translations of originals, rather than the imitations they are.

Considering the further content of the reviews, three themes can be distinguished. First, some of the reviewers recognise the problem Jones mentions and sets out to resolve: the existence of forgeries and, consequently, the inability of a non-specialist audience to distinguish genuine eastern poetry from fakes, and to acquire any knowledge about it:

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[382] Included in these pages are ghazal 254 of Hafez, which is compared to Shakespeare's sonnet 99, and Sadi's 'Bostan, or, The Garden' which is later included in Jones's translation of the *Moallakát*.

[383] Pieter van Winter, *Laura, door Petrarcha beweend. Eene Elegie, uit het Engelsch van William Jones*, (ca. 1780).

[384] Linn, *The Powers of Genius, a Poem in Three Parts. Second Edition, Corrected and Enlarged*, p. 64. This particular sentence is added in the otherwise unchanged description of Petrarch's Laura in the corrected second edition of the poem. Mention of Jones himself as an example of genius in the second part of the poem is also new in this edition.

> While the frequency of fictitious translations from Oriental manuscripts afforded room to suspect the authenticity of whatever was published under that denomination, it had the additional effect of rendering us doubtful with regard even to the existence of literary genius in that quarter of the world.[385]

The second theme discussed by the reviewers is of course the quality of the poetry. Most reviewers agree the poetry is worth reading, although the volume is not necessarily completely understood and appreciated:

> These poems, though they contain many very indifferent lines, are yet greatly above the standard of mediocrity.[386]

The reviewer for the *London Review* concurs with this judgment, and includes a remark that shows his understanding of the form and background of the poems:

> It is, indeed, a beautiful composition, both with respect to sentiment and harmony of numbers; although only a *pasticcio*, if we may so venture to call it, of figures and descriptions taken from the Arabian poets.[387]

The phrase 'only a *pasticcio*' is not only a description of the creation of the poem, it also implies that the reviewer would have appreciated *Poems* better, had it been more than *pasticcio*: genuine translations. Stuart, however, expresses that the character of the imitation does not pose problems for the reader to understand the originals as well:

> In the tale called 'the Palace of Fortune,' and in the allegory, termed 'the Seven Fountains' our Translator, (for so he would modestly consider himself) has exercised a similar, or perhaps a still greater liberty, than in this poem ['Solima']; but from these pieces, an intelligent and candid Reader will yet learn to respect the genius and poetry of Eastern writers, as well as the happy talents of their lively and energetic imitator. [388]

He goes on to express his approval of the paraphrase translations as well, countering any preconceptions that might exist about eastern poetry:

> In the song of Hafiz, and in the ode of Mesihi, he has kept with more exactness to his originals; and what may surprise those who have imbibed prepossessions to the discredit of the Asiatic poets, they discover a correctness and simplicity, which would

[385] [Anon.], 'Review of *Poems Translated from the* Asiatic *Languages*', p. 318. Cf. Stuart, 'Review: jones's *Asiatic Poems*', pp. 508-509.
[386] [Anon.], 'On New Publications X'.
[387] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Asiatic Poems*', p. 19.
[388] Stuart, 'Review: jones's *Asiatic Poems*', p. 511.

> not disgrace the finest productions of the most cultivated genius's [sic] of Greece or of Rome.[389]

Here Stuart expresses exactly what Jones hoped a reader would learn from *Poems*: they should understand that eastern poetry can easily compete with classical European poetry, and should therefore be studied and read as well. This lure to read more eastern poetry is the third theme that is commonly discussed in these eight reviews, for example in the *Critical Review*:

> The embellishment which, it is probable, the Eastern poetry receives from the hands of this author, renders it impossible for us to judge of the beauties of these compositions in their native language. But from the comparison of it with the Italian, which the author has drawn in a beautiful elegy, intitled Laura, we must acknowledge that the former appears with remarkable lustre. […] From the esteem in which the oriental poetry is held by this competent judge, we cannot help entertaining sanguine expectations of the pleasure which will soon be reaped upon the access of the public to the treasures of Eastern literature.[390]

This review shows the aims Jones set out to accomplish are clearly understood by the reviewer. The comparison with Italian poetry, meant to provide an intelligible context for a European audience, is indeed being used here as a frame of reference to measure the quality of the eastern poems. Considering these imitations, although to his mind they limit the reviewer's understanding of genuine Arabic or Persian poetry, has kindled the reviewer's curiosity for 'the treasures of Eastern literature.' In the review in the *Universal Magazine* this same hope is expressed, in an echo of Jones's own words from the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations':

> The public is indebted for this performance to the very ingenious Mr. Jones. It discovers the true spirit of poetry, and does honour to the genius of the Asiatics. It is to be hoped, that the novelty and the merit of the pieces, which compose it, will encourage men of letters to pay an attention to the languages of Asia. Their admiration has been too long confined to the beautiful productions of the Greeks and the Romans.[391]

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[389] Ibid. p. 511.

[390] [Anon.], 'Review of *Poems Translated from the* Asiatic *Languages*', pp. 317-318.

[391] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Poems*', p. 265.

3.2.2.1. The Case of Elizabeth Montagu

One specific reader's reaction is provided by the letters of Elizabeth Montagu and discussed by Michael J. Franklin.[392] Montagu, the 'Queen of the Blues', was interested in oriental literature and therefore appears very happy at the appearance of *Poems*. In a letter to her husband her first reaction to *Poems* is recorded:

> One sees plainly that if the Eastern Languages were known to us they have Authors in the East who would share the Temple of Fame with those of the Western World, & Europe would not assume all literary glory.[393]

This links closely to the contents of the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', in which Jones argues that eastern authors should take their place next to western classics.

Once Montagu has seen her mistake in taking these poems for genuine translations, her reaction is shown to be altered, in a letter to James Beattie:

> I sh[oul]d rather call these pieces imitations than translations. I wish they had been more of the latter for tho our Poet may have improved the poems, my greatest pleasure would have arisen from observing the turn of mind in the Oriental Poet. An Asiatick Bards address to a Sultan is more interesting to me than an English Poets birthday ode.[394]

Still this description is part of a recommendation to Beattie to read *Poems*. A similar sentiment is expressed in her letter of September 5th, in which she writes:

> I wish he had given us translations, rather than imitations, […] These things, as rarities brought from Arabia Felix, would give one great pleasure; but, when I am not sure they

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[392] Michael J. Franklin, '"Asiatick Fire & Figure," Or, How Joseph Emin Made Mrs. Montagu an Avant-Garde Critic in Her Empathy with the East', *Huntington Library Quarterly,* 81 (2018).

[393] Elizabeth Montagu to Edward Montagu, June 4, 1772, Elizabeth Robinson Montagu Papers, 1688-1800, MO 2792, Huntington Library, as quoted in Franklin, Ibid. p. 584.

[394] Montagu to Beattie, June 8, 1772, Beattie Collection, MS 30/C.80, University Library, King's College, Aberdeen, as quoted in Franklin, Ibid. p. 592.

Cf. 'Pray have you met with Mr. Jones's imitations of Asiatic poetry? He possesses the oriental languages in a very extraordinary manner, and he seems to me a great master of versification. I wish he had given us translations, rather than imitations, as one is curious to see the manner of thinking of a people born under so different a climate, educated in such a different manner, and subjects of so different a government. There is a gayety & splendor in the poems which is naturally derived from the happy soil & climate, of the Poets & they breathe Asiatick luxury, or else Mr Jones is himself a man of most splendid imagination.'

Quoted in Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 78.

> are not the dreams of a man who is shivering under a hawthorn hedge, in a north-east wind, I cannot resign myself enough to the delusion, to sympathise with them.[395]

Even though the rest of the description of *Poems* is indeed enthusiastic (e.g. 'Every object in these Asiatic pieces, is blooming and beautiful; every plant is odoriferous; the passions, too, are of the sort which belong to paradise.'), there is a clear want here for 'real' eastern poetry: 'translations, rather than imitations'.[396]

A similar response, albeit somewhat more sarcastic and less intrigued, is written in a letter from Horace Walpole. On May 25th, 1772, he writes the following to William Mason:

> There is a Mr. Jones too, who has published imitations of Asiatic poets: but as [William] Chambers' book was advertised by the title of *ornamental gardening*, instead of *oriental*, I think Mr. Jones's is a blunder of *oriental* for *ornamental*, for it is very flowery, and not at all Eastern.[397]

This conclusion, which can be seen in some of the reviews as well, might seem at first sight to be a disappointed one: Jones did not deliver the translations Montagu would have wanted to read. When we consider Jones's original aims, however, the call for translations is a substantiation to his own appeal to his readership: 'I only mean to invite my readers, who have leisure and industry, to the study of the languages, in which they are written.'[398] Now Jones has whetted the appetite of the reader and they want to read more, and more real, translations, this can lead to an interest in studying eastern languages themselves.

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[395] Montagu to Beattie, September 5, 1772, in Sir William Forbes, *An Account of the Life and Writings of James Beattie, LL.D.*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1806), vol. 1, pp. 298-99, as quoted in Franklin, '"Asiatick Fire & Figure," Or, How Joseph Emin Made Mrs. Montagu an Avant-Garde Critic in Her Empathy with the East', p. 585.

[396] Cf. Ibid. p. 585. Franklin interprets Montagu's reaction here as 'her delight in them [having] increased to a virtual rapture.' Her language is indeed rapturous, using terms like 'splendour', 'brilliant', and congratulating Jones as 'a man of most splendid imagination.' The most important judgement, however, remains that she 'cannot resign [herself] enough to the delusion, to sympathise with them': as poems they might be delightful, but as *Asiatic* poems they are very much wanting.

[397] Horace Walpole and others, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence. Vol.28, with William Mason*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 35-6.

[398] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. vii.

3.3. Nader Shah

3.3.1. The translation in two editions

Jones received the commission to translate a Persian manuscript of *Tarīkh-i Nādirī* of Mahdī Khān Astarābādī, a biography of the Persian ruler Nader Shah (1688/1698-1747) from King Christian VII of Denmark. He attempted to pass on the honour, but since no other orientalist of Jones's stature was found to complete the work, Jones conceded.[399] He did, however, dislike the work and its topic, as the subject of the work is a martial king who raged war and slaughtered the population of India. Rather than focusing on the translation, he attempted to turn it into a locus for knowledge about Eastern poetry. He phrases this aim in a letter to Lady Spenser on June 4th, 1770:

> I am not at all solicitous about its success: as I did not choose the subject myself, I am not answerable for the wild extravagance of the style, not of the faults of the original; but if your Ladyship takes the trouble to read the dissertation at the end, you may perhaps find some new and pleasing images.[400]

His opinion about the translation is clear; he dislikes the subject and style, an opinion which will be shared by the reviewers about to be discussed. The publication can, however, be turned into a useful work by the additions of several appendices and commentaries. It is precisely these additions that make the work significant as well, argues Moussa-Mahmoud, as it is Jones's first plea for oriental literature.[401] She also concludes the translation itself is full of mistakes, and therefore it is only its additions that make it relevant.[402] The repetition of this plea in *Poems* two years later, discussed above, would be more successful, but Jones's mission starts here. In the appended 'Traité sur la Poésie Orientale' Jones takes a similar approach to the *Commentarii*, taking parts of oriental literature, such as odes or elegies, per chapter and writing an explanation illustrated with original quotes and translations.[403] His intention is clearest in the first chapter of the 'Traité', where Jones writes what he will repeat in *Poems*:

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[399] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 65-66.

[400] Jones and Cannon, *The Letters of Sir William Jones*, p. 55.

[401] Fatma Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, (Cairo: Anglo Egyptian Bookshop, 1962), pp. 2-3.

[402] Ibid. pp. 2-3.

[403] Jones, *Histoire de Nader Chah, connu sous le nom de Thahmas Kuli Khan, empereur de Perse. Traduite d'un manuscrit persanne par ordre de sa majesté le Roi de Dannemark. Avec des notes chronologiques, historiques, géographiques. Et un traité sur la poésie orientale*.

> Il-est à la verité surprénant que la poësie Européene ait subsisté si long-tems [sic] avec la perpétuelle repetition des même images, et les continuélles allusions aux mêmes fables, desquelles nous sommes obliges de remplir nos compositions, parceque dès l'enfance on en remplit nôtre mémoire en ne nous faisant lire que les mêmes auteurs et des ouvrages de trois mille ans.
>
> [It is indeed surprising that European poetry has subsisted for so long on the perpetual repetition of the same images, and the continuous allusions to the same fables, with which we are obliged to fill our compositions, because since childhood our memory has been filled with making us read the same authors, and works of three thousand years old.][404]

Although this is similar to the version included in *Poems*, Jones's choice of words is stronger, implying that European literature has no reason to exist anymore, since its foundations have been fully played out, emphasised by the 'trois mille ans'. The following is again similar to his call for the study of works deposited in the libraries, with the important difference that he mentions in particular 'les inestimables bibliothèques de Paris, de Leyde, d'Oxford, de Vienne, et de Madrid,' [the invaluable libraries of Paris, Leiden, Oxford, Vienna, and Madrid] providing an international scope.[405] The conclusion of this call to action, however, is literally translated into *Poems* (and cited above). So although Moussa-Mahmoud analyses that this translation is full of mistakes, it is significant as Jones's first plea for oriental literature.[406]

The English translation of this Persian history is published three years later.[407] Jones presented it as an abridged version, which means Jones has left out various sections of the translation. It is however again accompanied by essays and notes. Appended is, among the other commentaries, the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', which had previously appeared in *Poems*, an essay on 'The History of the Persian Language', which he had planned to add to the *Persian Grammar*, and a long preface introducing topics ranging from 'The *Persian* Empire' to 'The *Mahomedan* Dynasties'. Of the 319 pages of the book, only 124 are

[404] Ibid. vol. 2, p. 246.

[405] Ibid. vol. 2, p. 246.

[406] Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, pp. 2-3.

[407] Jones, *The History of the Life of Nader Shah, King of Persia. Extracted from an Eastern Manuscript, Which Was Translated into French by Order of His Majesty the King of Denmark. With an Introduction, Containing, I. A Description of Asia, According to the Oriental Geographers. Ii. A Short History of Persia from the Earliest Times to the Present Century: And an Appendix, Consisting of an Essay on Asiatick Poetry, and the History of the Persian Language. To Which Are Added, Pieces Relative to the French Translation*.

filled with the abridged version of the translation, showing Jones's commitment to providing knowledge and poetry, rather than the disliked story of a Persian tyrant.

In an 'advertisement' preceding the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', Jones compares it with his previous 'Traité' and declares 'it will be found very different, both in form and style'.[408] He goes on to create a connection between all three of his works on Eastern literature, in English, French, and Latin:

> Both these Dissertations were intended only as introductory to a much larger work, on the *Asiatick Poetry*, written in *Latin* for the convenience of learned foreigners, and entitled, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentarii*, which will be offered to the publick in the middle of next March.[409]

By linking these three works together like this thematically, Jones both establishes a larger plan with these publications, showing that they are working together towards his goal, and he establishes the *Commentarii* as the *magnum opus* in this series. The previous publications have been introductions to the complete overview of his oriental knowledge.

3.3.2. Reviews

3.3.2.1. The French edition

Responses are in short supply for this first of Jones's translations, and it seems the choice of subject matter has done the reputation of Persian literature little good. Two reviews are published, and both agree that the style of the history leaves much to be desired. Stuart, reviewing for the *Monthly Review* states that 'we do not find in him, any of these penetrating and profound strokes, for which many of the European historians are remarkable' and 'that the high and hyperbolical tone he assumes is little suited to history.'[410] Jones on the other hand is an 'ingenious gentleman, who has procured a very deserved reputation for his knowledge in languages, [and] has executed this task with success.'[411] The reviewer for the *Critical Review* wholeheartedly agrees, by stating 'An affected tumour of stile, which, in our

[408] Ibid. p. 123.

[409] Ibid. p. 123.

[410] Gilbert Stuart, 'Review: Jones's *History of Nader Chah*', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 42 (1770), p. 509.

[411] Ibid. p. 508.

opinion but ill suits with the sedate majesty of historic annals' and '[w]e do not at all discover in him [i.e. the Persian author] the skilful politician or acute reasoner.'[412]

The notes added to the translation, however, the part Jones valued most, is praised by the reviewers. Stuart states: 'The explanatory notes he has added, display great sagacity, and an extensive knowledge of oriental literature', and '[h]is essay on the poetry of the eastern nations is a proof of his good taste; and he combats several vulgar errors that are entertained on that subject.'[413] This opinion is again shared by the reviewer for the *Critical Review*, who writes about the added notes that they 'at once do honour to his [Jones's] sagacity and extensive skill in Oriental literature; while his Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations is no mean proof of his taste in the more elegant and ornamental studies.'[414]

The overarching message seems to be that, although the History of Nader Chah itself holds no particularly interesting features, Jones's translation of it has been a good job and his knowledge, added to the translation in the notes and essay, make it a valuable contribution to literature.

3.3.2.2. The English edition

A first distinction between the reviews of the French and English versions, is the lack of excerpts in the previous. Where they are included from the English version, they all come from the appended annotations, rather than the translation, which is still deemed unattractive and uninteresting. The work is reviewed in four journals, with *Critical Review* and the *Monthly Review* including lengthy excerpts.[415] None of these are taken from the translation, but all excerpts are part of either Jones's introduction, as in the *Critical Review*, or both the introduction and appended essays in the *Monthly Review*. The reviewer for the *Critical Review*

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[412] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Histoire De* Nader Chah', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature,* 31 (1770), p. 70.

[413] Stuart, 'Review: Jones's *History of Nader Chah*', p. 509.

[414] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Histoire De* Nader Chah', p. 70.

[415] Ralph Griffiths, 'Review: Jones's *History of the Life of Nader Shah*', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 49 (1773).

[Anon.], 'Review: History of Nader Shah', *Annual Register,* (1773).

[Anon.], 'An Impartial Review of New Publications: I', *London Magazine, or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer,* 42 (1773).

[Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *History of the Life of* Nader Shah', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature,* 37 (1774).

explains this by remarking that the 'history itself [...] is not a striking performance,'[416] The reviews are otherwise descriptive, summarising Jones's commentaries and giving no further remarks on the merit of the work than short descriptions such as in the *London Magazine*: 'Those who are conversant with Oriental writings will undoubtedly consider this part of the volume [i.e. the Appendix containing the two essays] as a valuable acquisition.'[417]

Despite this mildly more appreciative response to the English version, the *History of Nader Shah* does not appear Jones's most influential work. Jones's efforts to create valuable content to accompany the translation of a history that lacked redeeming features did not manage to create enough interest in the work as a whole. It does not disappear completely, however, and is sporadically cited in later works. A poem is published, for example, in *The New Asiatic Miscellany* that is based on Jones's 'Ode by a native of *Damascus*'. [418] Jones included in the essay 'History of the Persian Language' several poems in the original and in metaphrase translation. One of these is an 'Ode by a native of *Damascus*', which Jones praises for its 'lively discussion of an *Eastern Banquet*.'[419] A paraphrase translation, citing Jones as the original source of the 'literal translation' is included in *The New Asiatic Miscellany*. There are several conclusions to be drawn from the appearance of this short translation. It shows Jones's work is being read; even though by the time of its appearance Jones was publishing primarily on Indian culture, his earlier works were not forgotten. Also, Jones continues to be a source and expert for oriental literature. This illustrates the part he played in the canon formation of Eastern literature in the West, because rather than attempting to find a different source, once again a poem, the quality of which is expressed by Jones, is translated and published.

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[416] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *History of the Life of* Nader Shah'. p. 37.

[417] [Anon.], 'An Impartial Review of New Publications: I'. p. 611.

[418] [Anon.], 'Description of an Oriental Banquet; Paraphrased from the Arabic of a Native of Damascus', *The New Asiatic Miscellany. Consisting of Original Essays, Translations, and Fugitive Pieces,* 1 (1789).

[419] Jones, *The History of the Life of Nader Shah, King of Persia. Extracted from an Eastern Manuscript, Which Was Translated into French by Order of His Majesty the King of Denmark. With an Introduction, Containing, I. A Description of Asia, According to the Oriental Geographers. Ii. A Short History of Persia from the Earliest Times to the Present Century: And an Appendix, Consisting of an Essay on Asiatick Poetry, and the History of the Persian Language. To Which Are Added, Pieces Relative to the French Translation*, pp. 162-164.

3.4. Moallakát

3.4.1. Outline of the work

3.4.1.1. Moallakát's planning

In 1782, after some years of devotion to his career in law, Jones publishes another translated work: *The Moallakát, or seven Arabian Poems, which were suspended on the Temple at Mecca*.[420] He has often mentioned them in his previous publications, and given short pieces of translations of the poems, and now a full version is published.[421] These seven poems were collected in the eighth century approximately and were called *Mu'allaqāt*, 'hanging' or 'suspended poems,' because according to their legendary origin story they were selected to be written on golden pieces of linen and hung from the Kaaba at Mecca. Although this title has persisted, the actual suspension of the poems is thought to be a mere story. The collection is considered one of the sources for early Arabic poetry, with its poems originating from the sixth century onwards and possibly being collected by the Iranian scholar Hammad al-Rawiya. The seven poems translated by Jones form the core collection of the *Mu'allaqāt*, but three other poems are sometimes considered part of the collection.[422]

Jones's translation of these canonical Arabic poems is part of the programme discussed above, of providing his western readers with the opportunity to read eastern poetry, and creating interest in the study of the originals. In his 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', *Moallakát* already gets a mention, as being 'considered as the finest [poems] that were written before the time of *Mahomed*.'[423] Jones gives some lines in translation of the poem of Lebid, accompanied by their original Arabic (vv. 57-59&61). In contrast to his practice in the *Moallakát*, the translation here is in verse, 'that the merit of the poet may not be wholly lost

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[420] Jones, *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems, Which Were Suspended on the Temple at Mecca; with a Translation, a Preliminary Discourse, and Notes*.

[421] See e.g. Jones, *Histoire de Nader Chah, connu sous le nom de Thahmas Kuli Khan, empereur de Perse. Traduite d'un manuscrit persanne par ordre de sa majesté le Roi de Dannemark. Avec des notes chronologiques, historiques, géographiques. Et un traité sur la poésie orientale,* vol 2, p. 235.

