Heterotopias in Novels by Sydney Owenson, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Charlotte Brontë

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Abstract

In this thesis, I explore seven novels written by Sydney Owenson, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Charlotte Brontë, all major women writers of the early nineteenth century. I will argue that these women writers, often financially dependent on their pens, strategically created literary characters whose embodied experiences of time, space and motion seek to redefine and reconstruct their relationships with social spaces. I approach the spatial in their works by using Foucault's concept of heterotopia as a critical framework. Heterotopias are Other spaces, off-center in comparison with normal or everyday spaces, possessing manifold meanings. I aim to trace how heterotopias function in different cultural and historical contexts, arguing that heterotopias have the potential to transcend binary power structures and provide a space for otherness, although they fail to overthrow the dominant social order. I will also focus on frame narratives and the liminal space of annotation, following Foucault's notion of textual heterotopias that 'destroy "syntax" in advance', something that allows 'words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to "hold together"'.[1] Ultimately, my thesis argues that the spatial is an important critical category to understand these women writers' engagement with a complex mesh of political, cultural and historical concerns.

This thesis aims to provide a fresh perspective on the deictic functions of heterotopias in my chosen works. The introduction offers an outline of my theoretical approach, and a discussion of the concept of heterotopia, from its etymology to its literal and metaphorical usage. My main analysis comprises four chapters. Chapter One focuses on cross-cultural contact zones in Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) and *The Missionary* (1811), where the liminal, often shifting identities of the Oriental Other pose a challenge to the assumptions of colonial authority. Following Edward Said and Homi K. Bhabha, I explore the concept of hybridity as an interstitial space to deconstruct oppositional discourses of dominance and resistance. The acts and artifice of storytelling form the focus of the second chapter, in which I argue that Shelley's use of frame narratives in *Frankenstein* (1818) and *The Last Man* (1826) reveals a non-linear understanding of history that contests Enlightenment ideas of progress and causation. Working with Foucault's fourth principle of heterotopias which emphasizes co-existence of diverse times in the same place, I argue that heterotopias arise as a hybrid effect of fiction and reality. Women's protean subject positions under benevolent patriarchy in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Mansfield Park* (1814) are the focus of the

[1] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (1966; repr. London: Routledge, 2002), p.xix.

third chapter. I examine how a heterotopic experience can promote female agency and destabilize binary gender relations, even while women are still restrained by patriarchal controls. In the fourth chapter, I turn to the private, inner world of the female character Lucy Snowe in *Villette* (1853), arguing that this is a heterotopia that facilitates the formation of a multifaceted self. The conflicted subject position occupied by Lucy reflects her difficult struggle to transcend gender and class boundaries. The Conclusion draws together my findings and argues that the analysis of these physical, psychic and textual spaces through the lens of heterotopias opens up the possibility for imagining a new embodied subaltern subjectivity.

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Abbreviations

CUP — Cambridge University Press

MUP — Manchester University Press

OED — Oxford English Dictionary

OUP — Oxford University Press

Introduction

This thesis examines a selection of novels written by the early nineteenth century women writers Sydney Owenson (1776-1859), Jane Austen (1775-1817), Mary Shelley (1797-1851), and Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855). These texts show how an individual identity is a fluid construct, shaped by the spatial production and reproduction of social relations. Michel Foucault's multivalent concept 'heterotopia' forms the conceptual framework for my study. It refers to actual places conceived as spaces with the potential to propose an alternative to the existing social and political order. By examining the working of this spatial metaphor, heterotopia—denoting ambiguous spaces and antithetical discourses—in these texts, this thesis sets out to investigate how identities are spatially shaped and spatially performed, inextricably related to the politics of gender, race and class. I draw on post-colonial criticism, feminist studies and spatial theories to conclude that spaces can shape the inhabitants' sense of otherness, racial differences and personal marginality. The mutual interaction between inhabitants and their settings resonates with Henri Lefebvre's consideration of space as a language that can be used to give expression to social relationships and construct identities. As Lefebvre argues, 'Every language is located in a space. Every discourse says something about a space; and every discourse is emitted from a space'.[2] This thesis is mainly concerned with the importance of the spatial dimension in reconfiguring a person's sense of self, arguing that the exploration of alternative spatial forms can produce a nuanced understanding of the ways in which various social forces interact to construct social identities.

I have selected the novels that best serve my purpose of using the idea of heterotopia to explore specific spatial configurations and to trace dynamic power relations. The works under scrutiny are: Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) and *The Missionary* (1811), Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Mansfield Park* (1814), Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and *The Last Man* (1826), Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853) and *The Professor* (1857). I have included also some analysis of several of Charlotte Brontë's surviving letters, in order to illuminate the complex nature of the writing self. Shelley's major works above are read in association with some of her short stories and lesser-known novels: 'Roger Dodsworth: The Reanimated Englishman' (1863), 'Valerius: The Reanimated Roman' (1819), *Valperga; or, The Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca* (1823). I have also included some discussion of her travelogue and journal:

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[2] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p.132.

Rambles in Germany and Italy in 1840,1842, and 1843 (1844) and *The Journals of Mary Shelley 1814-1844*, since they share the same thematic concerns, and provide clues to the interpretation of her way of approaching other cultures. The selected novels present a wide range of topics and themes—female mobility, colonial encounters, novel of sensibility, post-apocalyptic fiction—revealing these writers' fascination with borders, liminality, alterity and ways of transgressing the norms. These aspects of their works are addressed in the following chapters, as forms of heterotopias, a term used as a lens to explore the symbolic dimensions of spatial representations. The aim throughout is to delineate the gender and political implications of heterotopias as alternative spaces of ordering—be that space domestic or public, rural or urban, real or imagined.

My approach follows 'the spatial turn' in literary studies.[3] This emphasis on spatiality emerges from a postmodern attention to our lives which are complicated by 'a mobile array of social and spatial relations'.[4] Raymond Williams argues that the sense of 'place' reflects our historical and experimental knowledge of a place.[5] Tim Cresswell distinguishes 'place' as a 'meaningful location' endowed with 'subjective and emotional attachment'.[6] 'Space', by contrast, is in his view a 'realm without meaning', a more abstract concept which 'produces the basic coordinates for human life'.[7] Informed by these and other different theoretical perspectives, I attempt to explore specific meanings attached to space and place in these selected works. For example, in *The Wild Irish Girl*, specific places are portrayed such as 'the bay of Dublin', 'the Channel', and 'the north-west coast of Connaught'. The thick evocation of 'place' sheds light on the heterogeneity of Gaelic Irish society which challenges the English imperial way of envisaging Ireland as a homogenous entity.

The space is not merely a void but a complex set of relations that can have an impact on the individual and society at large. This understanding of space as an entity capable of change lays the foundations for Foucault's heterotopology. By further exploring the concept of heterotopia from its etymological meanings to its various principles, I aim to demonstrate how this concept can help illuminate the role of space in the selected novels.

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3 Robert T. Tally, *Spatiality* (London: Routledge, 2013), p.3.

4 Ibid., p.16-7.

5 See Raymond Williams, *The Country and The City* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973).

6 Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), p.7.

7 Ibid., p.10.

Defining Heterotopias

Etymologically, 'heterotopia' denotes 'hetero' ('other' and 'difference') and 'topos' (place). The term heterotopia originally comes from the study of anatomy, where it is used to refer to 'parts of the body that are either out of place, missing, extra, or, like tumours, alien'.[8] According to Heidi Sohn: 'From the 1920s onwards, heterotopia increasingly appears in medical literature to describe a phenomenon occurring in an unusual place, or to indicate "a spatial displacement of normal tissue", which does not influence the overall functioning and development of the organism'.[9] Although Foucault does not mention or use heterotopia in any medical context, the notion of a nondetrimental spatial displacement of body parts is a good metaphor to understand heterotopia as a form of dissonance that involves the disruption of normal order and implies the possibilities of alternative states of being.

Foucault refers to the term heterotopia in three main places. The first place is in the preface to *Les Mots et les choses*, later translated into English as *The Order of Things* (1966), where he makes reference to a passage from Jorge Luis Borges's book describing a Chinese Encyclopedia that aims to illustrate the challenges of human attempts to classify the world.[10] Here heterotopia is used to denote a textual space that has the power 'to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old distinction between the Same and the Other'.[11] In Borges's passage, Foucault calls attention to what he terms a 'heteroclite' group of animals such as those 'belonging to the Emperor', the 'embalmed', and the 'frenzied' that are more complex than the incongruous juxtapositions.[12] Foucault regards this disorder as heterotopic in comparison with the ideal order of utopia:

> Utopias afford consolidation: although they have no real locality there is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold; they open up cities with vast avenues, superbly planted gardens, countries where life is easy, even though the road to

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[8] Kevin Hetherington, *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering* (London: Routledge, 1997), p.42.

[9] Heidi Sohn, 'Heterotopia: Anamnesis of a Medical Term', in *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, ed. by Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (London: Routledge, 2008), pp.41-50 (p.41).

[10] The Chinese encyclopedia that Foucault refers to is the 'Heavenly Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge' described in 'John Wilkins' Analytic Language'. See Jorge Luis Borges, *The Total Library: Non-Fiction, 1922–1986*, trans. Ester Allen, Suzanne Jill Levine and Eliot Weinberger, ed. Eliot Weinberger (London: Penguin, 2000), p.231.

[11] Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p.xvi.

[12] Ibid., p.xix; Foucault's quotation includes a haphazard list of animals: 'a) belonging to the Emperor, (b) embalmed, (c) tame, (d) sucking pigs, (e) sirens, (f) fabulous, (g) stray dogs, (h) included in the present classification, (i) frenzied, (j) innumerable, (k) drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, (l) et cetera, (m) having just broken the water pitcher, (n) that from a long way off look like flies'. Ibid., p.xvi.

> them is chimerical. Heterotopias are disturbing, probably because they secretly undermine language, because they make it impossible to name this and that, because they shatter or tangle common names, because they destroy 'syntax' in advance, and not only the syntax with which we construct sentences but also that less apparent syntax which causes words and things (next to and also opposite one another) to 'hold together'.[13]

Utopias refer to placeless sites that cannot be localized in reality. Utopian imaginations of 'a fantastic, untroubled region' reflect human desires to create an ideal society and establish a perfect order. By comparison, heterotopias shatter the utopian illusion to create impossible spaces and disclose the limitations of language in transcending incongruity. Such questioning about the efficacy of language becomes the starting point of Foucault's deliberations, as it raises questions concerning the conditions of the existing order, including the constitution of knowledge, ideas and theory, and the development of diverse forms of empirical science. Foucault goes on to investigate the formal history of 'order', uncovering the homogenous nature of Western knowledge and calling attention to the unsettling existence of the Other.

The idea of textual heterotopias that destroy syntax holding things together is considered in more detail in Chapter One and Two, specifically in discussions of storytelling techniques such as frame narratives and annotations. For example, the annotations in *The Wild Irish Girl* are examined as heterotopias, where historical and antiquarian studies provide an alternative understanding of Irish cultural history with an emphasis on its mythical Eastern origins. The Orientalist viewpoint for the purposes of reclaiming Irish cultural identity challenges the dominant Anglocentric view that emphasizes Irish barbarism and backwardness. Joseph Lennon offers an overview of the long-standing arguments concerning 'the tradition of Oriental motifs', revealing how constructions of Irish genealogical, migratory, linguistic and colonial connections with the East in various time periods can serve different ends.[14] While references to Eastern origins of Irish culture by the turn of the nineteenth century aim to emphasize 'a lack of civilization', Irish nationalist writers use the Celtic-Oriental link to support an anti-colonialist movement and advocate 'the civilized pedigree of the Irish'.[15] Lennon sheds light on how Irish culture's connection with the East is arbitrarily constructed for political purposes. Owenson's multiple references to contemporary scholarship on

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[13] Ibid., p.xix.

[14] Joseph Lennon, 'Irish Orientalism: An Overview', in *Ireland and Postcolonial Theory*, ed. by Clare Carroll and Patricia King (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), pp.129-218 (p.129).

[15] Ibid., pp.134-135.

Irish Orientalism construct a distinctive Irish culture with ancestral and cultural connections with the East that is not fully understood or defined, perpetually outside the grasp of the colonial authority.

The second time Foucault mentioned heterotopia was in December 1966 when he gave a radio lecture as part of a series on the theme of utopia and literature, which was published as 'Les Hétérotopies', yet remains unpublished in English.[16] Kelvin T. Knight calls attention to this often overlooked radio talk, arguing that heterotopias pertain exclusively to 'fictional representations of these semi-mythical places' instead of real urban sites.[17] Foucault's radio broadcast was noticed in the world of architecture and he was thus invited to speak further on the subject. The third time was when Foucault gave a lecture 'Of Other Spaces' ('Des Spaces Autres') to a group of prominent architects in Paris in March 1967, during which he outlined the notion of heterotopia in relation to institutional and socio-cultural spaces as a development of the content of the radio broadcast.[18] It was in the transcript of this lecture that the concept of the heterotopia had found its widest audience. Foucault calls the present as an 'epoch of space' which is defined in the following way: 'We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed'.[19] Foucault's epoch is one in which space takes the form of 'relations among sites', and the site is defined by 'relations of proximity between points and elements'.[20] For example, cafes, cinemas and beaches are defined as 'sites of temporary relaxations'.[21] Among all these sites of relations, he distinguishes heterotopias as sites that 'have the curious property of being in relation with all the other sites, but in such a way as to suspect, neutralize, or invert the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror, or reflect.[22]

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[16] Michel Foucault, 'Les Hétérotopies', in *Le Corps utopique suivi de Les Hétérotopies,* ed. by Daniel Defert (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Lignes, 2009), pp.21-36.

