LADY ANNE BLUNT: CROSS-GENDER ENCULTURATION AND ORIENTALIST
TRAVELS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

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by Rachel Santer

In the 1870s, Lady Anne Blunt journeyed into the heart of the Arabian Peninsula. She
was the first western woman to cross into central Arabia, known commonly as the Najd. Lady
Anne recorded her extraordinary journey in field journals, pocket journals, watercolors, and
sketches. Her notes transformed into a travelogue about the journey, *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The
Cradle of the Arab Race,* published in 1881. Today, the travelogue is used by many scholars of
the Middle East as evidence of their arguments. Yet, Lady Anne has not received much
scholarly attention. In this thesis, I construct a historical person-centered ethnography to prove
that Lady Anne Blunt went through an enculturative experience while traveling through the
Najd. Enculturation is the acquisition and internalization of a culture. However, enculturation is
also a gendered process. Men and women undergo different variations of the enculturation
process. Uniquely, Lady Anne underwent an enculturative experience of Arab males, not
females. This is caused by the cultural tradition of female seclusion. Female seclusion, or the
separation of females from male spaces, was practiced throughout the peninsula in the nineteenth
century. Lady Anne was kept away from Arab women, and relegated her to the physical and
abstract space of Arab men. The cultural practice of female seclusion and sex segregation gave
Lady Anne the unique opportunity to undergo a cross-gender enculturative experience while
traveling throughout Arabia.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Late nineteenth century Arabia was a mysterious and idealized place in the minds of the British public. The arm of the British Empire had extended to the peninsula, and the public appetite for knowledge of an unknown land, so different from their own, was at its height. Lady Anne Blunt and her husband, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, were British aristocrats who had the time, money, and adventurous spirit to see Arabia with their own eyes. In the late 1870s, Lady Anne and Wilfrid journeyed to the center of the Arabian Peninsula, the region known as the Najd. The Najd was notoriously isolated and difficult to reach because of the desert that surrounds it. It was an idealized region both for Arabs in the Levant and the British masses. Few had traveled to the center of the peninsula, and almost none of those travelers spent time with its inhabitants: the Bedouin. Lady Anne Blunt and her husband became the first Europeans to live and travel with the Bedouin tribes of Arabia. The great Emir Mohammad ibn Rashid (Ibn Saʻud's opponent in the fight for power in the Najd, which he eventually lost) entertained the Blunts. Most remarkably, Lady Anne Blunt became the first western woman to travel into central Arabia.

Their journey is recorded for posterity in three publications. Her second, *Pilgrimage to the Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race,* is at the core of this examination and chronicles her experiences and observations during this exceptional expedition through the Arabian Peninsula. As the first European woman to lay eyes on the famous red sands of Arabia, Lady Anne's experiences provide an astonishing opportunity to better understand nineteenth-century Arabia and how cross-cultural travel changes the individual that experiences it.

Lady Anne's experience is also unique because it offers students of history an opportunity to understand what it is to travel and live with peoples from another culture. I

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contend that Lady Anne Blunt fully internalized the Arab culture and underwent the process of enculturation during her time in the peninsula, known to her as Arabia. Additionally, this process of enculturation was gendered. Lady Anne absorbed the gendered cultural schemata (assumptions, idealizations, behaviors, and beliefs) of the Arab male, not female, because she inhabited Arab men's physical and cultural space. Stated simply, Lady Anne was not exposed to the physical space inhabited by the women of Arabia. Lady Anne was denied entry to the women's space, largely because of Arab men, which in turn isolated her from the cultural schemata of Arab women. This left for her only the Arab men's gendered interpretation of culture and society from which to draw cultural understanding. Arabia's sociocultural tradition of sex segregation and female seclusion provided a unique forum for a purely gendered enculturative experience. Thus, Lady Anne absorbed the cultural transmission of the opposite gender. Lady Anne Blunt's exceptional experience in the Arabian Peninsula proves that cross-gender enculturation is not only a possibility, but also may be a reality in certain cultural contexts. Lady Anne Blunt underwent a cross-gender enculturative experience.

Why has Lady Anne Blunt been passed over by historians? Certainly an examination of her life would fall within the purview of Women's History, Imperialist History, and Middle Eastern History, to name a few. Perhaps this is because many of Lady Anne's personal papers only became available in relatively recent years through the British Library. It is also conceivable that historians dismissed Lady Anne as a wicked Orientalist, and perceived an examination of her life as disloyal to post-colonialist discourse and conclusions. Or perhaps the discipline and sub-disciplines' appetites for western European travelers were satiated with the study of Gertrude Bell. Maybe Lady Anne evaded historiography because she and Wilfrid manufactured their image as the ideal Victorian couple with disparate gender roles, including

wifely deference to her capable husband, and scholars bought into her produced secondary role. Possible explanations and justifications for Lady Anne's near absence in historical narratives and analyses are endless, and to a certain extent, reasonable.

Yet, to consider this extraordinary life, and its historical context, is to further understand the human dimensions of British imperialism, Victorian aristocracy, nineteenth-century Arabian culture, and adult enculturation for those who travel transculturally.

This study has distilled into a historical person-centered ethnography. I argue that Lady Anne Blunt experienced a cross-gender enculturation process while traveling through the interior of Arabian Peninsula. I intend to develop this argument throughout a six-chapter examination. An exploration of Lady Anne as an agent in history extends beyond the purview of purely biographical studies. The argument requires a general understanding of British Victorian aristocratic society, imperial history, and various forms of female seclusion throughout Arabia. Moreover, a firm comprehension of enculturation is required. The examination will incorporate a number of approaches to history, including social, cultural, intellectual, and class-based history. Moreover, the employment of the anthropological concept of enculturation makes this study interdisciplinary. Its scope, stretching from London to Arabia, is inherently transnational.

The analysis of Lady Anne Blunt and her orientalist travels in nineteenth-century Arabia will begin in Chapter II with a summary of existing historiography and scholarship pertaining to Lady Anne. In this chapter, we will consider the contexts in which Lady Anne is situated historically and historiographically. We will explore the nineteenth-century historical context of the British Empire and the Arabian Peninsula. Lady Anne's historiographical context will also be explored. Lady Anne has been largely eclipsed by her husband as an agent in the historical narratives of the British, the Middle East, imperial studies and orientalism studies. While many

historians use Lady Anne's travelogues as primary source material in support of their arguments, an in-depth consideration of Lady Anne as a representative of the Victorian aristocracy and a female orientalist has not been produced. In 2003, H.V.F. Winstone published the first biography dedicated solely to Lady Anne. While Winstone is an established researcher, he is trained in journalism and not history.

Nonetheless, his findings are significant to the third chapter of this thesis: a relatively short investigation of Lady Anne Blunt's exceptional life. This section provides the forum to demonstrate how Lady Anne was an agent in history, and a product of late nineteenth century British aristocracy. This biographical section will touch on the individual experiences and the collective forces at play during this time, interweaving an individual life within the greater political, social, and cultural contexts in which it unfolded.

I will then move to address more precisely the argument that Lady Anne underwent a cross-gendered enculturative experience. In Chapter IV, a consideration of the concept of enculturation is offered. How do anthropologists and other scholars use enculturation? After a firm grasp of enculturation (and how it is different from acculturation and socialization) has been provided, I will then turn to the social and cultural schemata of the Arabian Peninsula.

Chapter V will investigate the tradition of female seclusion and sex segregation throughout the peninsula in the late nineteenth-century. I will trace Lady Anne's expedition route, from the interior of Arabia to its coast, and demonstrate that female seclusion practices varied from interior to coast, from urban to rural to Bedouin, and from the elite to the lower classes. Sex segregation has been richly discussed and debated by many Middle Eastern scholars across many academic disciplines, and these historiographical and scholarly debates will be introduced.

Finally, in Chapter VI, the analytical focus will narrow to Lady Anne Blunt's *A Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race*, published in 1881, and her personal letters. These provide primary evidence that Lady Anne experienced a cross-gendered enculturation process. Due to the unique dynamics of the cultural tradition of sex segregation and female seclusion in Arabia, Lady Anne experienced a distinctive form of enculturation that was cross-gendered.

This project utilizes a number of sources. Lady Anne's three nineteenth-century publications and her personal papers, along with nineteenth-century newspaper and magazine articles regarding her, provide the foundation of the primary source material.[1] Similarly, I will use other primary sources--such as travelogues of Doughty, Burckhardt, and Hurgronje, and the missionary documents compiled in *Neglected Arabia* to more fully develop and support the examination of sex segregation in the Gulf.[2] Secondary sources will include works by historians of Victorian Britain and the British Empire, namely David Cannadine and David Fromkin. Anthropological articles discussing enculturation, psychological discussions of acculturation, and sociological inquiries concerning socialization will also greatly enhance this examination. Many historians, Middle Eastern specialists, anthropologists, and political economists have analyzed and richly debated sex segregation in the Arabian Peninsula: its meanings, how it varies over time and space, and its origins. The essence of this inquiry is both historical and anthropological.

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[1] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881); Winstone, H.V.F. *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (Manchester: Barzan, 2005); Rosemary Archer, "Lady Anne Blunt" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31937 (Accessed November 19, 2012); Marion Tinling, *Women into the Unknown: A Sourcebook on Women Explorers and Travelers* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), "Byron's Granddaughter," *Milwaukee Sentinel* (Milwaukee, WI), Feb. 13, 1887; "Byron's Granddaughter at Arab," *Milwaukee Journal* (Milwaukee, WI), Jan. 5, 1891; Edward Whymper, "Famous Lady Travellers: A Great Arabian Traveller-Lady Lady Anne Blunt," *Penny Weekly* (London), Aug. 29, 1885.
[2] *Neglected Arabia*: *Quarterly Letters from the* 1891.

Employing anthropological analytical techniques, methods, and assumptions to analyze the primary sources of history stimulates further understanding of the human experience.

Lady Anne Blunt was a unique woman of her time. Born the granddaughter of Lord Byron, she assumed her place in the Victorian British aristocracy at its height, only to witness its demise. She subscribed to and perpetuated the orientalist school and tradition and was the first woman to travel through the isolated interior of Arabia. While this project in way no endorses some of the consequences of the orientalist tradition, it is not intended to be a condemnation of its existence or its practitioners. This study demonstrates that a cross-gender enculturative experience in adults is not only a theoretical possibility, but even, in certain cultural contexts-- such as the one Lady Anne found herself-- a reality.

CHAPTER II

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND SCHOLARSHIP

In spite of Lady Anne's compelling life story, many historians and scholars have pushed her aside, consigning her to a role as the high-society wife of an adventurous and political man: her husband, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt. "With one or two notable exceptions her achievements as explorer, diarist, writer, translator of pre-Islamic poetry, and scholar are slighted."[3] Most scholarly treatment of Lady Anne had been folded into biographical studies of Wilfrid. More recently, some chapters have been dedicated to her as an individual, often lying in the middle of edited volumes, popular in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

This is a curious phenomenon considering that many scholars of the Middle East have often cited her work as primary evidence.[4] Many scholars of Middle Eastern Women's have used her words to prove their arguments, yet curiosity as to who Lady Anne was as an individual stopped with the footnote. Lady Anne published three books documenting her and Wilfrid's journeys through the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula. Her first, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates*, was published in two volumes in 1879. Her husband, Wilfrid, served as the editor and had a heavy hand in the final product, although much of the information comes from Lady Anne's journals and notes from her travels. There is a noticeable change in voice from *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates* to her second narrative, *A Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race,* published in 1881. Wilfrid again served as editor and composed the preface, but the voice evident in this narrative clearly belongs to Lady Anne. Again, it is Lady Anne's highly detailed

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[3] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 285.

[4] Middle Eastern scholars who have cited Lady Anne's travelogues as primary evidence include Eleanor Abdalla Doumato, Judith Tucker, Lila Abu-Lughod, Samir Habib, As'ad Abukhalil, Amira el-Azhary Sonbol, Mohammed Ayoob, and Hasan Kosebalaban, and several other scholars.

notes, diaries, and journal entries that are at the core of *A Pilgrimage to Nejd.* Her final book,

The Authentic Arabian Horse and His Descendants: Three Voices Concerning the Horse of

Arabia, was published posthumously by her daughter, Lady Wentworth, and is still praised for

its valuable information on Arabian horses. Its worth as an ethnography is still largely

dismissed, although the bulk of this book is dedicated to the Arab people, not their horses.

Kathryn Tidrick is a prime example of scholars' failure to acknowledge Lady Anne's

agency. Tidrick's *Heart-Beguiling Araby,* published in 1981, brilliantly examines the inner lives

of Richard Burton, Gifford Palgrave, and Wilfrid Blunt as some of the first European travelers in

the Arabian Peninsula. Tidrick approaches these men as a psychologist, producing a fascinating

psychohistory. She considers what drew these men to the Arabian desert in hopes of answering

her central question: how did "the notion that Englishmen possessed an intuitive understanding

of Arabs which gave them a special right, even obligation, to interfere in their affairs" develop?[5]

Tidrick's insights into the psychological history of these men are gripping, yet her blatant

dismissal of Lady Anne as an individual worthy of her own psycho-historical analysis indicates

shortsightedness. In her discussion of Wilfrid, Tidrick is not generous to Lady Anne and does

not see the need to recognize her agency. Tidrick describes Lady Anne as "a reliable but

unimaginative companion on the Arabian journeys. For some reason it was her accounts of these

journeys that were published. Blunt merely contributed chapters to her rather pedestrian

narratives…"[6] Most of Tidrick's references to Lady Anne are as "The Blunts", rarely giving her

an individual status. Lady Anne proved to be the better recorder of the two, jotting detail after

detail of their journeys in her pocket diaries and field journals, with Wilfrid only serving as

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[5] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 1.
[6] Ibid., 112.

editor and contributing a few chapters. Tidrick complains, "the artless snobbery of Lady Anne's narrative…provides an amusing gloss on the more sophisticated pretensions of her husband."[7]

In the decade following Kathryn Tidrick's shortsighted dismissal of Lady Anne Blunt, edited volumes and monographs examining Victorian travelers trickled through the presses. Women travelers, in addition to their male counterparts, began inspiring attention. *Ladies on the Loose: Women Travellers of the 18th and 19th Centuries* (1981), edited by Leo Hamalian, dedicates nine pages to Lady Anne Blunt. Similarly, Marion Tinling's *Women into the Unknown: A sourcebook on Women Explorers and Travelers* (1989), provides a thin six-page examination of Lady Anne as a distinct person. Although these studies were short, it is significant that Lady Anne became the subject, and Wilfrid became relegated to the role of husband.

Literary critics were the first scholars to treat Lady Anne as a substantive writer in her own right. The discipline acknowledged the unique discourse created by Victorian women travelers and explorers around the turn of the century. Their travelogues, diaries, and journals produced a distinct genre: travelogues of elite female explorers. Literary critics quickly acknowledged the significance of this female writing genre in the Victorian era. Their adventures were radical for their time. In the nineteenth century, the travelogue's bourgeois consumers saw female travel as taboo and unsuitable.[8] Women travelers and explorers produced works that represent "an exercise in individual freedom, both physical and intellectual, which is all the more striking as independence is achieved within usually misogynist contexts. Such an

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[7] Ibid., 120.
[8] Beatrice Bijon and Gerard Gacon, ed., *In-Between Two Worlds: Narratives by Female Explorers and Travellers 1850-1945* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2009), 2.

achievement goes along with the instinctive rejection of traditional gender roles."[9] However, as we shall discuss later, travelogues written by elite women and read by a British middle-class audience were generally accepted, as greater access and participation in the public realm were often socially accepted amongst aristocratic women. Literary critics understood the significance of the female traveler and chronicler. In the 2009 edited volume *In-Between Two Worlds: Narratives by Female Explorers and Travelers*, Lady Anne has a chapter dedicated to her life as a female explorer in the Middle East. Her contributions are seen as literary, not historical, but at least they are noticed.

The only discernible scholarly "debate" revolving around Lady Anne Blunt is about whether she romanticized and idealized the peoples she encountered. Many scholars have assumed that all Orientalist writing from this period is Romantic, mimicking Victorian England's conception of the Arabian Peninsula as "one of the most idealized and romanticized places in the imaginary orient."[10] This scholarly "debate" is narrowly manifested in scholarship and indeed dispassionate. Starting in the 1990s, there was an effort to retrieve Lady Anne's publications from the bin of discarded Romantic and Orientalist writings. Carole Bourne-Taylor and Billie Melman argue for Lady Anne's importance to literary development and history, respectively; also, they contend that Lady Anne is unique amongst her contemporaries for *not* romanticizing and idealizing Arabs whom she encountered. Bourne-Taylor acknowledges that Lady Anne has the tendency to "idealise nomadic culture…however, Lady Anne does not indulge in Eurocentric exoticism, assumptions and misconceptions, nor does she romanticize the East. The bulk of her

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[9] Ibid., 2.
[10] Billie Melman. *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 287.

narrative is very factual indeed."[11] Melman concurs with Bourne-Taylor that Lady Anne does

not romanticize Arabia or its inhabitants. She cites her lack of metaphors and matter-of-fact

tonality throughout *Pilgrimage to the Nejd* as evidence of her position. In addition, she points

out Lady Anne's harsh criticism of Gifford Palgrave's account of his Arabian journey as further

proof of Lady Anne's disdain for the Romantic. Palgrave represents the "Romantic tradition on

Arabia," and Lady Anne's rigorous disapproval of Palgrave's narratives leads one to infer that

Lady Anne was a conscious critic of Arabia's Romantic representations.[12] Although this debate

is more within the scope of literary critics and scholars, historians have accepted their

conclusions and used them to frame their own analyses.

Billie Melman attempted to inspire another historiographical and scholarly debate about

Lady Anne and her husband, which no scholars have challenged or commented upon to date.

Melman argues that the Blunts were *not* an Orientalist couple because they were not specialists

and their political involvement was informal and individual. Rather, they gathered their

knowledge through experience, not orientalist lectures or writings. Moreover, the Blunts were

not as ethnocentric as were contemporary orientalists. Melman's effort to inspire

historiographical and anthropological debate is appreciated, but her evidence is empty. Her

assertion is easily dismissed as elementary and sensationalist. Melman is clearly attempting to

elicit historical debate in her radical and polemic argument. Yet, it is little wonder that no

historians or other scholars took her up on the invitation.

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[11] Carole Bourne-Taylor. "Between Distance and Empathy: The Representation of the Desert in Lady Anne Blunt's Pilgrimage to Nejd (1878-79)*"* in *In-Between Two Worlds: Narratives by Female Explorers and Travellers 1850-1945,* ed. Beatrice Bijon and Gerard Gacon (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2009), 135.

[12] Billie Melman. *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 289.

Some historians of imperialism have recognized the historical significance of female travelers. After the publication of Edward Said's watershed book *Orientalism* in 1978 that successfully condemned the creation of the imaginary East (the binary opposite of the Occident) by these travelers and Orientalists, many historians were understandably apprehensive about dedicating their research to "practitioners" of the imperialist agenda and creators of the "other." Lady Anne Blunt was lost in the post-colonialist and revisionist shuffle. Yet, after new trends in British imperial history circled back to how the metropole was shaped by imperial peripheries, a few historians have reconsidered Victorian travelers and their legacies. Billie Melman was one of the first to examine how "gender and class influenced the European perception and representation of the 'other'" in her 1992 monograph *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East*. She criticized Said for focusing exclusively on a racial understanding of the "other" while ignoring a major force that certainly had a hand in shaping imperialist perceptions: gender. Melman held that women have previously been absent in imperialist historiography (this absence is generally explained as due to the patriarchal nature of imperialism); however, she asserts that women travelers to the empire's peripheries have become a prime example of female experience in the British Empire.