[422] Jones's transliteration of the title *Moallakát*, as well as of the names of the individual poets does not comply with modern transliteration conventions. In this chapter his names and titles will be followed, unless a modern source is quoted. The names of the poets are as follows:
Jones's 'Amriolkas', is nowadays conventionally transliterated as Imru'al-Qais; 'Zohair' as Zuhayr bin Abi Sulma, 'Lebeid' as Labīd, 'Antara' as Antara ibn Shaddad, 'Amru', as 'Amr ibn Kulthum and 'Hareth' as Harith ibn Hilliza. The interpretation of the transliteration of 'Tarafa' has not changed.

[423] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. 174

in a verbal translation.'[424] When his exhortations to read and translate these poems are not taken up by others, Jones decides to create a full translation himself. That his goal remains for others to study the poems and read them in their original language, becomes apparent from the addition of the 'originals' at the end of the volume: Jones provides the poems in their original Arabic and in full transliterations, so those interested in the originals will have sources to start their study of their text.

Each poem is also accompanied by a short introduction, in which the 'argument' of the poem is explained, giving short summaries of the long poems. Unlike *Poems* and Jones's other translations hitherto, *The Moallakát* is not accompanied by an introduction or explanatory essays. These were supposed to follow soon according to the included 'Advertisement,' in which Jones calls for the buyer to keep the books unbound until these additions appear, but they were never printed. Jones's model for this structure of dedication, preliminary discourse and notes was again Robert Lowth, by whom he was also inspired when writing his *Commentarii*, see chapter 2. Lowth's translation of the book of Isaiah (1778) followed the same structure.[425] This unfulfilled intention to add explanatory parts to the translation plays an important part in the reception of the poems by contemporary readers, as will be discussed below.

A second edition of *The Moalakát* is printed the following year.[426] The difference between these editions is nothing more than the change of the title, now acknowledging the lack of notes; where the 1782 edition mentioned *a translation, a preliminary discourse, and notes*, this is reduced to *with a translation and arguments* in 1783. Jones was preparing the translation in the midst of his law career and had not found the time to prepare his historical and literary background notes into an accompanying essay.[427]

3.4.1.2. On the translation of the Moallakát

Although *The Moallakát* is often mentioned as an extremely important work for the development of the study of Arabic literature, discussion of influence or analysis of its initial reception are mostly neglected in modern scholarship. Compare for example Franklin, who

[424] Ibid. p. 174.

[425] Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics*, p. 155.

[426] Jones, *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems, Which Were Suspended on the Temple at Mecca; with a Translation and Arguments*.

[427] Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics*, p. 150.

states that 'Jones's edition of *Moallakát* represents his most important contribution to Oriental studies prior to his departure for India.'[428] In the biography of Jones by the same author, however, the translation is only mentioned in passing.[429]

Nevertheless, in his overview of the tradition(s) of translation the *Mu'allaqāt*, Larcher argues that Jones's contribution constitutes a pivotal moment. Not only is his the first translation of all seven poems to appear in Europe, but it is also the first in the vernacular, rather than in Latin, showing Jones's commitment to reach a wide audience of non-academics, as discussed above.[430] After Jones's intervention in the field, translators of the *Mu'allaqāt* separate into two distinct directions that correspond with the general tendencies seen in the study of oriental literature discussed in chapter 2: on the one hand Latin editions with commentaries appear, that are aimed at scholars, and on the other hand, like Jones's, the vernacular translations, aimed at a more general audience and at the appreciation of the translations as pieces of literature.[431]

Despite its importance, modern critics do seem to agree that Jones's first attempt at translating the *Mu'allaqāt* is flawed throughout. When analysing the translation of metaphors in three translations of the *Mu'allaqāt,* Al-Garallah comes to the conclusion that Jones's translation 'was the poorest', losing the metaphorical effect in his translations.[432] Moussa-Mahmoud agrees, and states:

> Though Jones's translation was deficient in beauty and utterly incapable of conveying any of the poetic merits of these great poems, it furnished the writers of the oriental

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[428] Franklin, 'Sir William Jones. Selected Poetical and Prose Works', p 189. Literally the same is said by Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, p. 21.
Cf. Gillespie, 'The Developing Corpus of Literary Translation', p. 142: *Moallakát* 'represents a huge step forward in the study of ancient Arabic poetry'

[429] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*.
Cf. Padma Rangarajan, 'Imperial Babel : Translation, Exoticism, and the Long Nineteenth Century', (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), p. 104, who calls the translation the 'Persian *Moallakát*', proving the work is by now so unknown, the source language, which is mentioned in the full title, is obscure.

[430] Pierre Larcher, 'Traduire les Mu'allaqat: Histoire d'une tradition', *Quaderni di Studi Arabi, Nuova Serie,* 5/6 (2010-2011), p. 53.

[431] Ibid. pp. 51-54. Note that Larcher's roughly chronological paper consists of the paragraphs 'Avant William Jones', 'William Jones' and 'Le XIXème sciècle', emphasising the importance of the Jones's intervention even at this structural level. After Jones, the next intervention is the work of Antoine-Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758-1838), whose explicit aims were to equal and surpass whom he called 'le célèbre William Jones'. Larcher, 'Traduire les Mu'allaqat: Histoire d'une tradition', pp. 55-56.

[432] Aiman Sanad Al-Garrallah, 'Towards a New Model for Implied Metaphor Translation: English Translations of *Al Muallaqat*', *Advances in Language and Literary Studies,* 7 (2016), p. 185.

> tale with a more authentic picture of Arabian manners than his lengthy but often misinformed treatises.[433]

Out of the fourteen examples of Jones's translation Al-Garallah analysed, three are listed as 'mistranslations' and two as 'not translated'.[434] A similar conclusion is expressed by Lahiani, who explains the problems with Jones's translation as stemming from an incorrect reading of the text and a lack of insight into its interpretation.[435] One of the reasons for Jones's 'highly explicative' translation, in which comparisons are explained and lose their poetic appeal, is Jones's attention to his audience. The translation is not only latinised, to appeal to an English audience, but Jones's aim for accuracy to introduce these new concepts to his readers also causes assimilation.[436] This can for example be seen in the change Jones makes from an 'untamed desert landscape into the bucolic countryside of eighteenth century England', in the 'Poem of Lebid'.[437] The reason for this change is Jones's recognition of the genre of the 'pastoral'; not necessarily in the literal or classical definition of the genre, but in the way the poet describes his landscape with sympathy. Alan Jones therefore argues that Jones's translation, though flawed in some technical aspects, needs to be considered by interpreting the translator's intent, and the 'sympathy, or rather empathy' he displays.[438] Tritton expresses this as follows: 'there are many mistakes in detail; yet Jones succeeded in feeling the spirit of Arabic literature.'[439]

Considering the inaccuracies in the transliteration and translation of *Moallakat,* Lahiani remarks that 'Jones did not manage to perceive the *Mu'allaqāt* as belonging to a different literary tradition, and viewed them as part of the neo-Classicist frame.'[440] I would rather argue that this 'neo-Classicist frame' was the only frame of reference available at the time, not just for Jones, but more importantly also to his reader. His description of the poems as comparing

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[433] Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, p. 26-27.

[434] Al-Garrallah, 'Towards a New Model for Implied Metaphor Translation: English Translations of *Al Muallaqat*', pp. 180&187.

[435] Raja Lahiani, 'Eastern Luminaries Disclosed to Western Eyes: A Critical Evaluation of the Translations of the *Mu'allaqat* into English and French (1782-2000)', (University of London, 2005), pp. 356-358.

[436] Ibid. pp. 356-358.

[437] Alan Jones, 'Sir William Jones as an Arabist', in *Sir William Jones 1746-1794: A Commemoration,* ed. by Alexander Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 67-90 (p.77-78).

[438] Ibid. p.75.

[439] Tritton, 'The Student of Arabic', p. 698.

[440] Lahiani, 'Eastern Luminaries Disclosed to Western Eyes: A Critical Evaluation of the Translations of the *Mu'allaqat* into English and French (1782-2000)', p. 358

with classical European genres is therefore not a sign of ignorance of the literary tradition in which they find their origin – although Jones definitely lacked important background knowledge in that respect – but is a device for him to make the poems more acceptable to his audience.

3.4.2. Reviews and Responses

First responses to the appearance of these translated poems contain some similarities to the responses to *Poems*. However, the structure of the two volumes presents some differences – *The Moallakát* lack notes, are translated into prose, and are less clearly adapted to the western audience – and the effects of these different representations of the eastern material becomes apparent when surveying the reviews of the work.

Eight reviews of *The Moallakát* are known, four of which are acknowledged by Cannon in his *Bibliography*.[441] Although Cannon ascribes all four to the first edition, only the review in *New Review* discussed the 1782 edition of the work, and all other reviews refer to the updated title printed in 1783.[442] In addition to *London Magazine, Monthly Review* and *English Review*, all of which are mentioned by Cannon, reviews can be found in *British Magazine*, *European Magazine* and *Critical Review.*[443] A mention of *Moallakát* in the 'Domestic Literature' section of *New Annual Register* discusses Jones and his new post as judge, rather than give an actual description of the work.[444]

Only four of these reviews include exstracts from the work itself, and all seem to make their own personal choices when deciding which poem to include in their journal. The only poems that get included fully are the 'Poem of Amriolkas', not just the poem, but also the accompanying argument, in *London Magazine*, and the 'Poem of Hareth', without argument,

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[441] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, p. 35.

[442] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', *New Review; with Literary Curiosities, and Literary Intelligence,* 1 (1782).

[443] Charles Burney, 'Review: Jones's *Translation of the Moallákat*', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 69 (1783).

[Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Seven Arabian Poems*', *English Review, or, An Abstract of English and Foreign Literature,* 2 (1783).

[Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Moallakat*', *London Magazine Enlarged and Improved,* 1 (1783).

[Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', *The British Magazine and Review; or, Universal Miscellany,* 3 (1783).

[Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', *The European Magazine and London Review,* 4 (1783).

[Anon.], 'Review: *Seven Arabian Poems*', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature,* 57 (1784).

[444] [Anon.], 'Domestic Literature, of the Year 1783', *The New Annual Register, or, General Repository of History, Politics, and Literature,* (1783).

in *English Review*. Only the 'Poem of Zohair' is cited twice, but never in full. Stanzas 29-32 are printed in *Critical Review*, so the reader can 'judge the ethical tenets of the Arabians,' whereas 40-64 can be found in *New Review*, because it shows 'the strong vein of good sense, and knowledge of mankind, expressed in very strong proverbial language' and 'because it seems to me the finest part of the book'.[445] The same review ends with the final stanza of 'Poem of Tarafa', because the reviewer finds in this 'the finest sentiment.'[446] In *The Critical Review* the first fifteen stanzas of 'Poem of Lebeid' are also included, which 'open[s] to us an exact and entertaining view of the Arabian customs and modes of living' as well as 'enable[s] our readers to judge […] not only the plaintive tenderness of elegy, with that luxuriance of description, so conspicuous in Oriental compositions, but the sententious brevity of moral precept, and the fire and dignity of the true sublime.'[447] Common themes in these choices thus seem to be the moral lessons that are being conveyed in poetic language: a comparison with the proverbs of Salomon is made in this context, based on Jones's own description.[448]

The part that is included most often, however, is not a poem, but the text of the 'Advertisement' in which Jones announces notes will follow. This can be found in *British Magazine*, *New Review* and *Critical Review.* This foreshadows what the further analysis of the reviews below will also prove; that anticipation of the notes and introductory essays is high, and reviewers find it difficult to interpret the poems without this guidance from Jones.

In the reviews, three common themes stand out. There are those who enjoy the poems for their aesthetic quality, although this is not the most prevalent opinion. Other reviewers suspend judgement until the publication of the missing notes. Their rationale behind this, is that the poems are too foreign and too hard to understand without any further explanation, so it is impossible to give the reader an idea of their quality. Some reviewers add to this observation that in their current state, the poems are worthless. There are also those who see promise in these examples of Arabian poetry, and mention in their reviews Jones's unexpressed goal: to get others to study eastern languages. We will look at some examples of these categories to provide a context for their responses.

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[445] [Anon.], 'Review: *Seven Arabian Poems*', p. 271. He calls the stanzas he decides to include 'truly sublime.' [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', p. 386.

[446] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', p. 388.

[447] [Anon.], 'Review: *Seven Arabian Poems*', p. 270

[448] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', p. 386; Jones, *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems, Which Were Suspended on the Temple at Mecca; with a Translation, a Preliminary Discourse, and Notes*, p. 44.

Not all reviewers agree that the poems are aesthetically pleasing, as will be demonstrated below. After having enjoyed the translations in *Poems*, which as discussed were changed to suit a European taste, the poems of *Moallakát* did not match the expectations of all readers. However, some managed to appreciate the poems not despite, but because of their difference to the standard:

> The images, and figures of the Arabian poets are the most noble and sublime that can be imagined: and there is a moral end or object aimed at, and illustrated amidst the boldest flights of the most daring poetry. The translation has attained to an happy accuracy in preserving, and unfolding, the sense and genius of the original.[449]

In this description for *The European Magazine* there is an emphasis on the spectacular imagery and the divergence from what was to be expected from poetry in eighteenth-century Europe, signalled by terms like 'boldest', and 'most daring poetry.' The term 'sublime' is important to note as well, which is mentioned in further reviews, e.g. *Critical Review* quoted above.

These raving reviews have another term in common: 'moral'. Reviewers emphasise the moral lessons displayed in the translated poems. Furthermore, their imagery is 'full of fancy and imagination', because it describes a world with which the reader is not familiar.[450]

The same unfamiliarity, however, also poses a difficulty in understanding the poems, because the *Mu'allaqāt* are 'certainly among the most culturally and artistically obscure for a Western reader', especially Jones's reader who has had very limited exposure to Arabic literature before these translations appear.[451] Reviews of the work show that without guiding notes, the poems were misunderstood, even though Jones claimed that 'the *Discourse* and *Notes* are ornamental only, not essential.'[452] Their 'otherness' is simply too great when the reader misses an introduction into their poetics or an explicit explanation of their imagery and background. Reviews clearly show that some reviewers find it impossible to judge the translated poems without any further explanatory notes. The reviewer for *The European*

[449] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', p. 445.

[450] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Moallakat*', p. 59.

[451] Clive Holes, 'The Birth of Orientalism: Sir William Jones', in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English. Vol. 3: 1660-1790,* ed. by Stuart Gillespie and David Hopkins (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 443-55 (p. 448).

[452] Jones, *The Moallakát, or Seven Arabian Poems, Which Were Suspended on the Temple at Mecca; with a Translation, a Preliminary Discourse, and Notes*. 'Advertisement'.

Magazine, for example, decides to hold off judgement until the notes are published, because without them, he finds he is unable to give a proper review:

> When these [notes and essays] shall be published we shall be able to give an account, and to furnish a criticism on what has already been given to the public, with greater advantage than we can at present. It is proper, however, that we observe, that this publication fully supports the literary fame of the author.[453]

The weak begrudging of the missing notes in these examples, where the reviewer states having them would help interpret the poems 'with greater advantage', is surpassed by many others. The reviewer for *The British Magazine*, for example, calls them 'less entertaining than curious,' and adds that:

> The Preliminary Discourse, and Notes, promised in the following Advertisement, may render this work interesting to those who are attached to Oriental studies: in its present state, we do not think it calculated to obtain very general approbation.[454]

This opinion is shared by the reviewer for *English Review*:

> That Mr. Jones did not execute these intentions is object of regret; because the poems he has taken the trouble to translate would thence have been better understood. In the present they are often obscure; and this fault detracts infinitely from their interest. [...] They may be read over for once; but no curiosity to return to them will be felt by cultivated readers.[455]

A similar sentiment is expressed by Edward Gibbon, who uses Jones's works as sources for his chapters on 'Arabia and its inhabitants': '[Jones's] honourable mission to India has deprived us of his own notes, far more interesting than the obscure and obsolete text.'[456] The prevailing assumption in these comments is that Jones's knowledge of eastern literature is so great that his explanations would be valuable, and even make the texts themselves worthwhile, but being presented with the text without his guidance makes them too obscure to read.

The final common theme that is mentioned in the reviews, also relies on Jones's judgement of the texts and their context. It also links closely to Jones's original goal when translating the

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[453] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', p. 445. Cf. Burney, 'Review: Jones's *Translation of the Moallákat*', p. 297: 'We shall defer our extracts till the publication is completed.'

[454] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát'.

[455] [Anon.], 'Review: Jones's *Seven Arabian Poems*', p. 406

[456] Edward Gibbon, 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Volume the Fifth', (London: W. Strahan & T. Cadell, 1788), p. 196.

poems, which is their further study. The reviewer for *The New Review*, for example, agrees with the opinions mentioned above that, as literary objects, the poems are not particularly pleasing for a western audience. As examples of literatures yet to be discovered and studied in Europe, however, they shine light on a promising field:

> With regard to the poems themselves, they are rather to be considered as literary curiosities, and as connected with the study of languages which have been hitherto too much neglected, but from the revival of which is much to be expected, than as very pleasing things in themselves.[457]

Not only do the poems highlight a neglected field of study, but the reviewer for *Critical Review* adds that Jones's knowledge in this field will help promote its study and convince the reader of the importance of studying its originals.

> When scholars of this description [i.e. William Jones, who has an 'accurate and extensive knowledge of the languages'] thus render the more remote sources of knowledge acceptable to common readers, it is to be hoped that many who admire the translation, will wish to judge the native beauties of the original; and hence the treasure of Oriental literature, instead of being confined to the dusty shelves of a few public libraries, may in time become the subject of general and fashionable investigation.[458]

An echo is recognisable here from Jones's manifesto for the study of eastern poetry in the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', in which is included Jones's own call for notes as beneficial to the understanding of eastern poetry: 'if the principal writings of the Asiaticks, which are reposited in our publick libraries, were printed with the usual advantage of notes and illustrations […] a new and ample field would be opened for speculation…'[459] In this short extract it also becomes apparent that Jones agrees with his critics in principle: the translated texts benefit from the addition of notes. That he never had the time to finish those for *Moallakát* therefore is a true regret.

The analysis in chapter 5, however, provides an insight into the ongoing reception of the *Moallakát*. Once the reading public becomes more used to oriental literature, and the taste

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[457] [Anon.], 'Review: Moallakát', p. 385.

[458] [Anon.], 'Review: *Seven Arabian Poems*', p. 269.

[459] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, pp. 198-199.

Jones attempted to establish with his tactics in *Poems* is developing, the *Moallakát* proves a source of inspiration for future poets. Anthologies like *Specimens of Arabian Poetry* (1795) also prove the impact Jones had on the establishment of oriental influences in English literature, and in particular the influence his choices had on the canon formation. Carlyle includes 'An Elegy by Lebid ben Rabiat Alamary' in his *Specimens* 1795. This poetical translation is based on a manuscript he studied in the Cambridge public library.[460] Even though this is an original translation, he includes a comparison with Jones: 'The learned reader will perceive that the MS. I have made use of differs in some few places from the text given by Sir W. Jones.'[461] This signifies both an assumed knowledge of Jones's translation, and the creation of Jones as standard.

3.5. Conclusion

In a time when tales based on oriental themes were popular, few of their readers seemed to have a true understanding of the languages and literatures these stories came from. Invention, fakes and 'translations' were heaped together. Jones intended to break this cycle and bring focus back to the study of the originals, preferably in their original language.

Although not his first attempt to introduce these literatures to a western audience, *Poems*, was the first and most important English work with which he attempted to get this message across to his audience. This volume was intentionally domesticised to fit a western audience. Not only in the style of the translations, but also by including in the introduction and essays references and comparisons to literature well known to a western audience, Jones attempted to create a framework in which this poetry could be understood and its poetic value appreciated. First reactions analysed in this chapter show that his audience indeed enjoyed the translations, and that their adaptation to a western taste did not subdue the readers' interest in the original: rather, it lit a spark in some to see more literal translations or to study the originals.

The *History of Nader Shah* was similarly made into a volume where the translation from Persian was embedded in annotations and essays. These were provided to make it easier on the audience to understand the translation with all its foreign aspects, such as references to

[460] Joseph Dacre Carlyle, *Specimens of Arabian Poetry, from the Earliest Time to the Extinction of the Kaliphat, : With Some Account of the Authors*, (Cambridge: Printed by John Burges, 1795), p. 5.
[461] Ibid. p. 5.

Persian history and landscape. A second motive for these additions was the same project discussed in the essays appended to *Poems*. Even though Jones expressed this first in the French translation of *Histoire de Nader Chah*, the English audience needed to receive the message in English as well. Both these translations, however, were not appreciated by their reviewers, neither their style nor their content. It is however in the juxtaposition of this negative judgement on the translation and the positive remarks about the appended pieces that the value of Jones's annotations is clearest. Although without an attractive translation is it unlikely that the books, and therefore their messages, received a wide distribution. In chapter 5 we will indeed see that *Nader Shah* is not a popular choice for imitation, even though its inclusion in the collected *Works* must have aided its distribution and availability.

When Jones presented his translation of the *Moallakát*, their otherness was rather overwhelming to the audience. They lacked both the domesticised familiarity of the translations in *Poems* and the advantage of notes of *Nader Shah*. For some, this lack of understanding called for further study, but a large part of the responses discussed above focus on their curiosity, rather than the pleasure in reading these poems. Their unfamiliarity, combined with their lack of notes and the fact that Jones created a prose translation, did mean that the *Moallakát* was less popular than *Poems*. Its important role in the study of Arabic poetry, however, is recognised in modern scholarship. Not only because they were 'among the first examples of Arabic literature to which European scholars attended, and Jones's English text preceded translations into other Western languages.'[462] Jones's translation also provided an intervention in the field in his literary approach to the poems and his willingness to make them available to a larger audience, as argued by Larcher.

The issue with *Moallakát,* its lack of explanatory notes, Jones seemed to foresee in his other translations. The reactions to *The Moallakát* so clearly show that many reviewers are lost without these notes and comparisons, proving that Jones was right in including them in his other works, and that they indeed provided the context he aimed for. When comparing the reactions to *The Moallakát* to the reactions to Jones's other translations, however, it safe to conclude that *The Moallakát* would have been received more favourably and understood better, if Jones had provided the same anchors as he presented for his other works.

[462] Gillespie, 'The Developing Corpus of Literary Translation', p. 142.