[17] Kelvin T. Knight, 'Placeless Places: Resolving the Paradox of Foucault's Heterotopia', *Textual Practice*, 31.1(2017), 141-158 (p.142).

[18] Foucault's lecture was first published by the French journal *Architecture, Mouvenment Continuité* as the article, 'Des espaces autres' in October 1984. It was firstly translated into English by Jay Miskoweic two years later as 'Of Other Spaces' in Spring 1986 and by Robert Hurley in Volume 2 of the collection *Aesthetics: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*. The most recent translation is Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter, in the collection *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society* (2008). In this thesis, I use the Miskoweic translation. Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias', *Diacritics*, 16.1 (1986), 22-27 (p.22).

[19] Foucault and Miskowiec, 'Of Other Spaces', p.22.

[20] Ibid., p.23.

[21] Ibid., p.24.

[22] Ibid., p.24.

In the transcript translated as ‘Of Other Spaces’, Foucault pays tribute to the French philosopher Gaston Bachelard, who in *Poetics of Space* explores the spatial metaphor of imagination, the poetics of intimate spaces such as the attic, the cellar and drawers that are imbued with intrinsic qualities and haunted by fantasies.[23] But instead of these internal spaces, Foucault pays attention to the space of the outside, which he thinks is equally heterogeneous, formed by ‘a set of relations that delineate sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another’.[24] As Edward W. Soja suggests, heterotopia is thus a socially created space ‘rarely seen for it has been obscured by a bifocal vision that traditionally views space as either a mental constructor or a physical form—a dual illusion’.[25] Both utopias and heterotopias share the characteristic of simultaneously representing and inverting the other sites. What distinguishes heterotopias is that they are ‘real places’ closely associated with the rest of the world, yet at the same time indicate imagined realities as a way to resist reality.[26] The mirror is an important spatial metaphor to explain the link between utopias and heterotopias. Foucault argues that the mirror functions as a heterotopia, in that it makes ‘this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass’ both utterly real, connected with the space surrounding it, and utterly unreal, since the reflected image has to be perceived across ‘this virtual point which is over there’.[27] Heterotopias seem inherently contradictory. The East Room in *Mansfield Park* is examined as a heterotopia of illusion, where Fanny Price is allowed to have her own collection of objects, yet she is still constrained by patriarchy. Heterotopias thus bear the potential to mentally empower characters with an increased sense of agency, but the ideal vision is subject to the limitations of existing reality.

Heterotopia is a multivalent concept.[28] Foucault illustrates its six principles by using a bewildering spectrum of examples from the hotel to the colony, the library or the museum. The first principle is that heterotopias exist in all cultures in a certain way; they are heterogeneous, diverse in

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[23] Ibid., p.23.

[24] Ibid., p.23.

[25] Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), p.18.

[26] Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.24.

[27] Ibid., p.24.

[28] I have consulted Christopher James Duffy’s thesis on heterotopic space in selected works of J. G. Ballard in order to put together the summary of Foucault’s heterotopia in the following section. See Christopher James Duffy, ‘Heterotopic Space in Selected Works of J. G. Ballard’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, The University of Leeds, 2015) in White Rose eTheses Online <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/12593/>[accessed 8 February 2023], pp.11-12.

character depending on the society in which they are formed. Foucault broadly classifies two major types: heterotopias of crisis and heterotopias of deviation (or deviance).[29] The former exist in so-called primitive societies, referring to 'privileged or sacred or forbidden places' that are reserved for those who live in a state of crisis such as adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women and the elderly.[30] Foucault continues to argue that as society evolves, so do heterotopic spaces, and as such, the crisis heterotopias are gradually being replaced by those of deviation. He takes rest homes, psychiatric hospitals and prisons as examples where individual behavior is 'deviant from the accepted and dominant social norms'.[31]

The second principle is that heterotopias can function in different ways at any given time according to the needs of society. Foucault outlines his meaning by discussing the cemetery whose location was changed from the place next to the church to graveyards outside the towns at the end of the eighteenth century. Foucault demonstrates how the relocation of the cemetery reflects a change in the public opinion of death—a view of death as a contagious illness persists until the end of the eighteenth century.[32]

Foucault's third principle is that heterotopias are 'capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible'.[33] He takes the garden as the oldest example of the heterotopia, and delineates its perception in history as a sacred space: it is 'the smallest parcel of the world and then it is the totality of the world'; it 'has been a sort of happy, universalizing heterotopia since the beginning of antiquity'.[34] The universalizing feature of the garden is derived from the assemblage of different parts of the world into a sort of microcosm.

The fourth principle is that heterotopias are often linked to 'slices in time', or 'a sort of absolute break with traditional time'.[35] Such heterotopias are also what he terms heterochronies of indefinitely accumulating time, such as museums and libraries.[36] Another kind are festive

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[29] Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.24.

[30] Ibid., p.24.

[31] Ibid., pp.24-25.

[32] Ibid., p.25.

[33] Ibid., p.25.

[34] Ibid., p.26.

[35] Ibid., p.26.

[36] Ibid., p.26.

heterotopias where different temporalities are experienced in a transient, fleeting and precarious manner, such as fairground and carnival spaces. Foucault describes these spaces as 'marvelous empty sites on the outskirts of cities that teem once or twice a year with stands, displays, heteroclite objects, wrestlers, snakewomen, fortune-tellers, and so forth'.[37]

The fifth principle is that heterotopias have their own systems of opening and closing, making them both isolated and penetrable. Access rituals or rites often distinguish heterotopias from the space around them. These are heterotopias with apparent openings that simultaneously 'hide curious exclusions': 'Everyone can enter into these heterotopic sites, but in fact that is only an illusion'.[38] He takes the South American farmhouse as an example, where the guest room is open into the home yet remains separated from the family's private domain, making the visitor a 'guest in transit'.[39]

Foucault takes two oppositional forms of heterotopias to illustrate the sixth principle that heterotopias have a function in relation to the rest of society. Heterotopias of illusion exemplified in the brothel can 'create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory'.[40] Foucault mentions the brothel as an example, but does not offer a more substantial explanation. It is possible to infer that the brothel as a hidden space provides those customers with an illusion of home comfort beyond sexual transaction. On the contrary, heterotopias of compensation can 'create space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled'.[41] Foucault gives the examples of the English Puritan societies and the South American Jesuit colonies as 'marvelous, absolutely regulated colonies' where 'human perfection was effectively achieved'.[42]

The cultural geographer Edward Soja describes Foucault's principles of heterotopia as 'frustratingly incomplete, inconsistent, incoherent [seeming] narrowly focused on peculiar microgeographies' which are 'deviant and deviously apolitical'. For Soja, 'Foucault romps through the principles of heterotopology with unsystematic autobiographical enjoyment and disorderly

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37 Ibid., p.26.

38 Ibid., p.26.

39 Ibid., p.26.

40 Ibid., p.27.

41 Ibid., p.27.

42 Ibid., p.27.

irresponsibility'.[43] Despite Soja's critique, Foucault's heterotopia is helpful to analyze literary works. Foucault's six principles of heterotopia emphasize a tension between heterotopias of illusion and compensation which I examine as a significant part of spatiality, especially in Austen's novels.[44] Austen's texts define a nexus in which physical spaces can be transformed into heterotopic spaces that either set out to be prescriptive and regulatory, or escapist and fanciful. Whereas heterotopias of compensation involve meticulous regulation of space, heterotopias of illusion are imbued with imaginative potentials. Their antagonist relationship entails the negotiation and consolidation of social power. The dynamic interplay between illusionary disorder and compensatory order highlights the space's agency in constructing and reconstructing individual identities.

Having discussed Foucault's concept of heterotopia, I am now setting out to introduce some of the other theoretical and historical contexts for my analysis, including female authorship, women's travel writing and postcolonial theory.

Female Authorship

My thesis seeks to contribute to research on Owenson, Austen, Shelley, and Brontë, all major women writers of the early nineteenth century by considering how their spatial representation opens the possibility of breaking the limitations domestic discourse has imposed on women and, more broadly, deconstructing imperializing representations of the silenced subaltern. I argue that while women writers enjoyed the newly found mobility offered by open borders thanks to the end of the Napoleon Wars, they were conventionally confined to the domestic space of home and homeland. Writing for women writers was not only a process of self-expression outside their restrictive humdrum lives, but also a form of resistance, an attempt to create a textual heterotopia that disrupts

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[43] Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-imagined Places* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996), p.159.

[44] As Dehaene and De Cauter note: 'The qualifications "illusion" and "compensation" recall the distinction between heterotopias of crisis and deviance introduced in the first principle'. This leads them to distill six main types of heterotopia (crisis, deviance, illusion, compensation, festivity, and permanence) and to distinguish three axes in the text: 'an anthropological, a temporal and an imaginary axis'. It is clear, however, that there are potentially more, pointing to other dialectical tensions at work in the world of heterotopia. The anthropological axis (1) situates heterotopia on the division normal/abnormal, topos/heterotopos, common place/other place, resulting in the historical qualifications of crisis and deviance. The temporal axis (2) opposes permanence to the event-like character of the feast. The imaginary axis (3) conceives of heterotopias as realized utopias, as real spaces with a specific relation to the non-real spaces of utopia, resulting in the specific function heterotopia has with respect to "the rest of space", namely that of illusion or compensation'. Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces (1967)', in *Heterotopia and the City: Public Space in a Postcivil Society*, ed. by Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter, trans. by Michiel Dehaene and Lieven De Cauter (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp.13-30 (pp.27-28).

the hegemonic status quo and establishes a new subjectivity.

The demographic of female readership and authorship fundamentally altered in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries due to expanding access to books. As Michelle Levy argues, 'improved access to the press' contributed to 'women's prominent participation' in literary culture.[45] Levy notes that for middle-class women who had 'extremely limited career choices', becoming a writer was 'highly desirable'.[46] Owenson, for example, determined to support herself by writing after her father's bankruptcy.[47] Yet women at that time were still under much social pressure, since 'publishing (or—worse—writing for money)' was conventionally regarded as 'vulgar and unwomanly'.[48] Writing as a profession was still thought to be potentially contradictory to women's caring and domestic roles, and was especially considered unsuitable for women of the upper middle class.

Women's life writings (memoirs, autobiographies, letters, and diaries) can give us a glimpse into the social pressures exerted on female authors of the age. Family reputation was of overriding importance. David Nokes points out that Austen's family played down her propensity for satire and malice, whilst elevating 'her Christian virtues and her great love for all her fellow creatures' into near-canonization.[49] Kathryn Sutherland argues that James Edward Austen-Leigh's memoir of his aunt represents 'a particular family view of Jane Austen', for he tends to conceal 'within domestic pastime what must also have been a profoundly undomesticated, self-absorbed activity'.[50] Sutherland also points out that Austen-Leigh's presentation of Austen as 'an exemplary woman' runs parallel to Elizabeth Gaskell's portrayal of Charlotte Brontë as 'the ideal domestic figure, modest daughter of country parson', in that both can be explained 'in terms of a similar project of containment'.[51] Olivia Murphy suggests that the beginning of the Victorian period witnessed a new trend in 'the newly professionalized, male-dominated critical industry' that sought to downplay

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[45] Michelle Levy, 'Women and Print Culture, 1750-1830', in *The History of British Women's Writing, 1750-1830*, ed. by Jacqueline M. Labbe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.29-60 (p.34). See Figure 1.1. showing novel production as a percentage of the total by known male and female authors during the period of 1750-1830.

[46] Ibid., p.36.

[47] E. Byrne-Costigan, 'Sydney Lady Morgan (1776-1859)', *Dublin Historical Record*, 38.2 (1985), 61-73 (p.64).

[48] Lucy Newlyn, *Reading, Writing, and Romanticism: The Anxiety of Reception* (Oxford: OUP, 2000), p.229.

[49] David Nokes, *Jane Austen: A Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p.524.

[50] Kathryn Sutherland, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives: From Aeschylus to Bollywood* (Oxford: OUP, 2005), p.77; Ibid., p.87.

[51] Ibid., p.85.

women writers and commentators' contributions to the novel.[52] Brontë was once warned by Robert Southey, the biographer, essayist, editor and Poet Laureate, that 'Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be'.[53] To assure him that she was still engaged in her proper duties, Brontë replied that she was not 'the idle, dreaming being', writing neither 'for the sake of imaginative pleasures', nor 'for the love of fame and for the selfish excitement of emulation'.[54] She continued to explain that as the eldest child in a Clergyman's family, she was well educated, following a clear career path to 'become a Governess'.[55] Brontë's humble response absolved herself from blame for transgressing her expected gender role, and also served as evidence of the restrictions faced by women writers.

I have chosen 1800 and 1850 as my temporal boundaries, because they delineate a distinct period in the history of Britain and the British Empire after the outbreak of the French Revolution, a period of political turmoil and ideological debates. Suzanne Desan suggests that the French Revolution facilitated the reconfiguration of 'the customs, laws, emotions, power relations, and gender assumptions that informed family life'.[56] While Desan's argument is confined to a French context, events happening in France also had repercussions across Europe. With easier access to books, women writers had more intellectual participation in public life. For example, Shelley, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin, was considerably influenced by her parents and their circle. Observing the unexpected chaos and violence of the French Revolution led Shelley to contemplate the nature of anarchy and their revolutionary ideals. I argue that she embeds her conservative caution against radical impulses in *Frankenstein*, in which she reveals the danger of an unrestrained impulse to transform nature.