Melman's installment of women back into imperialist history is certainly an appreciated and welcome addition to historiography. Yet, so large a task is accompanied by drawbacks. Notably, Melman acknowledges the importance of Lady Anne in British and imperialist history in only a single chapter. But her approach to Lady Anne is summarized in the chapter's title: "An 'Orientalist' Couple: Lady Anne Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, and the Pilgrimage to Najd."

Melman marvelously argues, "Orientalism has a domestic, familial aspect which is not widely known."[13] Again, Lady Anne is crumpled into historiography as the wife, not the leading lady.

There have been numerous biographies dedicated to her husband, Wilfrid. The first of worth was written by Edith Finch and was published in 1938. Finch does not give much mention to Lady Anne or to her hand in shaping Wilfrid's life and work. Lady Anne, born into a famous British family, was Wilfrid's avenue to worldly and social importance. Many scholars went on to consider Wilfrid in their histories, and his notoriety pushed Elizabeth Longford to publish a meticulously researched and detailed biography of Wilfrid in 1979, *A Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt*. Longford gave relatively more attention to Lady Anne and researched her life more thoroughly than had any previous biographer. It is from Longford's biography of Wilfrid that scholars have drawn their portrait of Lady Anne, and it has been cited regularly.

Yet, in more recent years, Lady Anne's contributions and historical significance have become increasingly recognized. H.V.F. Winstone, an English journalist with an interest in the Middle East, wrote the first and, to this day, only biography of Lady Anne Blunt. This was published in 2003, twenty-seven years after he published his biography of Gertrude Bell-- another female English traveler to the Middle East. Bell first went to the region some twenty-five years after Lady Anne set foot in the region, and was inevitably influenced by Lady Anne's experience and publications. Gertrude Bell has absorbed the majority of scholarly attention, with many monographs dedicated to her life. Bell was very much the opposite of her predecessor: she was an arch-imperialist and was praised for her political involvement. Lady Anne, on the other hand, was an anti-imperialist and advocate for Arab independence. An explanation for this

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[13] Ibid., 279.

scholarly discrepancy of attention, outside of Lady Anne's manufactured and inauthentic image as the ideal Victorian wife, is hard to uncover. Nonetheless, Winstone's conjecture-driven biography of Lady Anne Blunt barely fills this historiographical cavity. To date, no trained historian has analyzed, researched, or contextualized Lady Anne's life and historical significance.

Lady Anne Blunt is present within the footnotes and bibliographies of Middle East History. Most noticeably, Lady Anne's books and journals have been utilized by many Middle East gender and women's history scholars. In order to provide a firm grasp of the historiography that Lady Anne contributed to, we now turn to examine Middle East Women's historiography.

Two works of Middle Eastern gender and women's historiography have been written in an attempt to synthesize the disparate and unconnected studies regarding women in the Middle East. Leila Ahmed wrote the first in the early 1990s before there was much to synthesize.[14] The most recent full-length historiography, written by Nikki R. Keddie, explains that Middle Eastern Gender and Women's history has only emerged in the past thirty years.[15] The field originated from scholarship within the region, including Lebanon, Egypt, and Turkey.[16] The unique nature of women's history and space in the region demands an interdisciplinary approach. The historical record does not have many documents written by women, or even explicitly regarding women. Women's experiences and perspectives must be teased out of the historical record. This has necessitated the application of anthropological, sociological, and political science approaches to Middle Eastern women's experiences and history. Like the goals of contemporary Middle East

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[14] Leila Ahmed, *Women and Gender in Islam* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 14.

[15] Nikki R Keddie, "Women in the Limelight: Some Recent Books on Women's Middle Eastern History." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34 (2002): 554.

[16] Israel Gershoni, Amy Singer, and Y. Hakan Erdem, *Middle East Historiographies: Narrating the Twentieth Century* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2006), 213.

history, its women's history endeavors to shed the orientalist images and interpretations of Middle Eastern women.

The focuses of Middle East Women's history are varied. Much attention has been placed on modern women, women and the state, and the veil. The countries most studied are undoubtedly Egypt and Iran, evidenced by the relatively large amount of scholarship that exists regarding modern Egyptian and Iranian women.[17] Studies of women in the Arab Gulf were sparse. However, the study of more modern Arabian women has been taken up by social scientists, not historians.[18]

Interpretations of Women's History in the region are largely economic. Class and location (urban or rural) have been accepted as the determining force for the application of gender ideals for women. Urban elite women did not work, and were often secluded in the harems, or private quarters, of a home. Lower-class urban women were required to work to meet the economic needs of the family, giving them more mobility and participation in the public sphere. Rural women were integral components of subsistence and trade economies. Before the introduction of oil into the economies, women had more mobility and were active participants in local and regional economies.[19] Women took on a complementary role to their husbands and male relatives, helping in crafts, trades, pearling, and fishing.[20] Sean Foley discusses the 1931 Dubai fishing law that made the selling of fish by women illegal. The fishermen, whom in theory this law would have benefitted, called for its repeal because the men were not familiar with the price of fish in the market. Moreover, they could not both catch and sell fish

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[17] Nikki R. Keddie, "Women in the Limelight: Some Recent Books on Women's Middle Eastern History," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34 (2002): 556.
[18] Ibid., 556.
[19] Sean Foley, *The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2010), 170.
[20] Ibid., 170.

simultaneously. They needed their wives and daughters to sell the fish they caught. The law

was quickly repealed, demonstrating "the importance of women in local economic life."[21]

Bedouin women also experienced greater agency than their elite counterparts. When husbands

left the home to trade or went to sea, their wives took their husbands' place to run tribal,

commercial, and family affairs.[22] Economic necessities, based on class, relaxed sex segregation

and female seclusion. A goal of Middle Eastern Women's studies is to demonstrate the

heterogeneity of women's roles and gender relations based on class and location.

    The argument that oil money has changed the role of women is widely accepted by

Middle Eastern Women scholars. The injection of oil money into the economy allowed women

to stop working and achieve the ideal of women not leaving the home and maintaining

segregation from the male sex.[23] Oil money emboldened adherence to traditional tribal customs

and Islamic gender relations because it afforded certain classes the luxury of practicing these

ideals. The significant acceptance of the class and economic interpretations (with oil as a key

player) of Women's History makes the focus of the historiography clear.

    Middle Eastern Women's scholars note many areas in the field that need further study.

Judith Tucker, a proponent of the class interpretations of women's history, points out that Middle

Eastern Women's History is still largely elitist. This is due to the lack of written sources

available to historians regarding non-elite women that ultimately inform analyses.[24] Tucker also

enumerates silent areas, such as class relations among women, the history of concepts (i.e.,

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[21] Ibid., 172.
[22] Ibid., 172.
[23] Ibid., 183.
[24] Tucker, Judith and Margaret L. Meriwether, ed. "Introduction," in *The Social History of Women and Gender in the Modern Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), 3.

honor, family, kinship), gendered labor, diaspora history, real vs. ideal daily lives, and a history of the family.[25] Sadly, tribalism is not on Tucker's radar.

Keddie admits that gender and tribalism have yet to be seriously studied by historians. Besides a fleeting sentence or two acknowledging the agency of tribalism in gender and women' relations, Keddie laments, "the great role of tribes and lineages in political, socioeconomic, and gender history of the region" has been under-emphasized.[26] The role of tribalism in Middle Eastern women's history remains largely unexplored.

Still, the primary goal of Middle Eastern Women's historians is to fully incorporate women's historical narratives into the conventional histories. A 2006 historiography contends that Middle East Women's history still runs parallel to traditional Middle East history and is yet to be fully incorporated.[27] However, the field of Middle East Women's History is evolving rapidly.

Considering the broader historical contexts Lady Anne lived within is essential to constructing a historical person-centered ethnography. The scope of this examination extends from England to Arabia; and we now turn to these two regions.

In the nineteenth century, European nations were entangled in a power struggle for European expansionism in the form of Empire. The "Great Game" was in full swing between Russia and Britain, the two main opponents in the imperial struggle. Soon Britain grew to be the largest empire on the globe, and their crown jewel was India. The British had two interrelated goals in the "Great Game": first, to keep their line of communication to India secure; and second,

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[25] Ibid., 4.
[26] Nikki R Keddie, "Women in the Limelight: Some Recent Books on Women's Middle Eastern History." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34 (2002): 556.
[27] Israel Gershoni, Amy Singer, and Y. Hakan Erdem. *Middle East Historiographies: Narrating the Twentieth Century* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2006), 215.

"to support the native regimes of the Middle East against European expansion. She did not desire to control the region, but to keep any other European power from doing so."[28] The latter goal helped ensure the former. These goals informed eighteenth-century British foreign policy in the Middle East.

Britain was interested in propping up indigenous regimes in the Middle East. Although the Ottomans "officially" ruled over the majority of the region (as recognized by Britain), including the Arabian Peninsula, the British also made efforts to preserve the tribal sheikhdoms that all but formally governed the Gulf region. While supporting Arab sheikhs, the British simultaneously supported the Ottomans. The British feared the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and were aware of the instability that plagued Constantinople and the Ottoman sultans in the second half of the nineteenth century. The dissipation of the Ottoman Empire would leave a vast power vacuum, and Britain maneuvered to establish itself as the next power broker. They did this to blockade Russian power in the region. After all, if Russia were to take control of Ottoman strongholds, the essential line of communication between India and Britain would be cut. And if the British lost Egypt, the main highway to Southeast Asia, they would lose India. In fact, Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798 based on the assumption that Egypt was the key to India.

British interest in the Ottoman Empire was further compounded with extensive trade networks between the two. Economic interests demanded further British support of the Ottoman Empire and of the more localized governments of the Gulf region.

The geopolitical and economic goals of the British Empire were at the core of their foreign policy and actions. Yet, this did not prevent the British publics' social and moral

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[28] David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LCC, 1989), 27.

concerns regarding the Ottoman Empire. The corruption of the Ottoman leaders and the publicized cruelties executed on the minorities of the regions, mostly Christians, inspired William Ewart Gladstone to take a zero-tolerance approach to the Turks after his election in 1880.[29] "Liberals in and out of Parliament began to express their abhorrence of the corrupt and despotic Middle Eastern regimes that their own government supported against the Russian threat."[30] Upon Gladstone's election, British policy towards the Ottomans had transformed from supportive to non-existent. The Ottomans turned to the Germans for support.

Although the British remained largely uninvolved with the Ottomans after 1880, they still maintained their support of local and autonomous regimes in the Arabian Peninsula. Mostly concentrated in eastern Arabian coastal areas, the British established friendships with many sheikhs and emirs in the Gulf's eastern region. These areas became known to the British as the Trucial States, and include the modern countries of Oman, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates.[31] The Trucial sheikdoms are geographically along the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea and became an important region for trade and communication between Britain and India. In the nineteenth century, piracy off the Trucial States' coast was a common occurrence. In an effort to fight piracy, the British navy (and by extension, British influence) allied with the sheikhs of the Trucial States. A formal agreement was signed in 1892 to fight piracy, and pronounced that Britain would have control over the Trucial States' foreign affairs, while the local rulers would retain authority over internal matters.[32] As the nineteenth century continued, the formal

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[29] Gladstone defeated the Conservative Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli.
[30] David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LCC, 1989), 30.
[31] Also referred to as the Trucial Sheikhdoms.
[32] Sean Foley, *The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2010), 46.

relationship between the British and the Ottomans deteriorated, and the informal affiliations with the coastal tribes of Arabia strengthened.

The Ottoman Empire had a relatively slow decline. Many scholars believe the empire's deterioration began in the seventeenth century, with various regions splitting off from the empire into their own nation-states or conglomerates. Yet, the Ottoman Empire did not vanish until the 1920s. The reasons hypothesized for the decline of the Ottoman Empire are numerous, as is befitting such a diverse and varied empire. Most historians cite the sources of decline as poor leadership and corruption, economic instability due to transformation in global trade patterns, vast cultural and geographic diversity, and the decentralization of the Ottoman government. Once the Ottoman Empire collapsed, European powers were ready to divide its territories. Ultimately, this laid the foundation for the modern Middle East.

Lady Anne Blunt's personal opinions greatly reflect contemporary attitudes to British foreign policy and public opinion. After her journey to the Najd, Lady Anne became fiercely anti-Ottoman and a supporter of Arab independence. She journeyed to the Najd in the winter of 1879, just before the election of Gladstone as prime minister. This election signaled a shift in public sentiment regarding Ottoman rule, as discussed previously. One must consider if Lady Anne's journey inspired and informed contemporary public opinion, or if public sentiment (illuminated by the election) ultimately shaped Lady Anne's political undercurrents present in *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*.

Nineteenth-century Arabia was indeed different from nineteenth-century Britain. "In terms of its interest to the rest of the world, the Arabian Peninsula probably reached its lowest

ebb during the 19th century."[33] Politically, three families dominated Arabia in the nineteenth century: the al-Saʿud, the Rashid, and the Hashemite. By the turn of the century, the al-Saʿuds and Rashids were the main contenders for power in the peninsula.

The Najdi al-Saʿud family came to significance in the eighteenth century. In 1774, Mohammad bin Saʿud formed an alliance with Mohammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab. Mohammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab was a religious mentor and leader who preached a fundamentalist and strict interpretation of Islam. Al-Wahhab believed that true Islamic worship and lifeways could be found only in the classical Islamic era (conventionally defined as the three generations of the Muslim community after the Prophet Mohammad). This alliance produced a strong military and religious force that soon expanded outside of Riyadh and the Najd. Wahhabism grew amongst Gulf tribal settlements and Bedouin camps in the nineteenth century. Although the political authority of the al-Saʿud family waxed and waned over a century in Arabia, Wahhabism did not. Wahhabi influence remained steady even though its political advocates ascended and descended from power.

Three distinct periods of al-Saʿud rule emerged and are known as the first, second, and third Saudi states. The first Saudi State began in 1802, when al-Saʿud forces captured Mecca. They successively lost, regained, and lost once again this meaningful city. By 1824, the second Saudi State emerged, although mostly concentrated in the Najd region of the peninsula. The Rashid family of Hail, a region and city also located in central Arabia, challenged the second Saudi State.

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[33] Dekmejian, Richard. "The Liberal Impulse in Saudi Arabia." *Middle East Journal* 57, no. 3 (Summer 2003): 403.

By the time of the Blunts' journey to the Arabian Peninsula, the Rashid family had firmly taken control of the Najd. The al-Sa'ud family was exiled to Kuwait. In *Pilgrimage to the Nejd,* Lady Anne explains to her 1880s audience that "the greatness of ibn Saoud and the Wahhabis is now a thing of the past, and Mohammed ibn Rashid is the most powerful ruler in Arabia."[34] By 1874, Mohammad ibn Rashid had taken Riyadh from the al-Sa'ud family, ending the second Saudi State.

Mohammad ibn Rashid is known as Mohammad al-Kabir, or the "Great." Although the name suggests otherwise, Mohammad al-Kabir was known for his ruthlessness and violence. He famously murdered his entire extended family to take sole power of the region, eliminating any challenges to his title as Emir. Mohammad had his brother, Tellal, and his nephews killed. The executions did not stop there. Mohammad called for his cousins to be gathered at the palace in Hail, and then

> with horrible barbarity, ordered their hands and their feet to be cut off, and the hands and the feet of their slaves, and had them, still living, dragged out into the courtyard of the palace, where they lay till they died. These ghastly crimes more ghastly than ever in a country where willful bloodshed is so unusual, seem to have struck terror far and wide, and no one since has dared to raise a hand against Mohammed.[35]

Nineteenth-century Arabs believed these atrocities incited punishment from God, as Mohammad al-Kabir was not blessed with children by any of his wives.[36] In the same palace courtyard that

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[34] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 119.
[35] Ibid., 198.
[36] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 161.

had witnessed the executions of the Rashid family, Mohammad al-Kabir entertained his European visitors, including the Blunts, Palgrave, Guarami, and Doughty.

In 1901, the al-Sa'ud family prepared to regain their former glory in the Najd. Under the leadership of twenty-one-year-old Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman al-Sa'ud, known colloquially as Ibn Sa'ud, their forces left Kuwait towards Riyadh. A battle ensued against the Rashid family, and against great odds, Ibn Sa'ud reconquered the city. The al-Sa'ud's power was reestablished after retaking Riyadh, and by 1932, the third Saudi State crystalized, and it is known today as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, where al-Sa'ud monarchs still govern.

Although the political authority in the Najd underwent many transformations, the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam remained firmly in the region. Wahhabism supports a highly conservative and authoritarian interpretation of Islam. As Mir Zohair Hussein explains, "Wahhabis work for a return to the simplicity, austerity, and piety of Islam's classical period."[37] Wahhabism rejects all ceremonies, rituals, and traditions that do not originate from the classical period. It promotes a literal interpretation of the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the Hadith. As will be demonstrated in more detail, Lady Anne Blunt came to associate pure Islamic faith and authentic Muslims with Wahhabism.

The Blunts traveled through the Arabian Peninsula during the period of the Rashid family's control of the Najd. They assumed that the al-Sa'uds' fall from power also indicated the decline of Wahhabism. This was largely the case, except for the urban centers in the Najd. Lady Anne explains, "Arabia proper, except in the first age of Islam, and latterly during the

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[37] Mir Zohair Husain, *Global Islamic Politics* (New York: Longman Publishers, 2003), 65.

hundred years of Wahhabi rule, has never been a religious country."[38] Wilfrid agrees with Lady

Anne in his preface to *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*, commenting that "religion, except in its primitive

Bedouin form, had disappeared from the inland districts, and only the Hejaz and Yemen were

more than nominally Mahometan."[39] Perhaps Wilfrid spoke to his British mainstream audience,

presumably wanting to support local Gulf leaders rather than the corrupt Ottoman Sultanate,

when he assured them that the fanatical Islamic sect had dissipated. He adamantly asserts the

"decay of Wahhabism in Arabia" in their 1879 journey.[40]

      Now that the historiographical and historical context in which Lady Anne found herself

has been explored, we may now narrow our scope to investigate Lady Anne's story.

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[38] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 13.
[39] Ibid, xiii.
[40] Ibid, xxiii.

CHAPTER III

WHO IS LADY ANNE BLUNT?

In order to consider Lady Anne Blunt's experience in the Arabian Peninsula, we must pause for a moment to learn more about her life story and historical context. Such is the nature of this historical person-centered ethnography.

After researching her life for a biography dedicated solely to Lady Anne, H.V.F. Winstone describes her as tolerant, modest, and in later life, eccentric.[41] Lady Anne's papers have recently been made available at the British Library in London and the Bodleian at Oxford, and are the core of Winstone's 2005 biographical narrative. These personal papers, journals, correspondence, sketches and watercolors were made accessible after the death of Lady Anne's only child, Judith. These papers extend over her lifetime: Lady Anne began keeping a journal in 1847, at the age of ten. She maintained her journaling until her death, with only small periods of lapse.[42]

Lady Annabella King-Noel was born in September 1837 to William King, first Earl of Lovelace, and Ada Byron King. She was born at her parents' home in London.[43] Ada was the only legitimate child of Lord Byron and Lady Anne Isabella Milbanke, known to history as Lady Byron. Lady Anne was born into a well-known and established British family. The Milbankes were wealthy notables in English society and famed horse riders, and Lord Byron was a household name by the time Lady Anne was born. After Lady Anne's death, her daughter, Judith, claimed "her mother was descended from the Royal Plantagenets, Alfred the Great,

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[41] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 10.
[42] Ibid., 41
[43] Ibid., 21.