4. Sanskrit as a new source: Jones in India

4.1. Introduction

After arriving in India in 1783, Jones started studying Sanskrit soon, in order to be able to understand Hindu law without the interposition of native interpreters translating the law texts into Persian first. Very few Europeans knew Sanskrit at that point, one of whom was Charles Wilkins. Wilkins and Jones became the first Europeans to publish translations of Sanskrit texts. Wilkins's translation of the *Bhagavad-Gita* (London 1785) was soon translated itself into French (1787) and German (1802), and his translation of the *Hitopadesa* appeared in 1787. The translation of the Sacontala episode from the *Mahabharata* that Wilkins published in Dalrymple's Oriental Repertory will be discussed below as a response to Jones's *Sacontalá*.

This chapter will review Jones's translations from Sanskrit and their influence on the European audience. His most famous translation, *Sacontalá*, will be the focal point, since this spread far and wide and stirred up a truly new taste for Indian literature, aided by the taste for orientalism that was already developing, as discussed in the previous chapter. How this taste developed will be discussed by the reviews of the work that appeared shortly after its publication, as well as further publications that followed *Sacontalá*'s success, such as translations of the drama into other European languages, and translations of other texts with a similar theme.

Jones's further translations from Sanskrit are Jayadeva's *Gita-Govinda*, a shorter translation that was published in the Asiatic Researches, and *The Institutes of Menu*, his translation of the mentioned law digest. These translations appear against the wider background of the *Asiatic Researches* and discourses read at the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which also appeared to provide information about India and its culture, in the broadest sense, to a European audience.

At the Asiatic Society, Jones read a paper 'On the Literature of the Hindus' written by a native scholar, Goverdhan Caul, since Indian natives were excluded from membership and from presenting their own discourses. Jones had translated the discourse and added his own commentary, which gives an insight into his opinion about the spread of Sanskrit studies in Europe:

> Since *Europeans* are indebted to the *Dutch* for almost all they know of *Arabick*, and to the *French* for all they know of *Chinese*, let them now receive from our nation the first accurate knowledge of *Sanscrit*, and the valuable works composed in it; but, if they

> wish to form a correct idea of *Indian* religion and literature, let them begin with forgetting all that has been written on the subject, by ancients or moderns, before the publication of the *Gíta*.[463]

His position is clear: the British in India have the ability to produce first-hand knowledge of Sanskrit literature, and to learn it *in situ*, taught by native teachers. This should place them, Jones himself and his colleagues at the Asiatick Society in particular, in the position of disseminating this knowledge throughout Europe. Although the *Asiatick Researches* do provide a starting point for the study of India, this study is followed through by German scholars, rather than the English, whose Anglicist politicians created a hostile atmosphere in India for the study of Indian languages, but rather imposed English on the population.[464]

Wilkins is credited as the first to translate a Sanskrit work that is worth reading, because of its accuracy and his knowledge of the language. Indeed, Ballaster argues that translations and Indian oriental tales before the translations by Jones and Wilkins were manipulated in two ways: to be exotic and oriental enough to fit the reader's expectations of India, and to fit the taste of the reader.[465] Without mentioning the parallel, what she is describing is exactly Jones's approach in *Poems*, where his imitations have the same underlying principle and aims. This is countered by Drew, in that Europe was not completely devoid of original images of India before the appearance of Sanskrit texts, since Persian texts describing India had been translated.[466] It was the object of Jones and his contemporaries, however, to remove the Persian intermediary texts and to return to Sanskrit source texts. The clearest example of this practice is the translation of law texts which led Wilkins and Jones to start their study of Sanskrit.

In 1783 Jones arrives in India to serve as puisne judge in Calcutta. Governor-general Warren Hastings at that time was working with other Englishmen, notably Nathaniel Brassey Halhed and Charles Wilkins, to translate Indian law texts so all Indian subjects could be judged by their

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[463] William Jones, 'On the Literature of the Hindus, from the Sanscrit. Communicated by Goverdhan Caul, Translated, with a Short Commentary, by the President', in *The Works of Sir William Jones. With the Life of the Author, by Lord Teignmouth,* ed. by Anna Maria Jones (London: John Stockdale and John Walker, 1807), pp. 93-113 (p. 113).

[464] E.g. Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, p. 120.
A discussion of these developments in the early nineteenth century and its consequences for Jones's scholarship is included in chapter 1.

[465] Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients : Fictions of the East in England, 1662-1785*, pp. 336-337.

[466] John Drew, *India and the Romantic Imagination*, (Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 65.

own laws, whether Muslim or Hindu.[467] The problem with the Hindu law texts was their language: they existed in corrupt Persian translations, a language which only some of the East India Company officials could understand, or were unavailable to the English, who then depended on local interpreters. To remedy this problem Jones started learning Sanskrit himself, in order to translate the Hindu law text into English for the use of all Englishmen in India without intermediaries.[468] The method he employed to acquire the language was the one he was familiar with from previous languages studies: reading and translating literary texts.[469]

The project of translating the law texts was left unpublished at his death in 1794, but *The Ordinances of Menu* were published posthumously in 1796.[470]

4.2. Sacontalá

4.2.1. Introduction

Jones's translation of the Sanskrit drama Sacontalá, by the Indian playwright Calidasa, is often called his most influential work. It certainly remains his most famous until this day, which is why it merits a separate chapter. The text was reprinted twice during Jones's lifetime, and continued to receive new editions after his death. In this chapter both the reprint and translation history of the work will be discussed, as well as reviews and responses to the translation. Authors inspired by Sacontalá will be discussed as part of chapter 5, on Jones's influence on literature, and Romanticism in particular, but other translations inspired and popularised by Jones's work will be discussed here.

To learn Sanskrit Jones reverted to the only method of language acquisition he knew, and the one he had promoted in his *Persian Grammar* as well; reading and translating literary texts. With his teacher Ramálochán Jones studied literature to make progress in the Sanskrit language, and it is during these endeavours that he first became acquainted with *Abhijñānaśākuntala* [The Sign of Shakuntala]. Since Sanskrit with its declensions is more like

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[467] Michael Franklin, ''the Hastings Circle': Writers and Writing in Calcutta in the Last Quarter of the Eighteenth Century', in *Authorship, Commerce and the Public. Scenes of Writing 1750-1850,* ed. by E. J. Clery, Caroline Franklin, and Peter Garside (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 186-202.

[468] Garland Cannon, 'The Indian Affairs of Sir William Jones (1746-94)', *Asian Affairs,* 10 (1979), p. 288.

[469] Garland Cannon, 'Sir William Jones's Indian Studies', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* (1971), p. 419.

[470] Jones, *Institutes of Hindu Law: Or, the Ordinances of Menu, According to the Gloss of Cullúca. Comprising the Indian System of Duties, Religious and Civil. Verbally Translated from the Original Sanscrit. With a Preface*.

Latin than English, Jones started working on an interlinear Latin translation, which he later translated into English prose.[471] This introduction of the treasures of Indian literature to Europe, with at the height of this work his translation of *Sacontalá*, is often recognised as Jones's most important achievement.[472] Creating a summary of Jones's greatest achievements, Mukherjee recognises the translation of *Sacontalá* as one of these three, since it meant 'the introduction of Sanskrit literature to the West.'[473] Although *Sacontalá* was not the first translation from Sanskrit, he still credits this translation with the introduction, since it appeared as the first literary translation and therefore gave its European readership a taste of the beauty of Indian culture.

When Jones first heard of the text and its genre, he did not know how to interpret it, as he describes in the introduction to *Sacontalá*. The 'nátacs', as his teachers introduced the genre to him, were unknown to him, and when he started to translate, he expected the work to be a 'dialogue on moral or literary topics'.[474] This proved a wrong supposition, since natakas are better described as heroic romances.[475] It was only while working on the translation that he realised this was not a historical or philosophical discussion, as he first assumed, but a play, and Calidasa could be called the Indian Shakespeare.[476] The play describes the marriage of the nymph Shakuntala to king Dushyanta (Jones transliterates Dushmanta) after he meets her in a forest. After their marriage she is distracted by love and forgets to pay the proper respects to Durvasa, a passing rishi, who punishes her for this by making her husband forget about her, unless she presents him with a token to recognise her by. Her friends know about this curse, but decide not to tell her, expecting Dushyanta to recognise Shakuntala by the ring he has given her. Unfortunately, she loses this ring while washing herself in a river on her way to his

[471] For a further description of Jones's method of studying Sanskrit, based on notes found in his manuscripts, see Gillian Evison, 'The Sanskrit Manuscripts of Sir William Jones in the Bodleian Library', in *Sir William Jones 1746-1794: A Commemoration,* ed. by Alexander Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 123-42.

[472] E.g. Garland Cannon, 'Sir William Jones and the Association between East and West', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* 121 (1977), p. 183.

[473] S. N. Mukherjee, *Sir William Jones: A Study in Eighteenth-Century British Attitudes to India*, (London: Cambridge U.P., 1968), p. 91.

[474] Jones, *Sacontalá, or the Fatal Ring, an Indian Drama by Cálidás: Translated from the Original Sanskrit and Pracrit*, p. vi.

[475] Dorothy Matilda Figueira, *Translating the Orient: The Reception of Śākuntala in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 215.

[476] Jones, *Sacontalá, or the Fatal Ring, an Indian Drama by Cálidás: Translated from the Original Sanskrit and Pracrit*, p. v.

palace, where he scorns her and sends her away upon her arrival. When a fisherman later presents the king with a fish which holds the ring, he remembers Shakuntala, but she is gone. Years later the king meets a young boy in the forest, who is playing with a tiger cub. This extraordinary boy is his son, and Shakuntala and Dushyanta are reunited.

Cannon describes Jones's discovery of Sacontalá in August 1787, while enjoying a holiday at his vacation cottage at Krishnagar.[477] Jones's first interpretation was somewhat flawed: in a discussion of the plot of the drama in a series of letters to Viscount Althorp, in the style of an Arabian Nights tale, he explains how Shakuntala is the one who ceases to recognise Dushmanta, rather than him forgetting about his marriage with her.[478]

After this initial reading of the play, it takes Jones a further year and a half to produce a full translation that is ready to be published. He adds a short preface to the work, but no further notes or commentary. Words unknown to the English reader appear transliterated and mentioned with an internal definition, rather than including footnotes and disrupting the text. This allowed Jones to create the same atmosphere in his translation as the original.[479] Cannon and Pandey explore Jones's translation choices further by comparing them to the original Sanskrit and later translations, and come to the conclusion that two reasons were at play in Jones's considerations: on the one hand giving the western reader a faithful representation of the text, and on the other hand avoiding the impression that there was anything gross or vulgar about Indian culture.[480] This combination led him for example to censor the love scene in the play, but also to include the aforementioned terms for Indian flora and fauna.[481] Although the result was much more foreign than the westernised poetry presented in *Poems*, Jones's considerations remained the same.

In her study of various European translations of *Shākuntala*, Figueira notes that, although Jones is the only western translator of the work who learned Sanskrit in India and had direct, personal contact with Indian people while he was learning the language and translating the

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[477] Garland H Cannon, 'Sir William Jones and the Sakuntala', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 73 (1953), pp. 198-199.

[478] Garland Cannon, 'Sir William Jones's Summary of Sakuntala', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 83 (1963), pp. 242-243. Although Cannon does not point out this mistaken interpretation here, he does so in his later paper Garland Cannon, 'Sir William Jones's Introducing Sakuntala to the West', *Style,* IX (1975), p. 89.

[479] Cannon, 'Sir William Jones's Introducing Sakuntala to the West', pp. 85-86.

[480] Garland Cannon and Siddheshwar Pandey, 'Sir William Jones Revisited: On His Translation of the Sakuntala', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 96 (1976), p. 535.

[481] Ibid. pp. 531-533.

material, his translation misses many nuances.[482] Some of the issues she noticed in the translation are that it lacks the intricacies of the language, including but not limited to Jones's usage of one style for translating both the Sanskrit and Pracrit passages in the play. It misses the humour the original play displays, and it shows a misunderstanding of cultural themes. A part of these issues can be explained by Jones's usage of the Bengali recension of the play, which suffers from interpolations and mistakes compared to the original Devanagari, but a large part will also be due to his lack of knowledge of the culture and literature, despite his efforts of studying.

4.2.2. *Sacontalá*'s travels: further spread of de work across Europe

4.2.2.1 Reprint history

Jones's translation of Sacontalá appeared in 1789, printed in Calcutta in octavo format. The price, 12 sicca rupees (30 shillings), would be used 'for the benefit of insolvent debtors', showing Jones's compassion for those enslaved or imprisoned because of their inability to pay their debts. The next year a version was printed in London, a larger quarto format, since the Calcutta edition was not likely to reach his English readership. That the work was instantly popular is not only shown by the glowing reviews it received and its immediate translation into other European languages, both to be discussed further below, but also by its further rapid reprints: three more editions were printed before the end of the century (London 1792, London 1796, Edinburgh 1796).[483] The print of new editions ceased after this first surge, which is to be explained by the inclusion of *Sacontalá* in the *Works of Sir William Jones*, which first came out in 1799, effectively providing yet another reprint of the work.

After inclusion in the 1807 version of the *Works of Sir William Jones* (in the ninth volume, joined together with the translation of the speeches of Isaeus), there is a period without reprints, although further editions in 1855 (Calcutta), 1870 (London), 1874 (both Calcutta and London) and 1899 (Calcutta) show that Jones's pioneering work is not quite forgotten, neither in England, nor in India. However, by then other and more accurate translations have also been produced, the first to appear in English in 1853 by Monier Monier-Williams, and Jones's fame had been reduced, leading to less interest in his first translation.

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[482] Figueira, *Translating the Orient: The Reception of Śākuntala in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, p. 172-173.

[483] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, pp. 36-37.

In 1805 *Sacontalá* makes its way to America, when the full play is printed in instalments in the poetry section of *The Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review*. The full poetry section is taken up by the play for six editions of the journal, July to December. The editor, William Emerson, explains his choice by stating that:

> The works of Sir William Jones are published in Quartos so splendid and ponderous, that we doubt that there are more than two or three editions of them within the United States. The greater part of readers must of course be shut out from them; and they will not be displeased therefore, that we allow the following translation to occupy much of the room, which we usually devote to poetry.[484]

This is evidence of Jones's fame, but also that of *Sacontalá*: out of all thirteen volumes of Jones's *Works*, this is the part that is deemed the most important to share with the American audience.

4.2.2.2. Spread of Sacontalá *through Europe*

The popularity of this work is shown not only by its quick and numerous reprints in English, and the enthusiastic reviews that followed and will be discussed below, but also by the appearance of translations in other European languages. After the first two English editions, *Sacontalá* takes Europe by storm. Within the first 25 years after its publication seven translations appear in various European languages, and these are so tightly linked to each other we can follow the spread of *Sacontalá* across the continent and the influence the translations have on each other.[485]

The first to appear is the German translation by Georg Forster, in 1791.[486] Forster adds to his edition not only an introduction, but also an alphabetic list of 'Erlauterungen,' explanations of the terms used 'da es der englischen Uebersetzung an diesem Commentar gänzlich fehlten' [because the English translation lacks this commentary completely].[487] Therefore he conducts

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[484] Emerson, 'Sacontalá', p. 360.

[485] Three of these translations, in German, French and Italian, are listed in Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, pp. 37-38. Cannon lists a further Thai translation by the king of Thailand, possibly printed in Bangkok, 1920, that is beyond the scope of this thesis.
An overview of the translations is presented in table 1.

[486] Georg Forster, *Sakontala oder der entscheidende Ring: Ein indisches Schauspiel von Kalidas. Aus den Ursprachen Sanskrit und Prakrit ins englishe und aus diesen ins Deutsche übersetzt mit Erlaüterungen*, (Mainz und Leipzig: Johann Peter Fischer, 1791).

[487] Ibid.

his own research and presents the reader with a list of references for this research. He explains that they are meant to help the reader understand the background of the play. In his introduction Forster explains the English interest in Indian literature, since the country is part of its empire, and the reasons why this literature has not reached Germany yet. He concludes by saying that this translation might help develop this interest in Germany as well. This translation famously inspired Goethe to not only write his poem *Sakontala*, but also to model the opening act of Faust after Calidasa's opening act, so Forster's prediction can be said to have come true.[488]

	Publication info	Title	Translator	Language	Translated from
A	1789, Calcutta	*Sacontalá, or the fatal Ring*	William Jones	English	Original Sanskrit & Prakrit
B	1790, London				
C	1791, Mainz/Leipzig	*Sakontala oder der entscheidende Ring*	George Forster	German	B
D	1792, Haarlem	*Sakontala of de Beslissende Ring*	Unknown	Dutch	C
E	1792, Moskow	*Sceni iz Sakontali [Scenes from Sacontalá]*	Nikolai Michailowitsch Karamsin	Russian	C
F	1793, Copenhagen	*Sacontalá eller den uheldige Ring*	Hans West	Danish	B
G	1805, Paris	*Sacontala, ou l'anneau fatal*	A. Bruguière	French	B & C
H	1815, Darmstadt	*Sacontala ossia l'anello fatale*	Luigi Doria	Italian	G
I	1821, Stockholm	*Sakuntala*	Jacob Ekelund	Swedish	C

Table 1: Translations of* Sacontalá *based on Jones (1790).

One year later, in 1792, a Dutch translation, translated from Forster's German one, appeared.[489] Although some of Forster's notes in the text are followed, the alphabetic list of explanations is not included. No translator's name was included in the publication. In the same year Nikolai Michailowitsch Karamsin published 'Scenes from Sacontalá' in his journal

[488] For Forster's anthropological interest in translating travel literature in general and *Sacontalá* specifically, see the discussion below and Madhuvanti Karyekar, 'Translating Observation into Narration: The 'Sentimental' Anthropology of Georg Forster (1754-1794)', (Indiana University, 2014).

[489] [Anon.], *Sakontala of de Beslissende Ring, een Indiaansch Schouwspel van Kalidas, oorspronglijk geschreeven in de oude Sanskritische en Prakritische taal, met ophelderingen van G. Forster*, (Haarlem: A. Loosjes, P.z., 1792).

Moskovskii Zhurnal, also translated from Forster's German translation.[490] A Swedish translation published by historian Jacob Ekelund in 1821 is created in the same way, by translating from the German.[491]

The French translation, published in 1803 and translated by A. Bruguière de Sorsum, finds its origin in both the German and Jones's original English translation: the play itself is translated from the English version, but a translation of the alphabetical list of notes from Forster's German translation is also added. [492] The Italian translation is based on this French version.[493] Translated by Luigi Doria, a professor of Italian in Darmstadt in 1815, this Sacontala comprises only of five acts, whereas the original has seven. Jones mentions in his introduction that, in order to be able to perform the play, some of the acts can be taken together: more specifically, that acts 2 and 3 can be merged and acts 5 and 6 as well. Although Jones himself translated the entire play, and so does Bruguière on whose translation Doria based his, Doria decides to shorten the play to make it more fit for actual performance.[494]

Although many of the European versions of *Sacontalá* thus seem to be translations of the German translation of the English translation of the original Sanskrit (or better: of the Latin translation Jones prepared from the Sanskrit, so four layers of interpretation away from the

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[490] The fact that this is translated from the German is mentioned without further evidence by Peter H. Salus, 'Šakuntalā in Europe: The First Thirty Years', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 84 (1964), p. 417.
A remark that this translation is incomplete can be found in Holes, 'The Birth of Orientalism: Sir William Jones', p. 452.
Further information about this Russian translation is lacking.

[491] Jacob Ekelund, *Sakontala; Ett Indiskt Dramatiskt Poem, af Kalidas; Öfversatt från Sanscrit på Engelska af W. Jones och, efter denna samt G. Forsters Tyska Tolkning, på Svenska af J. Ekelund*, (Stockholm: Zacharias Haeggström, 1821).

[492] A. Bruguière, *Sacontala, ou l'anneau fatal, drame traduit de la langue sanskrit an anglais, par Sir Wm. Jones, et de l'anglais en français, par le cit. A. Bruguiere; avec des notes des traducteurs, et une explication abrégée du système mythologique des Indiens, mise par ordre alphabétique, et traduite de l'allemand de M. Forster*, (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1803).

[493] Luigi Doria, *Sacontala Ossia L'anello Fatale. Dramma Tradotto Dalla Lingua Orientale Sanskrit Nell'idioma Inglese Dal Signor William Jones; Indi Dall'inglese in Francese Dal Signor A. Bruguiere; Ultimamente Dal Francese in Italiano Da Luigi Doria, Professore Di Lingua Italiana in Darmstadt. Con Note Dei Sovraccitati Traduttori, Ed Una Spiegazione Piu Ristretta E Compendiata Del Sistema Mitologico Degl'indiani, Messa Per Ordine Alfabetico Alla Fine Del Dramma*, (Darmstadt: Giov[anni] Franc[esc]o Piet[r]o Stahl, 1815).

[494] Ibid. p. xv.

original), not all made use of the intermediary of German; in 1793 Hans West published a Danish translation, based on Jones's original English one.[495]

Jones therefore is the first and only source for Sanskrit drama in Europe, and the rapid succession of translations is evidence of the interest in his work.[496]

4.2.3. Responses

Jones is considered most famous for his work in India, but scholars like Moussa-Mahmoud have claimed that his work on Sanskrit can also be considered to have had the least impact, particularly in Britain.[497] Although the first responses below show that the initial translation of *Sacontalá* was received as a revelation, it did not cause an influx of further translations from Sanskrit. An exception will be discussed below, in the shape of a translation by Wilkins highly influenced by the appearance of and responses to Jones's *Sacontalá*. However, in an analysis of Romantic poets and their indebtedness to Jones in the next chapter, *Sacontalá* is not a large influence on their work.

4.2.3.1. Reviews: general responses

Taking a step back from the spread of the play throughout Europe, this part of the chapter will examine the immediate responses the appearance of *Sacontalá* provoked. When the play appeared, it was the first of its kind translated from Sanskrit and, as mentioned above, one of the first translations from Sanskrit to be published in England, only proceeded by Wilkins' translations. Therefore it is no surprise to see a mixture of appreciation and non-comprehension in the reviews. Contrary to the responses discussed in the previous chapter, particularly in relation to the *Moallakát,* reviews of *Sacontalá* are almost all laudatory. More reviews exist of this work than of the previously discussed publications. I would argue there are three reasons for this increase: first, the practical reason of an increase in review journals by the 1780s. Second, the various editions *Sacontalá* goes through, allow the journals that did

[495] Hans West, *Sacontalá eller den Uheldige Ring, et Indianskt Drama af Calidas; Oversat af Original-Sprogene Sanscrit og Prácrit i Engelsk; og heraf i Dansk, med en indledning til den Danske oversaettelse*, (Copenhagen: N. Möller, 1793).