The historical background of women's paradoxical position informs my thesis about women writing in the early nineteenth century: they were encouraged to see their roles as citizens; on the other hand, they remained confined within the domestic realm. Joan Landes argues that republicanism liberated men while inevitably directing women to the household, and thus

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[52] Olivia Murphy, 'Jane Austen's Critical Response to Women's Writing: "a good spot for fault-finding"', in *The History of British Women's Writing, 1750-1830*, ed. by Jacqueline M. Labbe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.288-300 (pp.288-289).

[53] Robert Southey, 'Letter from Robert Southey to Charlotte Brontë, 12 March 1837' in *British Library* <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/letter-from-robert-southey-to-charlotte-bronte-12-march-1837> [accessed 13 September 2021].

[54] Charlotte Brontë, *Selected Letters of Charlotte Brontë*, ed. by Margaret Smith (Oxford: OUP, 2007), p.9.

[55] Ibid., p.9.

[56] Suzanne Desan, *The Family on Trial in Revolutionary France*, ed. by Inc ebrary (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p.1.

reinforced the prevailing view of separate gendered spheres.[57] After the overthrow of the Old Regime, Landes contends, the bourgeoisie tried to establish an alternative political structure, among which was the demarcation of gender attributes—'men as properly political and women as naturally domestic'.[58] Therefore, as the sexual contract subordinating women is inscribed into liberalism advocated by the Revolution, excluding women from public sphere becomes crucial in maintaining the patriarchal order in the French context. Another feminist scholar, Lynn Hunt, argues that the family as the microscopic structure of politics, is 'an imaginative construct of power relations' through which people collectively envisage the operations of power on larger scale.[59] According to Hunt, the idea of fraternity between men as the basis of the republican ideal of virtue emphasizes separate gender roles in order to prevent women from intruding into the public realm.[60] These ideas travelled across the Channel and influenced contemporary British society, as Adriana Craciun suggests: 'Romantic-period British women writers cultivated a radicalized cosmopolitanism through their engagement with French revolutionary politics'.[61] Yet Craciun also suggests that these cosmopolitan ideas were resisted by their counterrevolutionary counterparts, since they 'opened up a particularly dangerous new social role for English women'.[62] The dilemma of women who were caught up in an oppressive system is examined in Austen chapter, in which I argue that heroines are given the illusion of autonomy under benevolent patriarchy.

The above discussion sets out the context in which women were able to enter the intellectual and public sphere, yet were still restrained by traditional patriarchal values. The next section calls attention to how travel provides women with opportunities to experience some degree of autonomy and to negotiate a new subjectivity away from traditional social constraints.

Peripatetic Women

The notion of mobility is an important theme threaded throughout the work of my chosen authors.

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[57] Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p.2.

[58] Ibid., p.4.

[59] Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p.196.

[60] Ibid., p.122.

[61] Adriana Craciun, *British Women Writers and the French Revolution: Citizens of the World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.1.

[62] Ibid., pp.9-10.

My analysis of the works of Austen and Brontë (see Chapters Three and Four) draws on affect theories to argue that women's mobile experiences constitute inherent components of emotions and tacitly influence the construction of personal identity. The human body can become a heterotopia in which disparate and conflicting desires and interests coexist. Laura Mulvey calls attention to the discrepancy between the ego and the ideal ego, the gap which is widened by 'misrecognition', and upon which 'identification with others' is built.[63] The coexistence of conceptions and misconceptions suggests an interstitial space within the 'self', the gap between 'the reflected body of the self' and 'an ideal ego', or 'the alienated subject'.[64] It is within the interstitial space that identity is forged. In *Villette*, Lucy's affective experiences open readers to an aspect of her consciousness that transcends the habitual social self. The dynamic interplay between two divergent modalities of self throughout Lucy's narrative—the social self and the minimal self—demonstrates her inner space as a heterotopia juxtaposing and combining incompatible elements. My analysis aims to show how female characters' affective and haptic engagement with the surrounding environment contributes to the formation of subjectivity. These women writers have described the potential of mobility to bring a more fluid experience of subjectivity.

Scholars have concluded that women of the post-Napoleonic era were allowed more opportunities to travel and explore the world, yet a contradiction developed between their role in the home and their identity in the wider society. Kathryn Walchester argues that with the re-opening of the Continent after the Napoleonic War in 1815 and developments in travel infrastructure, the Continent became more affordable and accessible to more travelers other than aristocratic Grand Tourists, especially women.[65] Maureen McCue suggests that with the increasing popularity of domestic tourism in Britain and the post-Waterloo fever for Italy, art became accessible not exclusively to the privileged few—British Grand Tourists or Italian aristocrats—but also to a wider audience.[66] However, at this a historical juncture, women remained constrained in all aspects, relegated to their 'rightful' domestic space. Landscape viewing is gendered, as Mary Louise Pratt has contended, associating it with the masculine imperial power, and arguing that the eighteenth-

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[63] Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, ed. by Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (Oxford: OUP, 1999), pp.833-844 (p.836).

[64] Mulvey, p.836.

[65] Kathryn Walchester, '*Our Own Fair Italy*': *Nineteenth Century Women's Travel Writing and Italy 1800-1844* (Berne and Pieterlen: Peter Lang, 2007), p.12.

[66] Maureen McCue, *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793-1840* (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014), p.3.

century ‘systematizing of nature’ contributes to producing a Eurocentric ‘planetary consciousness’.[67] Jacqueline M. Labbe in her book *Romantic Visualities* also examines ‘the prospect view’ as ‘one of the defining characteristics of masculinity’.[68] Katherine Turner contends that travel writing with its ‘permeability to other kinds of writing’ allows women to engage in discussion of topics that are otherwise inaccessible to them in daily life such as the discourses of agriculture and imperialism.[69] Travelling exposes women writers to experiences beyond the domestic realm that add new dimensions to their character. For example, Shelley is a dedicated traveler, as her *Rambles* and *History of a Six Weeks’ Tour* (1817) attest. Her travelogue is unusual, in that she shows respect for local cultures and customs, and intellectual curiosity about the native people she encounters. She refuses to give a partial view of a country, criticizing Charles Dickens who forms judgements about Americans based on a ‘surface’ knowledge.[70] While my chosen primary texts are not non-fiction travelogues, Turner’s argument also holds for these novels in the form of travel writing where travelers are displaced from their homes and regular duties to meditate on issues such as the sublime, the revolutionary and the individual self. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth and the Gardiners’ leisurely walk through Pemberley Park generates a heterotopia where their multi-sensory experience with the immediate environment provides an alternative to the anthropocentric way of landscape surveying.

Walking is studied as a major form of spatial practice that creates heterotopias that allow women a temporary freedom from their fixed social roles. In *Villette*, Lucy’s urban walking in London generates a change in her self-perception in relation to the world—from a passive recipient of what the environment supplies to an active agent in her personal life. These representations of walking are not new, but steeped in the romantic tradition. Walking for Wordsworth, according to Rebecca Solnit, was ‘a mode not of traveling, but of being’.[71] Solnit explains that ‘Walking, ideally, is a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three

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[67] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.15.

[68] Jacqueline M. Labbe, *Romantic Visualities: Landscape, Gender and Romanticism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998), pp.ix-x.

[69] Katherine Turner, ‘Women’s Travel Writing: 1750-1830’, in *The History of British Women’s Writing, 1750-1830*, ed. by Jacqueline M. Labbe (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.47-60 (p.52).

[70] Mary Shelly, *The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Vol.III, ‘What Years I have Spent!’,* ed. by Betty T. Bennett (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), p.42.

[71] Rebecca Solnit, *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (London: Verso, 2002), p.104.

characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly making a chord'.[72] Solnit illuminates how walking can occasion an exploration of the walker's mental landscape. Thus for the attentive walker, paths play an important role not only in navigating physical terrains but also in exploring imagined domains, as Tim Ingold argues, 'Life is lived […] along paths, not just in places […] that people grow into knowledge of the world around them, and describe this world in the stories they tell'.[73] Walking in this thesis refers to a multi-sensory and immersive experience that challenges the notion of vision as the dominant mode of perception, and reconstructs the individual's relationship to the environment.

A growing body of scholarly work has restored women writers to the center of early nineteenth century studies. Kathryn Gleadle suggests that scholarship of the 1980s and 1990s in the field of British women's history has shifted attention to what she calls the 'new revisionism', a tendency to delve into 'the possibilities for female agency and the complex construction of nineteenth-century femininities, within broader narratives of historical explanation and gendered discourses'.[74] More recently, Jacqueline M. Labbe also suggests that scholarly attention shifts from what Gilbert and Gubar identifies as the social oppression faced by women writers, the absolute separation and gender difference in writing, to their writing styles affected by gender identity and understandings of their identity formation.[75] Recent critical attention is now turning to questions of gender and space. The collection of essays edited by Mona Narain and Karen Gevirtz titled *Gender and Space in British Literature, 1660-1820* interrogates how space and place construct and are constructed by gender in eighteenth-century British literature. This collection mainly examines stories set in an exilic context of the eighteenth century when Britain's geographical borders changed due to wars and imperial expansion.[76] This book is divided into three sections—'Inside', 'Outside' and 'Borderlands'—based on the locations of stories relative to Britain as a home base. Specific examples in this book demonstrate how women's spatial experiences such as exile, displacement and mobility help them reconfigure their individual and national identity. The women in these essays are portrayed as the marginalized Other who occupy the interstitial spaces within different

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[72] Ibid., p.5.

[73] Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (London: Routledge, 2007), p.2.

[74] Kathryn Gleadle, *British Women in The Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), pp.3-4.

[75] Jacqueline M. Labbe, *The History of British Women's Writing, 1750-1830* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p.10.

[76] *Gender and Space in British Literature, 1660-1820*, ed. by Mona Narain and Karen Gevirtz (London: Routledge, 2016), p.8.

social contexts, and the marginal is somewhat celebrated as a space of freedom for them to create or perform their identity. Gillian Rose proposes a notion of 'paradoxical space', where women can possibly empower and liberate themselves from the everyday oppression and occupy multiple positions in space rather than the unitary objectified Other.[77] Such paradoxical space lies beyond the binary divide between centers and margins, perpetuating the idea that 'the Other is part of the territory of the Same'.[78] Another feminist writer, Doreen Massey, argues that spatial constraints on women are correlated with limitations of their identity, which together have been used as 'a crucial means of subordination'.[79] Mobility in certain cultural contexts for women means an emancipatory force that threatens the established patriarchal order.[80] These writers have theorized the spatiality of women's resistance from the position of alterity, and demonstrated how mobility helps illuminate women's multiple identities. I suggest that these and other spaces of mobility function as heterotopias, where social norms are suspended, and women are allowed to assume a greater degree of agency, in response to the invasion of their personal spaces and restrictions on identities. While my analysis focuses primarily on women, this argument also holds for the subaltern Other more broadly conceived, such as the Creature in *Frankenstein*. During the scene in which Frankenstein chases after his Creature, I argue that mobility not only enables them to maintain physical proximity, but also satisfies their homoerotic desires in a marginal space far away from the judgmental eyes of mainstream society.

The above discussion and analysis of mobility illuminate the female body as an archive of experience, where selfhood is constituted through ongoing interactions with the male-dominated environment. The next section proceeds to discuss how the female body plays an important role in articulating a language that helps construct subalternity. Drawing on post-colonial theories which focus primarily on the subaltern consciousness that is being re-presented, my analysis of Owenson's novels engages with the multiple ways in which narrative voice structures subalternity.

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[77] Gillian Rose, *Feminism and Geography: The Limits of Geographical Knowledge* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), pp.149-150.

[78] Ibid., p.149.

[79] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge: Polity, 1994), p.179.

[80] Ibid., p.11.

Silence and the Body

This section discusses how the notion of the female body as a locus of selfhood can engage in the debate on postcolonial scholarship about how Western intellectuals can step outside themselves to restore subaltern agency. Scholars in postcolonial studies such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak have attempted to resuscitate the subaltern and recover their voice. Yet at the end of her influential essay 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', Spivak announces the impossibility of the subaltern as speaking subject, reiterating that 'the subaltern cannot speak'.[81] Spivak's central argument is the primacy of narrative as means of subsuming subaltern agency, arguing that the narrative of subalternity is always superseded by the discursive power of 'patriarchy', 'imperialism' and nationalism.[82] Her argument is developed further in her analysis on the limitations of the Nicaraguan elections from the perspective of the subaltern in 'Can the Subaltern Vote', which extends '[her] reading of subaltern speech into a collective arena.'[83] When another critic, Lata Mani, tries to reverse the silence of the sati woman by 'foreground[ing] that which is marginalized: the agency of the widow and materiality of her suffering'.[84] Spivak takes issue directly with her approach. In Spivak's view, this approach inevitably bears the traces of the philosophical tradition that has propped up Western imperialism, and she argues that '"facts" alone may account for women's oppression, but they will never allow us to approach gendering, a net where we ourselves are enmeshed, as we decide what (the) facts are'.[85] Spivak in this way calls attention to the immanent problem in post-colonial studies by western critics: they are redrawing the very divisions they seek to dismantle through reinforcement of the centre/periphery dichotomy and assignment of singular identity markers on heterogenous populations. This inherent contradiction is also seen in Said's *Orientalism*. His idea contributes to rethinking the Western conception of the East, yet apart from being criticized for its conceptual, factual and methodological problems, it also reinforces the East-West dichotomy which

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[81] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp.66-111 (p.104).

[82] Ibid., p.102.

[83] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*: *Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1999), p.309. More on the limitations of political speech and representation, see Leerom Medovoi, Shankar Raman, and Benjamin Robinson, 'Can the Subaltern Vote?', *Socialist Review*, 20.3 (1990), 133-149.