Charlemagne, and Charles Martel who defeated the Saracens."[44] Lady Anne was no doubt born

into the British aristocracy. Aristocracy or not, Winstone asserts that "Lady Anne was born into

a family whose capacity for engendering hatred has been described by one of its best informed

students as 'exquisite'."[45]

Lady Anne Blunt was born at the precise time to experience both the height and the

decline of British Victorian aristocracy. The elites of Britain enjoyed relative security of

political and economic power, perpetuation of the establishment, and unchallenged public

acceptance from Lady Anne's birth in the 1830s until the 1870s, when Lady Anne began

traveling to the Middle East. Land ownership and wealth were consolidated in the British

aristocracy, which led to staggering inequality. David Cannadine summarizes, "in terms of its

resources, its prestige, and its dominance, it was a truly supra-national class, embracing the

whole of the British Isles with its patrician tentacles."[46] Victorian England's aristocracy enjoyed

an illustriousness not seen on the continent, where land was divided amongst heirs, thus

dissolving the consolidation of familial wealth and titles. Cannadine, in his examination of

aristocratic class consciousness, pinpoints the 1880s as the inception of the establishment's

decay. The Third Reform Act, passed in 1884-1885, altered the political balance in favor of the

House of Commons and the middle class. The elite's economic security had eroded, and High-

Society became "dominated by the vulgar wealth of the new plutocracy."[47] Lady Anne Blunt

was to witness the height and the decline of her aristocratic family in her lifetime.

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[44] Elizabeth Longford, *Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1980), 57.
[45] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 10.
[46] David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 15.
[47] Ibid., 30.

Lady Anne also experienced a moralizing of British society in her time. Prior to the 1830s, British High Society was riddled with vice and depravity.[48] Lady Anne's generation was to condemn this behavior as immoral. Restraint, virtue, and the appearance of individual and collective propriety became social requirements. These were qualities Lady Anne's family wished to cultivate in her.

Her peers and contemporaries knew her as Lord Byron's granddaughter, with many newspaper articles about Lady Anne being titled "Lord Byron's Granddaughter." They boosted her Cornish ancestry--a reference to Lord Byron's heritage. They repeatedly referenced Lady Anne's quiet voice, which Byron famously loved in women.[49] Later in life, the public connected Lady Anne's adventurous spirit back to Lord Byron, claiming, "perhaps her ladyship has inherited the erratic and wandering propensities of her illustrious ancestor."[50]

It is ironic that the public and media so frequently associated Lady Anne with Lord Byron, when it was Lady Byron who had a strong hand in raising Lady Anne. In fact, Lord Byron died before Lady Anne was born. Lady Byron assumed the responsibility for finding Lady Anne's tutors and governesses. Lady Byron was greatly concerned with the proper Victorian upbringing of her granddaughter. There are numerous letters between Lady Byron and Lady Anne's father, Lord Lovelace, regarding Lady Anne's upbringing. Lady Byron contracted well-established, and sometimes famous, tutors and instructors for Lady Anne. The formidable Lady Byron employed the notable artist John Ruskin as Lady Anne's art teacher.[51] His influence

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[48] David Spring, "Aristocracy, Social Structure, and Religion in Early Victorian Period," *Victorian Studies* 6, no. 3 (1963): 266.
[49] "Byron's Granddaughter," *Milwaukee Sentinel* (Milwaukee, WI), Feb. 13, 1887.
[50] "Byron's Granddaughter at Arab," *Milwaukee Journal* (Milwaukee, WI), Jan. 5, 1891.
[51] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 43.

can be seen in the hard lines of the watercolors and sketches Lady Anne created while on her journey to Arabia.

Lady Anne's relationship with her mother and father evolved over time. When she was a child, her parents traveled frequently, leaving Lady Anne and her brothers in the care of Lady Byron and various governesses. Steady letter writing relieved the physical absence of her parents. This parenting approach was quite common for the Victorian era. In fact, it could be argued that Lady Anne was unique amongst her peers for her closeness to her grandmother. Comments from her letters and journal entries as a child demonstrate that Lady Anne felt the favoritism her parents showed towards her two brothers: her older brother, Ockham, known informally to the family as Byron, and her younger brother, Ralph.[52] Later on, Lady Anne was to understand that favoritism did not always last over time: her parents shipped Ockham off to sea when he was fourteen years old because they became disappointed by his peculiarities, which led to indifference towards him.[53] He never returned home for more than a visit; and, in later life, Ockham would reject his aristocratic birth by working as a laborer on the docks of northern England.

Her mother, Ada, a scientifically inclined woman, died when Lady Anne was fifteen years old. Ada was fond of gambling, horseracing, and romantic affairs with intellectuals.[54] Ada accumulated great amounts of debt that Lady Byron and Lord Lovelace would work to decrease. This did not keep Lady Anne away from her mother after she grew ill. Lady Anne was with her mother when she died at the age of 41.[55] After her mother's death, "her father had withheld the indulgences common to girls of her rank; she was 'ill-fed, ill-clothed, suffering from winter cold

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[52] Ibid, 24.
[53] Ibid., 48.
[54] Ibid., 62
[55] Ibid., 70.

in fireless rooms'."[56] Along with her father, Lady Anne was kept "under the Spartan rule of her grandmother, Lady Anne Noel, Lady Byron," with whom Lady Anne lived.[57] Lady Anne was not raised under the umbrella of religiosity, as Lady Byron was not religious. However, Lady Byron instilled a strict upbringing in Lady Anne. Elizabeth Longford explains "the moral code she received from Lady Byron had all the rigidity to be expected from that self-confident lady: no christening, no religious dogma, 'no basis of supernatural teaching' on which to rest her severe rules of conduct."[58] The visible absence of religious faith in Lady Anne's early life was later eliminated when she joined the Roman Catholic Church.

Lady Anne's father, the Earl of Lovelace, was likewise a distant presence in her life. As Lady Anne grew older, however, he often took her for continental holidays.[59] In her eighteenth year, Lady Anne formally "came out" to society with a formal presentation at court.[60] After her coming out, Lord Lovelace would take her abroad for extended journeys.

It was on a holiday in Florence, Italy, when she first met Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, a diplomat who hailed from a ranked family, but who grew up without fortune.[61] Lady Anne was twenty-nine years old when they met, and thirty by the time they married. Wilfrid was three years her junior, and Lady Anne was conscious of her older age. In a letter to him, she showed her vulnerability to Wilfrid when she remarked she was too old for him.[62] Wilfrid had several previous romantic liaisons (by many accounts, he was in love with Ella Baird when the two

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[56] Elizabeth Longford, *Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1980), 59.
[57] Rosemary Archer, "Lady Anne Blunt" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31937.
[58] Elizabeth Longford, *Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1980), 59.
[59] Ibid, 71.
[60] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 74.
[61] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 107.
[62] Elizabeth Longford, *Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1980), 64.

married), but was content that he and Lady Anne could find harmony in a "practical romance."[63] Wilfrid knew it was an advantageous match for him. Lady Anne had a famous pedigree and incredible wealth, and their marriage would financially stabilize him; and likewise, he provided an admittedly lesser position and partner for her.[64] Wilfrid describes Lady Anne after their first meeting in 1865:

> She thought herself plainer than she was, and had none of the ways of a pretty woman, though in truth she had that sort of prettiness that a bird has…She had beautiful white teeth and complexion rather brown than fair…In stature less than tall, well poised and active, with a trim light figure set on a pair of small high-in-stepped feet…an unobtrusive figure in Mme d'Usedom's noisy drawing-room, dressed in pale russet with a single crimson rose for ornament, rather behind the fashion of the day, but dignified and bright.[65]

They married in June 1869 in London, although "her father was opposed to any marriage for her, desiring the fortune she had inherited from Lady Byron for the son of his second marriage."[66] Lady Anne became close to Wilfrid's family throughout their engagement. After her marriage, Wilfrid's family started calling her just Anne, and Lady Annabella King-Noel was known from that time forward as "Lady Anne Blunt."[67]

Lady Anne became a wife and mother under the reign of Queen Victoria. During this time, British society was undergoing changes in the conceptions of gender roles. Queen Victoria

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[63] Ibid, 79.
[64] Ibid, 55.
[65] Ibid, 58.
[66] Ibid, 58.
[67] Ibid, 71.

set a paradoxical model for nineteenth-century aristocratic gender roles. As a woman, Queen Victoria promoted her feminine role-- especially in her marriage-- and encouraged her female aristocrats to observe the feminine ideals of deference, firm morality, childrearing, and social propriety. Paradoxically, Queen Victoria was sovereign of her kingdom and empire, yet she deferred to her husband, Prince Albert. Constitutionally, she was the master of her male subjects, yet encouraged the aristocracy to adhere to theologically-inspired gender expectations: for men to be brave, valiant, noble, master of the household, provider, and caring landlords for their dependent communities; and for women to be helper to the men in their tasks, instill Christian morality in their families, raise children, and care for the daily tasks of the household. These expectations transcended class, yet class greatly determined how these expectations were performed. As we shall see with nineteenth-century Arab gender roles in chapter five, class is at the heart of daily gender roles and customs.

Lady Anne was expected to play the role of proper Victorian wife, sister, and daughter. Yet, as an aristocrat, Lady Anne was able to achieve greater equality with her male counterparts compared to her middle- and lower-class female compatriots. Victorian aristocratic women were able to circumvent the gendered expectations of "domestic" vs. "public" spheres, held dearly as proper etiquette amongst the British middle class. K.D. Reynolds argues aristocratic society neither expected, nor practiced, the notion of separate spheres, due to their engaged participation as aristocrats in the management of their households and estates and as patrons of various charities and schools, and their participation in national politics.[68] Reynolds does not argue that aristocratic women were independent and equal to men. Rather, elite women had greater physical and social opportunities to become active in their communities and nation. She

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[68] K.D. Reynolds. *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 5.

contends that aristocratic men and women had a common goal, to perpetuate their elite class, which created unique aristocratic gender roles that greatly differed from other economic classes:

> as women, the nature of their involvement differed from that of men of the same class, but as aristocrats, their interests were shared. Unlike other Victorian institutions, a working aristocracy required women as well as men to function fully, and not simply for the hereditary dimension.[69]

Aristocratic women were not passive and submissive. They were active participants in the public sphere ,which sharply contrasted with the middle-class gender ideal of separate spheres. A British middle-class had emerged during the nineteenth-century. This newly emerged economic class subscribed to different conceptions of gender roles and ideals according to their economic capacities. It is the middle-class that constructed the notion of separate spheres for men and women. Women were to tend to the "domestic" sphere, caring for children and household, while the men were to attend to the "public" sphere of earning wages, industry, and politics. Middle-class men aspired to earn a comfortable living that would support themselves and their families and that ultimately allowed for the women to stay in their appointed domestic arena.[70] The practice of these separate spheres was socially understood to indicate the complete ascension to the middle-class and the proper adherence to Christian-inspired gender ideals.

Reynolds, in *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain,* successfully argues that the separate spheres was a notion that remained within the bourgeois class and did not permeate into the aristocracy or lower-classes. Lower-class men and women in nineteenth-

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[69] Ibid., 220.

[70] Susan Kingsley Kent. *Gender and Power in Britain, 1640-1990* (London: Routledge, 1999), 24.

century Britain encountered the same economic limitations as their Arab contemporaries. Poverty often mandated that both men and women in a family leave the home and work for a wage. Perhaps the lower-class aspired to the ideal of separate spheres, although it was certainly not a lived experience.

As an aristocrat, Lady Anne had greater access (and expectations) to engage in the public sphere and larger community. Lady Anne traveled abroad, established and ran a successful Arabian Horse Stud, and remained active in the literary world. The act of writing, editing, and publishing her travelogues is a prime example of Lady Anne operating within the aristocracy's gender models. As an aristocrat, she was not sharply criticized for engaging in activities outside of the home, as her status prescribed, and she accepted public engagement and visibility. Lady Anne certainly expected herself to engage in the realms outside her estates, and did not see herself as breaking gender codes. Yet, similar to Queen Victoria, Lady Anne also emphasized her femininity in her marriage dynamics and wifely deference to her husband. Although her claims of passivity and submission within her marriage may be empty, it is significant that she promoted these feminine qualities in her writings-- even if their purpose was simply to stay in line with her time's gender constructions.

Wilfrid and Lady Anne were both anxious to welcome a son and heir into their new family. However, pregnancy and childbirth proved difficult for Lady Anne. She endured several miscarriages and premature deliveries. These experiences deeply affected Lady Anne, and she felt profound grief. After losing twin girls only hours after her second premature delivery (she delivered at six months gestation), Lady Anne writes,

It is better my own child should die in my arms if it must die. I feel as if I could not bear anyone else to touch it. Oh, it was so lovely to me, it had feet and hands like its father and its voice went to my heart, and it opened its eyes and looked at me, how many times and the last time the eyes were open they saw me and I kissed the lids to shut them forever and I kissed my child's hands and feet and head. I kissed the mouth.[71]

Lady Anne delivered four children, including a son, but only one survived: a daughter, Judith Lady Anne Dorothea, born in 1873.[72] Wilfrid was openly disappointed in his being deprived of a male heir-- an experience Lady Anne likely recalled from childhood.[73] Her hopes of pleasing Wilfrid and creating domestic satisfaction without delivering a son were severely inhibited. Wilfrid began to stray from Lady Anne and the marriage during her miscarriages and difficult pregnancies. Lady Anne knew of Wilfrid's infidelity, and it was common knowledge in their social circle. Wilfrid's infidelity went public during a divorce case. Lady Anne remained loyal to Wilfrid and never publicly rebuked him or his socially offensive behavior. Others in their circle did not adhere to the dutiful loyalty Lady Anne demonstrated towards her philandering husband, and their social life greatly dissipated after the divorce proceedings.[74]

Wilfrid wished to reform his adultery and other sins, and this ultimately drew him to consider the austere discipline of the desert. It was an 1873 trip to Turkey that ignited Wilfrid and Lady Anne's fascination with the East.[75] Moreover, Wilfrid had met Richard Palgrave in

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[71] Lady Anne Blunt, quoted in H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 118-119.
[72] Rosemary Archer, "Lady Anne Blunt" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31937 (Accessed November 19, 2012.)
[73] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 107.
[74] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 132.
[75] Ibid., 124.

Buenos Aires during his engagement to Lady Anne. Palgrave spoke to Wilfrid of his experiences in Riyadh, the desert, and the horses. Upon the mention of the famous Arabian horses, Lady Anne was just as infatuated with the idea of Arabia. Lady Anne went for the horses, while Wilfrid went for the "harsh discipline of desert exploration."[76]

It is believed that Wilfrid and Lady Anne found marital happiness, or at least harmony, in their travels to the East. It was Lady Anne's fortune that funded their journeys to the Middle East. All together, the Blunts made six trips to the region: in 1874 they traveled to Algeria; the next year they went to Lower Egypt, Sinai, and Palestine; in 1877 they went to the Euphrates Valley (today known as Iraq and Syria); in 1878-1879 they journeyed through the Najd (central Arabia), Persia, and India; and finally in 1881-1882 they explored the Hijaz (western coast of Arabia, including Mecca and Medina) and Egypt.[77] It was their trip to the Najd and their encounters with Bedouin that are most exceptional. The Blunts "were the first Christians to penetrate Wahabi Arabia undisguised."[78] It was during this journey that their love of Arabia manifested, in particular, their admiration of the Bedouin.

Before the twentieth century, only a few Europeans had made recorded journeys to central Arabia since Roman times: William Gifford Palgrave, Charles Doughty, Carlo Guarmani, Charles Huber, Christian Snouck Hurgronje, George August Wallin, and William Lewis Burckhardt.[79] Lady Anne was the first European woman to set foot on the desert sands of Arabia.

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[76] Ibid., 134.
[77] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 282.
[78] Carole Bourne-Taylor, "Between Distance and Empathy: The Representation of the Desert in Lady Anne Blunt's Pilgrimage to Nejd (1878-79)' in *In-Between Two Worlds: Narratives by Female Explorers and Travellers 1850-1945,* ed. Beatrice Bijon and Gerard Gacon (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2009), 133.
[79] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 149.

Lady Anne and Wilfrid traveled through the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula in a fashion unlike that of their predecessors. They did not burden their camel caravans with European luxury items like bathtubs, linens, tables and chairs. Rather, the Blunts wanted to be like their hosts: they ate on the ground with their hands, sharing a common dish for meals. They slept on oilskin, sheepskin, and carpets like their Arab companions.[80] Similarly, their caravans were kept relatively small. Sometimes they traveled without hired escorts or interpreters, instead relying on "guides provided from their native hosts."[81] Obviously, the Blunts learned Arabic, although the dialect they absorbed was more Levantine than peninsular. The exceptional Arabian horses particularly fascinated Lady Anne, an avid equestrienne since childhood. She also kept detail-oriented notes, diaries, and journals of their journeys (often documenting pseudo-scientific data such as barometer pressures), made sketches, and mapped the region.[82]

Their extended journeys through the Middle East solidified Lady Anne and Wilfrid's political leanings. Specifically, their journey to the Najd politicized them both, albeit Wilfrid was the more politically passionate of the two. They were known in their day as advocates for Arab independence (precursors to Arab nationalists) and supported the re-establishment of an Arab caliphate to replace Ottoman imperial rule. Lady Anne lamented how the Turkish pashas, or governmental officials, were in no position to properly govern and attend to the Arabian Peninsula. Indeed, tribal law and governance were still primary in the Gulf, even during times of Ottoman domination. In *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*, Lady Anne laments the severe lack of water in the center of the peninsula. The desert inhabitants had no wells, or knowledge of how to tap a

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[80] Marion Tinling, *Women into the Unknown: A Sourcebook on Women Explorers and Travelers* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 58.

[81] Ibid, 57.

[82] Rosemary Archer, "Lady Anne Blunt" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31937 (Accessed November 19, 2012.)

well. She sharply criticizes the Turkish rulers for not sending educated and properly suited officials to help alleviate these issues, as a government should.[83] Her scorn for the Ottoman Empire and imperial rule would later extend to a critical view of the British Empire and imperialism.

Wilfrid and Lady Anne also found relevance for their exceptional Najdi journey through professional and academic societies of the nineteenth century. Lady Anne found purpose in her equestrienne contributions, most notably to the Arabian Stud section of the General Stud Book.[84] These were also the "salad days of the Royal Geographical Society."[85] A year after their Arabian journey, on December 8, 1880, Lord Northbrook, then president of the Royal Geographical Society, asked Wilfrid to speak about his Arabian expedition. Lady Anne, whose field observations and notes informed Wilfrid's arguments, was by his side.[86] Wilfrid's main contribution to scholarship was to refine and more accurately define the definition of "Najd." Wilfrid drew his definition from the indigenous conceptualization of the region. Reifying the position he took in his preface to *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*, he writes, " the name Nejed signifies 'highland', in contradistinction to the coast and the outlying provinces of lesser elevations."[87] Wilfrid went further to explain to his British audience that for the Arabs, after the expansion of "the Wahhabi empire of Nejd, the term changed from a geographical and became a political one."[88] In the end, Wilfrid argued that Arabs define the Najd as the areas and towns in the

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[83] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 49.
[84] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 182.
[85] Peter North and Harvey Tripp, *Culture Shock, Saudi Arabia: A Survival Guide to Customs and Etiquette* (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish Corporation, 2003), 16.
[86] Geographical Society, BL 53905; Elizabeth Longford, *Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1980), 250.
[87] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), xxv.
[88] Ibid., xxviii.

deserts of Northern Arabia (known to Arabs as the Nefud, composed of two distinct deserts: the "lesser" Nefud and the "greater" Nefud) and the deserts themselves; and thus, so should the Royal Geographical Society use the definition.[89] Wilfrid's support of an indigenous definition seems unique in the context of Orientalism.