[496] Cannon, *The Life and Mind of Oriental Jones: Sir William Jones, the Father of Modern Linguistics*, p. 313 also notes a Polish version in 1861 and a disputed Thai translation in 1920, which are both beyond the temporal scope of this thesis.

[497] Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, p. 100.

not exist by the time of the first edition to engage with the text later on when it is published again. And third, the novelty of the content, combined with Jones's fame as an orientalist, makes the work rather popular to review, which means more journals would be interested in including it than we have seen before.

Although Cannon seems to imply the reviews respond to the first edition of the translation, they all understandably rather comment on the second edition, printed in London, 1790, since the Calcutta edition will not have been available to them.[498] In addition to the six reviews listed by Cannon, which can be found in *The Analytical Review*, the *Gentleman's Magazine,* the *New Annual Register,* the *Critical Review,* the *Monthly Review*, and the *Annual Register*, reviews appear in two parts in both *The Bee* and the *English Review*.[499]

As opposed to the responses to Jones's Persian and Arabic translations described in the previous chapter, which largely focused on the difference of this literature and its difficult metaphors, the responses to *Sacontalá* display an appreciation for the play itself. One of the themes often mentioned in the reviews, is the comparison Jones makes between Calidasa and Shakespeare, describing the Sanskrit playwright as 'the Shakespeare of India.'[500] This epithet proved both useful and persistent; Cannon even claims the epithet has 'persisted to this day.'[501]

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[498] Cannon, *Sir William Jones: A Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources*, p. 36.

[499] Mary Wollstonecraft, 'Review: Sacontalá, or, the Fatal Ring', *The Analytical Review: or, History of Literature,* 7 (1790).

[Anon.], 'Review of New Publications 227: Sacontalá', *The Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronicle,* 60 (1790).

[Anon.], 'Domestic Literature: Sacontala', *New Annual Register,* 11 (1790).

[Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', *Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature,* 1 (1791).

[Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 4 (1791).

[Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá', *Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics, and Literature, For the Year 1791,* (1795).

James Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', *The Bee: or Literary weekly intelligencer,* 23 March (1791).

James Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', *The Bee, or Literary Weekly Intelligencer,* 30 March (1791).

[Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', *English Review, or, An Abstract of English and Foreign Literature,* 19 (1792).

[Anon.], 'Review : Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', *English Review, or, An abstract of English and foreign literature,* 19 (1791).

[500] Jones, *Sacontalá, or the Fatal Ring, an Indian Drama by Cálidás: Translated from the Original Sanskrit and Pracrit*.

[501] Cannon, 'Sir William Jones's Introducing Sakuntala to the West', p. 87-88.

Jones added this explanatory title because he believed the *Sacontalá*, and possibly his other works, to be of similar quality as those by the famous English bard, and Kālidāsa's status in Indian literature similar to Shakespeare's in English. Moreover, presenting his readers with this comparison should help them understand the text before them and its genre. The reference to Shakespeare should spare his reader the confusion he went through when he first encountered the text, and help them understand that it is a play by a playwright as competent and famous as Shakespeare. The two aims of Jones's comparative technique are therefore both at work in this short comparison, that consists of hardly more than the mention of a name: the genre of the text is established within the reader's frame of reference, and Jones has provided a measure for the fame of Kālidāsa in his own language, and therefore for the quality of his work.[502]

The effectiveness of this comparison can be seen in the reviews for this work, as most of the reviewers picked up on the mention of Shakespeare. They attempted to persuade their readership of the value of the work by mentioning this epithet. James Anderson, the reviewer for *The Bee,* paraphrased Jones's characterisation as follows:

> Some of these [dramatic performances in the Sanscrit language] possessing beauties, as he [Jones] alleges, (and he will be allowed to be a competent judge), that would have done no dishonour to Shakespear [sic] himself.[503]

This not only shows that Jones's comparative method is indeed used as a tool for determining the quality of the unknown author, but also that Jones is considered an authority in the field, and his comparisons are considered helpful and trustworthy devices when determining the relevance and quality of a translation. In the anonymous review for *English Review* it is mentioned that 'Cálidás, the author of this drama […] is still considered as the Shakespeare of India.'[504] The way this remark is phrased, implies that Jones's comparison is taken as fact, and it almost appears as if this were a long-standing comparison.

Anderson continues the comparison in his review for *The Bee*:

> The incidents that occur in the unravelling of this plot, are various; and though, to the fastidious European critic, the machinery employed, will be condemned as absurd; yet

[502] On Jones's comparative strategy, see further Janssen, 'Comparison as Context in Sir William Jones's Translations of Eastern Literature'.

[503] Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', p. 112.

[504] [Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', p. 100.

> the poet, in painting the emotions of the human heart, has throughout filled his piece with such delicate touches of nature, as renders it highly interesting. Delicacy and the softest sensibility of heart are the prevailing characteristics of this piece; and these are expressed with a native ease and pathos that are rarely found in European compositions.[505]

By comparing Sacontalá to 'European compositions' Anderson was able to decide the play has even more pathos. He determined the value of the eastern poet, by comparing him to an established baseline of European compositions, and used this to recommend the play to his readership.

Despite the context created by this anchoring comparison to Shakespeare, the lack of notes, a common point of critique mentioned in reviews to the *Moallakát* discussed in the previous chapter, is mentioned by some of the reviewers:

> We could have wished that the learned translator had accompanied this publication with notes, illustrative of the manners and mythology of the Indians. Without them the reader remains bewildered and dissatisfied. As a dramatic composition, we could not expect that it would be much relished by occidental critics; had it therefore been made a vehicle of knowledge, and made us better acquainted with the Hindoos, that wonderful race of men, we apprehend that every reader would have been better satisfied.[506]

The juxtaposition created between the text as literary and aesthetic object, and the text as 'vehicle of knowledge' is important to note, and echoes the remarks made upon the publication of *The Moallakát*. The reviewer claims western readers do not have enough knowledge of Hindu culture to be able to appreciate the play. Whereas this was a common theme in the reviews of *The Moallakát*, however, this is not how most reviewers respond to *Sacontalá*: the reviewer for *English Review* is the exception to a list of overwhelmingly laudatory reviews. It is only the reviewer for *Gentleman's Magazine* who mentions that he lacks the necessary background to understand the intricacies of Indian mythology, but this does not appear to influence his judgment of the play greatly.[507] A similar conclusion is drawn in *Critical Review,* where the reviewer remarks that 'much of the beauty [of the play] depends

[505] Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', p. 114.
[506] [Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', p. 191.
[507] [Anon.], 'Review of New Publications 227: Sacontalá', p. 1014.

on the peculiarities of the plants so often mentioned […] Some few notes to explain these allusions would be often necessary.'[508] Although the reviewer shows that the play and its descriptive language can be appreciated without further information, adding notes would help the understanding of the reader. This is, however, not the common conclusion from all reviews. The reviewer for *English Review* clearly states that the play is to be appreciated for its curiosity more than for its own literary merit: 'Upon the whole, as an oriental curiosity, as a picture of manners so very different from our own, we imagine Sacontalá will be received favourably by the literary world.'[509] As we have seen before, the point is made that it is hard for a reader to value the aesthetic merit of a work, when they cannot understand its context. Or, even if the play can be appreciated by all, still its curiosity and value as a source of information is higher than its beauty, as summarized in *Monthly Review*: 'the perusal of [this Indian drama] must give pleasure to every reader of taste; and, in particular, to all who are curious in their inquiries concerning ancient oriental literature.'[510]

The need for further explanation also becomes apparent when examining the translations of Jones's *Sacontalá* appearing all over Europe. As discussed above, the first translation to appear, the German translation by Forster, includes notes and appendices with further information.[511] A bibliography of further works, mostly works in English, is also part of this translation. This is all added to provide the reader with the possibility to develop their knowledge of Indian mythology. In further translations there is also a trend of providing addition information to place the play in context: we see this in the Dutch translation, which is a translation of Forster's German version, but also in Bruguière's French translation, which translates the text of the play from Jones's English, but adds a translation of Forster's German notes. These are translated into the subsequent Italian translation as well. Jones's lack of notes and explanations is therefore clearly seen as problematic in terms of understanding the play, but at the same time it stimulates curiosity about the culture from which this play sprung, and encourages further research into the topic.

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[508] [Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', p. 20.

[509] [Anon.], 'Review : Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', *English Review, or, An abstract of English and foreign literature,* 19 (1792), p. 191.

[510] John Aikin, 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 4 (1791), p. 137.

[511] Forster, *Sakontala oder der entscheidende Ring: Ein indisches Schauspiel von Kalidas. Aus den Ursprachen Sanskrit und Prakrit ins englishe und aus diesen ins Deutsche übersetzt mit Erlaüterungen,* p. 249-366.

This need to explain the play is also illustrated by the extracts quoted in the reviews. Although many extracts used in the reviews are examples from the play itself, many reviews also include large parts from Jones's preface; most of the preface is copied in the reviews in the *English Review* and the *Analytical Review*, and in *Gentleman's Magazine* we even find the complete preface, whereas in the review for *Monthly Review* only about half is quoted, and merely a paragraph in *New Annual Register*. These quotes have the dual purpose of providing context and illustrating Jones's authority.

Sacontalá is published, anonymously, without mention of Jones as translator. It is immediately fairly well known that the translation is from his hand as is clear from mentions in the reviews of the translation.[512] The reviewer for *Critical Review*, however, addresses the issue of the oriental forgery and the possibility that what is claimed to be a translation, might as well be made up by a western author:

> An Indian drama without the name of the translator, or any other testimonies of its authenticity, will undoubtedly at first excite suspicion; and, in an age fertile in literary forgeries, may at once be overlooked and despised.[513]

The review goes on to give very laudatory remarks on the work and it therefore seems to acknowledge its true origin. This sentiment is confirmed by the following statement:

> But the suspicion and contempt cannot be lasting: every page will convince even the most incredulous reader that if not the production of an artless age, where the customs, the religion, perhaps the superstition, as well as the natural produce of the

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[512] E.g. [Anon.], 'Review of New Publications 227: Sacontalá', p. 1013: 'It is generally believed that we are indebted for this specimen of the genius of the Indian Shakespeare to Sir William Jones, the great reviver of Indian literature.'
Aikin, 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', p. 121: 'This translation is said to come from the pen of Sir William Jones.'
[Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', p. 100: 'The translator has not chosen to affix his name to the work; but judging from internal evidence, we scruple not to ascribe it to Sir William Jones, already so well known for his intimate acquaintance with oriental literature.'
The Dutch reader is told the same: after the translation of Jones's preface, there is only one note from the Dutch printer: '…dat de Engelsche Overzetter niemand minder is, dan de geleerde Heer William Jones, bij alle geleerden als de stichter van the Asiatick Society in Indiën te over bekend, en dat men dus een volmaakt vertrouwen op de Echtheid van dit Stuk kunne stellen.' […that the English translator is none other than the learned gentleman William Jones, known very well to all learned men as the founder of the Asiatic Society in India, and that the reader can therefore trust fully in the authenticity of this play.] [*Sakontala of de Beslissende Ring, een Indiaansch Schouwspel van Kalidas, oorspronglijk geschreeven in de oude Sanskritische en Prakritische taal, met ophelderingen van G. Forster,* p. x.

[513] [Anon.], 'Review: Sacontalá; or, the Fatal Ring', p. 18.

> country, is different from our own, and not unsuitable to what we know of India, it is at least founded on an intimate acquaintance with every circumstance relative to Indostan.[514]

This makes it all the more interesting that the review ends with this ambiguous statement:

> In our extracts we have given sufficient proofs of its merit, and we can only add our thanks to the translator for bringing it within the sphere of our attention. Our suspicions, however, are scarcely quieted, for oriental manners and oriental imagery may be easily imitated.[515]

One particular review deserves further attention, because it gives an insight into some important themes linking the appearance of oriental translations to social and political developments at the time of publication. This is the review by James Anderson, appearing in *The Bee* in two parts, 23 and 30 March 1791. The two parts of this review have different structures and develop different ideas, but in general it is clear that Anderson sees *Sacontalá* as an important example of Indian cultivation. He therefore argues for an understanding of the Indian people as equals to his English readers.

More than six of the ten pages of the first part of the review are filled with a large extract from the play, the largest part of act IV, in which Sacontalá is being prepared for her journey to her husband by her friends and father, to give 'a picture of eastern manners and modes of thinking in particular cases, with which we are little acquainted in Europe.'[516] The review starts, however, before even giving the outline of the play interspersed with short quotes, with an ideological response to the act of translating from eastern languages. Anderson states that 'nations have long been separated', but it is by the virtue of translators that we get to know others unfamiliar to us.[517] Quoting Matthew 5:9, 'Blessed are the peace-makers', Anderson concludes that therefore

> Blessed then are those who by painful researches, tend to remove those destructive veils which have so long concealed mankind from each other, and occasioned this destructive estrangement; who by discovering the human heart, without disguise, naked as it came out of the hands of the creator, enable all nations, languages, and

[514] Ibid. p. 18.
[515] Ibid. p. 27.
[516] Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', p. 114.
[517] Ibid. p. 111.

people, to recognise each other as relations, and induce them to embrace each other as kindred.[518]

Because the characters in the play display the same emotions, Anderson concludes 'is not the being who feels all these affections, O man! thy brother, and thy equal!'[519]

This sentiment is expressed in greater detail in the second part of the review, where Anderson demonstrates his thorough study of the play by using various short extracts, all of which text spoken by Dushmanta in act IV, to show his response to certain situations and his expression of feelings.[520] Anderson concludes: 'Dost thou, O reader, recognize the savage in these features? Is he not a man? Is he not thy brother?'[521] The final repetition of this brother-motive is expressed at the very end of the review, when Anderson concludes 'Does not the man, who can cherish such ideas, deserve to be embraced as a brother, by all the virtuous part of the human race!'[522]

This imagery invokes the 1787 abolitionist motto by Josiah Wedgwood for the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 'Am I not a Man and a Brother?' Reading *Sacontalá* has clearly shown Anderson that there is literature and art of value in India, which is corroborated by his discussion of Indian painting: in Europe this is thought to be of little value, but Anderson uses examples from the play, the scene in act VI in which a painting of Sacontalá is discussed, to prove that there must be quality painting in the work. Based on this written example, therefore, Anderson concludes that the people producing such writing, and feeling these profound feelings, that are similar to what Europeans feel and at times expressed even better, must be equals to Europeans.[523] The usage of the abolitionist motto that also emphasises the equality in all humans, and that must have been recognisable to every reader of the review, therefore gives a strong signal to the appreciation of the literature and the culture it comes from. Although Jones opposed slavery himself, even offering the proceeds of his 1789 publication to paid for the debts of Indian debters, he does emphasise the difference between western and eastern people, for example in the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern

[518] Ibid. p. 111.

[519] Ibid. p. 111.

[520] Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', p. 149.

[521] Ibid. p. 149.

[522] Ibid. p. 152. The 'ideas' referred to here, are a plan Dushmanta expresses to avoid the estate of a childless subject to be lost to his kin.

[523] Anderson, 'Review: Sacontala, or the Fatal Ring', p. 114: 'These are expressed with a native ease and pathos that are rarely found in European compositions.'

Nations', where he described how the character and climate of a people contributes to the type of poetry they produce.[524] Moreover, where Anderson claims equality for Indians based on their writing, Jones writes 'a virtuous Hindu' is 'a greater Asiatick curiosity than the rarest production of nature or the oldest manuscript', clearly showing that, although he has respect for his teacher Rámlochán about whom he writes this recommendation, he is not convinced of the equality of all Hindus.[525]

The possibility Anderson recognises, to learn about all of mankind from a form of comparative literature, is a common theme in the reception of *Sacontalá*. This is also picked up by Wollstonecroft in her review for *Analytical Review*, where she states:

> This Indian drama, translated by Sir William Jones, if we may credit common fame, will undoubtedly be thought not only by the man of taste, but by the philosopher, a precious *morçeau*; for whilst the latter has an opportunity of tracing human passions clothed in a new modification of manners, the former will be immediately gratified by the perusal of some pathetic scenes, and beautiful poetic similes.[526]

Furthermore, Forster, in the preface to his German translation of Jones's translation, states that '... wenn wir sie vergleichen und das Allgemeine vom Localen absondern, entwickeln wir uns den richtigeren Begriff der Menschheit.' [if we compare them and separate the general from the local, we can develop a more real/truthful understanding of mankind].[527] In her unpublished PhD dissertation, Karyekar argues that this translation is one of the most important components in Forster's 'pedagogical program' of translation.[528] Two aims can be distinguished in his translation project: creating a tolerance for other peoples, and expanding knowledge by creating an understanding of the diversity among humans, in both of which both the translator and the reader play an active role.[529] The translator because he takes upon himself the task of intercultural communication and needs to get the message across

[524] See the discussion of the essay in chapter 3.

[525] Ehrlich, 'Empire and Enlightenment in Three Letters from Sir William Jones to Governor-General John Macpherson', pp. 550-551: quote from an undated letter to Macpherson, probably from late 1785.

[526] Wollstonecraft, 'Review: Sacontalá, or, the Fatal Ring', p. 361.

[527] Forster, *Sakontala oder der entscheidende Ring: Ein indisches Schauspiel von Kalidas. Aus den Ursprachen Sanskrit und Prakrit ins englishe und aus diesen ins Deutsche übersetzt mit Erlaüterungen.*

[528] Karyekar, 'Translating Observation into Narration: The 'Sentimental' Anthropology of Georg Forster (1754-1794)', pp. 180-184.

[529] Ibid. p. 166.

accurately;[530] the reader because they need to show the benevolence also present in Anderson's description to interpret the text and recognise the humanity in the foreign characters. This is clearly expressed in the preface to both the work and the annotations.

This project is ongoing and does not rely solely on *Sakontala*: Forster published over sixty translations after he returns from his travels, in the period of 1787-1793, but as these are mostly travel literature, *Sakontala* takes a special place in this oeuvre. Moreover, Forster's method of translating *Sacontalá* is slightly different from his other works. Where he usually translated only the parts of the work that are of special interest to him, abbreviating and re-writing as he goes along, with *Sakontala* he commits to staying as close to Jones's English as possible. The reasons for this different approach appear twofold: on the one hand, Forster's other translations are from languages he masters himself, which allows him the freedom of interpreting the texts. He does not know Sanskrit, so cannot permit himself this freedom and relies completely on Jones's interpretation of the text. [531] On the other hand, the content of the drama plays a role here as well. The translation will be a source of information, and therefore the cultural peculiarities it describes need to be translated as faithfully as possible. This same purpose is served by the added annotations, which are also meant to give the reader the chance to learn as much about this exotic, newly discovered culture as possible.

A review of the Dutch translation takes a similar approach, creating a balance between the otherness and beauty in the play by concluding:

> ik twijfel er niet aan, of gij zult met mij erkennen, dat een aantal schoonheden van den eersten rang alle wanstaltigheden en onregelmatigheden rijkelijk vergoeden, en de aandacht van elken wijsgeerigen beoefenaar der schoone kunsten dubbeld verdienen.'
> [I don't doubt, that you will acknowledge with me, that some first class beauties copiously compensate for all monstrosities and irregularities, and thoroughly deserve the attention of every philosopher of the fine arts.][532]

The monstrosities mentioned are, according to the reviewers, for example the lack of the Aristotelean ideals of unity of time and space. The author of this review includes further comparisons with Latin poetry, as well as Dutch, German and French poetry, throughout the

[530] Ibid. p. 168-170.

[531] Ibid. p. 171.

[532] Rhijnvis Feith and Jacobus Kantelaar, 'Brief aan ***, over de Sakontala', *Bijdragen, ter bevordering van de schoone kunsten en wetenschappen,* 1 (1793), p. 167.

piece. He is in a way annotating the play with European comparisons as he goes through his summative description. For example, he notices that much of the descriptiveness in *Sakontalá* is reliant on comparisons with nature. He then adds quotes from Virgil and Horace to show they use the same practice.[533] Like Forster in the example above, but on a much smaller scale, the review is creating a reference work out of the translation, embedding it in its new European context.

4.2.4. Wilkins's *Dooshwanta and Sakoontala*

Jones's immediate influence can also be noted when examining the publications of his contemporaries, and the topics and stories they chose to include in their works. The case study of Alexander Dalrymple's *Oriental Repertory* will be discussed below, showing both Jones's influence on the editor's choice of what to publish and the commercial opportunities arising from joining in the trend Jones started, as well as a critical response to Jones's name as the most important orientalist of the time.

The story of *Sacontalá* is adapted as a play by Calidasa from a story in the Indian epic *Mahabharata*, and a translation of the version from that epic by Charles Wilkins is included in Alexander Dalrymple's *Oriental Repertory*: 'The story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontala, extracted from the Mahabharata, a Poem in the Sanskreet Language.'[534] The purpose of this publication is to provide the reader with the possibility to compare the two versions of the story:

> Opinions differ concerning the comparative merit of the *two*: Sir *William Jones* has, very justly, observed 'that the tastes of men differ as much as their sentiments and passions, and that, in feeling the beauties of art, as in smelling flowers, tasting fruits, viewing prospects, and hearing melody, every Individual must be guided by his own sensations and the incommunicable association of his own ideas.' The *Drama* of *Calidas* is as much decryed by some, as extolled by others: The Publick have the *Drama* already before them, so that they are enabled to appreciate its merits; but the *Story* has never till this time been published: They are now competent to decide on both.[535]

[533] Ibid. p. 173.

[534] Alexander Dalrymple, *Oriental Repertory, Volume 2, Number Iii*, (London: printed by George Biggs: sold by P. Elmsly, Strand, and Mr. Chapman, East India House, 1794).

[535] Ibid. p. 415, quoting Jones from the preface of *Sacontalá*.

Dalrymple states Wilkins has produced this translation and the accompanying notes at his express request. The popularity of *Sacontalá* must have given him an impression of the demand of the English audience for this story. Furthermore, he takes the opportunity to use this popularity as an aid to commercial success: a year after the appearance of the *Oriental Repertory*, he publishes an excerpt of just this story.

The *Oriental Repertory* was a project by Alexander Dalrymple, based on his personal interests and his previous experience as hydrographer for the East India Company. When periodicals about the East Indies gained in number and popularity, notably the *Asiatick Miscellany* and the Asiatick Society of Bengal's *Asiatick Researches*, Dalrymple saw a chance to add his *Oriental Repertory*.[536] The contents of the *Repertory* were largely based on materials his network both in London and the East Indies could provide, extracts from earlier published works. In many cases these were surrounded by his own notes and letters from his East India Company contacts. Each volume was accompanied by plates, revealing a close link to Dalrymple's background as Company hydrographer.