[84] Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p.9.

[85] Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, p.286.

he seeks to break down.[86] This thesis sets out to intervene in the debate I have just outlined.

My analysis of Owenson's work (Chapter One) argues that the concept of heterotopia can be useful in exploring postcolonial responses to spaces of cultural encounters that tackle questions of personal and culture identity. My discussion of the female body in *The Missionary* revisits this aspect of Spivak's argument to offer an alternative vision of subaltern agency through a close study of narrative voice, especially the way in which narrative voice structures subalternity. Near the end of *The Missionary*, the Indian prophetess Luxima's act of self-immolation at the execution site evokes the practice of sati. There is a change in narrative voice, when the third-person omniscient narrator suspends the primary storytelling to recount Luxima's free indirect speech which briefly describes her observation of the whole process. I suggest that Luxima's subjectivity, her willingness and desire to jump into the fire for the sake of love, can only be represented in free indirect discourse, independent of elite descriptions. As Hélène Cixous argues, writing will 'return [woman] to the body which has been more than confiscated from her' and will also enable her 'entry into history, which has always been based on her suppression'.[87] While the subaltern is being muted by the representational framework with which the elite protagonist approaches the subaltern, Luxima's body acts as a site of language that renders her entry into history. Her body is also examined as a locus of selfhood, since she asserts her agency not through words, but through the chain of bodily movements arising from it. In this respect, her body is akin to a heterotopic space, in that it shows a dialectical interplay between active and passive elements in the self. Luxima, as we gather from the narrative, successfully gains sympathy and support from both Christian and Hindu religious groups, and arouses the nationalist fervor of the masses against Spanish rule. This suggests that she is able to recognize the intertwining of the patriarchal and state power, and her subordinate position in the political order. This heterotopic reading of Owenson's novel aims to provide an alternative view of the subaltern: Luxima represents a subaltern subject who can think outside the conventional box of Western domination and Oriental subordination.

The case of Luxima shows that representations of the subaltern are dependent upon the narrative voice that re-presents them. The subaltern identity is thus a discursively constructed entity

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[86] *Orientalism* has been criticized for its overgeneralization and essentialism. For example, Ashok K. Mohapatra criticizes Said for not discerning the internal differences and conflicts between 'the modernist and anti-modernist/romantic ideological strands of colonialism'. See Ashok K. Mohapatra, 'Edward Said and William Jones: Negotiating Between Orientalism and Asiaticism', *Journal X*, 8.2 (2003), 151-163 (p.10). Ibn Warraq accuses Said of misinterpreting the work of many scholars and Western civilization as a whole. See Ibn Warraq, *Defending the West: a Critique of Edward Said's Orientalism* (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2007).

[87] Hélène Cixous, 'The Laugh of the Medusa', trans. by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, *Signs*, 1.4 (1976), 875-93 (p.880).

produced in the interactional context of its articulation. Evidence of subaltern subjectivity can only be found in the interstices of narrative voices, in the gaps of the elite narration of subalternity. In *The Wild Irish Girl*, the elite protagonist Horatio's silence when faced with a group of Irish girls performing a traditional ritual suggests his inability to comprehend subaltern agency as it lies beyond his epistemic framework. The silence frustrates Horatio because he cannot grasp their language and represent their ritual performance; hence, Horatio's absence of speech lays a foundation for rendering the Irish girls visible to the reader. In other words, the gaps and silences in the narrative from Horatio's perspective show his inability to represent adequately the subaltern. The elite protagonist's discovery of the colonial margin generates a perspective on the imperial center: Horatio's 'decided prejudice' against Ireland as 'semi-barbarous, semi-civilized' reflects a tendency to homogenize diversity into a unified imperial vision.[88] His encounter with the Irish Other recalls Jacques Derrida's argument on the malleable boundaries between humans, animals and inanimate things.[89] For Derrida, naming all the other non-human creatures as 'animals' is incorrectly simplified, for it does not represent the multiplicity of difference between two species. Derrida's rejection of the universal category 'animals' echoes Foucault's idea of textual heterotopias that undermine the syntax holding things together.

Moving from the discussion of Owenson's novel which restores agency to the subaltern in a specific temporal-spatial context rather than within a Western framework, I now refer to my thesis more broadly. Felicity A. Nussbaum takes torrid zones as a central metaphor to reflect upon racial and moral differences among British women and the 'other' women of the empire. Nussbaum suggests that while non-European women are associated with exotic savages, English women at home are seen as 'the ideals of reciprocal affection, refined sexuality, and private domesticity'.[90] Nussbaum's argument foregrounds the importance of elucidating the differences of class, race and ethnicity among women who are oppressed under general patterns of oppression in patriarchal societies. Taking up this objective, my thesis aims to present a complicated picture of women's lives and perceptions by looking at the granular detail and specific contexts of their experiences. *Villette* calls attention to the wide differences between women characters belonging to different social classes. While the orphaned protagonist Lucy works 'for the roof of shelter', Paulina Home and her

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[88] Sydney Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806; repr. Oxford: OUP, 2008), p.10.

[89] Jacques Derrida and David Wills, 'The Animal That Therefore I Am', trans. by David Wills, *Critical Inquiry*, 28.2 (2002), 369-418 (p.381).

[90] Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narrative* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p.13.

wealthy father Monsieur de Bassompierre assume that Lucy's being a teacher is out of 'pure philanthropy'.[91] Lucy describes her solitary and precarious life as being like 'the lifeboat' which is only put to sea 'in rough weather', affronting 'danger and death'.[92] In contrast, her godmother's financially secure and stable life is compared to 'the stately ship cruising safe on smooth seas'.[93] Lucy conceals her affections towards Dr John, for she is well aware of the gap between his socioeconomic status and her own. As Brontë herself confesses, 'Lucy must not marry Dr. John; he is far too youthful, handsome, bright-spirited, and sweet-tempered…If Lucy marries anybody, it must be the Professor—a man in whom there is much to forgive, much to "put up with"'.[94] Yet Ginevra Fanshawe, the vain, privileged and attractive lady, as Lucy observes, flirts with Dr. John and 'trifles with his heart', while simultaneously meeting Alfred de Hamal secretly on Madame Beck's yard.[95] Thus my study rejects the idea that there is a unified category of women or any subaltern group, and aims to emphasize the heterogeneity and particularity of their life experiences. The attention paid to the specificities of historical, social, cultural and other specific conditions resonates with Foucault's idea of textual heterotopias in his discussion of Borges. This approach might also provide a possible solution to the problem within postcolonial theory that I briefly discussed above—to seek and locate subaltern resistance and agency in their concrete, lived experiences.

Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of four chapters and a conclusion, with discussions of each author's works appearing in a chronological order. It focuses on a subset of early-nineteenth century women's writings, organized around novels in which space and place substantially contribute to the development of plots and engage with identity reconfiguration. The first chapter examines cross-cultural encounters and identity construction through the lens of heterotopias in Owenson's two novels *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) and *The Missionary* (1811). This chapter explores the process in which the solitary English traveler and the European missionary struggle to cope with new and

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[91] Charlotte Brontë, *Villette* (1853; repr. London: The Folio Society, 1967), p.258.

[92] Ibid., p.164.

[93] Ibid., p.164.

[94] Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (London: Dent, 1971), p.365.

[95] Brontë, *Villette*, p.136.

ever-changing haptic information, and challenge what they have considered the norm before. Their encounters with unfamiliar and inexplicable Irish and Indian landscapes offer a critique of visual primacy, since they can hardly have a clear perception of the surroundings through their eyes. These contact zones become heterotopias, spaces of otherness where their perceptions of the quasi-otherworldly landscapes destabilize the very structures of power and fixity upon which colonial authority is premised. The story of *The Wild Irish Girl*, arranged in a pre-Union context and ended by an international marriage, reveals Owenson's contemplation on the Acts of Union 1800 which brought about the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The castle of Inismore including the Prince's hall and Glorvina's boudoir are examined as heterotopias where Horatio's perceptions of the Irish Other contradict and challenge his colonial assumptions, and thus undermine the authority of the English Self. The annotations of the text are also examined as a heterotopia, where authorial comments, surviving records and historical knowledge whose claims of the 'Eastern' origins of Irish culture, as I have discussed above, are as much a product of this period as the Anglocentric view of Ireland as a backward country. In *The Missionary*, I examine the caravan community as a heterotopia, where a social bond of empathy is formed transcending cultural and geographical boundaries. Another heterotopic location is the site of execution, where the female character Luxima's self-immolation evokes the practice of sati, and emphasizes her subjectivity and agency. Alongside Foucault, I reference other critical voices such as Said's conception of Orientalism and Bhabha's post-colonial concept of 'hybridity' to explore heterotopic forms and expressions along with their political implications in the novels.

In Chapter Two, I examine the link between spatial representation and identity construction in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and *The Last Man* (1826). This chapter is divided into three parts: the first investigates the frame narrative in *The Last Man* to reveal a non-linear conception of historical consciousness; the second part looks at the De Lacey cottage and the hot-air balloon as a heterotopia of illusion and a heterotopia of compensation respectively that reflect upon the dominant Enlightenment discourses on progress and universal compassion; the last part examines the sublime landscapes including the Arctic, the tomb of Raymond and the ice cavern as heterotopias, where the oppressed Other can enjoy greater agency and subjectivity, posing a challenge to the anthropocentric view of nature. My analysis draws on critical ideas including Siobhan Carroll's concept of 'atopias' and Julia Kristeva's term 'the abject' to explore heterotopic forms and expressions along with their political implications.

While the previous two chapters pay attention to how the encounters with the Other (including

the feminine, the non-human, the Orientalized) complicate any simple normative/deviant dichotomy, the next two chapters focus on women's lived experiences of space and identity. In Chapter Three, I discuss the relationship between heterotopias and the politics of gender and class in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Mansfield Park* (1814). By investigating the tension between heterotopias of compensation and illusion in these two novels, I argue that an individual's identity is a fluid construct, shaped through a process of interactions taking place in ideologically loaded spaces. The first section examines Mr. Bennet's library as a heterotopia of compensation, which signifies and reinforces his sense of superiority and emotional detachment from family concerns. The second section investigates the picturesque park at Pemberley as a heterotopia of illusion, where its spatial arrangement advocates an inclusive social order that challenges the traditional social hierarchy. Yet at the same time, Pemberley House acts as a heterotopia of compensation that displays Darcy's socio-economic power and wealth. The last section investigates Fanny Price's East Room as a heterotopia of illusion, where she can gain a sense of agency yet cannot transcend gender boundaries. The spatial dynamics that underlie the texts reveal the predicament of women living in the illusion of benevolent patriarchy.

Heterotopias reside not only in external, physical spaces, but also in the spatialized inner world. In Chapter Four, I focus on the important yet paradoxical function of the psychic space in the first-person narrative in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette* (1853). This chapter examines the inner space of the first-person narrator Lucy Snowe as a heterotopia capable of juxtaposing incompatible forms of selfhood. Her psychic disintegration reflects her being constantly haunted by the horrors of ubiquitous surveillance. Drawing on the scholarship of the role of affective practice in identity construction, I identify affective expressions as manifestations of the narrator's ambiguous and mutable identity, thus rejecting the notion of a single, homogeneous, and coherent self in Brontë's novel. The first part explores how Lucy's way of dealing with letters in the novel develops the dual sense of selfhood. The second part investigates how Lucy reclaims subjectivity through her embodied experience at the confessional box of the Catholic church. Then I analyze how the portrait of Cleopatra at the gallery exerts an uncanny effect on male viewers, potentially unsettling and disturbing their psychological stability. Cleopatra who is meant to be the object of male desire, now affirms her agency and subjectivity through her body. Thus the female body can be considered as a heterotopia which simultaneously serves a real corporeal space and a performed space of social identity. The last part considers the recurring images of death and expressions of the death drive as signs of Lucy's inability to maintain a single, unified self, while her mind is disturbed by Paul's

death at sea.

Throughout my thesis, Foucault's theory of heterotopia provides the theoretical framework to examine the spatial dimensions of identity formation and lived experiences, and to highlight the arrangement of space as a primary concern in the novels by Sydney Owenson, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Charlotte Brontë. Spaces are never neutral, but are embedded in and constitutive of socioeconomic, gender, racial and geopolitical power relations. Space plays an important role in helping the subordinate Other (e.g. women, the colonized) negotiate boundaries and borders in order to deconstruct and reconstruct their identities. Such a process of negotiation calls into question the normative gender roles and racialized practices that operate in society. Heterotopias as spaces that are physically real but simultaneously unreal allow actions that lie beyond the realm of social norms, yet at the same time, these actions cannot transcend the hierarchical structure. This thesis aims to shed light on these selected female writers' sensitivity to the existing power dynamics inherent in the process of space production and reproduction.