The Blunts' expedition through central Arabia inspired not only political thoughts, but also a religious conversion. Wilfrid had internally struggled with his faith since childhood. His mother had suddenly converted to Roman Catholicism and quickly moved to Italy. She brought Wilfrid and his siblings with her to Italy-- and into the Catholic faith. However, Wilfrid could not silence his doubts and angst regarding religion as he grew older. By 1870s, Wilfrid had essentially resigned his faith and began criticizing the Church.[90] Wilfrid eventually became a devotee to Darwinian evolutionary theory.[91]

Lady Anne, who had not been exposed to religious doctrine or worship during her formative years, secretly converted to Roman Catholicism on the road to Persia. Billie Melman, after reading Lady Anne's personal pocket diaries from the trip, housed in the British Library, offers the most detailed account of her conversion in existing historiography.   Lady Anne had a vision that heaven opened and she saw her three dead children 'in glory'. She converted to Catholicism immediately, and hid this from Wilfrid. However, H.V.F. Winstone offers another transformative moment as the impetus for Lady Anne's sudden conversion. According to Winstone, Lady Anne was taken with the "ascetic life of the desert," and began to seriously contemplate her own spirituality.[92] On the Persian leg of their journey, Wilfrid became very ill.

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[89] Ibid., xxiii.
[90] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 110.
[91] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 293.
[92] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 171.

Lady Anne was worried that he would die, but seeing his rapid return to health-- manifested in a "miraculous" moment of Wilfrid rising from the death bed to swiftly mount a camel-- she attributed the recovery to God and joined the Church.[93] Lady Anne particularly connected with the Roman Catholic Church, and certain tenets of Catholicism that promote an "immaterialist brand of Christianity that emphasized the personality of God," although she did not adopt some rituals of the Roman church.[94] Cardinal Henry Edward Manning confirmed Lady Anne in his private chapel at Westminster on March 14, 1880.[95] Wilfrid was incensed when he learned of Lady Anne's secret conversion, and this undoubtedly contributed to their marital complications.

The journals, diaries, and notes that Lady Anne produced throughout her journeys in the Middle East culminated in three publications. Her first travelogue, *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates,* was published in two volumes in 1879. This travelogue was heavily edited by Wilfrid, who also contributed a few closing chapters about the Arabian horse. Readers discern a manufactured version of Lady Anne's written voice that reads as idealized and inauthentic. Wilfrid likely wrote the narrative himself, although it was based on Lady Anne's journals and diaries from the Mesopotamian journey.[96]

On the other hand, her second publication, *Pilgrimage to the Nejd,* "is unmistakably Lady Anne's."[97] The style presented in *Pilgrimage to the Nejd* is noticeably different in tone from that in *Bedouin Tribes of the Euphrates.* Wilfrid's contribution to this second narrative is limited to that of editor and actor because his own notes and observations during their journey to the Najd

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[93] Ibid., 178.
[94] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 295.
[95] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 182.
[96] Ibid., 280.
[97] Ibid., 281.

are "thin."[98] Moreover, Lady Anne was editing and composing the travelogue in England while Wilfrid was away on the continent chasing new loves and lusts and in London expressing his new political viewpoints.[99] Wilfrid's physical absence in the editing process proves his contributions to be minimal. H.V.F. Winstone strong asserts Lady Anne's sole involvement in writing *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*: "Wilfrid boasted of his knowledge of Arabia and the Arab language but never truly knew the one or spoke the other."[100] Lady Anne was the clear scholar of the pair.

Lady Anne's final book, *The Authentic Arabian Horse and His Descendants,* was published by her daughter (known to posterity as Lady Wentworth) after her death. It should not be dismissed as a book singularly about horses. As Melman explains, "the history of the thorough Arabian is also a history of the authentic Arab" and she contends that Lady Anne's work should be considered an ethnography.[101]

Her predecessors inevitably shaped Lady Anne's narrative in *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*. Notably, Lady Anne was conceptually inspired by Bunyan's deliciously popular *Pilgrim's Progress.* A handful of Europeans, mostly specialists, had previously traveled throughout the region and documented their experiences in popular travelogues read by many in the greater British public-- including the Blunts. Richard Burton, John Lewis Burckhardt, and Gifford Palgrave all traveled throughout the Arabian Peninsula (in disguise, typically as a pilgrim or religious scholar). Their experiences prepared Lady Anne and Wilfrid for their own journeys, yet also qualified them to critique their predecessors' representations of the Najd and the Bedouin. Lady Anne directly challenges Palgrave's account, which she believed was heavily

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[98] Ibid., 286.
[99] Ibid., 92.
[100] Ibid., 146.
[101] Ibid., 301.

romanticized (at best) and, at times, outright false (at worst). Lady Anne charges herself with

finding the "authentic" Arabia that had been unceremoniously captured and misrepresented by

Palgrave.[102] In her narratives, Lady Anne balances descriptions of the landscape, flora and

fauna, and the peoples of the region. Lady Anne utilizes her artistic skills as a sketch artist and

watercolorist, and includes her visual representations in the books. This has set her travelogues

apart from those of her forerunners.

Literary critic Carole Bourne-Taylor correctly identifies two oppositional models Lady

Anne employs to characterize the Arabia she sees: the first is the Bedouin model, the second is

the urban model. Lady Anne represents the Bedouin model as noble, authentic, unspoiled by

modernity, utopian and pre-Islamic. The urban model, however, has negative features in Lady

Anne's estimation. She condemns the "sordid town notions" that have trumped townspeoples'

Bedouin heritage.[103] Curiously, in Lady Anne's analysis, the authentic Arab was to be found in

the Bedouin encampments, not in the towns, even though former Bedouin tribes had established

the towns.[104]

The marital bliss, real or fictitiously manufactured, of the Blunts' found in their Arabian

journeys did not extend to their life in England. They set up house at Crabbet Park, in Sussex,

which Wilfrid inherited upon the death of his brother within the first years of their marriage.[105]

At Crabbet Park they established an Arabian horse stud and indeed have been credited with

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[102] Carole Bourne-Taylor, "Between Distance and Empathy: The Representation of the Desert in Lady Anne Blunt's *Pilgrimage to Nejd (1878-79)"* in *In-Between Two Worlds: Narratives by Female Explorers and Travellers 1850-1945,* ed. Beatrice Bijon and Gerard Gacon (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2009), 134.
[103] Ibid., 137.
[104] The notion of Bedouin superiority over urban and village lifeways is also common amongst Arabs. This is evidenced by the Arab concept of *'asil*, which will be discussed in chapter six.
[105] Rosemary Archer, "Lady Anne Blunt" in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31937.

inspiring the elitist Arabian horse rage in England.[106] Their stud was highly influential and prestigious and was kept in operation for almost a century after its inception by their daughter, Judith. Similarly, in 1882, they also established a stud at their thirty-seven acre estate outside of Cairo, named Sheikh 'Ubayd (after a saint whose tomb was housed on their property).[107]

The horse studs did not mend their marital fissures, however. Wilfrid was known to have been a lady's man before and after their marriage, and his extramarital affairs began again after his "reformation" in the Najdi desert.[108] He had several instances of infidelity.[109] Wilfrid calls the year after their journey to the Najd his "carnival of folly."[110] Alongside the infidelity, Lady Anne's difficulty in conceiving and bringing to term a male issue added an extra layer of marital and individual strife. Moreover, Lady Anne's individual conversion to Catholicism during the Persian leg of the Najd trip must not be overlooked. In fact, some scholars hold that Wilfrid dated the deterioration of his and Lady Anne's marriage to April 1879, the month of Lady Anne's conversion.[111]

In 1906, Lady Anne Blunt and Wilfrid Scawen Blunt formally separated. Lady Anne left Crabbet Park and shifted her home base to the house in Egypt, Sheikh 'Ubayd. She did travel back and forth to England to visit Judith and her grandchildren. A few months before her death, Lady Anne inherited the barony of Wentworth from her grandmother, Lady Byron, "one of the

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[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Kathryn Tidrick, *Heart-beguiling Araby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 107.
[109] Wilfrid justifies his adulterous behavior: "There is no more certain rule in friendship…than that, unless one makes a little love to one's friend's wife, the love that was with him soon languishes. There is a point where it becomes a condition of its continuance, just as the continuance of one's love for a married woman depends so often on the pleasant relations one may establish with the husband. These are the secrets of the heart which are not known even to our best novelists." Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, quoted in H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 175.
[110] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 182.
[111] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 295.

few English titles which could be inherited through the female lines."[112] Lady Anne inherited the Wentworth title after the death of her brother Ockham, her younger brother Ralph, and Ralph's daughter. Upon Lady Anne's death, the title then passed on to Judith (thereafter known as Lady Wentworth). After a very full seventy years, Lady Anne Blunt died at the Anglo-American hospital in Cairo on December 15th, 1917.[113]

The London *Times* honored Lady Anne with an obituary printed two weeks after her death. The title of the obituary reiterates her public reputation: "*Byron's Granddaughter: The Late Baroness Wentworth.*" She is noted for her "absolute fearlessness," her contributions to Arabic scholarship, and "her stoical endurance of pain and hardship, her asceticism and self-sacrifice."[114] Even to her contemporaries, she was regarded as "one of the most ambitious and adventurous lady-travellers of our day."[115]

It would be a significant oversight to discuss the life of a British aristocrat such as Lady Anne Blunt without consideration of historian David Cannadine's insightful analysis *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire.* Cannadine's comprehension of turn-of-the-century aristocratic perceptions is also central to this paper's fundamental claim. Cannadine critiques Edward Said's prodigious work *Orientalism*, reinserting a consideration of class into imperialist historiography and criticism. He warns against a purely racial interpretation of imperialist history, and in so doing adds another layer of understanding to the historiography.

Cannadine persuasively argues that the British viewed their empire's colonies as an extension of their own social and cultural systems. How could they not? Individuals grapple

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[112] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 76.
[113] Rosemary Archer, "Lady Anne Blunt," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* ed. H.C.G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31937.
[114] "Byron's Granddaughter: The Late Baroness Wentworth," *Times* (London), Dec. 29, 1917.
[115] Edward Whymper, "Famous Lady Travellers: A Great Arabian Traveller-Lady Lady Anne Blunt," *Penny Weekly* (London), Aug. 29, 1885.

with, reconcile, and understand unknown entities by relating them back to what they know: their own societal formations, cultural expectations, and meta-processes. Cannadine clarifies, "they were at least as likely to envisage the social structure of their empire (as their predecessors had done before them) by analogy to what they knew of 'home', or in replication of it, or in parallel to it, or in extension of it, or (sometimes, in idealization of it, or even, and increasingly) in nostalgia for it."[116] Joseph Schumpeter agrees with Cannadine's arguments. Schumpeter argues the British Empire was created, in part, because the British aristocracy greatly identified with "the hierarchical and ordered society" found in the East.[117] Imperialism, on a collective level, "was a point of escapism for them from industry, middle class, and changing societal modes." Cannadine's and Schumpeter's understandings of imperialism ring true in the case of Lady Anne. Lady Anne highly identified wit and admired the unchallenged hierarchical societal modes of Arabia. Ultimately, this pre-disposed her to undergo an enculturative experience. Because she was not resistant to nineteenth-century Arab society, but rather admired it, she was more accepting and open-minded to its saturation in her as an individual.

Cannadine's contentions enhance, but do not undermine, the understandings of orientalism discussed by Edward Said. Said's interpretations of imperialism and the creation of orientalist discourse greatly clarify certain aspects of imperialism, including its justification amongst westerners. Said explains that the West understood imperialism as a binary relationship between the Occident and the Orient. Another binary relationship, males and females, served as a model binary relationship for the West and East. Said argues that westerners often characterized the role of the occident as male (promoting nobility, rationality, and a function as

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[116] David Cannadine. *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 5.

[117] Joseph Schumpeter. *Imperialism; And, Social Classes* (New York: A.M. Kelley, 1974), 21.

provider and protector) in contrast to the Orient as female (promoting dependence, effeminacy, and irrationality).[118] Said explains that the peoples of the Orient were often described with adjectives associated with the feminine. By characterizing the West as a male provider, protector, and guide in contrast to the East as a female in need of dependence and guidance, imperialism was greatly justified in the perspective of the western public.

Nowhere is Cannadine's argument more clearly manifested than in the writings and experience of Lady Anne Blunt. Curiously, however, Lady Anne is not once mentioned in his analysis. Still, Wilfrid is given a few sentences: "A Sussex squire who hated the middle classes, mass politics, 'self financiers' and 'greedy Jews', he travelled extensively in the Middle East and bought an estate near Cairo; he also spoke Arabic, bred Arab horses and wore local costume."[119] Wilfrid's utility in Cannadine's discourse is to demonstrate that British aristocrats admired the traditional political structures of Arab emirs and sheikhs, and the ordered hierarchy "which had once existed in Britain, but which was now under serious threat."[120] Wilfrid and Lady Anne Blunt did greatly admire the order, pervasive hierarchy, and deference to tradition the Arab Bedouin so nobly exhibited. This is because they were nostalgic for the traditional and aristocratic British society and because they could *only* comprehend another cultural system by comparing it to their own-- whether past or present. The Blunts happened to have been born, and thoroughly socialized, into a declining aristocratic order that seamlessly aligned with the patriarchal hierarchy they so clearly saw in the Najd. If Lady Anne and Wilfrid had been born into, let us say, a middle-class family, and had completed the same expedition routes, their admiration for the Bedouin social structure would likely have turned, according to Cannadine's

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[118] Edward Said. *Orientalism* (New York: Random House Inc., 1979), 16.
[119] David Cannadine. *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 72.
[120] Ibid., 72.

line of thought, to scorn and ridicule. Coincidentally, it just so happened that the Blunts shared the same values as their Arab hosts.

But what did the Blunts miss by recognizing only their esteemed form of social hierarchy in Bedouin daily life? Did the Blunts mistake social status for class? Did such a distinction in status and class truly exist in Arabia? Did Lady Anne ignore the powerful presence and agency of Arab women? Were the Blunts blind to the deviations from these seemingly strict hierarchies that life in the desert sometimes demands? These questions can only be contemplated briefly here, but will hopefully find their place in subsequent examinations.

Or is there another explanation available to us, outside of historical theory and hypothesis, to explain Lady Anne and Wilfrid's remarkable and boundless awe and acquisition of Bedouin culture and daily life? Another explanation lies in the anthropological discipline's concept of enculturation.

CHAPTER IV

ENCULTURATION, ACCULTURATION, AND SOCIALIZATION

Any individual who has lived for extended periods of time in another culture can attest to the fact that some cultural expectations, customs, and lifeways are adopted. Perhaps an American living in the United Kingdom will begin to call french fries "chips"; and maybe a Thai woman living in the United States will stop using a spoon as the vehicle for her noodles and start using a fork. However, after living abroad for a matter of years (or in the case of the Blunts, intermittent years), an individual begins to absorb and internalize larger cultural constructions and expectations of their host country at both a conscious and an unconscious level.

This process is highly familiar to anthropologists, who live and study in a host culture for typically two years, sometimes more. Known as "going native," this idiom

> Refers to the process of learning, adjusting, expanding, and accepting what goes on as anthropologists deepen their involvement with their hosts and their hosts' cultures through long-term fieldwork and participation. This process of absorbing another culture is psychologically challenging. At times the anthropologist will resist the process of assimilation, exhibiting signs of neurosis and obsessive behavior, while at other times they will plunge headlong into the lives and behaviors of their hosts, forgetting for a time that they ever lived anywhere else.[121]

Often this process manifests on a conscious and subconscious level; and it is a perpetual theme of an anthropologist's personal evolution during and after fieldwork. Anthropologist William J.

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[121] Laura Tamakoshi and Brian Cross, "Going Native," Feb. 2, 2012, http://www.truman.edu/academics/ss/faculty/tamakoshil/.

Klausner explains that an individual will inevitably form a new identity from being exposed to alien socio-cultural forces. In Klausner's case, he had to merge "the newly acquired Eastern and the more familiar Western elements of my persona" in order to achieve personal balance after fieldwork.[122]

There is no question that Lady Anne and Wilfrid Blunt, to some extent, "went native." Lady Anne and Wilfrid spent a total of five years journeying through the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula, not to mention the time spent in their Cairo home after 1882. The Blunts spent a great deal of time in the Arab world and kept the company of native Arabs. They did not regularly interact with Europeans outside of Damascus, and had only each other as a companion from their native culture. The Blunts were geographically and culturally isolated from their heritage culture; because of this, it would be shortsighted not to recognize that the Blunts must have absorbed and internalized some assumptions and customs that are unique to Arabia. Lady Anne and Wilfrid Blunt did go native, as it is hard to not adopt the systems and approaches of a place you idealize and visit with essentially no others of your native culture.

The phenomenon of "going native" has become a reality for many anthropologists in the field. In the 1960s, the field of anthropology began to recognize this force as a bona fide cultural process. This process is known today as *enculturation,* and is analytically differentiated from *socialization* and *acculturation.* The genesis and application of *enculturation* as a cultural process and analytical tool are anthropological.[123] On the other hand, the term *socialization* is sociological in genesis and application. *Acculturation* is anthropological in origin, yet over time has shifted under the purview of cross-cultural psychology.

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[122] William J. Klausner, "Going Native?," *Anthropology Today* 10, no. 3 (Jun. 1994): 18.
[123] Nobuo Shimahara, "Enculturation- A Reconsideration," *Current Anthropology* 11, no. 2 (1970): 145.

Enculturation has been defined by a handful of anthropologists since the 1960s and 1970s. In 1963, Margaret Mead defined enculturation as "the process of learning a culture in all its uniqueness and particularity."[124] Over time, the definition of enculturation has become more detailed. In 1968, George Spindler put forward another definition:

> Enculturation is the process through which the individual acquires the culture of his group, class, segment or society. Since we assume an ideational definition of culture, the process is limited to the acquiring of patterns for behavior, including language, meta-language, beliefs, values, and role definitions, among other phenomena of this order. Within the framework of this either the transmission of culture by cultural agents such as parents and teachers or the assimilation of it by the individual, including the response to such transmission, may be emphasized.[125]

Spindler maintains that enculturation refers to ideational orientation, or is idea-oriented in nature. Enculturation is an abstract process that operates within the realm of abstract ideas. This indicates that an individual's abstract realm of ideas (intellectual framework and shape of the mind, over-arching world views and approaches, assumptions, opinions, and beliefs) is acquired through the enculturative experience. Spindler separates this from socialization, which is behavioral, rather than ideational, in mode.

Fitz John Porter Poole accepts Spindler's ideational orientation of the enculturative process. Poole sees enculturation as the "focus on those processes by which one acquires understanding, orientation, and competence in the ideational realm that constitutes a culture-

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[124] Margaret Mead, *Continuities in Cultural Evolution* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 283.
[125] Nobuo Shimahara, "Enculturation- A Reconsideration" *Current Anthropology* 11, no. 2 (1970): 146.

schemata, scripts, models, frames, and other images of the organization and contextualization of knowledge."[126] Enculturation is the frame that shapes one's life experience.