Another strong link with the East India Company is shown through the financing of the project. The *Repertory* was, on paper, financed by subscriptions, but Dalrymple used a construction in which the EIC bought a hundred subscriptions, thereby paying for the full print run and allowing Dalrymple financial security for this project rather than having to wait for individual subscribers.[537]

The 'central feature' of third number of the second volume was Wilkins' translation.[538] It was preceded by an introduction by Dalrymple, and followed by notes, a letter, and an extract from the *Institutes of Menu*, 'On Transmigration and final Beatitude.'

All these elements taken together also compose the separately printed excerpt from the *Repertory*, appearing the next year, in 1795: The story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontalā.

extracted from The *Mahābhārata*, a *Poem* in the *Sanskreet Language,* translated by *Charles Wilkins* Esqr.[539]

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[536] Andrew S. Cook, 'Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808), Hydrographer to the East India Company and to the Admiralty as Published: A Catalogue of Books and Charts', (University of St. Andrews, 1993), p. 246.

[537] Ibid. p. 249.

[538] Ibid. p. 253.

[539] First the quarto edition: *The Story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontala, Extracted from the Mahabharata, a Poem in the Sanskreet Language, Translated by Charles Wilkins Esqr. Originally Published in the Oriental Repertory Vol.Ii. By a Dalrymple. 1794*, (London: printed by George Bigg, 1795).

This story is the only separately printed excerpt from the *Oriental Repertory*, to appear in the *Repertory* first and be printed separately after, illustrating the high demand for and popularity of the story of Sacontalá. This influence seems especially large, since it was deemed profitable enough to print the excerpt twice, in different formats, within the first half of 1795. The first edition is printed in quarto, like the *Repertory* itself, but continuing interest in Sacontalá leads printer F. Wingrave to want to publish a more accessible pocket version as well. This comes out soon after the first edition. Cook describes it looks like this went through two issues: the first consisting of the exact same components as described above, the second omitting the Postscript and extract from Jones. There is no evidence of the first issue ever coming into existence; all surviving copies seem to be of the second issue.[540]

In the first sentence of the introduction to the translation, there is a reference to Jones. This is to be expected, since Jones's *Sacontalá* would have been known to the reader, and quite possibly the main reason the reader would be interested in this additional translation. Jones is merely mentioned at the start of the discussion of the story's antiquity, his analysis being the starting point of Dalrymple's further considerations.[541]

The 'Postscript' to the translation, which also functions as the introduction to 'On Transmigration and final Beatitude,' does not take this neutral stance, and implies criticism of the choice Jones made when publishing certain texts. Both in the introduction to the volume and in this postscript, Dalrymple accuses Jones of publishing the Institutes of Menu, despite it being translated before by Wilkins and despite Wilkins' request not to. In the postscript in particular, his wording of this issue is sharp:

> It is the same Work […] to have been *translated* by Mr. *Wilkins*, who desisted from *publishing* it at the particular request of Sir *William Jones* himself; It might naturally have been expected, that some notice would have been taken by Sir *William Jones*, in his *Translation*, of Mr. *Wilkins's* acquiescence to his request; but *His silence* seems to *confirm Pope's* observation, that the most distinguished Authors

Followed by the octavo: *The Story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontalā. Translated from the Mahābhārata, a Poem in the Sanskreet Language. By Charles Wilkins, Esq. Originally Published in the Oriental Repertory by Dalrymple*, (London: printed for F. Wingrave, successor to Mr. Nourse, in the Strand, 1795).

[540] Cook, 'Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808), Hydrographer to the East India Company and to the Admiralty as Published: A Catalogue of Books and Charts', p. 593.

[541] Dalrymple, *Oriental Repertory, Volume 2, Number Iii.III,* p. 413.

Bear, like the Turk, no Brother near the Throne.[542]

He goes on to suggest that this is an opportunity for the audience: since Jones took no notice of Wilkins' request, Wilkins is now free to publish his translation as well, which will allow the reader to compare the two.

In the separately printed excerpts of the story, this critical part is left out. The first edition of the excerpt has an abbreviated postscript, where these two paragraphs are missing, whereas the second edition does not include either the postscript or 'On Transmigration and final Beatitude' (although these might have originally been planned for the first issue, see above). No reason for this is immediately apparent, but one might assume that the popularity of and support for William Jones was still so large, that the criticism was not appreciated. In a work relying for its sales on the popularity of Jones's *Sacontalá*, it might not have been appropriate or commercially viable to include these critical remarks,

Reviews of the excerpt show they appreciate the translation. The reviewer for *Monthly Review* concludes that 'in some aspects, we cannot help thinking [it] superior to the Drama of Calidas.'[543]

The story receives another reprint in 1817, in four instalments in *The Asiatic Journal*. It is announced as part of the *Mahabharata*, 'a stupendous epic poem', of which unfortunately too little has been made available in translation.[544] Although Jones is mentioned as a source for information about the poet, alongside Herodotus, no mention is made of his version of *Sacontalá*. Neither Wilkins, as the translator of the piece, nor Dalrymple as its original publisher are mentioned, but a reference to Wilkins's previous work makes it clear that the printer is at least aware of its provenance. The description will have also provided the reader with an insight into the original creator, since Wilkins and his *Bhagavat-Gita* must have been known to those interested in this excerpt: 'We lament that the pen which favoured the public

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[542] Ibid. p. 453.

[543] [Anon.], 'Review: The Story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontalā', *Monthly Review or Literary Journal,* 21 (1796), p. 259.

The review in *Walker's Hibernian Magazine* is a copy of the one in the *Monthly Review*, without the first and last paragraph, which display the engagement of the reviewer with the publication. The largest part of the review, the part copied into Hibernian Magazine, consist of summarising remarks interspersed with extracts from the text, cf. [Anon.], 'Review: The Story of Dooshwanta and Sakoontala', *Walker's Hibernian Magazine, or Compendium of entertaining knowledge,* (1797).

[544] Charles Wilkins, 'Dushwanta and Sakuntalá', in *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies,* (1817), pp. 425-28 (p. 425).

with the versions of the Bhagavata Gita, the Churning of the Ocean, and the following beautiful little piece has not been induced to proceed to larger communications.'[545] In four instalments, over four consecutive months, the whole story is printed in the journal, including all notes, but without any further commentary or reference to Wilkins's being the translator of the story.[546] No adjustments seem to be made in the text, although, as is immediately evident from the title, a different spelling is used for the names.

Further evidence of the two versions being compared, can be found in the version of *Sacontalá* held by the British Library, shelfmark 433e7. This copy of the second edition (London, 1790) is bound with a full manuscript version of the translation of 'Dooshwanta and Shakoontala' by Wilkins, with only some minor differences from the version printed in *Oriental Repertory*, and lacking the notes added in the printed edition. The book is purchased on July 16th, 1790, according to a manuscript note, 'by order of the Committee', meaning it was purchased by the British Museum to become part of its collection. A stamp on the back cover 'B.M. 1960' implies the work has rather recently received a new cover, and it is therefore impossible to determine when the manuscript story was added to the printed work. It being written in an unidentified, but clearly eighteenth-century hand, however, implies it has been written and added at, or at least close to, the original publication and purchase date.

The inclusion of, and extracted edition from, this story in the *Oriental Repertory* shows us two things. On the one hand, it illustrates the important influence of Jones as figurehead of oriental literature in this period. He steered the taste for oriental literature and helped create the canon upon which western reading of eastern literature would be based; his choices determined the further choice to publish this particular story.

Dalrymple's remarks, on the other hand, show that Jones did not hold a monopoly on these texts, as is sometimes implied in modern scholarship. Not only was Wilkins the first European to master Sanskrit, a fact that is generally acknowledged and mentioned, but there also seems to be a certain rivalry implied in this relationship that is usually described as a friendship.

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[545] Ibid. p. 425.

[546] Charles Wilkins, 'Dushwanta and Sakuntalá', The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies, 3. 17 (1817), 425-28

Charles Wilkins, 'Dushwanta and Sakuntalá', The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies, 3. 18 (1817), 548-49

Charles Wilkins, 'Dushwanta and Sakuntalá', The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies, 4. 19 (1817), 7-10

4.3. Gitagóvinda and German responses

The discourse 'On the Mystical Poetry of the Persians and Hindus' was presented by Jones to the Asiatic Society on December 8th, 1791, and printed in the third volume of *Asiatic Researches*. Although the discourse itself includes some fragments of poetry, it is the following translation, which it introduces at the end, that was the translation Jones wanted to present to the world, the *Gitagóvinda, or the Songs of Jayadéva*. This mystical poem by the twelfth-century poet Jayadeva, contains some explicit sensual content, of which Jones claims he had omitted 'only those passage, which are too luxuriant and too bold for an European taste.'[547] The poem's twelve chapters narrate the love of Krishna for a milkmaid, to whom he is unfaithful. His leaving and later returning to her, is interpreted as symbolising the winding journey of a human soul towards their god.

There are fewer direct reactions to this work to analyse than in the previous cases, but the responses that do exist, in the shape of a review and a translation, provide an important insight into the growing understanding of the English audience.

This poem was reviewed for *Monthly Review* by John Aikin, who had also reviewed *Sacontalá*.[548] After a short excerpt from the start of the poem, he gives an overview of its contents, ending with a brief evaluation:

> The president has not endeavoured to *spiritualize* the composition, nor to put us in possession of the mystic key which is to open its holy treasures. We confess that we never thought of such a key in reading it.[549]

Such a 'key' to the Hindu religion was provided for the Hymns to Hindu deities, discussed in chapter 5. Aikin however seems to enjoy the poem even without it, which shows the progress made since the appearance of *Moallakát*. The Arabic poems contains far fewer specific exotic sounding names, and were found problematic without accompanying notes. Here, as with *Sacontalá*, a poem is presented full of Hindu imagery and without notes, and the reviewer can appreciate it for its poetic value. The fact that he mentions the lack of a key, however, does indicate he must have been unable to interpret the difficult mythological references.

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[547] William Jones, 'On the Mystical Poetry of the Persians and Hindus', in *The Works of Sir William Jones,* ed. by Anna Maria Jones (London: John Stockdale and John Walker, 1807), pp. 211-35.

[548] John Aikin, 'Review: Asiatic Researches: Or, Transactions of a Society Instituted in Bengal, for Inquiring into the History and Antiquities, the Arts, Sciences, and Literature, of Asia', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal, 1752-1825,* 13 (1794).

[549] Ibid. p. 475.

Like the *Sacontalá*, this shorter poem was also translated into German, with notes attached, showing the translator, Friedrich Majer, did not agree with Aiken and considered the text more useful with some explanations. Although he stays truthful to Jones's translation, he disagrees with the way this is presented:

> Die Form aber, welche er diesem köstlichen und unschätzbaren Ueberreste altindischer Poesie gegeben hat, ist ihm nicht günstig gewesen. Er ist, wenn ich so sagen darf, eine epische Idylle geworden, nach deren Lesung (ich berufe mich auf das unbefangene Zeugniss jedes aufmerksamen Lesers) man nicht recht weis, was man daraus machen soll.
>
> [The form, however, that he [Jones] gave this delightful and invaluable remainder of old-Indian poetry, was not advantageous. It has become, if I may say so, an epic idyl. After reading it (I invoke the uninhibited judgment of any critical reader) one does not really know, what to make of it.][550]

He goes on to argue that only in its real form it can be truly interpreted. Its current 'unbeschreiblichen Schönheiten' [indescribable beauties] make the reader want to be able to see it in the original. Majer goes even further in his enthusiasm and states that 'nur heuchelnde Zeirerey oder blinde Unkenntniss des Menschlichen Natur, kann diese von jener, und nur thierische Rohheit jene von dieser trennen wollen.' [Only pretended affectedness or blind ignorance of human nature can keep this poem from its reader, and only animal brutality can keep the reader from the poem].[551] Despite the changed form of the poem, Majer is convinced of its beauty. Moreover, he makes a plea for the poem in its original shape, and thus indirectly for further study of Sanskrit poetry. Majer seeks to find in Indian poetry the source of all poetry, and the translations need to be as accurate as possible for him to reach this source.[552] It seems therefore that the time of domesticising poetry described in chapter 3 is over, and Jones's audience is ready for the exotic appearance of the original, particularly in Germany.

This interest in Jones and his Sanskrit studies is demonstrated above by the incredibly quick appearance of a German translation of *Sacontalá*. As interest in Indian studies increased in

[550] William Jones and Friedrich Majer, *Gita-Govinda : Ein Indisches Singspiel Von Jajadeva*, (Weimar: Verlag des Landes-Industrie-Comptoirs, 1802), p. 14.
[551] Ibid. p. 83.
[552] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 260.

Germany, the *Asiatic Researches* were also translated as a source for information. Although they were presented as the research of Sir William Jones, the volumes also included papers read by other members. Three volumes of *Abhandlungen über die Geschichte und Alterthümer […] Asiens* appeared in 1795 in Riga, with an introduction congratulating the members on the founding of their society. In the introduction the translator starts with a colonial commentary, stating that the institution of the Asiatick Society is proof of the fact:

> das doch nicht all Engländer in und ausser Europa bloß nach Reichthümern geizen sondern mancher auch noch den Drang seines Geistes zu befriedigen suchen, und seinen landsleuten in der Heimath […] Stoff zu neuen Untersuchungen und Auflösungen darbieten wolle.
>
> [That not all Englishmen in and outside of Europe strive solely for riches, but that some of them still attempt to satisfy the urge of their mind, and want to provide his countrymen at home matter for new researches and solutions.][553]

The diminishing interest in the work of Jones's and his colleagues setting in only two decades later, which not only led to Jones being forgotten, but also to German scholars developing as the heirs to Sanskrit studies, could ironically be linked to this reason. A discussion of the changes in the British rule in India at the start of the nineteenth century has been included in chapter 1.

As mentioned, Jones and his works remained influential in Germany, with his most famous reader being Goethe, who was so enamoured with *Sacontalá* that he wrote the following quatrain:

> Willst du die Blüthen des frühen, die Früchte des späteren Jahres,
> Willst du, was reizt und entzückt, willst du was sättigt und nährt,
> Willst du den Himmel, die Erde mit Einem Namen begreifen,
> Nenn ich, Sakontala, dich, und so ist Alles gesagt.
>
> [If you want the spring's blossoms and the fruits of the maturer year,
> What is seductive and creates joy, or what is satisfying and nourishing,
> If you want to encompass Heaven and Earth in one single name,

[553] D. Johann Friedrich Kleuker, 'Vorbericht', *Abhandlungen über die Geschichte und Alterthümer, die Künste, Wissenschaften und Literatur Asiens von Sir William Jones und andere Mitgliedern der im Jahre 1784 zu Calcutta in Indien errichteten gelehrten Gesellschaft,* I (1795), p. iii.

Then I name you, Sacontala, and everything is said.][554]

Not only did the subject matter of *Sacontalá* inspire Goethe, he also modelled the opening act of *Faust* after the opening act of *Sacontalá*, finding innovation in the Indian play. Franklin provides a clear overview of the influence *Sacontalá* had on Goethe in particular and German literature more generally in his chapter on the play.[555] It is clear that the responses presented in this chapter were moderate, compared to the further afterlife of *Sacontalá* in Germany. The effect of Jones's translations from Sanskrit and their laudatory reviews on English poets will be analysed in the next chapter.

4.4. Conclusion

Jones's Sanskrit studies and translations from Sanskrit are his most famous and have often been called his most influential works. Of his publications produced in India, *Sacontalá* has undoubtedly created the biggest impact on European literature. Its rapid publication in various editions, as well as its translation into other European languages alone are evidence of this fact. Although Jones's was not the first full literary translation from the Sanskrit, *Sacontalá* made a more lasting impression than Wilkins' *Bhagavat-Gita*.

When we consider the primary responses to *Sacontalá*, however, illustrated in this chapter by reviews and the paratexts in other editions and translations, this 'most influential' or 'most popular' translation of Jones's does not seem to receive a very different treatment in general from his earlier translation. Themes discussed in the previous chapter - the issue of forgeries, the lack of notes making the poetry inaccessible to the European reader, etc. - are also central themes in the reviews of *Sacontalá.* In addition to that, however, the narrative and style of *Sacontalá* seem to please more than the Arabic and Persian poetry Jones translated before ever did.

Sacontalá did however play a part in creating the start of a canon for Sanskrit literature in Europe. It was Jones's choice to translate this text that made it the first Sanskrit text to sweep across the European continent. Furthermore, the multiple publications of Wilkins' translation of the same story are evidence that *Sacontalá* was well known and popular, as the demand for more similar content was high.

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[554] Written in 1791, quoted in and translated by Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 251.

[555] Ibid. pp. 251-286.

The rapturous response Jones's Sanskrit translations received in Germany created a bigger impact than the work did in Britain, as Franklin has argued. Where in particular *Sacontalá* was read, appreciated, and re-printed in Britain, the German response was to use it as inspiration to create new works of poetry immediately. Chapter 5 will demonstrate that the place of *Sacontalá* and *Gitagóvinda* in later English literature are modest.

5. Future Poets: Jones in English Literature

5.1. Introduction

The previous two chapters have described how Jones worked to create a reading audience for eastern literature in the late eighteenth century. Supported by the previously existing taste for oriental tales, his translations attempted to take this fashion one step further. By making the original sources available, his translations provided a source for poets and authors to create new orientalist works, not just inspired by a taste for exoticism, but founded on true eastern poetry provided by Jones and his contemporaries.

This chapter will explore the works appearing in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that use Jones's translations as a source. Many of these cases have been noted in previous scholarship, but an overview of these works is lacking. In particular an analysis of the notes the authors add to their works, which show specifically which of Jones's works they use as sources, has not been previously included, although Hewitt already recognised in 1942 that these would provide a particularly fruitful source of understanding the influence of Jones on later poets.[556] By compiling this evidence in a literature review, this chapter will provide a full overview of authors building on Jones's work in their writing. This is limited to literature and poetry, creative writing, since academic studies are discussed to a degree in a previous chapter. Important sources for this overview include the studies by Moussa-Mahmoud and Mojumder, who have discussed Romantic authors influenced by Jones, but also more recent interpretations such as Watt.[557] Case studies have appeared throughout the twentieth century, providing short insights into the usage of a particular part of Jones's work by one author, such as Koeppel, Knox-Shaw, and Pachori.[558] Franklin has contributed to the understanding of Jones's reception not only by discussions throughout his work on Jones, in particular his biography, but also through his introductions in *Selected Poetical and Prose Works.*[559]

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[556] Hewitt, 'Harmonious Jones', p. 43.

[557] Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*.
Abu Taher Mojumder, *Sir William Jones, the Romantics, and the Victorians*, (Dacca: University Press, 1976).
Watt, *British Orientalisms, 1759-1835*.

[558] Emil Koeppel, 'Shelley's 'Queen Mab' Und Sir William Jones' 'Palace of Fortune'', *Englische Studien,* 33 (1900).
Peter Knox-Shaw, 'Vathek and 'the Seven Fountains' by Sir William Jones', *Notes and Queries,* 42 (1995).
Satya S. Pachori, 'Shelley's 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty and Sir William Jones', *The Comparatist,* 11 (1987).

[559] Franklin, 'Sir William Jones. Selected Poetical and Prose Works'.

Creating this overview of previous work will create a basis to recognise some larger trends in the reception of Jones's translations. Questions to be answered will be: what genre of literature made use of Jones's work? What are the most important themes to be used from Jones's translations? And which of Jones's works left the largest impact on later literature?

A step in between the translations and reception, however, will be discussed first, in the shape of Jones 'Hymns to Hindu deities.' These poems, modelled in the European form of the hymn, but filled with Hindu images, 'show [Jones] as a practitioner – rather than a theorist – of Romantic poetry.'[560] Not all scholars of Jones have agreed with this, Cannon for example argues that Jones's 'place in literature is as a Romantic precursor and source, not as an original poet', the discussion of these hymns will indeed prove that in writing them, Jones was creating the poetry he had argued for in his earlier work.[561] In the hymns, Jones provides an example of how his Indian researches could be used to create European poetry, and they serve as such in the notes to works of later Romantic poets.

The choice for the main four poets discussed in this chapter is based both on their place in previous scholarship on Jones, and on the differences in their respective use of his translations. The starting point of this overview is William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786), the only work included that is contemporary with Jones. Samuel Henley added notes to *Vathek* to improve its authenticity, and this tradition is followed by later Romantics, e.g. Byron, Southey, and Moore.[562] It is precisely this practice of adding notes that makes it possible to give a detailed analysis of the how, when, and why of the use of Jones's translations. *Vathek*, as the start of this tradition, will also form a starting point for the development of Jones as a literary influence. Moreover, *Vathek* is presented as a translation, placing it in the tradition of forged oriental tales Jones argued against, a more thorough discussion of which can be found in chapter 3. This juxtaposition makes this an interesting work to analyse in this context.

Robert Southey follows the tradition of the annotations in his poetry. His example is included since he was influenced by 'almost all Sir William Jones's original and translated works.'[563] This makes his work an important source for the distribution of interest in Jones's various translations. His *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) and *The Curse of Kehama* (1810), furthermore,

[560] Watt, *British Orientalisms, 1759-1835*, p. 140.

[561] Garland Cannon, 'Turkish and Persian Loans in English Literature', *Neophilologus,* 84 (2000), p. 290.

[562] Leask, 'Easts', p. 142.

[563] De Meester, *Oriental Influences in English Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 24.

both have oriental themes, but these are distributed like Jones's works: the earlier *Thalaba* has an Arabic theme, whereas *Kehama* in set in a Hindu context.

The final addition in this analysis of the development of Jones in the notes to poetry is the work of Alfred Tennyson. His *Locksley Hall* (1835) in particular meets the very end of the time scope set for this thesis, which makes his work particularly fit to be the endpoint of the survey. Finally, the poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley will be taken into account. Shelley is known to have purchased the full set of Jones's works in 1812 and therefore one can be fairly certain he was familiar with these works. Shelley features heavily in secondary literature on Jones's influence, but no clear overview of his various mentions is available. Since Shelley does not include notes to his works, the influence of Jones on his poetry needs to be analysed in a different way. In this case the analysis relies heavily on themes that the works of Shelley and Jones have in common.