Chapter One—Postcolonial Heterotopia in Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* and *The Missionary*

This chapter focuses on heterotopias in relation to cultural contact and identity construction in Owenson's two novels *The Wild Irish Girl* (1806) and *The Missionary* (1811). In the epistolary novel *The Wild Irish Girl*, the protagonist Horatio, second son of the Earl of M—, describes how his father sends him to Ireland to rectify his extravagant lifestyle and decadent disposition. The date on the letters addressed to a member of Parliament in the year '17—' makes it as a pre-Union text. During that period, the minority Protestant community had been in a privileged position in Ireland since the conquest of Gaelic Ireland in the sixteenth century.[96] Identifying himself as 'Don Quixote', Horatio presents himself within a Western frame of cultural reference.[97] *The Missionary* is approximately set around the final years of Spain's rule over Portugal, when tracts of India and Portugal were both Spanish territories. According to Julia Wright, the protagonist Hilarion represents 'an opponent of Spanish rule in Portugal' and 'a close relative of the rightful rulers of Portugal and the Portuguese colony of Goa'.[98] His missionary work is considered as part of the European imperial project, seeking to recast India's indigenous communities into imperial models of civilization and modernity.[99]

Both novels revolve around the protagonists' cross-cultural encounters. As Kristeva argues, encounter with the Other threatens the Self as a coherent identity, and indicates the existence of 'the foreigner' within the Self, something outside our frame of consciousness.[100] The notion of encounter involves a decentering of the Self and an opening up to plural possibilities in the presence of the Other. Sara Mills argues that 'the lived experience of colonialism' involves 'the infiltration of the values of each nation by the other', which interrogates imperial knowledge that emphasizes 'the notion of difference and distance'.[101] Both Kristeva and Mills show that conceptions of Self and

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96 For a brief summary of historical relations between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, see Senia Paseta, *Modern Ireland: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2003).

97 Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.36.

98 Sydney Owenson, *The Missionary: An Indian Tale* (1811; repr. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002), pp.72-73.

99 Julia Wright, 'Introduction', in *The Missionary: An Indian Tale,* ed. by Julia M. Wright (1811; repr. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002), pp.9-57 (p.24).

100 Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), p.1.

101 Sara Mills, *Gender and Colonial Space* (Manchester: MUP, 2005), p.15.

Others are not static but are being constantly shaped through dynamic social interactions. Following their arguments, I set out to examine the spatial dynamics of power, identity, and knowledge within 'contact zones' which are defined by Mary Louise Pratt as 'social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination'.[102] I deploy a particular concept of the 'Other' derived from Edward Said's theory of Orientalism which describes a Eurocentric way of knowledge production based on an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident'.[103] While a surface reading of these texts might suggest that binary power relations of dominance and subjugation exist between the English Self and the Irish Other, the European Self and the Indian Other, contact zones are inherently (as Pratt suggests) complex and contested.[104] This chapter aims to demonstrate that these contact zones can become heterotopias where the hierarchical relationship of the Self and the Other are threatened to be subverted.

I examine how imperial grand narratives are constantly challenged by local realties during the protagonists' encounters with the Oriental Other. The first section shows how the protagonists' perceptions of Irish and Indian landscapes such as Dublin (*The Wild Irish Girl*, Letter I) and Indian primeval mountains (*The Missionary*, Chapter II) are entrenched in a dominant Western framework. The second section investigates cross-cultural contact zones as heterotopias, where the colonized Other is perceived to be more varied than *a priori* assumption. Specifically, in *The Wild Irish Girl*, I examine the barn (Letter II) as a heterotopia, where the Irish oral tradition associated with a Scythian myth challenges the colonial view of Ireland as a land of backwardness and degradation. Analyzing the spaces of the Prince's hall (Letter XII) and Glorvina's boudoir (Letter XX), I also regard the castle of Inismore as a heterotopia where its interior arrangement presents an anti-imperial Irish identity that both clings to a glorious past and embraces an open and cosmopolitan view of the world. In *The Missionary*, I examine Luxima's retreat (Chapter VII) as a heterotopia, where her liminal identity simultaneously evokes and subverts the homogeneous European discourse on the Oriental Other. I also consider the caravan community (Chapter XV) and the execution site (Chapter XVII) as heterotopias, where people from different backgrounds come

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[102] Pratt, p.4.

[103] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; repr. London: Penguin, 2003), p.2.

[104] I use the term 'English' for something specific to England; British for something that applies to the British Isles. While England is notionally just one of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom, it is historically politically and culturally dominant. The interests and aims of England are frequently conflated by English commentators and agents with those of Britain. In the 18C and 19C, 'English' was at times used metonymically to stand for 'British'.

together to build inclusive communities that are transcending traditional ethnic and religious boundaries. The third section explores how conflicting pictures of reality (e.g. Horatio's perception of the Irish Prince's family) render his psychic space into a heterotopia capable of juxtaposing two incompatible selves. The last section looks at the extensive textual annotations to *The Wild Irish Girl* (e.g. the annotations concerning the supposed Eastern origins of Irish culture) as heterotopias, where references to historical studies and comments reproduce and contest the mainstream imperial visions.

1.1 The Colonial Self

This section demonstrates how the protagonists in both novels, Horatio and Hilarion, perceive and describe Irish and Indian urban and natural landscapes from the privileged perspective of the colonizer. Their representations are saturated with their racial, religious and cultural stereotypes about peripheral countries, revealing a Eurocentric conceptual framework. As I have discussed about the tradition of Irish Orientalism in the introduction, here 'Europe' does not include Ireland. In *The Wild Irish Girl*, Horatio's perceptions of Irish urban and natural landscapes are shaped by his prejudices towards Ireland as a 'semi-barbarous, semi-civilized' country.[105] The only thing Horatio requests before his journey is 'a FAHRENHEIT', a meteoric instrument that articulates his desires to know and measure Ireland.[106] He evaluates Dublin by a comparison with London. For example, while he finds the 'civilization of manner' of Irish boatmen similar to that of Thames boatmen, he insists on their inferiority by pointing out their 'ferocity of appearance' as 'sea monsters', and how 'their manner proportionately uncivilized' will be betrayed on a further intercourse.[107] In terms of the urban design, he implies Dublin's lack of 'strength and magnificence' by comparing it to 'a small temple of the Ionic order', as opposed to 'a vast palace' with 'Corinthian pillars' as the epitome of London.[108] In terms of the arrangement of buildings, he notices the parallel between 'the compact uniformity' of Dublin and 'the wonderous extent' of London. Yet he also emphasizes Dublin as a city of undemocratic and nonmodern divisions, calling attention to the residential segregation between 'the plebeian hut' and 'the patrician edifice', and the streets haunted by 'a

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[105] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.10.

[106] Ibid., p.11.

[107] Ibid., pp.14-15.

[108] Ibid., p.15.

certain class of wretches' who are 'emblematic of vice, poverty, idleness, and filth'.[109] Thus Horatio's perception of Dublin as 'the miniature copy' of London, 'though minutely imitative in show and glare', reflects an Anglocentric knowledge paradigm.[110] His sense of superiority is further seen in his representations of Irish natural landscape as a wild and barren place with 'the simple but sublime operations of nature', in contrast to 'the embellished labours of art' in the English landscape'.[111] Horatio's Eurocentric mode of knowledge production is evident in his representation of natural landscapes with references to the Western notion of the sublime. His use of the term 'delightful horror' to describe his mixed feelings when standing alone at the foot of a mountain 'like the presiding genius of desolation', recalls the Burkean sublime as one of simultaneous terror and delight, 'which is the most genuine effect, and truest test of the sublime'.[112]

Despite their different settings, Hilarion in *The Missionary* resembles Horatio as a colonial figure, whose representation of Indian wilderness as 'a nest of warlike states' aims to justify his missionary work as an effort to bring civilization.[113] The Arochosian mountains and the shores produce passions in Hilarion to align himself with Timur and Mahomet, yet his sight of the majestic and all-pervading sun associated with God creates an opposite effect to make him feel 'self-accused, humbled, awed'.[114] The duality of fear and wonder, terror and admiration experienced by Hilarion, reproduces Burke's conception of the sublime as capable of producing mixed sentiments. His egocentric ambition to control and change nature is seen in his attempts to transform the naturally formed cave, 'the grotto of congelations', into a sacred Christian shelter distinguished from the surrounding regions of Hindoostan (Hindustan). By building an altar with the golden crucifix and performing morning rituals in the grotto, Hilarion tends to arouse in the neighbouring Indians reverence and admiration.[115] Thus this cave is not considered as aesthetically profound, but religiously powerful to evoke an emotional response, as a goala (a member of a Hindu caste) who

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[109] Ibid., pp.15-16.

[110] Ibid., pp.15-16.

[111] Ibid., p.18.

[112] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. by James T. Boulton (1757; repr. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p.129.

[113] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.80.

[114] Ibid., p.81.

[115] Ibid., p.107.

happens to catch sight of his performed acts gives him ‘a look of homage’.[116] At the same time, he is nurtured by nature, relying on the support of goalas and Indian shepherds to gain necessary food such as ‘the luscious milk of the cocoa-nut’, ‘the fruit of the bread-tree’, and ‘the nutritious grains of the wild rice plant’.[117] But he does not show any signs of gratitude, and takes everything for granted.

Both Horatio and Hilarion, in the early stages of their journeys to peripheral countries, adopt privileged epistemic positions of the colonial Self to observe and describe Irish and Indian landscapes. The English explorer Horatio imbued with an ‘imperial’ mentality, is to explore and produce knowledge of Ireland. The Christian missionary Hilarion serves as an ideological agent of imperial expansion, imposing Western cultural hegemony on the non-Christian communities. Their aesthetic appreciation and judgement have been influenced by Eurocentric discourses as well as an anthropocentric view that humans dominate over and rule nature. Their superior positions in both texts will be complicated and undermined by their encounters with certain physical spaces which reproduce and challenge their stereotypes of the Oriental Other, as discussed in the next section.

1.2 Encounters with the Other

This section investigates Horatio’s and Hilarion’s encounters with the ‘uncivilized’ Others in Owenson’s two novels, and how these encounters expose them to the ambivalence inherent in colonial discourse. Bhabha argues that colonial discourse, on one hand, depends on ‘the concept of “fixity” in the ideological construction of otherness’.[118] On the other hand, colonizers’ attempts to bring the colonized Other closer to Western ideals of humanity inevitably shatter the discourses of colonialism, as Bhabha explains how ‘colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at once “other” and yet entirely knowable and visible’.[119] In these two novels, the spaces of cross-cultural encounters function as heterotopias, where Horatio’s and Hilarion’s perceptions of indigenous Irish and Indian communities and cultures evoke and deviate from the Western purview

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[116] Ibid., p.107.

[117] Ibid., p.107.

[118] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p.66.

[119] Ibid., pp.70-71.

of seeing, imagining, and knowing the world.[120]

In *The Wild Irish Girl*, the barn becomes a heterotopia where Horatio as a colonizer figure himself becomes othered through his encounter with a chorus of Irish girls who display a rich cultural and linguistic heritage that subverts his readily assumed superiority. The barn is where Horatio encounters a group of Irish girls performing a traditional called 'Ouris' whose origin, according to Owenson's citation of General Vallancey, can be traced back to 'the Scythian religion'.[121] Horatio's interaction with these girls challenges his monolithic assumption that 'someone among the number must understand English', and brings about a change in his status from a political subject to an object of compassion for his 'ignorance of their language'.[122] David Lloyd argues that what distinguishes Irish culture is the preservation and perpetuation of its oral and performative practices that go beyond English comprehension literally and figuratively.[123] Lloyd points out that the oral associated with myth and folklore, signifies pre-modern forms of consciousness that resist literacy-induced historical consciousness of progress and development.[124] Here this cultural and linguistic contact zone constructed by Irish oral performance functions as a heterotopia, where the preserved Irish oral and ritual tradition overcomes entrenched negative stereotypes about 'primitive' Ireland, since their association with a Scythian myth of origin which is beyond Horatio's comprehension undermines his sense of ethnic and cultural superiority.

Horatio's epistemic superiority and control is further undermined when he enters the castle of Inismore, a place which is thought to be geographically and culturally excluded from the modern world. It is akin to a heterotopia, where alternative spatial reordering is performed to resist the enlarging project of modernity. Owenson evokes a picture of Gaelic Ireland, long before the English incursion, settlement and conquest, in which the political system comprises a number of independent petty kingdoms or clans under the lead of selected kings or tribal chiefs.[125] This pre-modern picture of the political institution makes it a representative of a heterotopia, as an alternative model of social structure to English monarchical, state-governed society. The two rooms

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[120] As I have discussed in the Introduction about Irish Orientalism, here both 'West' and 'Europe' exclude Ireland.

[121] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl,* p.21.

[122] Ibid., p.21.

[123] David Lloyd, *Irish Culture and Colonial Modernity, 1800-2000: The Transformation of Oral Space* (Cambridge: CUP, 1955), p.55.

[124] Ibid., p.5.

[125] John O'Beirne Ranelagh, *A Short History of Ireland*, 3rd edn (Cambridge: CUP, 2012), p.11.

with the castle—the hall now serving as 'an armory, a museum, a cabinet of national antiquities, and national curiosities', and Glorvina's boudoir with differing fabrics and furnishings—reflect a difference between the Prince and Glorvina in their conceptions of Irish identity.[126] In associating the hall with a pre-Christian space 'Vengolf', or 'Velk-halla' haunted by 'the very spirit of Woden', Horatio recalls Viking culture.[127] The hybrid images of pillars built in the Gothic style and the arched roof marking 'the spirit of that day in which it was erected', demonstrate the merging of one space-time into another and signal a breakdown of temporal flows.[128] The hall associated with different temporalities recalls Foucault's fourth principle of heterotopias that open up to 'heterochronisms', which enact 'a sort of absolute break with their traditional time'.[129] The heterotopic nature of the hall lies not only in this liminal sense of time in which fragmented slices of time are simultaneously experienced, but also in its potential to create the illusion of vast open views.