Nuobo Shimahara defines enculturation as "a bipolar process of cultural transmission and transmutation operating on the preadult and adult levels of human growth."[127] This implies that enculturation is a two-tiered experience: first, it is the acquisition of the existing culture; second, it is the transmission of the culture by an individual.[128] He argues that the process of cultural transmission is innovative, meaning that an individual (or agent) has the ability to mutate a culture through enculturation. This would ultimately explain how cultures change over time on both an individual and collective level. Shimahara's understanding correctly implies that enculturation is a dynamic, changing force. His balanced comprehension of enculturation is distilled into two dimensions: "the creative modifying of culture (in a microcosmic sense) and the creative adapting to it (in a macrocosmic sense)."[129]

Many terms are used to refer to the enculturative process. Cultural transmission, cultural acquisition, internalization, adjustment, cultural conditioning, (re) orientation, and even socialization are used interchangeably with enculturation. However, socialization has a separate definition and analytical use.

Socialization, according to Mead, is "the set of species-wide requirements and exactions made on human beings by human societies."[130] More specifically, socialization is

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[126] Fitz John Porter Poole, "Socialization, Enculturation and the Development of Personal Identity" in Tim Ingold, ed.; *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology: Humanity, Culture and Social Life* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 831.
[127] Nobuo Shimahara, "Enculturation- A Reconsideration" *Current Anthropology* 11, no. 2 (1970): 146.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid., 145.
[130] Margaret Mead, *Continuities in Cultural Evolution* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), 283.

concerned with the character and condition of learning processes, entailed in the learner's

participation in social practices appropriate to particular relationships, by which he or she

becomes adapted to, integrated in, and competent at those interactions involved in

becoming or being an actor in society.[131]

Socialization typically refers to the manifestations of an individual's acquisition of society and

culture through performing contextualized social skills. The difference between socialization

and enculturation can best be understood by acknowledging that socialization involves the rules,

structures, formulations, and interactions within a society; whereas enculturation involves the

meta-framework within which the socialization process occurs. Enculturation is the acquisition

of ideas, cultural assumptions and beliefs, and worldview approaches. While socialization refers

to society, enculturation refers to culture. An analogy to the human body often assists in

conceptualizing the difference between these two forces. Society is akin to the skeleton of the

body-- the bones that allow the rest of the body to function on a sustained level. While bones

may vary in size, their function is always the same. Culture is seen as the exterior of the body. It

is what people see from the outside, and can be varied in its dress, appearance, and maintenance.

Culture is the "pretty stuff." However, as the biological analogy implies, culture and society are

interdependent and cannot exist independently.

   While enculturation is a concept that has only recently been integrated into the lexicon of

the anthropological discipline, acculturation founds its utility in the first half of the twentieth

century. In 1954, the Social Sciences Research Council defined acculturation as

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[131] Fitz John Porter Poole, "Socialization, Enculturation and the Development of Personal Identity," in Tim Ingold, ed.; *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology: Humanity, Culture and Social Life* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 832.

cultural change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural

systems. Acculturative change may be the consequence of direct cultural transmission: it

may be derived from noncultural causes, such as ecological or demographic

modifications induced by an impinging culture…its dynamics can be seen as the selective

adaptation of value systems, the process of integration and differentiation, the generation

of developmental sequences, and the operation of role determinants and personality

factors.[132]

The difference between acculturation and enculturation may be difficult to grasp at first.

Enculturation is the process of learning a culture and fully assuming its schemata and

framework. Acculturation refers to "second-culture acquisition through contact with different

cultures."[133] However, acculturation is more intentional, more "selective," in its transformation

of the individual; and it operates in the behavioral realm, rather than the ideational realm. As

will be demonstrated in chapter six, the experience Lady Anne underwent was both behavioral

and abstractly ideational. This implies that Lady Anne experienced both an enculturation and an

acculturation process. Sadly, behaviors are not typically left for posterity in the historical record.

On the other hand, abstract ideas and implicit worldviews saturate a person's writing. Primary

source records have the capacity to preserve an individual's ideational orientation, but not their

behaviors. As such, this historical analysis can only extend itself to the enculturative experience.

This understanding of enculturation implies that the process occurs only when an

individual is in childhood and adolescence, and can only happen once in a lifetime.

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[132] Vanessa Smith Castro, *Acculturation and Psychological Adaptation* (London: Greenwood Press, 1969), 8.
[133] Ibid.

Acculturation, on the other hand, permits an individual to adapt and adopt another culture at an adult level if exposure to another culture occurs. In recent years, however, many anthropologists have challenged the general belief that enculturation can only occur at a pre-adult level. Until the 1990s, many scholars agreed with Herskovits that once an individual reaches adulthood, their enculturative experience is complete, except when new situations are encountered. Similarly, preadult enculturation is unconscious, while adult enculturation is a conscious experience. However, Nuobo Shimahara objects to this explanation. He asserts that childhood enculturation is not unconscious, but contemplative and reflective, thus making the entire process conscious. Moreover, enculturation is a dynamic process that interacts with conscious reflection. Broadening this understanding implies that the enculturative experience does not stop once adulthood is reached, but rather continues throughout a lifetime.[134] Thus, adult enculturation is a possibility when new cultures are encountered. This is essential to further enculturative analysis of Lady Anne.

Gendered enculturation is accepted as a natural dimension of the enculturative process, as gender is a learned phenomenon.[135] However, I further propose that cross-gender enculturation is a possible in a culture that segregates the sexes, and that this is evidenced by the life and experience of Lady Anne Blunt. Gender is a social construction, culturally relativistic in nature, in which a human society collectively assigns meaning to biological sex.

In the 1970s, Robert Levy, a psychiatrist by training and anthropologist by approach, considered enculturation while conducting fieldwork in Nepal and Polynesia. As a pioneer of psychological anthropology, he suggested a "person-centred ethnography" research approach to

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[134] Nobuo Shimahara, "Enculturation- A Reconsideration," *Current Anthropology* 11, no. 2 (1970): 146.
[135] Amy Sheldon, "Talking Power: Girls, Gender Enculturation and Discourse," in Ruth Wodak, ed., *Gender and Discourse* (London: Sage, 1997), 233.

better understand the enculturative experience.[136] This analysis of Lady Anne Blunt is an execution of historical person-centred ethnography, loosely inspired by Levy. When studying the highly individualized processes of enculturation, a solid grasp of the individual being considered is obligatory. Similarly, it is also necessary to understand the larger cultural and societal contexts and complexes in which the individual interplays. Now that the foundational basis has been presented, we may turn to Lady Anne's extraordinary enculturative experience.

Research and knowledge of the enculturation process are constantly expanding. A study of cross-gender enculturation in a normative ethnographic arena has yet to be undertaken. Perhaps this is due to the fact that enculturation research is typically an armchair endeavor, and generally occurs in the ivory tower rather than "on the ground" and in the field. In the field, it is a difficult task to trace the enculturation of an individual throughout their lifetime. An anthropologist would need to stay in the field over the course of an informant's lifetime, and personal and financial constraints restrict these opportunities. Moreover, in recent decades, the American field of anthropology has been focused on post-colonialist existential issues that have led the field to adopt a new approach: public (activist) anthropology- as opposed to traditional, academic anthropology. Because of this shift in emphasis, a deep and thorough examination of enculturation remains an area of growth for the discipline.

For the remainder of this person-centered ethnography, I will examine the greater cultural context in which Lady Anne and Wilfrid found themselves. More precisely, how was Lady Anne able to undergo a cross-gendered enculturation process?

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[136] Robert I. Levy, "Emotion, Knowing, and Culture" in R. Shweder and R. LeVine, ed., *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, and Emotion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 217.

As we move forward, an operational definition of enculturation is needed. Based on the definitions enumerated in the preceding discussion, for our purposes, enculturation will be defined as the ideational acquisition of the language, meta-language, ideational behavior, values, and role definitions of the host culture. These tenets work together to create a cultural schemata and framework for an individual to operate within a culture.

CHAPTER V

FEMALE SECLUSION AND SEX SEGREGATION IN ARABIA

Lady Anne's journey to central Arabia began in Damascus, in December 1878. From there, her caravan traveled over 500 miles into the Arabian desert. They headed south from Damascus toward northern Arabia, through the regions of al-Jauf and Jabal Shammar. They traversed the greater and lesser Nefuds as they penetrated the very heart of Arabia. They reached the Najd, in central Arabia, upon their entrance into the region of Hail, with the aim to meet Emir Mohammad ibn Rashid in the city named for the region, Hail. As the caravan progressed, they observed the variation in geography and lifestyle that simultaneously existed in Arabia. They crossed through towns inhabited by peoples whose ancestors were once Bedouin, but who had slowly shifted into a sedentary lifeway. They also passed through small agricultural villages, urban centers, and Bedouin encampments. The Blunts' route allowed them to comprehend the diversity of lifeways and variation in cultural interpretations present in nineteenth-century Arabia.

In this chapter, we will trace Lady Anne's journey through Arabia to explore the various forms of female seclusion and sex segregation in nineteenth-century Arabia. Sex segregation is the physical separation of males and females. Female seclusion is the sequestering of women into socially accepted and recognized physical or abstract spaces. In nineteenth-century Arabia, female seclusion was an ideal cultural expectation originating from pre-Islamic tribal feuds and battles. Since the early twentieth century, female seclusion has further evolved into what scholars refer to as "sex segregation." Sex segregation is still an ideal cultural expectation with many interpretations and degrees of adherence in the modern Gulf nations, but has been most heavily institutionalized in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Generally, scholars refer to this

cultural tradition as female seclusion when treating the time period before the discovery of oil in the Gulf region. Sex segregation, and its institutionalization by the modern nation-state, typically refers to the cultural practice since the 1950s. Female seclusion and sex segregation have permeated much of the region to varying degrees, and the social interpretations of both have changed over time and space. By tracing Lady Anne's late nineteenth-century Arabian expedition, we can examine the diverse manifestations of female seclusion in contemporary Arabia. More specifically, we will investigate how the interpretations and practices of female seclusion differed between the women of the elite and lower classes; among the urban townspeople, agricultural villagers, and Bedouin; and finally, between the coastal and inland Arab peoples.

At the core of this examination are class and economic status, which provides the most seamless vehicle for comprehending the variation in female seclusion and sex segregation throughout the Gulf. Tribalism is an implicit key agent in this chapter, reflecting its elemental agency in nineteenth-century Arabia. As have most scholars analyzing sex segregation and female seclusion, we will adhere to the most common and balanced interpretation: economic. Although culture maintains some agency in the manifestations of sex segregation, economics is at the core. The economic explanation for the various forms of female seclusion and sex segregation has become standard among Middle Eastern Gender and Women's historians. As will be discussed subsequently, a woman's economic status ultimately determined what form of female seclusion and sex segregation a woman was socioculturally expected to practice. Mirroring Lady Anne's journey, we will begin with penetrating into the Najd, and then make our way to the coastal regions to elucidate the differences between coastal and non-coastal practices of female seclusion.

Lady Anne verbally paints the landscape of Arabia with a comparison to the sea. "Yet the Nefud it was, the great red desert of central Arabia. In a few minutes we had cantered up to it, and our mares were standing with their feet in its first waves."[137] The Arabian Peninsula has significant environmental deviations from most popular images. The peninsula has both mountainous areas with high elevation, and lower elevated coastal regions that meet the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the Persian Gulf. The region is largely arid desert. However, most individuals (including Lady Anne) are shocked to discover that the peninsula's famous deserts are not simply a "sea" of sand with its waves rolling towards the horizon. Rather, it is covered with rocks, rigid cliffs and caves, sand, and low-growing vegetation. Patches of grass are common, along with low-growing flora that bloom brilliantly after a desert rain, igniting the scents of their newly exposed flowers. Animals also pepper the landscape, including the Oryx, lizards, snakes, desert hares, and antelope. There are three recognized deserts in the Arabian Peninsula. *Rub' al Khali,* or "Empty Quarter," dominates the Southeast. It is estimated to be roughly 250,000 square miles.[138] The *Nefud*, divided by natives into the "Great Nefud" and the "Lesser Nefud," are in northeast Arabia. The Nefud are known for their fierce wind and unforgiving sandstorms, and have been a source of anxiety for all travelers. Navigating the Nefud is essential to reaching the central region of the Najd. The famous red-sand desert familiar to popular imagery is known as *Ad Dahna',* and is a tract of rolling sand hills that connect the two greater deserts of Arabia of the Najd: Rub' al Khali and the Nefud.[139] Lady

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[137] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 156.
[138] "Splendid Arabia", www.splendidarabia.com.
[139] Ibid.

Anne sketched watercolors of the Nefud and Ad Dahna', in the hope of eliminating the romanticized exclusivity of the red sands.

Established by ancestral Bedouin groups, wells dot the desert and had become established posts by the nineteenth century. Oases also punctuate the landscape, with villages and small cities have developed surrounding them. In these areas, groves of date trees add color to the monochromatic sand. Jasmine adds to the intoxicating atmosphere. Water seasonally floods in powerful swells into these areas from *wadis,* or valleys. Underground water can also be tapped, in the form of wells, to support the populations that inhabit these settlements.

Understanding the physical landscape of Arabia is essential for understanding the economies of the region. Whether the economy be based on the sea, depending heavily on pearls and fish, or whether the economy is nomadic pastoral or sedentary, the environment is the ultimately the dictator. However, the economy (being shaped by the environment) is sovereign over the various forms of female seclusion and sex segregation in the peninsula. Thus, the environmental landscape indirectly influences the tradition of sex segregation.

From where did female seclusion, and later on, sex segregation, originate? It evolved from the era before Islam, a period that was dominated by tribalism and polytheistic religious practices.

The virtue of honor in the Arabian Peninsula originates from the *jahiliyya,* or pre-Islamic era, and its tribal feuds and battles. Allen Fromherz has significantly researched the institution of "Ladies of Victories" in pre-Islamic Arabia. Fromherz found that women were the symbolic holders of honor in Arab *jahiliyya* tribal societies. The association of women with tribal and familial honor was deeply entrenched, and tribes socially institutionalized the position of the

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"Ladies of Victory." A Lady of Victory would be covered in the finest clothes made by the women of her tribe and marched to battle alongside the men of her tribe. Fromherz explains,

> The Lady of Victory usually had the highest social status within the tribe and was accompanied by a number of other women of status affiliated with the sacred cult. As a battle began, this sacred female group stayed in position only a short distance from the fighting, goading their men with chants and songs accompanied by special stringed instruments. The chief Ladies of Victory, one from each tribe, sometimes with their bodies exposed, represented the valor, honor and passion of their respective clans. The battle would rage around these women until the day was decided and the feud was lost or won.[140]

Ladies of Victory were an accepted and expected sight at battles. Their presence was believed to inspire the tribe's men to fight more fiercely, and culturally forbade the tribe or clan to be disgraced by having its Lady of Victory taken by their rivals. A man was expected to fight to the death to protect his tribe's Lady of Victory- and, by extension, its tribal honor.

The association of women with tribal honor is also evident in *jahiliyya* tribal poetry. Analyzing a famous poetry duel involving two sub-tribes of the Tamimi in the *naqa'id* of *Jarir* and *al-Farazdaq,* Fromherz concludes that women were the standard-bearers and embodiment of tribal honor.[141] This conclusion stems from the observation that poets would routinely insult the rival tribe by slanderously commenting upon its women and their behavior- often accusing them

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[140] Allen Fromherz "Tribalism, Tribal Feuds, and the Social Status of Women" in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 51.

[141] *Naqa'id* is a form of Arab poetry discourse in which poets exchange poetical insults to one another. The naqa'id documents these oral poetry performances in succession. The *naqa'id* of Jarir and al-Farazdaq is the collection of *naqa'id* verses Jarir and al-Farazdaq orally exchanged.

of depraved and shameless activities. An insult of a tribe's women was a direct insult upon the entire tribe's honor in general.[142]

Both women and men were responsible for upholding family and tribal honor. To demonstrate tribal honor and unity, both genders were expected to remain loyal and communalist, display deference to parents and community, exhibit social propriety, and employ sexual restraint to maintain uncontaminated bloodlines of the tribe. These, and many other practices and behaviors, were associated with tribal honor.

The pre-Islamic tribal conception of honor adapted over time and space. Formerly Bedouin tribal peoples settled into sedentary communities in market towns or farming villages. Yet, the association of women with honor did not erode, but evolved in its interpretation and implementation. Still, in the effort to uphold tribal honor and to protect their women from being taken by a rival group, townspeople and villagers constructed a new interpretation of the seclusion ideal for women to stay secluded (and thus, protected) within the permanent home. The most enduring and cogent causation for the seclusion of women in non-Bedouin communities is the supreme desire to maintain and protect the family honor, associated with women, by keeping them secluded. Over time, the cultural ideal to protect and guard the family honor changed to being conceived as keeping women secluded. Ladies of Victory on the battlefields, symbolically representing tribal honor, transformed into special sections of the tent reserved for the women. If they were out of sight, their honor could not be challenged. As permanent homes replaced tents, rooms were set aside for the women of the family.

Town and village life did not require the same activities of pastoral nomadic life. Women's activities, such as preparing meals, washing clothes, and feeding livestock, could now

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[142] Ibid., 55.

be accomplished in finite spaces and plots shared amongst nuclear families, eliminating the need for communal living. The wealthier town Arabs could afford for women not to work by relying on household slaves or hiring workers. As some families accumulated wealth, the need for elite women to go outside the home decreased. The communal work demanded of their nomadic female ancestors ceased to exist, and women were expected to maintain the integrity and honor of the tribe by staying protected, out of sight, and indoors.

Soraya Altorki describes late Ottoman Arabia as characterized by pastoralism, agricultural settlements, and urban market towns. In urban areas, festivals, pilgrimage, and commercial and business pursuits of both men and women shaped life.[143] The Blunts' caravan encounters with Gulf Arabs came in the urban centers, villages, and Bedouin encampments that peppered the landscape. These small towns and villages sprang up over time as Bedouin populations came to settle more permanently. As the towns and villages evolved, so did the peoples. Permanent towns and farming communities offered the physical space to achieve a gender ideal held in the region for centuries: to maintain the honor of the family (or, previously, tribe) by protecting and secluding the women.

The tradition of female seclusion in the nineteenth-century is most easily observed within the elite class of inland and coastal urban Arabs. These women, having little or no work to accomplish outside of the home, retained the honor of the tribe and family by staying out of sight-- thus invulnerable to "attack" from rivals or enemies wishing to bring dishonor to a family, clan, or tribe. The economic stability of elite Arabs permitted women to stay secluded and unblemished by dishonor. Mrs. S.M. Zwemer, an American missionary working with the

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[143] Soraya Altorki, "Some Considerations on the Family in the Arabian Peninsula in the Late Ottoman and Early Post-Ottoman Period," in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 284.