5.2. Setting the example: Hymns to Hindu deities

While in India, between 1784 and 1788 Jones composed nine Hymns on Hindu mythology, based on his research and reading in Sanskrit. He had planned to write eighteen, but never finished this plan. The hymns appeared at various times, most of them in various volumes of *Asiatick Miscellany,* and were collated in the sixth volume of the 1799 *Works*, where they appeared in non-chronological order of appearance.[564] In following anthologies of Jones's poetries they are bundled together as his hymns.[565] They also find a place in the *New Oxford Book on Romantic Period Verse*, where McGann explains that, although they are not written in a romantic style, they deserve a place in this handbook, since they provided 'a major source of the romantic orientalism that flooded across the period.'[566] Added is that the hymns share this role with Jones's 'philological writings on Persian and Arabic materials', which have been discussed in chapters 2 and 3, and which do not receive a place in the handbook.[567] Although this distinction is not specified, the style of the hymns can be assumed its reason, as Jones's

[564] William Jones, *The Works of William Jones in Six Volumes, Vol. 6*, (London: G.G. and J. Robinson, and R.H. Evans, 1799), pp. 313-392.

[565] See 1.2.2. for an overview of such reprints.

[566] Jerome J. McGann, *The New Oxford Book of Romantic Period Verse*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. xxi.

The included texts are the hymns to Narayena, Indra, and Surya, as well as two pieces posthumously published in collected *Works*: 'Hymn to the Night' and a short translation from the Yayurveda.

[567] Ibid. p. xxi.

earlier works are grounded in a European classicism from which the Romantic period actively moves away. Moreover, the 'Hymn to Narayena' is the opening poem to the collection, because McGann considers the argument 'a worthy epigraph for a collection of Romantic poetry.'[568] In this argument, Jones describes his syncretic worldview that 'the whole *Creation* is rather *energy* than *work*', that inspired many of the other authors included in the anthology. Franklin argues that this two-page argument is even 'in itself a seminal document in the history of Romanticism', in that it supplements the 'Essay on the Arts commonly called Imitative' by adding insights into the philosophy of the Hindus.[569]

The first of the hymns, 'Hymn to Camdeo' was written in 1784 and published in England together with Jones's opening address to the Asiatick Society and his first charge to the grand jury.[570] In the argument to the hymn, Jones creates the connection between various Hindu and Greek gods, such as Krishen and the nine Gopia being similar to Apollo and the nine muses.[571] The eponymous god transcribed by Jones as Camdeo (or Cám and Cáma, currently transcribed as Kamadeva) is a god who makes mortals fall in love with his bow and arrow, is likened by Jones with the Roman Cupido and Greek Eros.

Although Jones does not imply this in the accompanying argument, the hymn is mistakenly called a translation when it is published in London. Reviews show that the work is appreciated for its exotic beauty, but that Jones's inclusion of many unfamiliar mythological names diminished this response.

Burney, in his review for the *Monthly Review* calls it 'a charming performance', that 'will equally delight the admirers of genuine and elegant poetry, and the lovers of eastern allegory.'[572] In these qualifications Jones's goals come together: he is producing poetry fit for the European reader that normalises the use of eastern imagery and mythology.

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[568] Ibid. p. xxii.

[569] Franklin, 'Sir William Jones. Selected Poetical and Prose Works', p. 104.

[570] Jones, *A Discourse on the Institution of a Society for Enquiring into the History, Civil and Natural, the Antiquities, Arts, Sciences, and Literature of Asia, Delivered at Calcutta, January 15th, 1784 : A Charge to the Grand Jury at Calcutta, December 4th, 1783: And a Hymn to Camdeo, Translated from the Hindu into Persian, and from the Persian into English*.

[571] Jones, *The Works of William Jones in Six Volumes, Vol. 6*, p. 313.

[572] Charles Burney, 'Review: Sir W. Jones's Discourse on the Institution of a Society, &C.', *Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 71 (1784), p. 357.

In *Gentleman's Magazine* the reviewer gives a similar impression of the hymn, stating that 'it gives us a very favourable idea of the poetry and allegories of the East.'[573] Both cite the first two stanzas, and in the *Gentleman's Magazine* the last one is included as well; those are notably not the most inundated with the various names of the Hindu gods, as the sixth and seventh stanzas are. This practice is evidence for the analysis De Sola Pinto gives of Jones's 'Hymns to Hindu gods'. He claims the legends Jones describes in his hymns are 'too intricate and remote' to be appreciated by a Western reader.[574] In particular she mentions 'the numerous exotic proper names', which were unfamiliar not only as mythological characters, but also in their appearance and pronunciation, and presented an unsurmountable 'stumbling block to the uninitiated.'[575] This is congruent with the exclusion of the most name-heavy stanzas of the poem, but it also explains why all reviewers find it necessary to equate Camdeo with 'the Grecian Eros and the Roman Cupido' in their introduction to the poem, as Jones does himself in the prefixed 'argument'.[576]

This analysis is most clearly proven by the third review of the 'Hymn to Camdeo.' In this review, published in the *English Review*, no parts of the poem are cited, but an excerpt from the 'argument'.[577] This practice matches with the overall judgement of the hymn as described in the review. The reviewer interprets the hymn not as an esthetically pleasing poem, but as a source for understanding the East. Much like responses to the *Moallakát* analysed in chapter 3, the reviewer states that 'it does not appear to us, that the poetry of this piece is very excellent; but it illustrates eastern manners, and on that account is exceedingly curious.'[578] It is clear from these responses that the hymn is valued by the reviewer as an insight into eastern culture, which is also apparent from the excerpt cited, but not appreciated for its poetic value. The other reviews, although more laudatory, hint at this interpretation as well by the stanzas they choose to include. All three reviews describe Jones's reputation as a celebrated scholar and emphasise the important knowledge that will emanate from the Asiatic Society, proving

[573] [Anon.], 'Impartial and Critical Review of New Publications 9', *The Gentleman's Magazine: and Historical Chronicle,* 55 (1785), p. 51.

[574] De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', p. 693.

[575] Ibid. p. 693.

[576] The full first paragraph is included.

[577] [Anon.], 'Review: Sir William Jones's *Discourse to the Asiatic Society*', *English Review, or, An Abstract of English and Foreign Literature,* 5 (1785), p. 39.

[578] Ibid. p. 39.

that their most important reason for reading and reviewing this work is the dissemination of knowledge about the East.

In his review of 'The Hymn to Narayena,' Parsons concludes the poem itself is 'very poetically conceived, and vigorously, as well as elegantly, expressed.'[579] He praises it for its combination of Indian and classical elements, however, and not necessarily for its presentation of Indian fables, which are 'sometimes perhaps obscure and uninteresting, and inseparably connected with names which are harsh and inharmonious to an European ear.'[580] This opinion is illustrated by the excerpts he chooses to include; the second and sixth stanzas, which are printed, include only 'Brehm' and 'Maya', whereas other parts of the poem, in particular the fourth and fifth stanzas, are littered with obscure names, which are not all explained in the preceding 'argument.' The introductions Parsons include to either stanza explain his choice in the light of providing a connection between the hymn and classical philosophy, in particular Plato, and therefore catering to a classically trained and interested audience. In the review for *The Critical Review* the same choice is made: the second and third stanzas are included, as well as the sixth.[581] It is added that the 'Hymn to Narayena' was 'the poetry which has pleased us most, by its varied splendour and beauty,' earning a special mention from the other contributions in the volume.[582] That the 'Hymn to Narayena' is indeed better received than the 'Hymn to Sereswaty,' which is included in the same volume, is clear from the continuation of the reviews.

In the second part of his review, Parsons discusses the 'Hymn to Sereswaty' and repeats the same point of emphasis: his introduction is copied from Jones's 'argument' without acknowledging this, and only includes the comparison of Sereswaty with Minerva Musica. He utters 'the same objection' to the hymn as previously made to the 'Hymn to Narayena': 'the frequent recurrence of Indian names, and allusions to Indian mythology, however harmonious, and however beautiful they might be to the orientalist, certainly have a tendency to lessen the general effect.'[583] The stanzas he includes are the first two, because they

[579] Parsons, 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*, Nos I and Ii', p. 417.

[580] Ibid. p. 418.

[581] [Anon.], 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*', *The Critical Review, or, Annals of Literature,* 63 (1787), pp. 267-268.

[582] Ibid. pp. 266-267.

[583] John Parsons, 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*, No Ii', *The Monthly Review, or, Literary Journal,* 76 (1787), p. 481.

describe 'the influence of music on the passions, as well as the passions themselves, […] very elegantly and poetically,' which not only illustrates Parsons' interest in the philosophy and poetics in Jones's work, but also allows him, again, to avoid the later stanzas, filled with names of Indian deities.[584]

The reviewer in the *Critical Review* concludes about the entire volume of the *Asiatic Miscellany*, not just the hymns, that 'it does not appear to be the design of the contributors of the original pieces, to introduce European ideas: the whole is Asiatic. […] The separate works are very different from what we commonly meet with, in their images, the metaphors, and the descriptions: they are sufficiently Asiatic to be pleasing and new; […] if they are not wholly eastern, they are something better.'[585] Especially this final comparison is poignant, since this sums up what Jones attempted to achieve. By introducing Asian elements, he stimulates the production of poetry that is not only 'pleasing', but most importantly 'new.' The aim was never to create 'wholly Eastern' poetry, but to incorporate those images and metaphors into European poetry, to make it 'something better.'

I would argue that these hymns are an example of Jones practicing what he preaches: he has studied Sanskrit and Hindu mythology and from these experiences, he creates new poetry. This is not just inspired by eastern poetry, but also by European examples such as Milton, Pope and the Bible, working towards a rejuvenated and syncretic new type of poetry.[586]

The combining of European and Indian traditions is recognised by Parsons, reviewing for the *Monthly Review*, who states:

> it [the Hymn to Narayena] is entitled not only to the praise of the Oriental scholar, but to the candid admiration of those classical students, who listen with delight to the philosophical fables of Ovid, or the elegant mythology of Callimachus; whom the perusal of the Choral Ode transports on the wings of fancy to the spacious theatres of Athens; and who gaze with rapture at the flights of the Dircean Swan, while he soars into regions beyond the ken of vulgar mortals.'[587]

Close reading of this review causes me to disagree with Franklin, who summarises this review as 'most favourabl[e].'Franklin, 'Sir William Jones. Selected Poetical and Prose Works', p. 113.

[584] Parsons, 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*, No Ii', pp. 481-482.

[585] [Anon.], 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*', p. 266.

[586] De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', p. 692.

[587] Parsons, 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*, Nos I and Ii', p. 418.

In the *Critical Review* a similar observation is made when analysing why the quoted stanzas are 'highly sublime':

> the effect, on a little reflection, will appear to arise from the splendour of eastern mythology, joined to the majestic energy of Milton; which is, perhaps, somewhat lessened by the measure of the ode.[588]

It is the combination of the Indian subject matter and the familiarity in the form that lead the reviewer to the conclusion of the sublime poetry. The use of the form of the Pindaric ode, which the reviewer seems to find one of the less attractive attributes of the poem, is an important feature of Jones's strategy. Since the ode was a popular verse form this makes the hymn more recognizable in its familiar neoclassicism.[589] These therefore are a great example of eastern influences mixing with European poetry to create a new genre of combining the form of the Pindaric ode, which was a style in which religious poetry was presented, and expressing not Christian, but Hindu content.[590] Teltscher argues that this combination was meant to incorporate Indian culture in the shape of a classical ideal.[591] This would create a way to present the European reader with Indian imagery in an understandable and palatable manner.

In his analysis of the hymns, Majeed distinguishes three common threads: the theme of creation, but quite contrary also that of aggressive and martial imagery.[592] Most poignantly, however, he analyses the imagery of fountains and springs present in the various hymns as metaphors for the desire of Jones and his colleagues to 'tap the sources of a pure "orient knowledge."'[593] In this sense the content of the odes is working together with its formal shape to propagate the message of oriental inspiration. Leask adds to this that 'the *Hymns* celebrated the rejuvenation of Hindu culture as a British initiative.'[594] As Majeed's interpretation argues as well, the British are encouraged to make use of the freely flowing

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[588] [Anon.], 'Review: *The Asiatic Miscellany*', p. 267.

[589] Leask, 'Easts', pp. 141-142.

[590] Stuart Curran, *Poetic Form and British Romanticism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 57-58. Curran presents the example of the 'Hymn to Durga', as 'remarkable' because it 'testifies to a combined awareness of religious connotations of the triad (both Christian and Indian) and of the symmetry appropriate to the Pindaric ode.' p. 58.

[591] Kate Teltscher, *India Inscribed : European and British Writing on India, 1600-1800*, (Delhi ; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 208.

[592] Majeed, *Ungoverned Imaginings : James Mill's "The History of British India" And Orientalism*, pp. 36-38.

[593] Ibid. p. 37.

[594] Leask, 'Easts', pp. 141-142.

waters of Hindu culture to create the availability of these sources for themselves and the rest of the world.

In these hymns a similar approach can be recognised to some of the poems in the volume *Poems*. 'The Seven Fountains', 'Solima', and 'The Palace of Fortune' also exist as a compilation of Jones's reading of originals, but they are imitations, as described in chapter 3. The biggest difference to Jones's earlier approach is, however, that in *Poems* both the translations and the imitations are catering to Jones's audience. They are dometicised, or 'culturally translated' to fit the taste of their audience, and to secure their understanding. This is not the case with the hymns: their many exotic names are completely foreign, and the argument helps only a little, as can be seen in the reviews. The only thing domesticised about these poems is the choice of form, as religious hymns are an existing genre in English poetry, and the Pindaric ode fits the taste of the time. De Sola Pinto therefore concludes about the Hymns that 'Jones's bold attempt to naturalize Hindu mythology in English poetry failed.'[595] This seems too harsh a conclusion, when considering not only the appreciative remarks in the reviews, but also the way in which the hymns are used by later authors, as will be discussed below.

5.3. Following the example: Jones's work in Romantic notes

5.3.1. Influenced by Jones's early work: Beckford's *Vathek*

In 1786 the first English edition appeared of *An Arabian Tale, from an unpublished Manuscript*, henceforth *Vathek,* as it is usually referred to after the name of its protagonist and its French title.[596] The tale was originally written in French, but was translated and accompanied by notes by the reverend Samuel Henley. Although called a translation 'from an unpublished Manuscript', this is not a translation, but an orientalist story created by William Beckford, who does not appear on the original title page.[597]

This type of forged 'translation' was popular during the eighteenth century, which Jones actively attempted to counter, as discussed in chapter 3. Jones's response to the appearance of these orientalist tales was to provide the English readership with original oriental translations, in particular in his *Poems*, where he makes his purpose of opposing forgeries

[595] De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', p. 693.

[596] William Beckford, *An Arabian Tale, from an Unpublished Manuscript: With Notes Critical and Explanatory*, (London: printed for J. Johnson, in St. Paul's Church-Yard, and entered at the Stationers' Hall, 1786).

[597] For a recent biography of Beckford, with a focus on his Oriental studying and writing, see Laurent Chatel, *William Beckford : The Elusive Orientalist*.

explicit. *Vathek*, however, stands both in this literary tradition of forgery, or exoticised oriental tales, and takes his inspiration from Jones, who argues against this type of work. De Meester argues that it 'forms a link between this century and the next' in the way it re-established interest in eastern literature, in the shape of the oriental tale, which was popular in the eighteenth century, but also in how Beckford found information in actual oriental research and translations, the way Jones promoted and the Romantics of the nineteenth century worked.[598] The addition of notes was meant to improve the authenticity of the story.[599] As Jones's works were omnipresent in these notes, as will be shown in the following analysis, this had the additional effect of Jones's fame spreading further among the readers of *Vathek*.[600] In the references on the works of the other authors to be discussed, these works indeed appear side by side.

The theme and content of *Vathek* is often compared with 'The Seven Fountains, An Eastern Allegory', one of the imitations Jones included in his *Poems*.[601] In 'The Seven Fountains', the allegory in which was in turn inspired by the story of Prince Agib from the *Arabian Nights*, a young man opens six golden doors to sensory pleasures, only to discover true religion behind the seventh. The Caliph Vathek's quest for pleasure is compared to the narrative of this poem by Franklin.[602] Furthermore, Knox-Shaw has analysed the opening of *Vathek* as 'bear[ing] a striking resemblance to a narrative poem from Jones's volume of 1772', i.e. 'The Seven Fountains', and he recognises that the parallel is indeed embedded in the structure of the whole work.[603] Knox-Shaw claims this is a story on which Henley repeatedly draws in the notes to the work.[604] Although Jones's *Poems* is indeed mentioned in the notes, 'The Seven Fountains' are not explicitly credited as a source by Henley.

The notes are an interesting addition to the work, creating a context of 'research' against the idea of a forgery the fake translation might at first glance provoke. Although they are not added by Beckford himself, they do provide an insight into the attempts to embed the story into the emerging research and translations of the time. Therefore, a close examination of

[598] De Meester, *Oriental Influences in English Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 20-21.

[599] Leask, 'Easts', p. 143.

[600] Mojumder, *Sir William Jones, the Romantics, and the Victorians*, p. 14.

[601] E.g. Knox-Shaw, 'Vathek and 'the Seven Fountains' by Sir William Jones'. Cf. Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 78.

[602] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 78.

[603] Knox-Shaw, 'Vathek and 'the Seven Fountains' by Sir William Jones'.

[604] Ibid.

which of Jones's works are mentioned, and particularly, what information they are thought to provide, gives an insight into the way in which Jones's translations are used as sources in later literature.

Jones and his works are mentioned and quoted a total of twenty-four times. He finds a place between a broad scope of sources, ranging from classical authors such as Herodotus and Virgil, to holy books, the Koran and the Bible, to oriental tales and orientalist research, like the *Arabian Nights* or d'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque orientale*. Jones is mentioned by name several times, but his works are also referred to just by their title, especially *Moallakát*, showing the renown the work had gathered in the few short years since it had been published (four years before *Vathek*). Moreover, the authors Jones translates are mentioned as sources, with an excerpt from Jones's translation included. All these mentions are evidence of the domesticisation of these authors and works, needing no further introduction; Henley mentions and quotes Virgil, Milton, Petrarch and Mesihi in the same way.

Jones's translations are used to create a context and provide evidence for certain oriental customs that are described in the text of *Vathek*. In most cases, this information is provided in the shape of an excerpt describing the same theme as the text, such as a note on the horsemanship of the Arabs being accompanied by paragraphs 46-49 of 'The Poem of Amriolkais' from the *Moallakát*, or paragraphs 15-16 from 'The Poem of Tarafa' providing information about camels.[605] It is, however, not only factual information about Arabia, that would be unknown to the reader and therefore possibly hard to believe without evidence, that is referenced in the notes. Metaphors used are also provided with proof that these are regular in eastern poetry. For example, the comparison of the skin of a woman to ivory or ostrich eggs is given two excerpts to ensure the reader that this is an acceptable reference.[606] Both these examples are taken from *Moallakát*, from the poems of 'Amriolkais', paragraphs 29-30, and 'Amru', paragraph 15.

Henley's engagement with Jones's texts goes further than providing examples for metaphors or customs in *Vathek*, he engages with the texts in a more critical manner as well, comparing instances when a certain topic is described across literatures. The most elaborate example is

[605] Beckford, *An Arabian Tale, from an Unpublished Manuscript: With Notes Critical and Explanatory*, pp. 298, 314-315.

[606] Ibid. pp. 277-278.

on the topic of hair and its metaphorical descriptions.[607] Jones is introduced as the authority on the poetry of Hafez and Jami, when he is quoted about the fact that the image of 'a breeze playing with the tresses of a beautiful girl' is used often in their poetry. This is a literal quote from the preface to *Poems*, but is not mentioned as such.[608] Henley goes on to include further examples of imagery to do with hair from various languages, Hebrew, Italian, Arabic, and all are borrowed from Jones's work in different places. Petrarch's sonnet 227 is given as another example, which Jones uses on the same page of his preface to *Poems* to point out the similarities between Persian poetry and Petrarch's sonnets.[609] Furthermore, Jones is credited with interpreting the 'cluster of grapes' from 'Song of Songs' 1:14 as hair, as he describes in his *Commentarii*.[610] Henley includes the Hebrew, which is also present in *Commentarii*, and which the King James Bible translates as 'a cluster of camphire', rather than a bunch of grapes. Jones thus becomes the expert, his interpretation overruling the common translation and functioning as an important part of the comparison Henley presents. And an example from the 'Poem of Amriolkais', paragraph 33 is included, in which hair is described as 'bunches of dates clustering on the palm-tree,' further consolidating the discussion of metaphors for hair as bunches of fruit.

Although this elaborate example shows interaction with many of Jones's translations and their paratexts, their share in the notes is not equal. The *Moallakát* is used most often, with seventeen notes containing excerpts from the various poems, or mentioning them.[611] Within this work, 'The Poem of Amriolkais' is used most, and only 'The Poem of Hareth' gets no mention at all. In addition to the examples from the preface discussed above, three poems from *Poems* are included. In line with the responses discussed in chapter 3, since they are the

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[607] Ibid. p. 276-277.

[608] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. v.

[609] Ibid. p. v.

Henley quotes this sonnet as number CXCI [191]. Beckford, *An Arabian Tale, from an Unpublished Manuscript: With Notes Critical and Explanatory*, p. 277.

[610] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 91: 'Racemus uvarum dilectus meus mihi | in hortis Eingedi.' [My love is like a bunch of grapes in the gardens of Engedi].

[611] There is only one note that mentions a poem from the *Moallakát* without including a quote (Beckford, *An Arabian Tale, from an Unpublished Manuscript: With Notes Critical and Explanatory*, p. 319, mentions 'Tarafa'); all other instances contain at least part of a paragraph, but usually full paragraphs, to provide examples of their topics mentioned in real Arabic poetry.

only two 'real' translations in the volume, the translations of Mesihi and Hafez are used as sources.[612] When Henley includes one short quote from 'Solima' he does emphasise that this is 'an eclogue made up of Eastern images', rather than a translation or original text like most of his other sources.[613] The least mentions gets Jones's *Commentarii*, although this has the most elaborate discussion of eastern figures and metaphors, and would therefore have presented a valuable source.