The hall forms a nationalist space, overlooking its neighbouring bog and affording noble views of the ocean which environ it. The oceanic image hints at a heterotopia of illusion, a potential space of imaginative freedom that exposes the Prince's earthbound location and a disenfranchised existence. According to Yi-Fu Tuan, 'enclosed and humanized space is place'.[130] Tuan illustrates that both space and place serve a basic human need, since 'human lives are a dialectical movement between shelter and venture, attachment and freedom'.[131] The hall satisfies human needs for both 'the solitude of a sheltered place' and 'the vastness of space', revealing the princely family's wish to restore the castle to its former glory, and gain new opportunities for development.[132] Katie Trumpener argues that for nationalists, as both oral and written traditions had been suppressed as a result of English occupation, preservation of the bog as one national landscape was crucial to maintain Irish cultural tradition and develop an emotional connection to the past.[133] Thus the

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[126] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.102.

[127] Ibid., p.101.

[128] Ibid., p.102.

[129] Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.26.

[130] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p.54.

[131] Ibid., p.54

[132] Ibid., p.54.

[133] Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p.52.

neighbouring bog serves as a visual counterpoint in the Irish landscape, subject to what Trumpener calls 'the project of Enlightenment land reform' prevalent in Owenson's time such as drainage and reclamation of bogs.[134] In her analysis of the topographical poem 'Killarney' by John Leslie, Julia Wright argues that this poem emphasizes the geographical significance of Ireland on a global scale —'placing it at the center of British power while emptying it of Irish sovereignty and offering it up as a key geographical resource for British Atlantic trade'.[135] Wright's arguments illuminate the topographical significance of the Irish landscape, even at this point, historically within its political and colonial relationship to England. The hall on the periphery signifies the social marginalization of this Irish noble family, yet the everlasting ocean scenery associated with a sense of openness, mobility and freedom takes on a nationalist and anti-imperialist character.

The hall acts as a heterotopia of illusion which satisfies the Prince's psychological needs to indulge himself in past glory and forget about cruel reality. In addition to the visual exposure to selected natural environments (the bog and the sea), the Prince evades the sight of 'the domains of his ancestors' and those 'beyond the confines of this little peninsula', by blocking off the other side of the windows.[136] While the visual avoidance of ancestral lands suggests the suppression of lamentable reality, the displayed antiquities evoke a distant, pre-Christian history of knighthood in Ireland. For example, the collar plated with gold, as the Prince explains, belongs to 'an order of knighthood hereditary in his family' more ancient than any in England.[137] And the golden hilted sword found in the Bogs of Cullen resembles 'those found upon the plains of Canae' in terms of construction and form, attesting to their 'Milesian origin'.[138] Thus this comfort zone has heightened the Prince's awareness of self and his position as an inheritor of rich Irish historical and cultural traditions, though not everything is real.

While the Prince's hall is filled with objects displaying the former prowess of family, the other rooms within the castle take on a different form which points towards an epistemological uncertainty, resistant to simple or straightforward understandings. Glorvina's boudoir, for instance,

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[134] Ibid., p.42.

[135] Julia Wright, *Representing the National Landscape in Irish Romanticism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014), p.8.

[136] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.102.

[137] Ibid., p.103.

[138] Ibid., p.106.

strikes Horatio by 'the incongruity of its appearance'.[139] Her boudoir serves as a heterotopia where objects from vastly different spatio-temporal contexts are brought together such as a new beautiful 'Turkey carpet', a few 'old chairs', a ponderous 'Gothic table', a 'silver escritoire' and 'antique vases'.[140] Heterogenous space-times coalesce into an ordering of the past that highlights irregularity, discontinuity and inconsistency. A vast range of reading materials assembled from works by 'French, English, and Italian poets', newly published books and 'London newspapers', reveal her intellectual and cosmopolitan subjectivity.[141] Thus disparate objects converge to make Glorvina's boudoir an indefinable space transcending the limits of time and culture that challenges Horatio's hegemonic understanding of the Oriental Other. The hall as 'a bonne bouche' not only for 'antiquarian taste', but also for 'Ossianic palate' is a space infused with nostalgia and imagination, disrupting the smooth flow of time.[142] In Horatio's eye, this is where the Prince temporarily 'forgets the derangement of his circumstances', and regains a sense of pride as 'an Irishman', by indulging himself in an uncanny space with recovered 'domestic joys and social endearments'. [143] The Prince himself becomes the central generating source of nationalist forces, reordering and re-appropriating an amalgam of Irish images and symbols such as 'the famous wood of Shilelah', 'his harper', and 'his domestic altar', diametrically opposed to the cosmopolitan world order.[144] The assembling objects gathering around the central figure display a spatial pattern that emphasizes the strength of family ties, which runs counter to the collapse of a domestic circle of dependency. The Prince's daughter Glorvina standing 'by his side' as a decorative object, suggests her subordinate status in this domestic and political patriarchy. She is compared by the narrator to 'one of the beautiful Valkyries' of this hall of Woden, one of mystical maidens serving to please guests and her father by singing, chatting and playing the harp.[145] The spatial arrangement of Glorvina's boudoir indicates an alternative ordering that reflects her independence and agency. Representations of the Prince's hall and Glorvina's boudoir, despite their differences, both demonstrate the castle of Inismore as a

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[139] Ibid., p.156.

[140] Ibid., pp.156-157.

[141] Ibid., p.157.

[142] Ibid., p.101.

[143] Ibid., p.103.

[144] Ibid., p.103.

[145] Ibid., p.103.

heterotopic site of imaginative possibility, existing between historical reality, memory and fantasy. My analysis now turns to Luxima's retreat in *The Missionary* as a heterotopia which in a similar vein blurs the boundaries of fiction and reality.

Spatial representation serves to highlight a metaphysical understanding of Luxima's retreat as a prelapsarian idyllic space subject to imperial forces, with recourse to biblical models and Protestant Christian presuppositions. The representation of the pavilion evokes the image of Eden, as the narrator compares the alluring aerial sounds proceeding from within to the voices of Angels which are 'Sweet as from blest voices uttering joy'.[146] Hilarion's 'penetrating, with his eye, into the interior of the room' recalls the oblique, voyeuristic gaze of Satan who is searching for another opportunity after being expelled from Paradise.[147] Balachandra Rajan argues that the encounter between Hilarion and Luxima evokes Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve in Milton's hierarchical universe which proclaims itself as 'the engendered prologue to the imperial theme'.[148] Hilarion's voyeuristic look into Luxima's room casts him in an unfavorable light as a satanic figure who has imperial ambition to subjugate her to the authority of God so that millions will follow. The garden of Eden metaphor is strengthened, as they encounter The Valley of Floating Islands on the way to Goa whose 'small but lovely islets' further conjures up the image of the postlapsarian Eden, a space of harmony and joy being washed out and lost at sea by the flood.[149] Luxima and Hilarion in the lovely and magnificent valley of Cashmire are explicitly compared to 'the first pair' departing from their native Eden.[150] While Hilarion represents the masculine archetype who rationally analyzes the sudden burst of bamboo fire, and exploits the inconsumable mountain flax to get out of the dangerous situation; Luxima resembles Eve, paying no attention to the 'latent evil lurked' but the presence of him.[151] The fall narrative is reinforced by various images. For instance, the sight of the sleeping Luxima in juxtaposition with an enormous serpent which symbolizes a blend of 'loveliness and death', 'peace and destruction', is easily associated with Eve's yielding to Satan's original

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[146] Ibid., p.121.

[147] Ibid., p.121.

[148] Balachandra Rajan, *Under Western Eyes: India from Milton to Macaulay* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), p.131.

[149] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.201.

[150] Ibid., p.206.

[151] Ibid., p.203.

temptation.[152] Luxima's perception of the ferocious storm with flashes and lightening as manifestations of 'the wrath of Heaven' towards her apostasy, further evokes God's anger and impending punishment for Adam and Eve's transgression.[153] To return to Rajan's argument, the romance between Hilarion and Luxima develops with distinctly violent and colonial undertones. Yet their power relations are not fixed but constantly negotiated through concrete forms of interaction. Accordingly, Luxima's retreat has the potential to break down the rigidly defined construction of Indian otherness.

Luxima's retreat surrounded by natural landscape with an aura of mystery and romance serves as a heterotopia, where hybrid images of Indian figures and landscapes simultaneously reproduce and deviate from European stereotypes of the Orient, and further challenges the colonial authority of the Christian missionary. When describing the scenery around the path Hilarion proceeds through, the narrator juxtaposes ordinary images 'trees', 'cascade' and 'labyrinth' with the exotic ones 'cusa-grass' and 'parasite plants'.[154] The retained names of Indian trees as bearers of sanctity intensify the exotic atmosphere, such as 'the bilva, the shrub of the goddess Durga' and 'the bacula, the lovely tree of the Indian Eden'.[155] Bhabha demonstrates how the mimicry of the English book (the Bible, namely) with a nuanced difference implies a subversion of the authority, 'founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention'.[156] For Bhabha, hybridity announces a failure of the singular universal framework within which the colonial governing authority attempts to translate the identity of the colonized (the Other).[157] Following Bhabha, I argue that the landscape representation in this passage containing a hybrid of the humdrum and the spectacular plants create an air of mystery surrounding the retreat, evoking while destabilizing the discourse familiar to European readers.

Apart from the physical environment, hybridity also occurs in the image of Luxima. Previous scholarship has explored how Owenson underscores the British Orientalist William Jones' commitment to the liberal syncretic tradition in the novel. John Drew has noticed that Luxima who

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[152] Ibid., p.212.

[153] Ibid., p.218.

[154] Ibid., pp.107-108.

[155] Ibid., p.111.

[156] Bhabha, p.112.

[157] Nikos Papastergiadis, 'Tracing Hybridity in Theory', in *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multo-Cultural Identities and the Politicd of Anti-Racism*, ed. by Nina Werner and Tariq Modood (London: Zed Books, 1997), pp.257-281.

personifies Asian imagination, presents herself as 'the henotheistic goddess' in various manifestations (e.g. Rajini, Radha, Lakshmi and etc.) as Jones conceives in his hymns.[158] Michael J. Franklin argues that Owenson draws upon Jones's works and reveals how the intricate interplay between Western and Indian discourses foregrounds Indian agency in redeeming its own national character.[159] In 'focusing, popularizing and dramatizing Jonesian syncretism', Owenson reveals to readers similarities between 'Oriental and Occidental traditions of mysticism' that undermine 'the binaries of imperialism'.[160] Luxima who wears both Hindu muntras and a small cross embodies the syncretic tendencies and produces an effect of collapsing the distinction between 'a Christian Magdalene' and 'a penitent Priestess of Brahma'.[161] Luxima's adamant insistence on the practice of prayer in Hinduism makes Hilarion realize that 'it was the heart of the woman he had seduced, and not the mind of the heathen he had converted'.[162] Learning that her partial proselytism is induced by love rather than reason, Hilarion recognizes the impossibility of his mission, confessing that 'to effect a change in the religion of sixty million people, whose doctrines claim their authority from the records of the most ancient nations…requires a power seldom vested in man'.[163] Luxima's simultaneous commitment to two religious traditions unsettle and subvert Hilarion's confidence to carry out his missionary work, as he begins to reflect upon the negative consequences of Christian conversion by means of 'coercion' and 'artifice'.[164] The analysis of Luxima's syncretic tendencies emphasizes how her identity is a fluid cultural construct, which I will further explore in the representation of her bodily experience both as a religious practitioner and the observed object.

Luxima's retreat is examined a heterotopia in which she reclaims subjectivity through her ritual practice, and her multiple cultural identities offer a sharp challenge to the traditional 'Western' view of the Orient as a homogeneous, fixed and stable object. Before analyzing phenomenological

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158 John Drew, *India and the Romantic Imagination* (Delhi and Oxford: OUP, 1987), pp.246-7.

159 Michael J. Franklin, 'General introduction and [meta]historical background [re]presenting "The palanquins of state; or, broken leaves in a Mughal garden,"' in *Romantic Representations of British India*, ed. by Michael J. Franklin (London: Routledge, 2005), pp.1-44 (p.15).

160 Michael J. Franklin, 'Radically Feminizing India: Phebe Gibbes's *Hartly House, Calcutta* (1789) and Sydney Owenson's *The Missionary: An Indian Tale* (1811)' in *Romantic Representations of British India*, ed. by Michael J. Franklin (London: Routledge, 2005), pp.1-44 (pp.170-171).

161 Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.184.

162 Ibid., p.220.

163 Ibid., p.226.

164 Ibid., p.226.

aspects of her multisensory experience of worship, I turn to Thomas J. Csordas' concept of 'embodiment' which emphasizes 'the collapse of dualities between mind and body'.[165] Csordas sheds light on the body not as 'an object in relation to culture', but rather as 'the existential ground of culture'.[166] Subsequently, Csordas uses the term 'somatic' to describe bodily sensations that are applied to experiences of 'attending to and with one's body'.[167] Csordas also suggests that somatic modes of attention are culturally constituted in a shared 'intersubjective milieu' with others, which further leads readers to identify 'a fundamental principle of indeterminacy' that dismantles the boundary between subject and object, self and other.[168] The notion of embodiment and somatic experience can help us understand how Luxima relies on her bodily knowledge to build a meaningful engagement with the retreat—performing an idolatrous worship—while also experiencing herself. Her religious performance is perceived by Hilarion as an immersive multisensory experience:

> […] while, before her tutelar deity, knelt Luxima, playing on the Indian lyre, which she accompanied with a hymn to Camdeo. The sounds, wild and tender, died upon her lips […] She then rose, and poured incense into a small vase, in which the leaves of the sacred sami-tree burnt with a blue phosphoric light: then bowing to the altar, she said, "Glory be to Camdeo; him by whom Brahma and Vishnu are filled with rapturous delight; for the true object of glory is an union with our beloved: that object really exists; but, without it, both heart and soul would have no existence."[169]

The narrator pays attention to the sensorial dimensions of Luxima's spiritual experiences, involving playing on the Indian lyre, singing a hymn to Camdeo, pouring incense into a small vase, and pronouncing the impassioned invocation. These are multisensory practices where sounds, sense of touch and hearing, color and scotopic vision play an important role. Her multisensory interactions with the environment highlight her body as a primary locus where she registers her sensitive and emotional experiences. Western societies have associated the sense of sight to the highly valued

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[165] Thomas J. Csordas, 'Embodiment as a Paradigm for Anthropology', *Ethos*, 18.1 (1990), 5-47 (p.7).