Arabian Mission stationed in Bahrain in 1901, comments on the Arab aristocracy in a letter published in the Mission's Quarterly Letters, often used for fundraising: "A few of the aristocracy have welcomed us to their homes, but they cannot return the calls because they do not visit but remain in their homes year in and year out."[144] The pre-Islamic association of women and family honor becomes clear when Zwemer further explains that a "girl being unmarried and belonging to the better class was not allowed to go outside for fear she might be seen and recognized by a man…"[145]

This is not to say that elite urban women did not contribute to the community. Recently, many scholars have argued that elite Gulf women did not idly pass the time. Rather, certain women became invested in religious growth and spirituality. These women would devote their time to religious devotion and cultivating religiosity within their families and communities, particularly Wahhabism, which permeated the Najd in the nineteenth century. One elite woman, al-Jawhara bint Faysal bin Turki al-Sa'ud, born in 1854, was famous in the Gulf for memorizing the Qur'an, and the *Sira* (the biography of the Prophet), and mastering *fiqh*, and passing on her acquired knowledge to the greater community of women.[146]

Not all women, of course, were born into the wealthy and socially elite families of the urban centers. Lower- and middle-class women, although still expected to uphold the honor of the family and tribe, simply did not have the economic security to stay secluded within a restricted area. They had to work: cooking, farming, raising livestock, selling goods at the markets, and assisting their brothers, husbands, and fathers in numerous trades. The economic pressures of the non-elite classes, to a certain degree, alleviated some of the sociocultural

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[144] S.M. Zwemer, "Bahrain Section" in *Neglected Arabia*, no. 37 (1901): 9.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Omaima Abou-Bakr, "Women's Religious Activities in the Arabian Peninsula: A Historical Outlook" in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 218.

expectations of female seclusion because families could not survive, or thrive, without the support of their female members. Lower- and middle-class women could be seen buying and selling goods at markets, harvesting crops in fields, and trying to hide within the smaller homes not large enough to have a specially designated harem quarters.

Although these women and their families were more or less forgiven for not achieving the seclusion ideal, they were expected by their families and communities to preserve honor by staying secluded from the men in the public places they had to occupy. Special sections of *suqs*, or markets, were physically relegated to the women to utilize. Ideally, an unmarriageable male family member, referred to as a *mahram*, would accompany a woman outside the home. However, if a man could not accompany a woman on a task, modesty and avoidance were expected to be observed in all activities.

Both inland and coastal urban lower-class and middle-class women were significant contributors to the towns' economies. Elderly women, in particular, could be midwives, keepers of traditional medicine, healers, and Qur'anic teachers. Non-elite urban women also worked in economic markets established solely for women, such as beauticians. Hoda el-Saadi explains that beauticians were viewed as "experts in exfoliation, washing, massaging, depilation and applying henna to the bride's hands and the soles of her feet."[147] The intricacy of a bride's clothing and ceremonies also necessitated an expert in traditional wedding garments. El Saadi argues that handling toxic materials commonly used in beauty rituals qualifies women workers as experts of an industry. Another occupation held by women, and for women, was that of the *dallala*, or female peddler. The *dallala* would act as an agent in transactions. The *dallala* would

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[147] Hoda El-Saadi, "Women and the Economy: Pre-oil Gulf States" in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 157.

enter the homes of wealthy women and sell them goods. The *dallala* was paid a percentage of the purchase by the wholesaler or the manufacturer. By working on a commission from the supplier, these Gulf women became the peninsula's first female salespeople.

Both in the interior and in coastal regions, non-elite urban women in nineteenth-century Arabia did still observe the sociocultural practice of female seclusion. They and their families specified harem, or "inner," spaces within their homes. Although these women did not have large homes with numerous rooms within which to construct a harem, they did typically create a space within a given residence that would be acknowledged as the harem. Harems, although popularly perceived to be cornered-off spaces in the back of a home where the women were kept, are actually fluid spaces. Harems in the late Ottoman period, rather than being a specific physical location occupied by women, were actually any space within a residence in which women located themselves. Wherever the women were located was where the harem was for that particular moment. If the women were in the sleeping quarters, that is where the harem was to be found. If the women were in the kitchen, the harem was in that kitchen. The harem was any spot in which the women found themselves during a particular moment. Snouck Hurgronje first elucidated this conceptual misunderstanding in the nineteenth century after he traveled to the Najd.[148] Hurgronje describes how urban lower- and middle-class men and women created a harem in a residence or even within a single room by utilizing partitions, screens, lattices, and veils.[149] Although this remedy did not achieve the elite's ideal of seclusion, it was accepted as enough to maintain family honor. Thus, both elite and non-elite women could experience the harem and all economic classes could achieve their own socially accepted degree of female

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[148] Snouck Hurgronje, *Mecca in the Latter Part of the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 83.
[149] Ibid., 84.

seclusion; and by association, honor. It was *culturally* expected to uphold family honor through female seclusion, no matter economic class. Yet it was the family's economic class that dictated the *socially* acceptable form of female seclusion.

The economic forces shaping the various implementations of female seclusion also applied to the veil in the nineteenth century. While wealthy women always veiled, non-elite women were given greater leeway for the veiling standard. When functioning in daily work and completing chores, a veil can simply become a nuisance or hazard, and the expectations regarding the veil were relaxed for these non-elite urban women. However, these women were expected to wear the veil when possible, in public spaces.

As Lady Anne witnessed first hand, the economic class into which an urban woman, whether inland or coastal, was born largely determined the degree of seclusion she would experience. As Lady Anne and her caravan continued to move further into central Arabia, leaving the urban market towns, she observed that the women born into small agricultural settlements (villages) and Bedouin families were likely to experience more freedom of mobility and a less severe expectation of physical separation from males. In the agricultural villages and Bedouin encampments of inland Arabia, female seclusion was more fluid, adaptable, and less rigid than in the urban centers of interior Arabia.

Nomadic pastoralists, known as Bedu in Arabia, would typically travel in nuclear families based on the *bayt,* or household.[150] Bedouin lifestyle demanded communalism and cooperation, which relaxed the strict enforcement of female seclusion because of the group's reliance on women to perform daily tasks that ensured survival and comfort. Bedouin women

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[150] Soraya Altorki, "Some Considerations on the Family in the Arabian Peninsula in the Late Ottoman and Early Post-Ottoman Period," in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 285.

were expected to gather water from the wells, prepare meals, pack and unpack the tents and caravans, and care for the children. The nomadic groups were typically kin, and as such, the need to protect the honor of the family and its women was only occasionally provoked when non-family members entered the scene. The communalism that the Bedouin economy and pastoralism required, paired with nomadic units typically composed of nuclear families, ultimately resulted in a relaxation of the traditional association between family, tribal honor, and female seclusion. Honor was still fiercely retained, but the cultural conceptualization of honor changed by the nineteenth century and had weakened-- but not erased-- the cultural association of honor and women. If an unfamiliar group did approach, the women of the Bedouin family would shuttle off into areas where they could not be seen or taken. Otherwise, Bedouin women experienced comparatively relaxed restriction in their movements and activities. The same formula applies to the nearly non-existent use of the veil. Typically, Bedouin women would not veil. The pious expression of faith that veiling signifies today did not exist for the Bedouin in nineteenth-century Arabia. Moreover, they did not need to shield their faces from unfamiliar men, as there were none in the nuclear family (the unit in which Bedouins traveled). Mostly, Bedouin women veiled to protect their skin from the Arab sun and desert sand. However, if the family joined with another clan or tribal grouping, the Bedouin women also practiced restraint, modesty, avoidance, and veiling to maintain the family and tribal honor, exactly as did their urban non-elite counterparts.

Charles Doughty, a European traveler who journeyed through the Najd approximately the same time as Lady Anne in the late 1870s, was surprised at the liberality of the Bedouin in regard to female seclusion and women's roles. He remarked that Bedouin women "have a

liberty, as where all are kindred."[151] Similarly, in the early 1800s, John Lewis Burckhardt noted "in the mountains south of Mecca, towards Yemen….women are said to entertain a guest in the absence of her husband, and to sit up with the stranger."[152] Doughty and Burckhardt, though only experiencing indirect interaction with the Bedouins of Arabia, still heard about the liberal adaptability of female seclusion in Bedouin encampments.

As expected, female Arab villagers in the nineteenth century landed somewhere between the urban market towns and the Bedouin on the spectrum of seclusion practices. Extended families largely made up the agricultural settlements of the villages. Similar to the Bedouin, village women were expected to contribute an equal share of the work alongside the men, thus relaxing the cultural association between honor and female seclusion and protection. A female villager's movements would not be as rigidly controlled; however, there was still a social expectation of avoidance, modesty, veiling, and limitation of interaction with in public or with unfamiliar peoples.[153]

Thus far we have discussed social variation of the cultural seclusion ideal in the non-coastal areas of nineteenth-century Arabia. Lady Anne had very limited exposure to the coastal communities, and it was only during the caravan's journey back, heading northeast towards Baghdad with a Persian pilgrim procession, that Lady Anne became indirectly familiar with the lifeways of coastal women. The manifestation of female seclusion in the coastal areas of the peninsula takes yet another form.

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[151] Charles M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1936), 280.
[152] John Lewis Burckhardt, *Notes on the Bedouins and the Wahabys* (Reading, UK: Garnet, 1992), 350.
[153] Soraya Altorki, "Some Considerations on the Family in the Arabian Peninsula in the Late Ottoman and Early Post-Ottoman Period" in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 284.

The sea dominated the economies of the coastal communities. Fishing, pearl diving, shipbuilding, and trade were the pillars of coastal economies. Hoda El Saadi summarizes nineteenth-century coastal Arabian society as a " 'women society' at least for the period between June and October each year, when all the able-bodied men were away from home, pearl diving."[154] The extended absences of men left women to be the caretakers of the household and community economies.

Women were seen as elemental for the functioning of the coastal Gulf economy, so much so that in 1931 a law in Dubai was publicly detested and soon repealed by the Dubai legislative council. The law banned women from selling fish at the markets in Dubai. It was the men, not the women, who publicly called for the repeal of the law. Fisherman "argued that it was impossible for them to catch fish and at the same time sell their goods at market."[155] They needed the women of their families to sell the fish they caught; otherwise, no money would be earned for their efforts. Fatma al-Sayegh argues that the cause for the protest was the fishermen's belief that women could sell fish at higher prices than the men could bring in. This is because it was women who were knowledgeable about the market forces, not the men. The men's ignorance of market dynamics and prices would lead them to uninformed sales that would result in loss of income.[156]

Trade was also an important feature in nineteenth-century coastal Gulf communities. Coastal Arabs built ships not only for local use, but also for trading voyages to the Mediterranean and Asia. Women would often make and sell trading goods such as pottery,

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[154] Hoda El-Saadi, "Women and the Economy: Pre-oil Gulf States," in Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 154.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Fatma Al-Sayegh, "Women of the Gulf During the First Half of the Twentieth Century: A Comparative Study of American Missionary Archives and Local Memory," in Amira El-Azhary, ed., *Gulf Women* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2012), 264.

textiles, and palm products. Trade buttressed the coastal economies, but had a sociocultural impact as well. Trade vessels from different regions of the globe would dock at various coastal Gulf communities, sharing not only goods but also cultural traditions. Individual and collective cultural encounters between Arab natives, tradesmen, and immigrants from other contemporary cultures and nation-states enriched the coastal culture with new ideational models and cultural imagery. For example, Bahrain became home to many Persian immigrants trying to escape drought and famine in the late nineteenth century.[157] Many scholars attest to the comparatively liberal cultural and economic attitudes of the Gulf coast as opposed to the interior, which can be traced back to these cultural encounters and adaptations. Scholars have addressed how the exposure to foreign traditions, lifeways, and cultures ultimately led to a comparatively eroded cultural association of female seclusion and honor among coastal Gulf Arabs. It is not surprising that the coastal societies are reputed to have the most adaptable, fluid, and progressive interpretations of women's roles in the Gulf, both in the nineteenth century and today.

Economic standing also shaped the degree of female seclusion in the coastal areas of the peninsula. Marion Wells Thoms, a missionary working in Bahrain at the turn of the century, summarized the variation in a letter when discussing the importance of female missionaries:

It is a work that can only be done by women, for while the Bedouin women have greater freedom to go about and converse with the men than the town women have, and while some of the poorer classes in the towns will allow themselves to be treated by a man doctor and sit and listen to an address made in the dispensary, the better classes are only

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[157] Marion Wells Thomas, "Bahrain, Persian Gulf," in *Neglected Arabia*, no. 44 (1902): 8.

accessible in their houses- it is impossible to say homes in a country in which homes do not exist.[158]

Marion Wells Thoms understood the agency of economic class and region in the cultural expectations of female seclusion and social avoidance.

The Gulf coastal economy and geopolitical location led to a less rigid manifestation of seclusion and segregation in the nineteenth century and in modern times. Coastal Gulf women were openly depended upon for the maintenance of the economy. This led to greater physical mobility in the public spheres for these Arab women. Similarly, regular interactions with non-Arab peoples in their homes and communities evolved into a relatively relaxed enforcement of female seclusion. This is not to say that the cultural association of women and honor vanished in the coastal communities. Rather, it indicates that coastal Arab women upholding the honor of the tribe and family were not as heavily associated with the physical space of women, thus undermining the need for vigilant separation.

Understanding tribalism is essential to understanding Arabia in the late Ottoman period. Although under the arm of the Ottoman Empire, the Arabian Peninsula was able to maintain much of its local tribal authority due to its geographic isolation from Turkey and its notoriously harsh environment. Tribes retained their localized sovereignty and autonomy throughout Ottoman rule.

Tribalism is often imagined as an institution of the early or premodern human experience. Over many centuries, tribes have played an integral part in survival and community formation.

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[158] Marion Wells Thoms, "The Need for Women Workers Among the Women of Arabia," in *Neglected Arabia*, no. 47 (1903): 20.

Jason D. Hill explains that tribes have allowed for social progression and protection.[159] They were the first forms of political machinery, offering protection and community. Soon tribes became the main units of enculturation and socialization for their members.[160] Tribes have been formed on the basis of "race," ethnicity, and family.

Perhaps the best definition of tribalism comes from Joseph Kostmer and Philip Khoury. They define tribalism as "a localized group in which kinship is the dominant idiom of organization, and whose members consider themselves culturally distinct in terms of customs, dialect or language, and origins…tribes are usually politically unified."[161] The hierarchy of tribal society, from largest to smallest unit, is as follows: tribal confederation, tribe, sub-tribe, clan, and family.[162]

Tribalism is hard to define, as it can take on many forms and is an organic, dynamic entity. Tribalism is characterized by a communal, rather than an individual, understanding of identity. Typically it expects submission to elders and a unique moral code that promotes tribal members as superior to non-tribal members. Tribes are decisively hierarchical and exclusivist.[163] Arab tribal values include honor, duty, loyalty, deference, and kinship. Although designed for endurance, tribes are constantly changing. J.E. Peterson discusses how old tribes dissolve and new tribes evolve into sub-tribes or families.[164] This largely explains the dissolution of tribal life in the coastal communities in the Arabian Peninsula, such as the Trucial States and in the eastern

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[159] Jason D. Hill, *Beyond Blood Identities: Posthumanity in the Twenty-First Century* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 4.
[160] Ibid, 5.
[161] Wanda Krause, *Women in Civil Society: The State, Islamism, and Networks in the UAE* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 19.
[162] Sayyid Hamid Hurreiz, *Folklore and Folklife in the United Arab Emirates* (London: RoutelageCurzon, 2002), 59.
[163] Eleanor Abdella Doumato, *Getting God's Ear: Women, Islam, and Healing in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 227.
[164] J.E. Peterson, "Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia." *Middle East Journal* 31 (1977): 299.

districts. Yet, tribal formation and preservation are not limited to the rural and Bedouin communities in the Gulf. Peterson explains that town-dwelling tribes are just as prevalent as Bedouin tribes.[165]

In his study of Middle Eastern tribes, Lawrence Rosen argues that all tribes, although dynamic and heterogeneous, have two central features that together comprise the universal "tribal ethic".[166] The first is an internal leveling system that balances the power of its leaders. This is achieved through joking and avoidance patterns. Father and son will typically avoid public interaction with one another to prevent tribal members suspecting a scheme to achieve hereditary dominance. Second, all Middle Eastern tribes have a moral-equivalency cultural expectation. This expectation suggests that all tribal members are subject to the same moral expectations and implies egalitarianism within the tribe.[167]

Scholars of the Middle Eastern focusing on the relationship between tribalism and the nation state dominate scholarship and historiography of tribes. Interestingly, one scholar has suggested that tribalism is the most historically stable institution in Arabia.[168] Wanda Krause explains, "the governing system for centuries was largely tribal" in the United Arab Emirates until the 1960s.[169] But tribalism did not simply dissolve upon state formation. Rather, the states' leaders deliberately employed continuity and syncretism to ease the transition to a nation-state. Sean Foley asserts that upon formation of the state Saudi Arabia in 1932, Ibn Saʿud, the first

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[165] Ibid, 298.
[166] Lawrence Rosen, "Expecting the Unexpected: Cultural Components of Arab Governance," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 603 (2006): 169.
[167] Ibid, 169.
[168] Charles F. Swagman, "Tribe and Politics: An Example from Highland Yemen," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 44 (1988): 252.
[169] Wanda Krause, *Women in Civil Society: The State, Islamism, and Networks in the UAE* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 49.

king of the modern state of Saudi Arabia, intentionally "did not impede many tribal legal traditions."[170] Foley widens his scope to the rest of the Gulf States to argue:

> Gulf rulers drew on their families' tradition of governance dating back to the nineteenth century to maintain their authority and to repel rhetorical attacks from Arab nationalists. Rulers reinforced their legitimacy by cultivating various social networks and by promoting Islamic and tribal values.[171]

It is fascinating to consider that 80% of Saudi Arabia's 1943 budget went to subsidize tribes within the Kingdom, showing the tribes held the political and economic power; and the tribe, not the state government, is ultimately the unit that has remained sovereign over the daily life of citizens. The fusion of tribalism and nation-state governance has helped maintain stability in the Arabian Peninsula.

Tribal institutions were incorporated into state rule. A *Majilis*, a "public session whereby the individual citizen is granted personal access to the ruler and has an opportunity for immediate redress of his grievances," is still held by the rulers of Kuwait, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia.[172] *Shura*, or consultation, is also a preferred form of state decision-making.[173] In the United Arab Emirates, seven sheikhs from specific UAE tribes rule the seven emirates comprising the nation-state.

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[170] Sean Foley, *The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2010), 25.
[171] Ibid, 8.
[172] J.E. Peterson, "Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia," *Middle East Journal* 31 (1977): 299.
[173] Ibid, 299.

Tribalism still governs the politics among and within the Gulf States. The royal families of the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait all belong to the large and ancient Najdi 'Anazas tribe.[174] Intermarriage between the UAE sheikhs and the Kuwaiti and Saudi royal families is extremely common because it consolidates and maintains wealth and power in the tribe's hands. Similarly, Sultan Al-Qassemi asserts that the results of the 2011 municipal UAE elections were largely based on tribe: those who were not affiliated with a tribe or did not earn a tribal endorsement simply did not win.[175] Moreover, many scholars agree that the Rentier Model present in the Gulf "operates vis-à-vis the tribal components of society."[176]

Although the enduring historical tradition and significance of tribalism are evident, some scholars have contested the prevalence and influence of tribalism in the twentieth century in the peninsula. Some have said tribalism is marginal, while others believe it is dying out.[177] Unni Wikan, an anthropologist who conducted her fieldwork in Oman in the 1980s, questioned the significance of tribalism: "we found little evidence among the men that these tribes mean much today. We were surprised that many, if not most, women did not even know the name of their tribe."[178] J.E. Peterson, who wrote about tribalism in eastern Arabia during the 1970s, also believed tribalism was "declining in importance."[179] Two native scholars, however, challenge the non-indigenous and academic understandings of Wikan and Peterson. They assert the continuing significance of tribalism in the modern Arabian Peninsula. Sayyid Hurreiz contends

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[174] Sultan Al-Qassemi, "Tribalism in the Arabian Peninsula: It is a Family Affair," *Jabaliyya* (2012): 1.
[175] Ibid, 2.
[176] Madawi Al-Rasheed and Loulouwa Al-Rasheed, "The Politics of Encapsulation: Saudi Policy Towards Tribal and Religious Opposition." *Middle Eastern Studies* 32 (1996): 99.
[177] Jason D. Hill, *Beyond Blood Identities: Posthumanity in the Twenty-First Century* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009), 82.
[178] Unni Wikan, *Behind the Veil in Arabia: Women in Oman* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 42.
[179] J.E. Peterson, "Tribes and Politics in Eastern Arabia," *Middle East Journal* 31 (1977): 312.

that tribalism "has not been superseded by modern political systems."[180] The requirement that

hospital patients name their tribal affiliation and the popularity of historical television shows

glorifying Arabia's past tribal histories also speaks to the enduring nature of tribalism and its

significance. Sultan al-Qassemi summarizes, "tribalism in modern day Arabia is still alive and

well."[181] Moreover, identity formation is still based on tribalism.