Analysing the notes appended to *Vathek* provides an important insight into how Jones's works were being used. The majority of the notes are meant to provide information about customs mentioned in the text of the book, giving brief explanations, but mostly providing evidence for the existence of these customs that would be foreign and even incomprehensible to the English reader. Jones's *Commentarii* provide a wealth of knowledge and explanations of exactly those topics, but these are not the source Henley turns to. The *Moallakát* was judged to be incomprehensible and too foreign by its reviewers, as has been discussed in chapter 3 where the first responses to the work have been analysed. Appearing without notes, the poems were deemed hard to appreciate. As a source for Arabic customs, however, they provide exactly those examples needed to prove the plausibility of the narrative. The poem that lent *Vathek* part of its narrative structure, and that is recognised in the story by critics, 'The Seven Fountains', gets no mention in the notes.[614] *Poems* in general is cited little, which leads to the conclusion that the paraphrase translations and imitations were too domesticised to provide the authentic oriental information Henley was looking for. What put off its first readers in *Moallakát* was what made it so useful as a source.

[612] Henley chooses to quote from both different versions of Mesihi, both the metaphrase and paraphrase. The choice for the paraphrase translation of the final stanza is a strange one: it is inserted in a discussion of the 'nightingale and rose' trope in eastern literature, Ibid. pp. 286-287. Jones's metaphrase translation includes exactly those terms, 'Thou art a nightingale with a sweet voice, O Mesihi, when thou walkest with the damsels, whose cheeks are like roses' (Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. 113). The paraphrase translation, however, reads 'Thyself the rose, and He the bird of spring' (Ibid.) The explanation could be that in the paraphrase translation the two terms are more clearly juxtaposed, and therefore fit Henley's purpose better.

[613] Beckford, *An Arabian Tale, from an Unpublished Manuscript: With Notes Critical and Explanatory*, p. 275.

[614] Despite claims by Knox-Shaw, 'Vathek and 'the Seven Fountains' by Sir William Jones'.

5.3.2. 'A waste of ornament': Southey's *Thalaba* and *Kehama*

Robert Southey was most inspired by oriental sources for his two works *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) and *The Curse of Kehama* (1810). De Meester argues that he was influenced by 'almost all Sir William Jones's original and translated works' and that this is demonstrated by his notes.[615] As will be shown below, Jones does indeed play a role in these notes, and information from the full range of his works is mentioned and used, which means Southey was familiar with Jones's works, most likely from the 1799 edition of the collected *Works*. Warren states Southey had read Jones's translations in a version of *Poems*, but as the analysis below will show, this is the only work that Southey refrains from quoting.[616] The number of notes based on his works, and with those the exact influence on Southey, however, is smaller than De Meester implies.

The themes for the two poems are different and that shows in the notes used. The twelve books of *Thalaba* deal with Arabic themes, and therefore draw on some of Jones's early works. Watt even goes as far as to call it a 'response to Jones.'[617] Like *Vathek*, the notes of *Thalaba* contain a number of quotes from the *Moallakát*: five notes use excerpts from this work to provide background information, from four different poems in the collection.[618] They are included, as in *Vathek*, to provide evidence for certain aspects of the poem existing in the Arabic world, such as colouring the fingers with henna, or visual deception in the desert because of the sunlight.[619] It is, however, not only this type of factual information that is taken from Jones's poems. Southey uses the poems to inspire his poetical language, as is seen in his note quoting 'The Poem of Antara', paragraph 29, to give evidence for the existence of 'an Arabian expression from the Moallakat': 'large-headed Screamer of the night'.[620] Similarly, a discussion of the use of the metaphor of 'pearls of Poesy', includes multiple quoted from Jones's works.[621] Alongside two examples from Jonathan Scott's translation of *Bahar Danush*

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[615] De Meester, *Oriental Influences in English Literature of the Nineteenth Century*, p. 24.

[616] Andrew Warren, 'The Orient and the Young Romantics', (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 84.

[617] Watt, *British Orientalisms, 1759-1835*, p. 10.

[618] These are the poems of Amriolkais, Tarafa, Hareth, and Antara appears twice.

[619] Robert Southey, *Thalaba the Destroyer: A Rhythmical Romance*, (Boston: T.B. Wait and Co.: Charles Williams, 1812), vol 1, p. 156 includes Amriolkais 37 about tinged fingers; vol 1, p. 215 has Tarafa 42 which mentions the distorted view of men appearing larger.

[620] Ibid. p. 166.

[621] Ibid. pp. 150-151.

(1799), which give examples of the metaphor as part of the literary work, the two excerpts from Jones include both translation and a short part of his commentary. In the *Commentarii*, Jones claims that 'Illi [i.e. Persae] pulcherrima usi translatione, pro *versus facere* dicunt *margaritas nectere*' [The Persians use a most beautiful metaphor: instead of 'writing verses' they say 'thread pearls'].[622] The quoted distich from Ferdusi to illustrate this point is also included by Southey. Southey's examples end with an excerpt from the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', in which Jones quotes 'Abu Temam' (Abu Tammam).[623] The *Commentarii* are quoted twice more, both containing verses from Hafez translated into Latin, illustrating the way in which wine is described in Persian poetry.[624]

These examples show that Southey had read Jones's works, and had studied them in detail, to be able to use their most detailed examples in constructing a poem as authentically oriental as possible. The notes taken from Jones's work, however, are only a very small part of the vast body of notes appended to *Thalaba*.

A similar picture can be created from examining *The Curse of Kehama*. In the preface to his *Curse of Kehama*, Southey describes a similar method to Jones's when writing this work: 'The story is original; but, in all its parts, consistent with the superstition upon which it is built.'[625] This 'superstition' is 'the religion of the Hindoos', and Southey displays knowledge of this religion based on his own reading. He addresses the issue Jones has been battling with his translations, the 'obvious objection that the religion of Hindostan is not generally known enough to supply fit machinery for an English poem', but also provides the answer to these objections: 'if every allusion to it throughout the work is not sufficiently self-explained to render the passage intelligible, there is a want of skill in the poet.'[626] If Southey's idea is to be believed, there was indeed 'want of skill' in Jones as a poet, since previously discussed reactions to his translations show that these were not 'sufficiently self-explained' to be appreciated. Their appearance thirty years earlier, however, must play a large role. The English

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[622] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 22.

[623] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, p. 186.

[624] Southey, *Thalaba the Destroyer: A Rhythmical Romance*. II:36, quotes from Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, pp. 151-152 and pp. 220.

[625] Robert Southey, *The Curse of Kehama: a Poem in Two Volumes*, (New York: David Longworth, 1811), p. iii.

[626] Ibid. p. iv.

reader has since been inundated with eastern poetry and their frame of reference has been extended largely since the publication of the misunderstood *Moallakát*.

Moreover, the claim of self-evidence seems to be in contrast to the large quantity of notes included. Watt even argues that Southey's overwhelming notes and wide range of sources, led to a feeling of otherness in its readers rather than a recognition of the beauty of oriental influence.[627]

Where Southey in *Thalaba* exclusively used Jones's early works, for *Kehama* Jones's writing from India forms part of the inspiration. These take their place alongside a vast number of sources and authors, many describing historical and social information rather than poetical examples. Amongst a large range of sources, such as Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, and the *Bhagavat-Geeta*, the *Asiatic Researches* is a source often quoted, from papers by Jones and his colleagues. Franklin has stated that is was precisely this journal that influenced Western thinking about India, and which helped place it 'at the centre of European romanticism.'[628] The information used from this journal ascribed to Jones, is mostly connected to his descriptions of the Hindu gods, taken from his explanations of, for example, Indra, Nared or Yama.[629] In the same vain, his Hymns to Hindu deities are used to provide context for their characters: the argument to the 'Hymn to Camdeo' accompanies two verses from this poem, to explain that this is the god the Romans call Cupid, and Southey declares his indebtedness to Jones for the fable of 'The birth of Ganges', which is described in book ten.[630]

Of Jones's translations, it is the *Institutes of Menu* that is cited most frequently, providing a background for customs and rules described in *Kehama*. Southey includes what he calls 'one of the few sublime [passages] in his institutes' to show Menu's exhortations to stay true to oneself, in an attempt to make a witness speak.[631] His poetical translations, *Sacontalá* and *Gita-Govinda* are both mentioned, albeit *Gita-Govinda* only once and *Sacontalá* three times. These excerpts are not used for their poetic value, however, but again to explain certain names or customs, such as in the dialogue between Dushmanta and Matali discussing mount Hémacúta at the start of the seventh act (Southey: Himakoot).[632]

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[627] Watt, 'Orientalism and Hebraism', p. 683.

[628] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 206.

[629] Southey, *The Curse of Kehama: a Poem in Two Volumes,* vol 1, p. 158; vol. 1, p. 173; vol. 2, p. 169.

[630] Ganges: Ibid. p. 102-103 & note pp. 185-186. And Camdeo: p. 204.

[631] Ibid. p. 210.

[632] Ibid. pp. 156-157.

Comparing Southey's use of Jones and other sources to that displayed in *Vathek*, the most poignant difference is not in what is being used, but how the sources and translations are applied. In *Vathek*, as discussed, Jones's texts are as regularly included to provide an example for metaphorical language, as they are for the existence of certain eastern places or customs. Southey however applied a method that could be called almost scholarly. He finds evidence in his sources to explain the use of the names of deities or customs, but his use of poetic language is English rather than oriental. This can be explained by his attitude towards eastern poetry, which he expresses in the notes to *Thalaba*:

> A waste of ornament and labour characterises all the works of the Orientalists. […] The little of their literature that has reaches us is equally worthless. Our *barbarian* scholars have called Ferdusi the Oriental Homer. We have a specimen of his poem; the translation is said to be bad, and certainly must be unfaithful, for it is in rhyme; but the vilest copy of a picture at least represents the subject and the composition. To make this the Iliad of the East, as they have sacrilegiously styled it, a good poem, would be realizing the dreams of alchemy, and transmuting lead into gold.[633]

The '*barbarian* scholar' (original emphasis) who equated Ferdusi to Homer is Jones, rather implicitly in *Poems* and literally in *Commentarii.* He makes the following comparison between the two in the chapter on epic poetry:

> Nobilissimum inter ea [i.e. poemata Ferdusii] … est sine ulla dubitatione vere epicum; et profecto nullum est ab Europaeis scriptum poema, quod ad Homeri dignitatem et quasi coelestem ardorem propius accedat.
>
> [The most remarkable of these poems is without any doubt truly epic; and there really has been no poem written by Europeans, that approaches Homer's dignity and almost divine passion.][634]

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[633] Southey, *Thalaba the Destroyer: A Rhythmical Romance*, p. 39

[634] Jones, *Poeseos Asiaticae Commentariorum Libri sex, Cum Appendice; Subjicitur Limon, Seu Miscellaneorum Liber*, p. 294.
Jones compares Ferdusi even more literally with Homer in the summary of the chapters, stating '*Ferdusi* poeta vere epicus, et *Homeri* proximus.' [Ferdusi is truly an epic poet, and comes close to Homer] p. xxvii.
In *Poems*, however, he makes it clear that he would never want to equate another poet to Homer, whose quality is it impossible to equal: 'A great profusion of learning has been thrown away by some critics, in comparing *Homer* with the heroick poets, who have succeeded him; but it requires very little judgement to see, that no succeeding poet whatever can with any propriety be compared with *Homer* […] for which reason I am far from pretending to assert that the poet of *Persia* is equal to that of *Greece*; but there is certainly a very real resemblance between the works of those extraordinary men.' Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations*

Southey clearly disagrees with Jones on comparing the quality of eastern and western poetry.[635] As previously discussed, however, this poses no barriers for using his works, or that of the other 'barbarian' orientalists, who have translated the 'worthless' literature from the East. As his generous use of them implies, Southey's problem is not with oriental stories, but with the style and metaphors, that are too elaborate and 'a waste of ornament.' He confirms this analysis in his remarks about the *Arabian Nights*: 'The Arabian Tales certainly abound with genius: they have lost their metaphorical rubbish in passing through the filter of a French translation.'[636] For Southey the domesticising influence of translation made eastern literature more attractive, rather than less genuine.

5.3.3. An English Amriolkais: Tennyson's *Locksley Hall*

That Tennyson took some inspiration from Jones is not surprising, when considering Jones is listed as one of the authors he read most in his formative years.[637] He learned Persian himself, and it is likely that he did so using Jones's *Persian Grammar*.[638] This reading led not only to Jones receiving several mentions in the notes to Tennyson's poems, but also to the claim 'that Sir William Jones' prose translation of the *Moallakát* […] gave him the idea for the poem [*Locksley Hall*].'[639] The poem indeed shows a resemblance to the narrative of the 'Poem of Amriolkais', in which a young man asks his friends to wait a while, so he can sit and reminisce about his past loves. Similarly, *Locksley Hall* starts with the request to be left behind to contemplate the past and future. Jones provided a prose translation of the poems in the *Moallakát*, but appended a transliteration of the Arabic. De Meester argues that *Locksley Hall*

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from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative, p. 195.

I have argued that Jones includes these comparisons to provide the European reader, unfamiliar with these texts as their first translations appear in the 1770s, with a contextualising framework, rather than stating they are to be perceived as the same, as Southey seems to protest against here. Cf. Janssen, 'Comparison as Context in Sir William Jones's Translations of Eastern Literature'.

[635] Brown describes him as being 'particularly incensed' at Jones; Wallace Cable Brown, 'Robert Southey and English Interest in the near East', *ELH,* 5 (1938), p. 220.

[636] Southey, *Thalaba the Destroyer: A Rhythmical Romance*, p. 39.

[637] Hallam Tennyson, *Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 16. Jones is in good company, as some of Tennyson's other favourites are Shakespeare, Milton, Burke, Goldsmith, Rabelais, Addison, Swift, Defoe, and Cervantes.

[638] Mojumder, *Sir William Jones, the Romantics, and the Victorians*, p. 68.

[639] Tennyson, *Alfred, Lord Tennyson: A Memoir*, p. 195.

is not only inspired by the content of the poem, but indeed also adapts the meter and rhyme from the original.[640]

Notes to some of Tennyson's other poems also show engagement with Jones's work on a smaller scale. Jones is quoted in several notes to *Poems by Two Brothers* (1827).[641]

In this collection of poems is included 'The Expedition of Nadir Shah into Hindostan.' The subject matter is obviously linked to Jones's translation of the biography of Nadir Shah, but moreover Tennyson mentions this work in the notes to the poem. In particular Tennyson gives examples of the epithets used in the poem, to explain the choice he makes in the poem to call Nadir Shah the 'Monarch of Nations.'[642]

Another poem based on a completely different, and much later work by Jones, is 'Love.' In the second part of the poem Cupid/Camdeo is addressed in both these guises, Roman and Indian. The poem describes the exotic eastern surroundings, and ends with a stanza fully based on the 'Hymn of Camdeo', which is cited in the accompanying note.[643] A comparison of the first line of these stanzas shows this is not just a case of being inspired by the example, but of Tennyson re-writing it:

> Jones - 'He bends the luscious cane and twists the string | With bees how sweet'
>
> Tennyson – 'Thy fragrant bow of cane thy bendest | Twanging the string of honey'd bees'

Finally, several of Jones's works are also included in the notes to 'Thou camest to the bower, my love'. Tennyson explains that he has used Jones's works 'on eastern plants' to inspire the information on the 'Himsagar.' Furthermore, he admits to using a simile from *Gita-govinda*.[644]

After the previous examples, it is clear that Tennyson's use of Jones is much more implicit than that of Southey and Beckford, showing the development away from the explicit mention of authenticity and research, and towards a more natural incorporation of eastern images.

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[640] Marie E. de Meester, 'Oriental Influences in the English Literature of the Early Nineteenth Century', (Heidelberg : Winter, 1915), pp. 52-53

[641] De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', p. 693. Cf. Cannon, 'Turkish and Persian Loans in English Literature', p. 294.

[642] Alfred Tennyson, *Poems by Two Brothers [Facsimile of First Edition]*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1893), p. 80.

[643] Ibid. p. 208.

[644] Ibid. pp. 165-166.

5.3.4. Fortuna & Queen Mab: Shelley's intertextual syncretism

De Sola Pinto has made the bold claim that Percy Bysshe Shelley, coincidentally educated at University College Oxford like Jones, is the poet 'who owed most to Jones.'[645] In the examples discussed above, influences have been traced through notes by the authors, but in the case of Shelley's poetry, no notes are appended. It is however certain that Shelley at least took notice of Jones's work, since he ordered a complete set of his *Works*. A letter from Shelley to the bookseller Thomas 'Clio' Rickman, on December 24th, 1812, proves this purchase, which is a solid starting ground for the similarities critics have found between Shelley's and Jones's poetry.[646] The *Works* were part of a long list of ordered books, starting with many Greek and Latin classics, and also including other works with orientalist themes, such as Robertson's *Historical Disquisition of India*, Lord Monboddo's 'On the origin of language' and Southey's *Thalaba*, all of whom are also inspired by Jones's pioneering work. Therefore, although Shelley does not include notes stating his sources or inspiration, it is safe to assume that he was familiar with Jones's work. Previous scholarship has offered comparisons and links between Shelley's and Jones's work, which will be collated and analysed in the following. As Watt has put it, Shelley has been 'silently informed' by Jones; where the authors discussed above have shown their knowledge of Jones's translations in their notes, Shelley uses it more implicitly, though continuously.[647]

This practice is evidence that Jones's work has become part of the literary tradition from which an author can borrow without explanation or notes. Jones's works, and through him his eastern sources, become as natural to allude to as the European classics with which he has compared them throughout. The lack of mention of Jones in accompanying notes makes it harder to establish his exact influence, or which of his works were read over time, but it also means the goal he set himself and all those who would follow him in eastern language study, is being met. Oriental images become part of Romantic literature, needing no explanation when they are being applied.

In the discussion of connections between the poetry of Jones and Shelley, some small but strong cases can be made, such as the appearance of certain topics from Jones's work, or the

[645] De Sola Pinto, 'Sir William Jones and English Literature', p. 693.

[646] Percy Bysshe Shelley and Frederick L. Jones, *The Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Volume 1, Shelley in England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 343-345.

[647] Watt, *British Orientalisms, 1759-1835*, p. 148-149.

influence of Jones on characters described by Shelley. One such example is the discussion of time and the Zodiac in *Alastor* (1815). This shows clear signs of Shelley's knowledge of 'On the Antiquity of the Indian Zodiac'[648]

In another such example, Koeppel was the first to argue Jones's influence on Shelley. He makes the case that Shelley bases the two main characters of his 1813 poem *Queen Mab* on his reading of 'The Palace of Fortune', originally printed in *Poems*.[649] The figure of Queen Mab who takes Ianthe on a tour through her palace, shows similarities with Fortune, who is called both a queen and a goddess in Jones's pasticcio. Fortune comes across a maiden, Maya, whom she takes on a tour to learn about virtue through allegorical gates.

Koeppel analyses all Shelley's sources for the poem and comes to the conclusion that this structural part of the narrative can come from no other place but Jones's poem. He adds to this a comparison of specific verses from *Queen Mab* that echo Jones's, to provide additional proof of Shelley's indebtedness to 'The Palace of Fortune'.[650] Franklin takes this argument one step further, and states Shelley was indebted to 'The Palace of Fortune' for the entire framework of his poem.[651]

A further poem by Shelley inspired by Jones's work is his 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty', written in 1816 and published in 1817. Pachori argues that Jones's influence can be recognized in, for example, the final lines of both poems, that imply how the self is absorbed into the whole of nature and being.[652] This theme of recognising a larger, mystic consciousness is what Shelley is most indebted to Jones for.[653] The big distinction however, between the two poems, tellingly both called 'hymns' in another echo, is that Jones concludes by ascribing this general consciousness to the Christian God, whereas Shelley does not invoke this religious context.[654] Leask argues that it is most likely 'On the Gods of Greece and India', in which Jones compares deities from various religions and show their relation, that influenced Shelley, and other

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[648] Percy Bysshe Shelley and others, *The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, (Baltimore, UNITED STATES: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), pp. 397-399.

[649] Emil Koeppel, 'Shelley's 'Queen Mab' und Sir William Jones' 'Palace of Fortune'', *Englische Studien,* 28 (1900).

[650] Ibid. p. 48.

[651] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794*, p. 78.

[652] Pachori, 'Shelley's 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty and Sir William Jones', pp. 62-63.
Cf. Drew, *India and the Romantic Imagination*, pp. 234, 261-263, 268.

[653] Pachori, 'Shelley's 'Hymn to Intellectual Beauty and Sir William Jones', pp. 60-61.

[654] Ibid. pp. 62-63.

Romantic poets, to look beyond the familiar mythological figures.[655] Whereas Leasks describes this phenomenon for *Prometheus Unbound* (1820), it influences all of Shelley's poetry and examples can also be recognised in 'Laon and Cythna' and 'Queen Mab'.[656] Shelley's editors add that it is not just the work of Jones that inspired Shelley's syncretist approach, but his knowledge about oriental deities springs from many sources.

A similar sentiment is expressed by Lord Byron, in a letter to his editor, John Murray, of November 13th, 1813.[657] In defending his choice to use the name Cain in his poem *The Bride of Abydos: A Turkish Tale*, he draws on Jones, alongside 'D'Herbelot, Vathek, or the notes to the Arabian Nights' to explain that Jewish, Christian and Muslim mythology are alike and share the same characters.[658] Although Byron suggests his editor adds a note at this point, if he thinks this necessary to make the use of this name believable to his readership, in general he uses oriental loan words without italicising or annotating them. Cannon argues his use of loans is more frequent than that of the other Romantic poets, and although he includes capitals to emphasise the exoticism of the terms, the lack of italicisation and notes signals an implied normalisation of these types of terms in English poetry.[659]

This type of inspiration from oriental tales and translations is exactly what Jones argued for. The images, mythology, religion and metaphors of the East should become natural parts of European poetry, without the need for explicit explanations that only create the feeling of otherness.

5.4. Conclusion

The examples discussed in this chapter could very well be expanded further, to include for example Thomas Moore, Lord Byron, or Samuel Taylor Coleridge, but they give a thorough overview of the different kinds of implementation of Jones's translations in the poetry of the Romantic period. A detailed look into the work of several of the authors often flagged as being 'inspired by' or 'indebted to' Jones, has given a clearer view of what this inspiration consisted

[655] Leask, 'Easts', p. 141.

[656] Shelley and others, *The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, pp. 863-864.

[657] George Gordon Byron, *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron: With Notices of His Life*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 483.

[658] Byron adds that Murray may turn this information into a note 'if [he] think[s] it necessary.' He does, but the resulting note does not mention Jones or the other sources. George Gordon Byron, *The Bride of Abydos. A Turkish Tale*, (London: John Murray, 1813), p. 69.