[166] Ibid., p.5.

[167] Thomas J. Csordas, 'Somatic Modes of Attention', *Cultural Anthropology*, 8.2 (1993), 135–156 (p.138).

[168] Ibid., p.138; Ibid., p.149.

[169] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.121.

faculty of reason since the Enlightenment, regarding sight as 'the most noble sense'.[170] Luxima's embodied and somatic spiritual practice, echoing Csordas' arguments, blurs the boundary between body and mind. An overlapping and an intertwining of her mind, body and soul is most evident in the perception of her countenance after pronouncing the invocation: 'her eyelids gently closed, and soft and delightful visions seemed to absorb her soul and feelings'.[171] Luxima's multisensory experience of bodily sensations—'a tender and ardent enthusiasm'—are themselves a demonstration of her agency and subjectivity.[172] Thus Luxima occupies a resistant subject position that counters objectification performed by a voyeuristic male gaze.

Luxima and Hilarion's changing positions counter the imposition of any fixed notions of Self and Other. The narrator problematizes the authenticating power of the European male gaze, as the missionary is said to immediately '[hasten] away', having 'seen' and 'heard' 'too much'.[173] Luxima's unfixed identity is constructed by the articulation of her mixed feeling 'as pure and as devoted as it was sublime and awful'.[174] Her 'tender eloquence of mystic piety' which frequently assumes 'the character of human feelings', both evokes and contests the 'seducing image' of 'female Passions' in Hilarion's mind.[175] Her incongruous images shifting from 'the lovely Rajini' to 'the future foundress of a religious order' thus challenge his monolithic and essentialist presumptions of an Indian priestess. But the incoherence of her image does not completely subvert the division between Self/Other binary, since Hilarion still tries to convert her, believing that 'the ardent enthusiasm of the lovely Heathen was a sure presage of the zeal and faith of the future Christian'.[176] Thus, Luxima's malleable subjectivity is able to cause epistemic uncertainty in Hilarion, despite failing to overturn the existing hierarchical relations.

The paradoxical nature of heterotopia is also explicit in the mobile caravan at Lahore which Hilarion and Luxima join on their way to Goa. The caravan can be regarded as a heterotopia of

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[170] Danijela Kambaskovic-Sawers and Charles T. Wolfe, 'The Senses in Philosophy and Science: From the Nobility of Sight to the Materialism of Touch', in *A Cultural History of the Senses in the Renaissance*, ed. by Herman Roodenburg (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp.107-125 (p.112).

[171] Owenson, *The Missionary*, pp.121-122.

[172] Ibid., p.121.

[173] Ibid., p.122.

[174] Ibid., p.122.

[175] Ibid., p.122.

[176] Ibid., p.123.

illusion, where people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds establish an alternative social order based on egalitarian, democratic and humanistic values. As the narrator describes, the caravan was composed of five hundred persons of various nations and religions:

> —Mogul pilgrims, going from India to visit the tomb of their prophet at Mecca; merchants from Thibet and China, carrying the produce of their native climes, the Western coasts of Hindostan; Seiks, the Swiss of the East, going to join the forces of rebelling Rajahs; and faquirs and dervises, who rendered religion profitable by carrying for sale in their girdles, spices, gold-dust, and musk.[177]

The convergence of miscellaneous individuals in this freely accessible space evokes a liberal, cosmopolitan social order that fosters cultural differences and undermines the imperial idea of India as a static and homogeneous national entity. Two European travelers among the caravan who turn out to be officers working for the Spanish Inquisition are to arrest Hilarion, since they notice the signs of love between the couple. The Hindu priestess Luxima who has forfeited cast, causes horror in the mind of those of her own nation and religion who recognize her as 'a Chancalas, or outcast'.[178] Yet her fearless efforts to protect Hilarion produce sympathetic responses from the crowd and motivate them to rescue the missionary. Their engagement in acts of solidarity establishes a bond among people across religious and cultural boundaries, showing resistance to the attempts of the Christian authority to gain ecclesiastical control over all Indians. However, such a rebellious heterotopia of illusion is limited in its potential to subvert relations of dominance. Hilarion in face of the approaching officers is described as somehow parallel to Satan who beholds 'Awe from above, that quelled his heart, /nought else dismayed'.[179] Yet at the same time, he embraces the fate that 'he was bound when one cheek was smitten, to turn the other', which indicates his practice of pacifism in the face of injustice and cruelty, the same course of action promoted in Christ's Sermon on the Mount.[180] By making allusions to both Jesus Christ and Satan, the narrator implies his flawed standards of right and wrong. Hilarion is able to recognize the 'good and brave' qualities of the multitude in the caravan who are united out of shared sympathy and

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[177] Ibid., p.223.

[178] Ibid., p.223.

[179] Ibid., p.235.

[180] Ibid., p.235.

compassion.[181] But he eventually chooses to pursue 'the sacrifice of all human feeling to Heaven', and consigns Luxima to the officers of the Inquisition as 'a Christian Neophyte'.[182]

The caravan demonstrates the unsettling power of heterotopia in temporarily suspending the dominant social order associated with religious intolerance and fanaticism. Similar to the caravan, the site of execution is akin to a heterotopia of illusion, where a social bond of resistance is formed transcending ethnic and religious boundaries. Luxima's embodied experience of throwing herself onto a fire which is supposed to burn Hilarion, exerts a substantial affective influence upon the Hindu viewers and mobilizes them to take nationalist opposition against imperialistic intervention. Luxima, who suddenly appears at the foot of the pile as a 'singular phantom', reveals many layers of associations by individuals from a variety of religious and cultural backgrounds.[183] For the Hindus, 'the sacred impress of Brahma' on her brow signifies her high social status as the 'herald of the tenth Avatar, announcing vengeance to the enemies of their religion'.[184] From the Christians' point of view, the sight of 'the cross' glittering on her bosom brings to mind 'a miracle, wrought for the salvation of a persecuted martyr, whose innocence was asserted by the firmness and fortitude with which he met a dreadful death'.[185] By associating her appearance with the advent of divine saviors in various religious contexts, the narrator indicates the similarities between Christians and Hindus—their shared desire for justice and sympathy for the plight of others. On top of these religious imageries, Luxima's heroic martyrdom under oppression awakens in the Hindus' long-suppressed 'religious enthusiasm' and 'superstitious zeal', and her shriek 'Brahman!' is regarded as a godly summon to fight for their religion and freedom.[186] As the latest news of Portugal gaining independence from Spain has already stirred up Hindu nationalist fervor, their priestess Luxima's injury instantly rouses them to rebellion against Spanish rule. The spaces of epiphany in Christianity and Hinduism are invoked in immediate juxtaposition with the space of Indian nationalist uprising. In doing so, the narrator indicates how Luxima's embodied experience is culturally constructed, emerging from her ongoing interactions with social environments. This

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[181] Ibid., p.235.

[182] Ibid., p.235.

[183] Ibid., p.248.

[184] Ibid., p.249.

[185] Ibid., p.249.

[186] Ibid., p.250.

execution site serves as a heterotopia of experimental imaginations where no totalizing subject position of Luxima can be constructed, and the meanings encoded within it can only be fully grasped through different angles. Owenson's representations of the execution site shows a tendency to defy a single, homogeneous interpretation of the same event, echoing Foucault's definition of the disturbing textual heterotopias that shatter in advance the syntax holding things together.[187]

On top of these understandings of Luxima's self-sacrificing act within various historical and cultural contexts, her act is also reminiscent of the sati ritual, since she murmurs 'the Gayatra, pronounced by the Indian women before their voluntary immolation', and summons 'Brahma' to 'receive and eternally unite [their] spirits'.[188] Spivak takes the widow-sacrifice (sati) in colonial India as an example to illustrate the impossibility for Western intellectuals to recover subaltern subjectivity, as she warns that 'one never encounters the testimony of the women's voice-consciousness' in the discourse on sati.[189] Spivak's arguments demonstrate how western intellectuals with a superior perspective attempt to speak for the subaltern, but ironically supersede and quash their voices. In the concluding part of *The Missionary*, the narrator employs free indirect discourse to complete the story, embedding Luxima's innermost thoughts into the third-person narrative. The free indirect discourse is helpful to recuperate the woman's agency. Here through the free indirect discourse, the narrator emphasizes that Luxima's attempt to jump into the fire whose imagery evokes the practice of sati, is purely out of her will and love for Hilarion.

The site of execution can be regarded as a heterotopia, where Luxima effectively reclaims female agency through her embodied experience, challenging the dominant stereotype of women's passivity. When Luxima beholds Hilarion in the moving procession on the day of the auto-da-fé, she instantly rushes out to find him, with the thought that 'whatever were his fate, she resolved to share it'.[190] The narrator demonstrates that her act of self-immolation is completely voluntary and almost providential, since in a state of terror and bewilderment, she is led by chance to the square of execution, and then throws herself into the fire with a natural illusion that 'the hour of her sacrifice and her triumph was arrived'.[191] Spivak famously coins the sentence 'White men are saving brown

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[187] Foucault, *The Order of Things,* p.xix.

[188] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.249.

[189] Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, p.287.

[190] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.251.

[191] Ibid., p.251.

women from brown men' to articulate the British negative view of sati, which she sets against the 'Hindu nativist' understanding of sati which emphasizes women's agency.[192] Here, Luxima's voluntary act shows how the brown woman attempts to save the white man from religious persecution, which subverts hegemonic discourses with regard to sati. The spatiality of Luxima's voluntary self-immolation problematizes normative moral judgments of sati as a barbaric practice, opening up potential liminal spaces suspended between uncivilized behavior and an act of defending moral truth even to the point of enduring martyrdom.

The site of execution as a heterotopia of illusion empowers Luxima to fight against religious persecution, yet her resisting power is not strong enough to overthrow the dominant oppressive power structure. The limitation of the heterotopia manifests itself in the final scene of the tragedy, in which Hilarion is found dead in the grotto by a goala (a member of a Hindu caste) twenty years later. He is found:

> at the foot of an altar which he had himself raised to the deity of his secret worship, and fixed in the attitude of one who died in the act of prayer. Beside him lay a small urn, formed of the sparry congelations of the grotto—on opening it, it was only found to contain some ashes, a cross stained with blood, and the dsandum of an Indian Brahmin. On the lucid surface of the urn were carved some characters which formed the name of "Luxima!"[193]

The juxtaposition of the 'cross' and the 'dsandum' (sacred thread of an Indian Brahmin) symbolizes a power of love to transcend differences in faith. This image conveys a wish that religion should be depoliticalized on its own terms. Yet the 'blood' indicates acts of violence and oppression that obstruct the fulfillment of this wish. Hilarion's years of solitary toil as a recluse 'living on the produce of the soil' both recall the punishment for Adam's sin and his way of redemption.[194] The past twenty years, as the narrator suggests, have witnessed how 'the mighty had fallen, and the lowly were elevated'.[195] The narrator gives a vision of humanity participating in the cycle of domination and aggression, shifting identities between 'the persecutor' and 'the persecuted', 'the slave' and 'the tyrant'.[196] This endless vision implies a corrupt human nature that tends to dominate

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[192] Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', p.92.

[193] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.261.

[194] Ibid., p.260.

[195] Ibid., p.259.

[196] Ibid., p.259.

other people as well as being dominated themselves. The rise and fall of regimes along with changing power dynamics over the past twenty years, symbolize a dilation of time-space in which the Christian missionary and the Hindu priestess are supposed to drift further apart, just as Adam and Eve are banished from the garden as punishment for defying God's command. Laura Susan Dabundo argues that Hilarion and Luxima's tragedy reveals 'violently partitioned' communities between East and West, due to the fact that 'the Imperial West cannot acknowledge or respect the Other'.[197] In the denouement, the dying Luxima is rhetorically central in signaling that her own and Hilarion's sufferings result from 'the sword of destruction' raised between the followers of different faiths, and 'the stubborn prejudice' that separate human species.[198] William Shullenberger argues that Milton's *Paradise Lost* indicates a possibility of regaining the paradisal life by building a 'paradise within', through the exercise of the love toward others and the world.[199] Considering its allusion to the story of the fall, *The Missionary* intimates the hope of restoring such internal balance in the heroine Luxima who is condemned both by Christianity and Hinduism, yet still patiently fights to the death for what she loves and believes. Luxima shows her repentance in her last words, accepting her sufferings and death as punishment for her 'disobedience to the forms of her religion and the laws of her country', and tries to reclaim her soul 'pure from sin'.[200] Her continuous devotion and obedience to her religion and country echo the way humankind redeem and save themselves after the fall.

1.3 Contested Narratives

The Irish and Indian physical spaces discussed above as heterotopias exist in a liminal state between historical reality and imaginative investment. Their essential in-between quality makes these physical spaces difficult to define and results in uncertainty and crisis in the protagonists' psychological spaces. The status of *The Wild Irish Girl* as an epistolary novel is important in this context that 'the apparent demise of epistolary novel' was actually being continually reworked and

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[197] Laura Susan Dabundo, '"The Sabbath of the Heart": Transgressive Love in Lady Morgan's India', *The Wordsworth Circle*, 41.2 (2010), 84-88 (p.87).