Clans, or extended families, are typically the preferred and primary point of identity.[182]

In a recent article, Donald P. Cole argues that the Bedouin have shifted from an economic

lifeway to a cultural identity.[183] A woman's identity is also tied to her father and husband's

tribal and socioeconomic status.[184] Today, the status of her husband and father will determine a

woman's freedoms and mobility, much as it did in the nineteenth century.

Lady Anne's journey through the Arabian Peninsula permitted her to observe the various

social interpretations of the Arab cultural ideal for female seclusion. The seclusion ideal evolved

from the *jahiliyya* concept of tribal honor, as epitomized by the tribes' women and symbolically

represented by the Ladies of Victory. Distinct regions, political economies, and classes emerged

in nineteenth-century Arabia. These changes evolved organically and independently over time

and space. Eventually, these changes led these groups to interpret and implement female

seclusion differently.

Still, the cultural ideal of seclusion never vanished from any of the regions, classes, or

political economies discussed throughout this chapter. When a family or tribe encountered

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[180] Sayyid Hamid Hurreiz, *Folklore and Folklife in the United Arab Emirates* (London: RoutelageCurzon, 2002), 59.
[181] Sultan Al-Qassemi, "Tribalism in the Arabian Peninsula: It is a Family Affair," *Jabaliyya* (2012): 1.
[182] Lawrence Rosen, "Expecting the Unexpected: Cultural Components of Arab Governance," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 603 (2006): 168.
[183] Donald P. Cole, "Where Have the Bedouin Gone?" *Anthropological Quarterly* 76 (2003): 235.
[184] Sean Foley, *The Arab Gulf States: Beyond Oil and Islam* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2010), 170.

unfamiliar and potentially threatening groups or individuals, the women secluded themselves from potential physical or verbal harm. In this way, tribal honor was guarded and preserved.

This is what Lady Anne and Wilfrid experienced throughout their exceptional journey. Because the Blunts were unfamiliar and foreign people, the societies they came upon guarded their women-- and honor-- and limited their women's exposure to Lady Anne. Arab men protected their tribe from a potentially harmful Lady Anne. Lady Anne's physical and cultural restriction from contact with Arab women isolated her within the Arab male's physical and cultural space; thus, Lady Anne could only draw cultural understanding and meaning from what she knew-- the gendered cultural interpretations of men. In sum, this laid the foundation for a cross-gendered enculturative experience. The unique historical and economic contexts of Arabia in the late nineteenth century aligned with specific social and cultural interpretations of female seclusion. Female seclusion and sex segregation were prevalent wherever Lady Anne journeyed. This fact is further supported by its continued practice, to a degree. Whether coastal or inland, urban, rural or Bedouin, or upper or lower class, all places and spaces in 1870s Arabia adhered to the cultural ideal of female seclusion and segregations of the sexes. And Lady Anne found herself on the outside.

CHAPTER VI

THE ENCULTURATIVE EXPERIENCE OF LADY ANNE BLUNT

What did Lady Anne absorb from their host culture? I argue that Lady Anne Blunt underwent an enculturative experience while traveling through Arabia. During her journey, Lady Anne was not exposed to Arab women's physical and cultural space. Recalling the previous chapter's discussion of female seclusion and sex segregation in nineteenth-century Arabia, female space was relatively more restrictive. It was more difficult for a traveler or guest to be welcomed into the Arab women's cultural and physical space. As will be demonstrated, Lady Anne was not given unrestricted entry to Arab women's physical, and by extension, cultural space. Yet, she was initiated into Arab men's physical space and cultural schemata. Lady Anne occupied Arab public space that was largely presided over by men, not women. Similarly, Lady Anne's caravan was comprised of only Arab men. All her guides, interpreters, and escorts were male. When she visited with locals, it was the men with whom she held conversations, passed the time, and interacted. She had some restricted exposure into the harems of town women and women's world in tribal Bedouin encampments. Yet, Lady Anne did not have any recorded interactions with only Arab women. Lady Anne's time in the harems and women's space were always supervised and managed by a native male escort. Stated simply, Lady Anne was not welcomed into the physical and abstract world of Arab women. Therefore, it was only the Arab men's cultural schemata and social interpretations from which Lady Anne could draw cultural understanding. Lady Anne embraced the Arab man's perspective because that was the cultural environment she was exposed to during her journey.

Enculturation is a commanding process. It is how we learn, extract meaning, and operate in our cultures. It is the undercurrent for how individuals discern meaning and awareness in the

human experience. It shapes how we see and understand the world, informs how we behave, how we think. It is also socially constructed, and as such, an organically learned process. Enculturation is different for females and males in all cultures. The cultural and social construction of gender is a tenet of the enculturation process. In many cultures, individuals learn a specific gender. We receive a gendered interpretation of the world, and this is a part of the enculturation process. Enculturation is a gendered process. And rarely in a lifetime is an individual given an opportunity to be initiated into a cross-gendered enculturative experience. Lady Anne had this unique opportunity because it was only the Arab man's cultural space she was welcomed into.

The operational definition of enculturation, as discussed in chapter five, is the cultural acquisition of language, ideational behavior, role definitions, meta-language, and values. It is these tenets that work together to create a cultural schemata and framework for an individual to understand and operate within a culture. It is these tenets that generate the enculturation process. As will be discussed, Lady Anne was culturally conditioned to all these tenets as understood and interpreted by the Arab male. As such, Lady Anne underwent a cross-gendered enculturative experience during her 1870s trip through Arabia.

The Najd journey began as the Blunts departed from Damascus in the winter of 1878 and 1879. They headed southeast into the Arabian Peninsula. They went through the region of al-Jauf, and stopped at a town they incorrectly identified as Jauf. They hadn't discerned that this was the name of the region, not the town. In actuality, they stopped at Dumat-al-Jandal.[185] They continued south into the Jabal Shammar region, and then on to the region, and city, of Hail. It was in Hail that they met Emir Mohammad Ibn Rashid, known to natives as Mohammad al-

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[185] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 152-153.

Kabir, the "Great." The Blunts' original plan was to continue south to Riyadh, in the very heart of central Arabia. However, Emir Mohammad ibn Rashid foiled their intended route by narrating "such an alarming account of what would happen to us if we went to Riad, that I don't think it would be wise to attempt to go there now."[186] The Blunts, achieving their aim to reach the Najd and see its beautiful Arabian mares, decided to head home. They turned back with a Persian pilgrimage procession towards Najaf, heading northeast. Lady Anne refers to the city of Najaf as her Persian Shi'a travel companions do: Meshhed 'Ali, in honor of the eighth Shi'ite Imam, 'Ali al-Rida.[187] After arriving back in Baghdad, the Blunts sent off telegrams to Damascus and England informing their friends, family, and governments of their changed, and extended, journey. Rather than return to England, they impulsively decided to go on to India through Persia.[188] While on their journey, Lady Anne began to edit her journals and field notes into her travelogue *Pilgrimage to the Nejd*. This is when she composed her narrative of the Hail visit with Emir Mohammed ibn Rashid.

The narrative of *Pilgrimage to the Nejd* runs chronologically, beginning in Damascus. It reads as a journal, with entries occurring nearly every day throughout the journey. The entries generally always note the climate and physical landscape in which the caravan found itself, then continue to discuss the meals prepared during that day. Sporadically, Lady Anne notes the provisions (or lack thereof) of the caravan. Unexpected visitors, typically Bedouin caravans coming from various tribes, are given special attention within the narrative. These characteristics are almost always present in the daily entries. However, the travelogue also has a few storylines that extend for sections of the travelogue. The first developed storyline is the

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[186] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 254.
[187] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 165.
[188] Ibid., 166.

finding of a suitable wife for their travel companion, Mohammed. This storyline concludes

before another begins: the visit to Emir Mohammed al-Kabir's court at Hail-- the main objective

of the Najdi journey. The Blunts' time in Hail, roughly three weeks, provides the climax to the

narrative. As the caravan left Hail with the Persian pilgrimage, an irritable tone is detected in the

story. Lady Anne becomes agitated in discussing her interactions with the pilgrimage caravan,

and her agitation is alleviated only once when the caravan met Muttlak, who Lady Anne

perceived to be the quintessential Bedouin sheikh she hoped to encounter. After Muttlak leaves

the Blunt's caravan, the narrative slows and the daily entries return to documenting the

provisions, meals, and attempts at hunting.

Lady Anne's traveling companions in the caravan were all men. The caravan included

Mohammad, a friend from their previous Mesopotamian journey whose Najdi heritage proved

useful; his cousin, Abdullah, who served as the head camel man; Hanna, the Christian cook also

from their Baghdad excursion, and his brother; and Ferhan, a camel-driver.[189] Other companions

also intermittently joined the caravan for shorter legs of the journey. These individuals were

locals hired as camel-drivers and guides, or were provided by sheikhs to aid the Blunts in

reaching their next destination, well, or city. No women joined the caravan.

Language is profoundly significant in any discussion of culture. One of the first steps in

the enculturation process is to learn and use language. Both Lady Anne and Wilfrid learned

Arabic, although it was Lady Anne who was the more willing student. She studied Arabic

language books before and after her Najdi journey, but also absorbed her language skills while

on the road with her traveling party. While on the journey, Lady Anne was required to speak

Arabic, as none whom she encountered spoke English. Lady Anne was fully immersed into the

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[189] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 2.

Arabic language, and was required to use Arabic in order to communicate and thrive in her host culture. Learning language is supremely important in any enculturation process because language is a primary vehicle for cultural transmission and perpetuation. Lady Anne mastered the Arabic language, providing her the capacity to be enculturated.[190] It is impossible to be enculturated without mastering the language.

As many anthropological linguists point out, language is also a gendered phenomenon. We can observe the dichotomy of gender in language. For example, certain phrases, sentence structures, and words will be largely used by women and not used by men. The opposite is also true, with certain language patterns utilized exclusively by men, and avoided by women in communication. Language is gendered.

Lady Anne was initially exposed to the Arabic language through textbooks, and then was immersed in gendered language through her male traveling companions and local hosts. She was exposed to the male grammatical and cultural forms of Arabic because her conversation partners were not women. She consciously and unconsciously mimicked and absorbed male communication patterns and techniques. Language is not only a vehicle for cultural transmission, but also an integral element in how we view and structure the world around us. The highly regarded Warf-Sapir hypothesis explains that linguistic categories simultaneously reflect and shape an individual's cognitive understandings of the world. Language will determine a human's categorizations of the world, thoughts, and sometimes behavior. For example, if a culture recognizes three types of gender, rather than two, that culture will have

three words-- and thus, three conceptualizations-- of gender.[191] Rather than seeing gender as a binary relationship, these cultures will imagine three genders, not two. Language can also shape how individuals experience and understand the world around them. For example, the indigenous Inuit of Alaska have several words all meaning "snow". On the other hand, in the English language, we only have one word describing this type of weather: snow. Culture informs language, and language informs culture. Language is the roadmap for conceptualizing and understanding culture and social interaction. The cultural roadmap Lady Anne was given was largely male. Lady Anne did not have the opportunity to interact with Arab women and therefore, was unable to learn the women's gendered language patterns. While it was clearly a gendered version, Lady Anne did learn the Arabic language, an essential tenet to enculturation.

Ideational behavior is also evident in Lady Anne's narrative. During the journey, the members of her caravan viewed Lady Anne as independent and competent. The nature of the expedition required her to ride her Arabian mare and aid in protecting the party from animals, sandstorms, and *ghazus* (tribal raiding parties). Lady Anne was not restricted as a local woman may have been. She rode off on her own and sat by herself for hours to sketch and watercolor the landscape. Lady Anne was treated as an equal by the caravan, as demonstrated when she describes how she and Wilfrid, "who had gone on in front, agreed to separate here, and ride around the citadel, he to the right, and I to the left, and I was to wait on the top of the ridge till he gave me some signal."[192] Lady Anne and Wilfrid were given the same task, to ride around the citadel independently, in order to gain a better understanding of what they had come across. Both Lady Anne and the men of her party had the same tasks, implying an egalitarian tint to the

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[191] An example of this can be seen in the Zuni tribe of the American southwest. The Zunis have three genders: man, woman, and we'wha (a male-bodied individual who wear women's clothing and perform women's tasks). The existence of this third gender has no associated cultural taboo.
[192] H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003), 55.

journey. Lady Anne was unaccompanied by men and her own protection was left to herself.

The partnership of Lady Anne and the men of the caravan, rather than her dependence on them,

is evident. There is no doubt that Lady Anne's partnership to the caravan was inspired by the

necessities of desert travel, mirroring the accepted partnership of Bedouin men and women.

Harsh environments notoriously induce egalitarianism. In the desert, Lady Anne was viewed by

her caravan, and herself, as an equal partner. Lady Anne performed culturally assigned men's

behaviors and actions while traveling with her caravan. This evolved into Lady Anne assuming

men's tasks, expectations, and motives for actions. Lady Anne was being treated as masculine,

and acquiesced in internalizing masculine ideational behavior.

Lady Anne Blunt's deliberate choice of dress also indicates her adjustment to masculine

ideational behavior. Lady Anne writes, "as to dress, it was unnecessary for me to make any

change, save that of substituting a *kefiyeh* for a hat and wearing a Bedouin cloak over my

ordinary travelling ulster."[193] Lady Anne never wore the veil, although many European female

travelers donned the veil as a symbol of femininity. But rather, Lady Anne wore an '*abaya*, the

loose robe Gulf women wear to this day, over her European riding clothes. Rather than the

female veil, Lady Anne wore the male *ghutra,* or headdress, and wrapped it around her head in

the masculine fashion.[194] Lady Anne maintained this type of fused dressing style after her Najdi

excursion and often posed for photographs donning this unique fusion of Arab male and female

dress with her British female garments.[195] Although it may be argued that European female

travelers intentionally did this to asexualize themselves, it is indicative of Lady Anne's

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[193] Ibid., 23.

[194] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 283.

[195] Photograph of Lady Anne in Arab dress, found in H.V.F. Winstone, *Lady Anne Blunt: A Biography* (London: Barzan Publishing, 2003).

conditioning to Arab male ideational behavior and identity. Clothing is a powerful medium of personal expression; and Lady Anne's consciously choosing to dress in European riding clothes, along with the typical female garment of the region, and the typical male headdress, points to a subconscious cultural identity conflict. Nevertheless, dressing is a function of idea-driven behavior.

Lady Anne also implicitly asserted masculine ideational behaviors when a *ghazu*, or Bedouin raiding party, attacked their caravan. Lady Anne saw the *ghazu* heading towards them and jumped into action, as her caravan expected her to do. Lady Anne did not fight, but began bargaining and communicating with the *ghazu* on behalf of the caravan: "Resistance seemed to me useless, and I shouted to the nearest horseman, '*ana dahilak*' (I am under your protection), the usual form of surrender."[196] Lady Anne initially took the position of leadership for her caravan, a traditionally male role. This made the men of the *ghazu* party communicate and treat her as a man, deepening her masculine enculturative experience. Lady Anne did not know how contemporary Arab women would typically respond to unfamiliar encroachers or raids until she witnessed it from a distance later on in her journey:

> We rode down to see what was to be seen and presently found half a dozen people, men and women, in a *fulj*, and several more camels grazing near a tent…as soon as they saw us the women ran and pulled it [the tent] down, while the men rushed off to the nearest camels and made them kneel.[197]

[196] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 104.
[197] Ibid., 162.

The locals and her caravan saw Lady Anne's behavior during the *ghazu* as masculine. She was treated as a man, behaved as a man, and while in Arabia, personified one.

Living through a moment of anxiety and fear, such as a *ghazu* raiding party, alongside only men made Lady Anne more susceptible to male enculturation. Lady Anne was able to experience a situation that bonded her with Arab men, as moments of vulnerability typically evoke. This vulnerability and connectedness to her male traveling companions allowed Lady Anne to more fully experience, relate to, and identify with the opposite gender. During moments of empathy, it is natural that the enculturative process can more deeply take root. During interactive situations, Lady Anne's behavior was filtered through a male's positionality and understanding. Her adaptation to ideational behavior is indicative of enculturation.

How a culture defines gender roles is another main element of enculturation. Lady Anne adopted Arab men's collective conception of role definition. Lady Anne adopted a male's expectations of women and fully deferred to the patriarchal standard present in her host communities. This would explain the abnormally patriarchal relationship between Lady Anne and Wilfrid that manifested in their writing, considered peculiar even for their contemporary period. Billie Melman explains, "their travels and writing appear to reproduce a marriage, which struck even their contemporaries as an unequal partnership, a hierarchical relation, based on male domination and female deference."[198]

Both Lady Anne and Wilfrid had a hand in their first two publications and employed censorship and restraint in expressing who they were as individuals, and as a couple, to their public audience. Lady Anne's public image in Britain became that of the dutiful wife and

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[198] Billie Melman, *Women's Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718-1918* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 283.

companion: she wrote journals and diaries for the both of them, so that Wilfrid would not be bothered with such a tedious task, Lady Anne once explained.[199] In private, their nicknames for one another demonstrate their individual approval of their strictly patriarchal relationship. Wilfrid's pet names for Lady Anne included "Towsy" and "Stumpie," while Lady Anne lovingly referred to Wilfrid as "master" and "dearest tyrant."[200] These names were used in a playful, and perhaps sarcastic, manner. Yet, Lady Anne utilizing these words in any sense demonstrates some complicity (and acceptance) of their meanings. These pet names for one another imply their contentment and satisfaction with the patriarchal marriage.

Lady Anne's internalization of Arab men's role definitions is also seen in her disapproval of local Arab women who deviated from the ideal mold. Lady Anne writes with condemnation of the wife of Hassan, a travel companion, wife:

 Who was among the crowd which gathered round us on our arrival at the village. She, like the women of all these villages, made no pretence of shyness, and was running about unveiled as any peasant girl might in Italy. She was evidently a spoilt child, and required more than one command from Hassan before she would go home.[201]

If Lady Anne had been exposed to Arab women's social interpretations and customs, she would have acknowledged that many rural and Bedouin women did not veil, as it was not practical for the execution of their daily tasks.   Still, the social ideal was for women to veil, and men subscribed to this ideal. If Lady Anne had been exposed to women's interpretations and

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[199] Lady Wentworth, *The Authentic Arabian Horse* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1980), 4.
[200] Elizabeth Longford, *Pilgrimage of Passion: The Life of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1980), 72.
[201] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 48.

executions of this cultural ideal and daily life, she would have known that Hassan's wife was not amiss for her uncovered head. Lady Anne judged the wife according to an idealized and masculine interpretation and understanding of veiling.