[659] Cannon, 'Turkish and Persian Loans in English Literature', p. 292.

of. It also allows Jones to be put into context, being used as a source alongside so many other orientalists and other authors.

Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) posed an important example of the earlier uptake of Jones's work. Although the notes to the text were not composed by the author, they still show a clear attempt to embed *Vathek* in an oriental literary tradition. In particular the style of Arabic poetry, images described and metaphors used, is often annotated, more so than the informative notes on oriental knowledge we see particularly with Southey. The most frequent use of the *Moallakát* out of all of Jones's work seems contradictory to the first reactions analysed in the third chapter. However, the fact that the Arabic imagery needed to be annotated does fit this image. It was so foreign, that it was not appreciated by the reviewers discussed. Similarly, it is so foreign, that its usage needs an annotation to be believable in the text, to provide the evidence for the reader that Beckford did not create an extravagant image from his own imagination, but it is grounded in true Arabic poetry.

The development of Jones's position in the notes to the poetry is clear in his appearance in Southey's annotations. In a vast body of notes, Jones plays a relatively small role. Where it was eastern imagery that received the most explanation in the notes to *Vathek*, Southey uses his sources for factual information, showing his reader that certain names and places are not the products of his imagination, but do exist in the work of the orientalists. Particularly in *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), Southey makes it explicit that he appreciates the new range of topics that have reached England for him to write about, but it is not his plan to write in an ornamental eastern style. The eastern influences he adapts will take their place in a domesticised, English poem. This echoes Jones's practice in his hymns, where he takes Hindu deities, but addresses them in Anglicised hymns.

With the example of Tennyson, the journey for Jones in the notes to poems seems to draw to a close. Although Tennyson uses Jones as an example for some of the topics of his poems, for example *Locksley Hall* (1835), no notes are added, or needed, to facilitate the recognition. Those who know the 'Poem of Amriolkais' and the further *Moallakát* will undoubtedly recognise the themes, but it is so strongly domesticised and embedded in the English poem, that it needs no further explanation.

Shelley shows a similar image. His poetry is shown to have been influenced by Jones in small details, as well as his structural thinking about religion and Creation. This has become part of his worldview, and needs no specific mention in notes for the reader to be understood.

This analysis does not only provide information on how the authors used their oriental sources, but also on which of Jones's works were read. Particularly *Sacontalá* is often called Jones's most influential work, with Franklin for example speaking of a European '*Sacontalá*-fever.'[660] The previous chapter has indeed shown that responses to this translation were highly positive, and the play was immediately translated into further European languages to spread across the European continent and beyond. The poets examined in this chapter, however, show that the part *Sacontalá* played in English literature is less overwhelming, with only some pieces of factual information being borrowed from it. Jones's Indian works are being used though, but it is in particular the *Asiatic Researches*, and even the hymns, that provide the most information.

In chapter 3 the relative responses to Jones's early translations indicated that *Poems* would receive a much wider readership than the *Moallakát*. Again, the notes show a different picture. Moussa-Mahmoud was right when she claimed that *Poems* 'had little impact on the literature of the time.'[661] The message given in *Poems*, however, and in particular in the 'Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations', seems to be received loud and clear. As Jones's direct influence diminishes, the normalisation of oriental images and the implicit use of Jones and his early orientalist colleagues grows. There is no need for notes anymore, when metaphors taken from eastern poetry become commonplace, like Greek mythology can be used without references, or as the stories of the *Arabian Nights* became canonical about a century earlier.[662] Furthermore, the diminishing references to Jones are caused by the large corpus of translations and reference works about eastern poetry available since the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Since Jones was one of the first to publish these, and knowledge developed at a rapid pace, his works were becoming obsolete. By examining his influence on Beckford through to Tennyson, this development is clear. Paradoxically, I would argue that the disappearance of Jones from the notes, means the success of the project he started in 1770. 'Future scholars' have studied the texts he recommended, and 'future poets' have made their images their own. Jones's influence is developing from explicit, in the notes, to implicit, as it has become part of the corpus of English literature.

[660] Franklin, *Orientalist Jones. Sir William Jones, Poet, Lawyer, and Linguist, 1746-1794,* p. 251.

[661] Moussa-Mahmoud, *Sir William Jones and the Romantics*, p. 55.

[662] See the introduction to chapter 3.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Key points

The research question asked in this thesis is: what was the contemporary reception of Sir William Jones's translations of oriental literature? This broad question was further defined as questions about who read his works, how they were read, and how they were used. To facilitate an answer to the question who read the work, the thesis considered various audiences separately. First, an academic audience of scholars specialised in oriental languages. Second, a general readership, that was interested in exoticised oriental tales, but not yet familiar with authentic translations from oriental languages. Finally, authors and poets who would use Jones's work to inspire their own writing, in particular Romantic poetry inspired by his oriental influences. This division, as well as the research question, was inspired by the statement Jones made himself when explaining the project of oriental translations in *Poems*, one of the seven translations, and works about oriental literature, that were central to this thesis, that if the 'writings of the Asiatics' were printed, and 'the languages of the Eastern nations were studied':

> a new and ample field would be opened for speculation; we should be furnished with a new set of images and similitudes, and a number of excellent compositions would be brought to light, which future scholars might explain, and future poets might imitate.[663]

Although previous scholarship has engaged with responses to Jones's work, both a systematic overview of the responses, and an analysis of their content was still missing. Furthermore, Jones's work has previously been studied in separate contexts, such as his influence on Indology or on Romantic poetry. By taking his translations as a starting point, this thesis has provided an overview of how the full corpus of Jones's translations work together towards a common goal, and how this was interpreted by various audiences. In particular the academic context to which Jones's *Persian Grammar* and *Commentarii* allude, but in which they do not fully fit, has previously often been neglected.

[663] Jones, *Poems: Consisting Chiefly of Translations from the Asiatick Languages: To Which Are Added Two Essays I. On the Poetry of the Eastern Nations Ii. On the Arts, Commonly Called Imitative*, pp. 198-199.

Considering first the audience of academics Jones wrote for, two of his works have been analysed within this context, as discussed in chapter 2. The discussion of Jones's place in the academic context adds valuable information about the position of the gentleman amateur scholar. Jones is often praised for his founding influence on Indology, but his own place in the context of eighteenth-century academic disciplines receives little attention. The response his *Persian Grammar* receives is telling, as it sheds a light on the tension between the amateur and the academic. In a time when research is slowly becoming more structured and more formal, professor of Hebrew James Robertson is protecting what he considers his discipline against the possibility of anyone laying claim on it. The general demand for a more democratic approach to this knowledge is however clear from the further reception of the *Persian Grammar*, from its many reprints to the other grammars it inspired. These show that British presence in India gave rise to an interest in a new utilitarian view on language acquisition, not based on academic tradition either in its approach or in its location.

Thus, with the *Persian Grammar*, although building on an academic tradition of earlier scholarship, Jones has created a new audience for himself: the East India Company employee traveling to India. This audience shows some overlap with the 'general reader' whom Jones attempts to reach with his translations, since they have the same background in language study, or lack thereof. With this grammar, however, he particularly targets the professional. His colleagues, John Richardson, Nathaniel Halhed, and Charles Wilkins, recognised this newly created audience and its needs, and followed Jones's example with the publications of their respective grammars. Moreover, the East India Company recognised the need for language education and created funding for these grammars. I argue therefore that the *Persian Grammar* played a significant role in the formalisation of language education within the East India Company.

The analysis particularly in section 2.3.1.1. has shown, moreover, that the appearance and success of the *Persian Grammar* had a wider effect on publishing than just on the aforementioned further grammars of eastern languages. Anthologies of Persian literature were published that specifically targeted the student using Jones's *Persian Grammar*, claiming to be additions for the further development of their literary studies. How marketable this was in England is illustrated by the discovery of a plagiarised work, *The Persian Interpreter,* by Edward Moises. Whether this plagiarism is based on malicious intent or carelessness in the

preparation of the work, one can only speculate, but either way the popularity of the topic of Persian literature must have led Moises to publish his work in the hopes of monetary gain.

The reception of the *Commentarii* is harder to trace, and the audience of academics is the reason. Jones's connections in the academic world receive and read this volume, and congratulate Jones on the achievement, but we can hardly see it leaving a significant mark on later scholarship. Some tangible evidence of its use in further literature does exist, particularly in Germany. The examples of the 1777 reprint by Eichhorn and the use of *Commentarii* as notes to the *Praelectiones* by Lowth (1793) confirm that the *Commentarii* are used as part of philological research into oriental literature in the eighteenth century. The popularity of Jones's works in Germany is a recurring theme in the analysis of translations and reprints of these translations, providing a preview into the nineteenth century, when German universities take the lead in the development of Indology and Linguistics as academic disciplines and research areas.

Further, it is evident from both the contemporary reviews and modern scholarship that the *Commentarii* require specialist knowledge to be considered: both these categories of readers might not be as versed in Latin as Jones's contemporary academic audience and therefore cannot access the work. We need to conclude that the *Commentarii*, although considered by Jones the most important and most elaborate link in his plan to rejuvenate European poetry by the influx of eastern examples, incongruously had little traceable impact on the contemporary reader. I have however also shown that the *Commentarii* stayed connected to Jones's name throughout and even beyond his life, when in eulogies he gets called the 'author of the Asiatic commentaries' before his other achievements.

It will, however, be an important step for modern scholarship to have a modern annotated edition available with a translation. This could resolve this paradox of Jones's most elaborate work being ignored in scholarship. The work gives an important insight into Jones's methods and aims during the first phase of his publications, on Persian and Arabic. His Indological work is more readily available and more popular among modern critics, but it is in these first translations that Jones establishes his methodology for the interpretation of Eastern literature. In particular in the *Commentarii* those methods of e.g. metaphrase translation and comparison, are explained and applied. Therefore, this is an important work to understand Jones's approach to his other translations as well.

The contextualisation of the *Commentarii* in chapter 2 has furthermore shown Jones's place in the field of oriental scholars was firmly established by this volume, since congratulatory letters arrived from orientalists all over Europe. What had created this reputation as a champion of English oriental studies even more, however, was Jones's *Lettre a Monsieur A*** de P**** (1771), an example of rivalry that caused discord between particularly French and English scholars for centuries to come. Whereas biographers stress Jones's amiable character, this episode does imply a certain competition, ambition, or even jealousy. A similar suggestion is made by Dalrymple, when he publishes *The Story of Dooshwanta and Shakoontala*, translated by Wilkins (1794), discussed in section 4.2.4. Dalrymple all but states Jones has mistreated Wilkins by passing him by in publishing a translation he was aware Wilkins was preparing as well. Whereas reviews imply that Wilkins' version of the story is the more enjoyable one, and it does get immediate reprints, it is Jones's *Sacontalá* which has become the famous version. Like in the case of Anquetil-Duperron, Wilkins is studied less, and generally deemed less influential than Jones, despite his status as the first European to publish a translation from Sanskrit. I must conclude that despite collaboration between Jones and Wilkins, there must also have been a competition that in time caused Wilkins to disappear to the background.

The publication of *The Story of Dooshwanta and Shakoontala* is furthermore proof of the role Jones's choices played in the early canon formation of eastern literature in Europe. In this and other examples throughout this thesis we have seen that texts and authors discussed or translated by Jones are likely to receive further attention. These are the decisions of one man, based on what he believed or was told was important literature, or sometimes even more arbitrarily, based on the availability of manuscripts. They have influenced the appearance of a whole branch of literature, until more systematic research also led to a broader range of texts being translated.

Engaging 'future poets' was the largest task in Jones's translation and rejuvenation project. We have seen that in order to allow poets to use oriental imagery, Jones first needed to create a taste for oriental translations, and his method for doing so was taking small steps. The imitations in *Poems* created a bridge between the familiar oriental tale and the unfamiliar authentic translation. Readers and reviewers have a preference for the authentic translations,

rather than the imitations, but the imagery in the imitations does create a longing for further exposure to real Eastern poetry, with which Jones moves towards his goal.

That not every reader was ready for this exposure is evident from the responses to the *Moallakát*. In a metaphrase prose translation and without notes or introductions, the reviewers found them difficult to interpret. This is an indication of Jones's good judgement when preparing *Poems*: either annotation or domestication of the translations was needed for the inexperienced audience to get acquainted with oriental poetry.

However, it cannot only be blamed on the lack of annotations that the *Moallakát* was not appreciated. Responses to *Sacontalá*, also appearing accompanied only by a short introduction, are much more positive, although some reviewers do mention the lack of notes. *Sacontalá* is part of a large corpus of communications from Jones and his colleagues in the Asiatick Society from India. For this thesis I have chosen the smaller scope of examining only Jones's literary translations, for two reasons: collating and examining responses to the full corpus of papers Jones presented for the Asiatic society would have created a discussion beyond the scope of one thesis. This is, however, research that can provide important insights into the influence of this work, as currently analyses of these papers and discourses are unsystematic and scattered. Secondly, the research question posed is on the literary position of Jones's translations, and including the *Asiatick Researches* would have meant including a discussion of his influence on all topics and disciplines, from linguistics, to history or botany. The analysis of the precise source texts used by Romantic poets has however shown that these papers play a large role in the gathering of information when creating a poem inspired by the Orient.

Scholars of Jones's work stress the influence of *Sacontalá*, and the immediate popularity of the play. The many reprints and translations indeed indicate that there was a demand for the translation. By the time Jones learned Sanskrit and published his translations, however, his reputation as an oriental scholar had already been established. The analysis in this thesis shows that both European academics and a more general reading audience had met with Jones's translations with various degrees of success before 1789. When *Sacontalá* appeared, therefore, this pre-existing reputation plays an important part in its success. The analysis of the reviews provides evidence for the emphasis on the translator's identity, although it appeared as an anonymous translation. Perhaps a more accurate interpretation is that the emphasis was on the translator's identity, *because* the work appeared anonymously. It was

Jones himself who argued for authentic translations against forgeries in *Poems*, and appending Jones's name to the translation was seen as a sign of authenticity. His choice not to do so is therefore enigmatic, and corrected by the 1792 reprint that does bear his name. It is a sign of his audience following his guidance, though, that there was a call for authenticity, and even stronger evidence of his reputation that most reviewers were able to connect his name to the work without it being printed on the title page.

Sacontalá was Jones's most successful work abroad, being translated into other European languages at a rapid pace, an overview of which appeared in table 1. *Sacontalá*'s success abroad, and particularly in Germany, has also been facilitated by Jones's previous works. Since the *Persian Grammar* had been translated into German, and the *Commentarii* received an edition printed in Germany, his name was established there, and the swift appearance of a German translation of *Sacontalá*, and later *Gitagóvinda* and the *Asiatic Researches* can be seen in this context.

These analyses of the popular responses to Jones's work provided a context within which his influence on 'future poets' can be discussed. The fifth and final chapter has attempted an analysis of the use of Jones's work by (Romantic) authors, based on review of secondary sources and analyses of the notes the poets themselves provide. With the discussion of Beckford, Southey, Shelley, and Tennyson, I am aware that I have barely scratched the surface of the vast body of texts that is the corpus of Romantic poetry. On the other hand, these examples do provide clear insights not only in the different uses of Jones's translations and the relative popularity of those translations, but also in the development of interaction with those sources over time.

Despite my hypothesis based on secondary literature, that it would be *Sacontalá* which would have the highest volume of references, since it is often claimed to be Jones's most influential translation, the impact of *Sacontalá* on the particular English works I assessed was small. Franklin's work provides evidence that this is not the case in Germany, where it influenced among others the famous work of Goethe.

Rather surprisingly, however, after discussing the first responses to this volume, the poems from the *Moallakát* play a significant role in the works discussed. But also Jones's essays and discourses from *Asiatic Researches* are more important as explicit sources than *Sacontalá*.

This analysis has also provided important conclusions about the manner in which Jones's translations and the other orientalist sources are being used in literature, creating the picture of a clear development. At the time of *Vathek*'s publication (1786), Jones's first translations were only a little over a decade old. The movement he attempted to start of the usage of authentic oriental translations was in development, but it was still a novelty. The notes to *Vathek* therefore show that, although attempts are being made at using oriental imagery, this needs to be embedded in context to prove its authenticity. When Southey publishes *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) these images have become more commonplace, and it is information like names, places and customs that needs explanatory notes. The images have even become so widespread, that Southey agitates against them, since their 'waste of ornament' spoils English poetry (see section 5.3.2). Shelley's *Queen Mab* (1813) shows the absorption of oriental examples in English poetry is complete, by implicitly including oriental images and narrative elements. Tennyson's *Locksley Hall* (1835) similarly and seamlessly adapts an Arabic example, the 'Poem of Amriolkais' in a completely English context.

This shows a development from explicit to implicit use of Jones and other sources. While the decrease of explicit notes and references makes it harder to prove influence of Jones in the context of this thesis, this development also proves the success of Jones's project. The poetry shows oriental influences have not disappeared, but the need to explain them has disappeared over time, as they become more naturally embedded in English literature. As the common reader develops a taste for oriental imagery, the Romantic poet is more confident in using it as inspiration.

This thesis has also presented examples of readers, who have played a part in making progress for this process, by creating a European context for oriental translations. Jones started the practice of comparing the eastern texts he published to western examples from similar genres or of similar quality. For example in reviews this practice is continued, showing how the reader creates their own frame of reference in an attempt to understand the texts. The Romantic poets discussed, present an example of a similar practice on a larger scale, when they use the notes to their works to equate both western and eastern works as equal sources of inspiration for their poetry.

6.2. Recommendations for further research

I have attempted to place Jones's work in the context of the time, both by providing the responses, but also by discussing works by his orientalist colleagues that appeared at the same time. Even though Jones's fame went through a large decrease for about a century after 1835, he is well known and studied and his influence on certain areas of linguistics, such as Indology and Comparative Linguists are widely recognised. His contemporaries, however, have fared differently. To establish a clear view of Jones's accomplishments, it is necessary that further research is conducted into their work, in particular Charles Wilkins and John Richardson, who not only wrote work on oriental languages but published the work of others as well. Nathaniel Halhed and Alexander Hamilton do get some recognition in secondary literature, with the biographies Rosane Rocher has compiled. But in particular Charles Wilkins is reduced to the side-line, whereas, as I have argued, particularly in chapter 4, as the first European to learn and translate Sanskrit, he played a pivotal role in the development of knowledge about India.

When starting this project, I had envisioned following Jones all over Europe, not only finding the translations to his work, as I have presented in this thesis, but also the responses in their countries. This would have led to an overview not only of responses to Jones in Britain, and in English, but to a more pan-European overview of his influence. This proved too elaborate a research question, and the result is that this thesis has a clear anglophone focus. A study of these responses, however, will deepen our understanding of Jones's position in European literature and scholarship, and will be a valuable contribution to scholarship on eighteenth-century orientalism. Part of this work has been done by Franklin, who presents an overview of German responses to Jones, but there is more work to be done before a complete picture can be formed. Furthermore, I have traced Jones's influence across the Atlantic on a few occasions, using these in passing to prove the broad scope of his work. A more systematic overview of Jones's reception in America and influences on American literature is needed to understand the full scope of his influence.

In my search for sources responding to Jones, I have had the pleasure of researching letter archives in libraries such as the Bodleian Library in Oxford and the Leiden University Libraries. Since many of these treasuries lie largely unexplored, it has been a privilege to search them for relevant information, although this has not been obtained at every visit. Current initiatives

like the Elizabeth Montagu Letters project are constantly uncovering invaluable sources.[664] The letters concerning Jones's *Poems*, which sprang from this project and had been published by Michael Franklin, show the importance of such sources in the analysis of reception of literary works, but also for example in the mapping of networks.[665] Developing other such projects can provide a great well of sources. In particular the papers of the family Schultens in the Leiden University Libraries can provide important insights in scholarly networks in Arabic studies.

6.3. Final Remarks

This thesis has analysed contemporary responses to Jones's translations of oriental literature. The outcome is significant in furthering the understanding of the role Jones played in the popularisation of oriental influences in English literature.

In work on Romantic poetry or colonial India, Jones's name is often invoked as an influential figure. This thesis set out to find out what that influence was in terms of his translations. In what I have called Jones's early translations, published before he was assigned his post in India, Jones is searching for a way to create support for his idea that eastern poetry is needed to rejuvenate the stale European literature. His later publications have a different character. They move away from attempts to please his audience by domesticating, but he presents authentic, metaphrase translations. The audience however has developed with Jones. Analysis in this thesis of primary sources, in particular the reviews of his work, contribute to the understanding of the attitudes to eastern literature of the British reading audience. From the 1770s to the 1790s they are educated by a steady influx of oriental literature and develop a taste for authentic eastern influences, against the oriental tales of the earlier eighteenth century.

Although there has been a consensus about the fact that Jones, as one of the early orientalists, is influential, the debate of the scope and content of this influence has been interpreted in various ways: from claiming Jones as the most important inspiration for the Romantics, to

[664] http://www.elizabethmontagunetwork.co.uk/ (Accessed 28/04/2021).

[665] Franklin, '"Asiatick Fire & Figure," Or, How Joseph Emin Made Mrs. Montagu an Avant-Garde Critic in Her Empathy with the East'.

calling his mission to popularise eastern poetry in Europe a failure. Equally, the analyses of the importance of his individual works has been diverse.

Throughout his work Jones has expressed the importance of language study. But, as we have also noted, according to him this language study should never be a goal in its own right, it should be the stepping-stone to further knowledge. This thesis has shown that this utilitarian view on languages has developed into a source of inspiration for English literature, as well as for a structured approach to language education by the East India Company.

By returning to the first responses to Jones's works, this thesis has provided a full overview of the direct reception of Jones's translations. The trend I uncovered was that of a growing interest in and understanding of eastern literature, in accordance with the argument of previous critics. The added value of this primary source analysis is that it has shed light on the particular distribution of interest in Jones's individual translations, and the reasons why this distribution exists.

It has also proved that, although the uptake for some of his early translations was not great at the time of first publication, the project Jones started to stimulate a taste for the rejuvenating influence of eastern literature had a big effect. The analysis of notes on the works of the Romantic authors has shown that the earlier translations find their place among the later translations and scholarship. Since they were all collated in the 1799 and 1807 editions of *Works*, authors go back to the *Moallakát* for information and inspiration. The analysis of the individual translations has thus created a timeline of growing interest in eastern literature. Many have said that it is Jones's work on Sanskrit and Indian culture that make him an important figure in the history of orientalism. This thesis has provided proof for the importance of his earlier translations that prepared the way, and without which Jones's pioneering influence on Indology could not have existed.

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