Further evidence of Lady Anne's adjustment to role definitions is seen in her conception of Arab marriage. Lady Anne was exposed to masculine interpretation of polygamy and adopted men's expectations of how multiple wives should behave towards one another. While being entertained by a host's first wife, Lady Anne briefly encountered the second wife. Lady Anne glowingly praises the second wife's adequate deference displayed towards the first wife.[202] Recalling Cannadine's line of argumentation, Lady Anne's regard for Victorian hierarchy and rank may certainly explain some of her judgments. Yet, at the core of her observation is the culturally imposed Arab male expectation that his wives would behave warmly towards one another according to the socially prescribed hierarchical pattern. From the male point of view, enforcing the wives' hierarchy is a way to control the outbursts that polygamy may engender between wives. However, this is just an ideal, and dynamics of marriage blurred the hierarchy. There are countless verses in tribal poetry, memoirs, and tribal and Ottoman court cases that expose the reality that wives were typically not congenial to one another.[203] Nonetheless, Lady Anne's judgment of proper wifely behavior elucidates her acquisition of the Arab masculine conceptualization of gender-role definition; and adds another layer to her cross-gendered enculturative experience.

Lady Anne was not easily welcomed into the world of Arab women. As such, she was only exposed to the meta-language of Arab men. Meta-language is defined as the cultural and

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[202] Ibid., 141.

[203] Judith Tucker and Guity Nashat, *The Middle East and North Africa: Restoring Women to History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 81.

social undercurrents of language and silent meanings of communication. She did not assist women in their daily tasks and entertainment, or even share a meal with the women. Throughout the two volumes of her *Pilgrimage to the Nejd,* Lady Anne encountered Arab women a total of five times. When she was permitted to venture into the harem, Lady Anne was never alone, and was accompanied by a man. When Lady Anne was at a town in Jauf, she went to visit the ladies in the home of her host. She was pleased with the women's good manners and cordiality, but commented that "the ladies would not uncover their faces until Assad, the Sheykh's secretary, who accompanied me, had retired."[204] Lady Anne did not see their faces, for the secretary never left Lady Anne alone in the harem. How could she observe and understand the meta-language of women whom she rarely interacted with?

Even when given the assignment of picking a wife for her longtime friend and travel partner, Mohammad ibn Aruk, Lady Anne was not left alone with the women to acquire feminine meta-language. A main storyline in *Pilgrimage to the Nejd* is the search for a proper wife for Mohammad to take back to Tudmur. Mohammad had asked Lady Anne for help in picking a suitable match. As Arab tradition dictates, Mohammad told Lady Anne what he was looking for physically and mentally. The caravan arrived at Meskakeh, in the region of Jauf, to meet some distant relations of Mohammad's family, the ibn Aruk. Lady Anne was to pick a bride from an ibn Aruk family in Meskakeh. She was to go to the harem and meet the potential matches. Yet, Lady Anne did not go to the harem alone. Although given the honor of assisting Mohammad in his marriage negotiations, Lady Anne narrates that the groom preferred for

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[204] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 59-60.

"Abdallah to go with me, just to spy out things."[205] She met the potential matches in the harem with 'Abdallah (Mohammad's cousin and camel-driver for the caravan) and Turki, a son of the Meskakeh ibn Aruk family.[206] It seems that the honor bestowed upon Lady Anne, to serve as honorary mother and pick a bride for Mohammad, was largely ceremonial and superficial. Although she expressed her opinion to Mohammad, his decision was made only after consulting Abdullah. Lucky for all individuals involved, Abdullah agreed with Lady Anne's recommendation and a final marriage contract was settled and celebrated before moving onwards to Hail.[207]

During her involvement in the marriage process, Lady Anne was not only engaging in meta-language, but also simultaneously becoming culturally conditioned regarding Arab values. Marriage is an institution born out of cultural value systems. Lady Anne's full participation in an Arab marriage negotiation provided an ideal forum to engage in meta-language. She was to find a wife based on an Arab man's value-driven imagery. She looked for a match with strong tribal connections to the husband, pleasant in appearance, modest, and unassuming in disposition.[208] On the other hand, Lady Anne was not shown the marriage process from a woman's point of view or allowed access to an Arab woman's hopes, desires, or cultural assumptions. This indicates a singularly masculine acquisition of meta-language, a tenet of the enculturative experience.

Similar to her experience in Meskakeh, Lady Anne was not left alone in Emir Mohammad ibn Rashid's harem. On her second day in Hail, Lady Anne asked the Emir if she could visit the harem. This is a bold question to ask a host, but the Emir acquiesced and

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[205] Ibid., 134.
[206] Ibid., 135.
[207] Ibid., 137.
[208] Ibid., 59-60.

permitted Lady Anne to visit the women of his family. Still, Lady Anne was taken to the private quarters of the palace escorted by the Emir's trusted male slave. He stayed with Lady Anne as she talked with the women. The presence of a male slave in the harem did not allow the women to act as they do without the presence of a man. It was the ideal of women's behaviors and thoughts that was shown to Lady Anne- not the real, organic, and everyday behaviors and interactions. Even as Lady Anne visited with the women, the Emir came in twice, showing he was uncomfortable about her presence there and how his wives would react to this foreign woman.[209] It was not easy for Lady Anne to find authentic cultural and physical space of Arab women, devoid of men, as the women's world was largely lived outside the purview of men and guests. Of course, this contributed to the unique opportunity for Lady Anne to undergo a cross-gendered enculturative experience.

Lady Anne was sequestered from the female physical and cultural space in Hail, prohibiting the acquisition of a feminine meta-language. The Emir at his palace in the city of Hail entertained both Lady Anne and Wilfrid. Meals were shared with him and his male attendants. Lady Anne attended the *majlis* of Emir Mohammad ibn Rashid, "the court of justice which he holds daily in the yard of the palace," a socially and culturally recognized male space.[210] This indicates that her hosts treated, and viewed, Lady Anne as a man, not a woman. First, Lady Anne was the first European woman to travel through central Arabia, and Arab hosts may not have known how to best culturally and socially respond to this foreign and enigmatic individual. Her dress indicated she was a European female wearing Arab male garments, so perhaps her native hosts took their cue from the identity she asserted in her dress. Yet, it is most

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[209] Ibid., 239.
[210] Ibid., 217.

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likely that the Arab men Lady Anne encountered were concerned with protecting the honor of their families and tribes, associated with Arab women since the *jahiliyya*. Lady Anne was unfamiliar to Arabs, and in their duty to protect tribal honor, they swayed to the side of caution regarding the unfamiliar. Rather than leave Lady Anne to her own devices with the women, which could potentially cause scandal or blemish the tribal or familial name, they would ensure and control her exposure to women. Similarly, the Blunts' Arab hosts could not bring dishonor to their tribe or family by not displaying proper Arab hospitality. Therefore, admitting Lady Anne into their communities and homes as a male was the best option for the hosts to uphold tribal honor. Lady Anne was to be socially recognized as a male by her hosts. This only allowed her to observe and partake in masculine meta-language.

Lady Anne was simply not physically or culturally exposed to the Arab women's space, ultimately limiting her enculturative experience to a single gender. In every community they visited, she was never given access to Arab women without an attendant. She did not have individual time or space with any Arab woman during her journey. She befriended no Arab women. Lady Anne was simply unable to learn from Gulf women. Voluntarily or involuntarily, Lady Anne was only able to experience a male enculturative process while in Arabia.

It is clear that Lady Anne did not feel any significant kinship with Arab women. This can be explained by the insignificant amount of time she spent with local women. When the Blunts' caravan arrived at a new encampment, village, or town, the men entertained both Lady Anne and Wilfrid, and Lady Anne always dined with the men. There is no mention of Lady Anne eating a meal with Arab women. Moreover, Lady Anne mostly dined with the elite men of the town, village, or camp, further exposing her to elitist male cultural assumptions and views. Lady Anne's infrequent time spent with women shapes a superficial understanding and camaraderie

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with Arab women. Lady Anne describes the ladies of Emir Mohammed ibn Rashid harem: "They have no idea of amusement, if I may judge from what they said to me, but a firm conviction that perfect happiness and dignity consist in sitting still."[211]

One may also speculate if Lady Anne was more reluctant to identify with the women of Arabia after enduring Wilfrid's countless adulterous flings. Was Lady Anne insecure and instinctively suspicious of women? Did she blame Wilfrid or his mistresses for the betrayals in her marriage? Did Lady Anne trust women? Did she see women as a threat? Did Lady Anne even want to get to know the social and cultural world of Gulf women? Did Lady Anne like the idea of female seclusion, because it protected her marriage from further fissure? Did Lady Anne, who modeled her own controlled and dutiful reactions to her husband's infidelity after her grandmother, identify with the emotionally controlled cultural expectations of Arab males? Was Lady Anne more comfortable and natural in the space of the Gulf men? Did she identify with Gulf men, therefore allowing the gendered enculturative experience to more firmly take hold?

Curiously, we may consider how Arab men felt about Lady Anne's presence in the male-dominated physical spaces and conversations. Emir Mohammed ibn Rashid's documented reaction to Lady Anne's request to visit with the women in his family may indicate the general public opinion regarding Lady Anne's puzzling presence in male circles. Lady Anne writes, "on the second day after our arrival, after the usual compliments and some conversation, I asked the Emir's permission to pay a visit to the harim. Mohammed ibn Rashid appeared gratified by my request, which he immediately granted…"[212] Perhaps the Arab hospitality which Lady Anne and

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[211] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 233.
[212] Ibid., 230.

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Wilfrid so wildly praised and expected prevented their male hosts from directing Lady Anne towards the inner courtyards and tents set aside for the women.

A prime example of Lady Anne's enculturative experience is detected in her adherence to the Arab value of *'asil.* The internalization of values is a tenet of enculturation, further demonstrating Lady Anne's experience. The Blunts translate '*asil* to the English concept of "noble." However, a more accurate translation of *'asil* is "pureblooded." This concept has two meanings. The first is the literal meaning, that individuals are tribally pureblooded. An '*asil* individual can trace their family's ancestry directly back to their tribe's founding members. The Arabic root is incredibly important in deciphering the literal and symbolic meaning of a word. The root for '*asil* is constructed with three letters, ayn-sin-lam, meaning "honey."[213] The Arabic root is then given various suffixes and prefixes which indicate more specific meaning. For example, *'asala* means to prepare or mix with honey, to sweeten, and to make pleasant, and additionally means "honey-colored." "*Assaal* is a beekeeper, and '*ma'asuul* means prepared with honey.[214] The root of the word, honey, may have at first been associated with skin color, but over time, was applied metaphorically to denote the purity of individuals and tribes. The metaphor of honey as pure is seen across languages, including Arabic, English, and many Native American indigenous languages. Pureblooded Arabs marry endogamously to maintain uncontaminated bloodlines, and to marry someone outside of the tribe is not only taboo, but also grounds for exile from the tribe. Although it is preferred that tribal members marry their parallel cousins (ego's father's brother's children), members may marry within their sub-tribes, typically composed of a very large extended family of 400-500. If these two preferences cannot come to

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[213] Hans Wehr , *The Hans Wehr-Cowan Arabic-English Dictionary,* ed. J. Milton Cowan (Spoken Languages Services, 1976), 613.
[214] Ibid., 613.

fruition, then marrying within the larger tribe, typically composed of thousands, is acceptable and the couple's offspring will still be considered *'asil*. The second meaning of *'asil* refers to an individual's manners. If their manners and values are traditional, tribal, and Bedouin in origin, they are maintaining *'asil*. To this day, it is perceived as a tremendous insult to be told you are not behaving up to *'asil* standards. According to Lady Anne's and native Arabs' conception, townspeople were not considered as *'asil* as the Bedouin because they had walked away from their traditional nomadic lifeways and did not uphold the second use of *'asil*. Bedouin look down upon the townspeople, even though Bedouin ancestors established the towns.

Lady Anne readily implemented the cultural value of *'asil* in her judgments of the Arabs whom she encountered. She conceived the "authentic" Arab as being holistically *'asil* in both forms of the term.

Lady Anne's culturally conditioned observance of *'asil* value is peppered throughout her narrative. For example, Lady Anne describes the fixer of their journey, Mohammed, with celebrated Bedouin heritage but raised in a town, according to *'asil* standards: "he has indeed good enough manners to pass very well for a true Bedouin."[215] Lady Anne's conception of *'asil* is also connected to the concept of *adab* and *akhlaq*. *Adab* refers to manners, and emphasizes the purity of manners found in an individual. *Adab* emphasizes hospitality, generosity, protecting the weak and pilgrims, and being good neighbors, among other characteristics. *Akhlaq* refers to the performance of manners (or *adab*), and behavior of an individual.[216] *'Asil* is conceived by many Gulf Arabs to be the supreme form of *adab*. Lady Anne became highly

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[215] Lady Anne Blunt, A *Pilgrimage to Nejd: The Cradle of the Arab Race* (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1881), 5.
[216] Akhlaq is discussed in the Sunnah, when the Prophet Mohammed, peace be upon him, said Islam was "sent to perfect good manners." (Malik). This implies that Islam was to continue the manners practiced in the desert, and would not change these behaviors. Rather, Islam would preserve and protect the purity of manners practiced by Arabs. http://www.huda.tv/articles/miscellaneous-topics/581-reaping-the-benefits-of-ramadan.

familiarized with the yardstick used by locals to judge *adab* and *'asil* in individuals. Lady Anne mimicked her hosts in conception and usage of these terms.

Lady Anne also discerns who is *'asil* based on appearance, exclaiming, "no Bedouin of true blood was ever seen with hair or eyes not black, nor perhaps with a nose not aquiline."[217] Lady Anne found the epitome of her *'asil*-driven Bedouin imagery in Sheikh Muttlak, a distant relation of the fixer, Mohammad. Fascinatingly, Lady Anne compares him to the Arabian horses she holds dearly: "Muttlak has with him his own little mare, the counterpart of himself, old and without other pretension than extreme purity of descent."[218] *'Asil* is the value-based standard for both horses and peoples in Lady Anne's understanding.

We can also detect similarities in Lady Anne's conception of *'asil* and her understanding of Islam. Lady Anne believed that the further into the heart of Arabia she entered, the more *'asil* and authentic these Bedouin peoples became. The same can be said of her perception of what an authentic Muslim is. The further into the heart of Arabia she went, the more she respected and believed the individuals who professed their Islamic faith. As the caravan moved closer to Hail, Lady Anne observed

> all our Mahometans have begun to say their prayers, for the first time during the journey. The solemnity of the Nefud, or perhaps a doubt about reaching Jobba, might well make them serious; perhaps, however, they merely want to get into training for Nejd, where Wahhabism prevails and prayers are in fashion.[219]

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[217] Ibid., 9.
[218] Ibid., 80.
[219] Ibid., 103.

As discussed previously, the Najd was the heartland of Wahhabism, a strict interpretation of Islam that wished to preserve classically practiced Islam, although Lady Anne and Wilfrid journeyed to the Najd during a lull in the authority of the al-Sa'ud family, who promoted Wahhabism. Although the Sa'uds' power had waned after Mohammad Ibn Rashid had defeated them, the influence of Wahhabism lingered. In the nineteenth century, Muslims from around the Middle East recognized the prevalence of Wahhabism in the Najd. It was no shock to Lady Anne that the more deeply they traveled into Arabia, the more poignantly she would detect the presence of Islam and Wahhabism. She had understood that the Bedouin of Arabia were not reputed to be devout; yet, she fully expected to discover Wahhabism in full force in the villages and urban centers of the Najd.

This provoked anxiety and concern over how she and Wilfrid would be received by the Najdi peoples. As the first Europeans to travel through Arabia without disguise, they were also the first openly Christian Europeans to tour the Najd. Gulf Arabs commonly referred to Christians as *nasranis,* stemming from the word Nazarene.[220] Lady Anne's worry boiled over while staying in Hail at Mohammed al-Kabir's court. She wrote in her journal "we were among Wahhabi fanatics and we began to be very much alarmed."[221]

Lady Anne's alarm did not stop her from commenting on the piety she saw while in Hail. In *Pilgrimage to the Nejd,* Lady Anne remarks that if her hosts were entertaining her when the call to prayer came, they would excuse themselves to pray, often retiring to a separate room or corner, and then resume the conversation.[222] This is considered socially permissible because the host was not leaving Lady Anne by herself, as Wilfrid was typically with her. She mentions that

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[220] Ibid., 101.
[221] Ibid., 20.
[222] Ibid., 203.

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while in Mohammad al-Kabir's harem, the women would silently excuse themselves, walk to the corner of the room and pray. Lady Anne was not left by herself while the women prayed in the harem. Rather, the Emir's first wife continued talking with Lady Anne. Once some of the women had completed their prayer and returned to the circle, the Emir's first wife excused herself to do the same.[223]

Perhaps witnessing such strict devotion inspired Lady Anne to examine her own spirituality. Readers will recall that soon after her Najd expedition, she converted to Catholicism. Whether the Wahhabism of the Najd influenced Lady Anne's spiritual evolution is interesting to consider. Either way, Lady Anne certainly understood and categorized Islam as she did *'asil*. Lady Anne silently associated the authentic Arab, an *'asil* Bedouin, with authentic Muslims. She describes the Bedouin sheikh Muttlak, an ibn Aruk relation, as "very pious; unlike the Anazeh and other tribes of the North, these Bedouins of Nejd say their prayers regularly, and profess the Mussulman creed, and Muttlak's first act on dismounting this evening in camp, was to go apart with his attendant and pray."[224] Lady Anne was interested in discovering only the authentic in Arabia; the authentic horse, authentic Arab, and authentic Muslim. She believed herself to have found them all in the Najd.

Although Lady Anne's devotion to the Arab value of *'asil* and authentic Muslims is not indicative of a gendered enculturation process, it does signify her absorption of her host culture's values, a tenet of enculturation.

Lady Anne's enculturative experience was not a fleeting phase. By nature, the enculturation process operates at the core of an individual and leads to true transformation. The

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[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid., 81.

fact that we may extract these tenets of enculturation in her travelogue, edited and composed after completing her journey, demonstrates the powerful impacts of adult enculturation and acculturation in an individual.

The enculturative experience is composed of five main doctrines: language, ideational behavior, role definitions, meta-language, and values. When a person culturally adjusts to these tenets, they have undergone an enculturative experience. A careful reading of her travel narrative *Pilgrimage to the Nejd* shows that Lady Anne Blunt exhibited these tenets of enculturation. Yet, Lady Anne was exposed only to Arab men's interpretations and understandings of these tenets. In these many ways, Lady Anne Blunt underwent a cross-gendered enculturative experience.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Lady Anne Blunt was a remarkable Victorian woman. The layers of her life expose some of the most intriguing forces at work in British imperialist history that historians discuss on a macro level: class, gender, the 'other,' and orientalism. This makes Lady Anne an outstanding historical case study from which to extract a greater understanding of the British Empire and its manifestations in the Middle East. Her story and books epitomize Cannadine's conclusions in *Ornamentalism,* which verifies not only Cannadine's spot-on analysis, but also Lady Anne's place as a historical agent. If we delve further into her life, however, we discover her story is incredibly human, only adding to her historical utility.

Lady Anne's cross-gender enculturation process proposes many further avenues for research and central questions: If Lady Anne went through this male enculturation process, are there other similar women who went through a female enculturation process in the Middle East? How would those compare? Does this gendered process help explain the stereotypes created with Orientalist discourse which Said so vehemently condemned? Are these the origins of the West's great misunderstanding of the women in the Middle East and the wide gap between the real and the ideal? These avenues of inquiry demand further consideration for historians and scholars alike.

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