[198] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.257.

[199] William Shullenberger, 'Imagining Eden' in *The Cambridge Companion to Paradise Lost*, ed. by Louis Schwartz (Cambridge: CUP, 2014), pp.125-137 (p.136).

[200] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.258.

redeployed in different forms'.[201] Joe Bray argues that the epistolary novel is not transparent and unmediated as it is thought to present consciousness of the letter writer.[202] Bray's study demonstrates how the 'unity' is hardly maintained between 'the subject and object of consciousness' within the minds of letter writers.[203] Bray has shed light on an oscillation in epistolary narratives between the two selves of the first-person narrator, 'the narrating self' and 'the experiencing self', which is also manifest in the first-person narrative in the epistolary novel *The Wild Irish Girl*.[204] I posit that Horatio's epistolary narrative reveals his psychic space as a heterotopia imbued with the tension between his calm, reasonable narrating self and his fervent, passionate experiencing self.

When recounting his experiences of staying with the Irish Prince's family, Horatio's narrating self does not always manage to moderate his tumultuous feelings and thoughts. In one of the emotionally charged portions of his narration, Horatio feels himself as 'the being of some other sphere newly alighted on a distant orb' with a deep sense of spatial dislocation and disorientation, after attending the vespers, and witnessing the scenes resembling 'some pictured story of romantic fiction'.[205] He goes on to describe a scene inside the castle of Inismore where Father John is in studious meditation while the Prince is absorbed in emotions aroused by the strain of music produced by his daughter:

> The 'white rising of her hands upon the harp;' the half-drawn veil, that imperfectly discovered the countenance of a seraph; the moonlight that played round her fine form, and partially touched her drapery with its silver beam—her attitude! her air! But how cold—how inanimate—how imperfect this description![206]

A fragment of poetry, the beautifully written attention-grabbing verse line 'white rising of her hands upon the harp' quoted from James Macpherson's epic poems is used as a rhetorical device to capture her moving white hands and heighten his affection for her.[207] Given the controversy around

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[201] Joe Bray, *The Epistolary Novel: Representations of Consciousness* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.17.

[202] Ibid., p.1.

[203] Ibid., p.16.

[204] Ibid., p.17.

[205] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.51.

[206] Ibid., pp.52-53.

[207] James Macpherson, *The Poems of Ossian: Translated by James Macpherson, Esq; In Two Volumes* (London: printed for A. Strahan; and T. Cadell, 1790), p.150.

the authorship of the Ossian poems, the quotation of Macpherson's work here implies that Owenson is associating it with a possible Irish origin. Horatio's fascination with Glorvina is also manifest in the description of the moonlight that foregrounds her angelic features in a gentle ambience. His present reactions seemingly triumph over his private thoughts, characterizing his own descriptions as 'cold', 'inanimate' and 'imperfect' from a detached perspective, but the use of exclamation marks and dashes reflects unbridled admiration. His failed attempt to make sense of the past sensations indicates a coexistence of his narrating self and experiencing self.

The simultaneous separation and disintegration of the self suggests his psychic space to be a heterotopia open to imaginary possibilities. He describes how he is 'estranged from [himself]' after spending three weeks at the castle.[208] The epistemological uncertainty and confusion are generated by fictive elements in his narration which associate Glorvina with multiple images in different scenarios. For instance, Owenson quotes a line from *Paradise Lost* to describe Horatio's mentality: '—Beheld her,/Such as I saw her in my dream adorned,/With all that earth or heaven could bestow'.[209] In his biblical imaginings, she is compared to Eve standing in Eden while he as Adam steals towards her and beholds her for the first time. At the same time, his prejudices of the wild Irish girl with 'unpolished manners' and 'confined ideas' exert a great influence on his imagination, as he dreams of her approaching his bed with 'the face, the head, of a Gorgon', a repulsive and threatening female character in Greek mythology.[210] Horatio tries to subjugate and transform her into one of those romantic heroines who are 'the most perfect of beings', yet also 'the most stupid', by leading her to read some sentimental novels 'as Glorvina had not, yet should read', such as *La Nouvelle Heloise* by Rousseau.[211] The images of Glorvina shifting between the angelic and monstrous figures have undermined monolithic assumptions about the Englishman. The liminality of his inner world is reflected in his attitude to the Irish girl fluctuating between attraction and aversion. As he confesses in the letter:

> If I am less an apathist, which I am willing to confess, trust me, I am not a whit more the lover. —Lover!—Preposterous!—I am merely interested for this girl on a philosophical

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[208] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.123.

[209] Ibid., p.140. John Milton, *Paradise Lost,* ed. by Stephen Orgel and Jonathan Goldberg (1667; repr. Oxford: OUP, 2004), p.200.

[210] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.60.

[211] Ibid., p.144.

principle.[212]

This internal monologue aims to justify his interest in her which is claimed to arise out of a desire to study 'the purely national, natural character of an Irishwoman'.[213] Yet all these fictive associations evince his mental uncertainty that contradicts a type of consistency implied in the epistolary confessional mode of truth-telling. In denying himself as either an 'apathist' or a 'lover', he also denies himself to be a unified and reliable center of judgment in the novel.

These tensions within Horatio's consciousness are played out in the constant negotiation between reason and feeling, which further attests his heterotopic inner world where the narrating self in the present continually approaches the past from multiple alternative perspectives. The blend of memoir and fictionalized account of his interactions with Glorvina emphasizes a tendency to reconceptualize the past. A syntactic analysis of his letters reveals alternative orders that question the secure spaces of his private correspondence. For example, the first of May witnesses their increasing affection for each other when Horatio receives a rose from Glorvina, and he gives her a small branch of myrtle in return. In describing this scene in the letter, the exclamation of 'Oh! My sweet friend!', together with the ensuing dash, suggests a burst of passion from his experiencing self:

> '[…]—well indeed might your nation have held this day sacred; and while the heart which now throbs with an emotion to which it has hitherto been a stranger, beats with the pulse of life, on the return of this day will it make offering to that glorious orb, to whose genial nutritive beams this precious rose owes its existence.'[214]

Seeing the rose as a precious symbol of love and friendship, Horatio publicly confesses how his heart is animated by the newly awakened feelings. His burst of excitement is manifest in the long fragmentary sentence constituted by many clauses.

This self-revealing statement is disrupted by the sudden appearance of Father John, without being followed by thinking and expression in a clear and consistent manner. His inability to maintain rational self-reflection indicates how he is subject to illusions created by untrammeled emotion. Horatio's affection for Glorvina reaches a climactic moment when they stay close together in the boudoir. As he reveals himself in the letter:

> Oh! Had not her celestial confidence, her angelic purity, sublimed every thought, restrained

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[212] Ibid., p.65.

[213] Ibid., p.65.

[214] Ibid., p.142.

every wish—at that moment—that too fortunate—too dangerous moment!!![215]

The combination of exclamation marks and dashes suggest his utmost excitement and fragmentary thoughts, while the past perfect tense of 'had not' indicates the interaction of experiencing and narrating selves. This moment of strong feelings is followed by coherent reasoning, as he writes that 'I am now certain of at least being understood…I now feel I love!—for the first time I feel it'.[216] He attempts to make sense of his past sensations, as he realizes that 'I have hitherto mistaken the senses for the heart, and the blandishments of a vitiated imagination for the pleasures of the soul'.[217] He claims a mutual recognition of love founded upon mutual trust and developed through small details which words cannot convey such as 'a sigh, a glance, a broken sentence, an imperceptible motion'.[218] In claiming that 'She now feels her power over me', he seemingly makes a rational judgment of Glorvina. Yet his narrating self does not triumph over the experiencing self, as he states that:

> In a thousand little instances she contrives to tease me; most, when most she delights me! and takes no pains to conceal my simple folly from others, while she triumphs in it herself.[219]

The exclamation mark suggests a fleeting return to the intense emotion. In delineating Glorvina's variable manners and volatile feelings, Horatio indicates his excessive emotional dependency on her. This is evident in the case that he climbs up the tree to fetch the high branch she desires, merely trying to 'get a kiss of the hand in return'.[220] All in all, his narrating self is incomplete in translating all observations of Glorvina's tantalizing behaviors into convincing ideas. The alternation between the narrating self and the experiencing self in Horatio's first-person narration is indicative of his fluctuating sense of autonomy.

The above analysis suggests that Horatio's lived experience of interacting with the indigenous Irish family proves his previous assumptions about Ireland to be inaccurate and oversimplified. The Irish Others turn out to be more complicated than their stereotype as a homogenous, barbaric,

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[215] Ibid., p.159.

[216] Ibid., p.159.

[217] Ibid., p.159.

[218] Ibid., p.159.

[219] Ibid., p.160.

[220] Ibid., p.160.

economically helpless group, waiting to be transformed by a supposedly superior English civilization. The identity of Glorvina is found by Horatio to be constantly changing, which causes a disintegration of his inner self. Horatio's narrative infused with a tension between his narrating self and experiencing self demonstrates how his colonial authority is destabilized and challenged by the power of Irish otherness. The dynamic interactions between Horatio and Glorvina show that the binary relationship between Self and Other is not fixed, but a contextual, fluid construction. The collapse of binary oppositions sheds a new light on the marriage between Horatio and Glorvina as an allegory of Act of Union between England and Ireland. Their union is what Robert Tracy has aptly called the 'Glorvina solution', referring to the 'intermarriage/assimilation of the Irish and Anglo-Irish'.[221] Tracy argues that the marriage serves essentially as a political tool for Anglo-Irish landlords to gain legitimacy.[222] Mary Jean Corbett points out the non-violent nature of marriage as 'the last prescription' to conquer a yielding Ireland, and argues that loving and possessing Glorvina is the best way of owning Ireland, since her natural and national femininity complies with the colonizer's idealism and dominion.[223] Eamonn Dunne contends that 'it is Horatio who will benefit most from this marriage' as 'Glorvina will become subordinate through marriage'.[224] These scholars have argued that the marriage between Horatio and Glorvina can be regarded as a triumph of English colonial ambition. Despite the seeming triumph of colonialist mentality, I argue that their power relations are not fixed once for all. The gap Horatio perceives between the local reality and his assumptions when in close contact with the Irish family, as analyzed above, implies the possibility of subverting the perfect stasis of colonial rule.

1.4 Annotations

Having examined how encounters with the Irish and Indian Other have threatened to subvert the established colonial order, I turn in this section to investigate authorial annotations as heterotopias that contribute to disrupting the binary oppositions between center and margin. Gérard Genette

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[221] Robert Tracy, 'Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan: Legality versus Legitimacy', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 40.1 (1985), 1-22 (p.10).

[222] Ibid., p.13.

[223] Mary Jean Corbett, 'Allegories of Prescription: Engendering Union in *The Wild Irish Girl*', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 22.3 (1998), 92-102 (p.101).

[224] Eamonn Dunne, '"She sang beyond the genius of the sea": Sydney Owenson's Topographical Ethics', *Nordic Irish Studies*, 8 (2009), 1–15 (p.15).

defines the paratext generally as the writing that surrounds and prolongs the text such as titles, prefaces, and illustrations.[225] Genette describes the paratext as 'an undefined zone between the inside and the outside': a zone without any fixed boundary on either the inward side (turned towards the text) or the outward side (turned toward the ward's discourse about the text).[226] Following Genette, Paul Magnuson argues that paratext is 'an esthetic border constantly crossed and re-crossed', showing readers how the text dynamically interacts with the public discourse.[227] What Magnuson attempts is 'a historical close reading', paying particular attention to the 'intertextual connections' of public authorship which augments subjectivity.[228] Differing from Genette's idea that paratext should be regarded as a parasite, Alex Watson demonstrates that in collaborative literary production, the margins can become 'a site of conflict' where creative writers seek to 'establish their centrality', and strive for 'authorial ownership and interpretive hegemony'.[229] Watson further argues that the margins serve as 'an ambiguous borderland' where writers are provided with 'a peculiar liberty to engage in a variety of public and private interactions', though they are at risk of being 'supplemented by readers, critics or even fellow writers'.[230] Watson suggests reading from the margins as a means to reframe conventional views of textual structure and literary history from a new angle. My analysis builds on Watson's scholarship on the paratext as a liminal space between the text and the discursive public realm, and follows Magnuson's approach of paying attention to the 'intertextual connections' of public authorship which augments subjectivity.[231]

I aim to investigate annotations in these two novels as heterotopias where a playful indeterminacy is induced from dynamic interactions among readers, texts and paratexts, simultaneously invoking and invalidating the notion of the text as a centre formally and thematically. I am aware that Owenson follows a long tradition of annotations. The use of annotations was not unusual during Romantic period. For example, Walter Scott frequently used

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[225] Gérard Genette, 'Introduction to the Paratext', trans. by Marie Maclean, *New Literary History*, 22.2 (1991), 261-272 (p.261).

[226] Ibid., p.261.

[227] Paul Magnuson, *Reading Public Romanticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), p.4.

[228] Ibid., p.5.

[229] Alex Watson, *Romantic Marginality: Nation and Empire on the Borders of the Page* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp.31-32.

[230] Ibid., p.32.

[231] Magnuson, p.5.

annotations in the Waverley novels, and Byron utilized annotations in *Don Juan* to construct a hybrid narrative that intertwines fact and fiction. Nigel Leask approaches annotations from a postcolonial perspective, highlighting their role in inscribing 'the viewer/reader' 'in a position of epistemological power' by keeping them at a safe distance from 'the absorptive pull of the exotic visual image or allusion'.[232] As Jacqueline Labbe argues, 'the marginal nature of footnotes provided an opportunity to explore spaces not thought proper for a woman to visit'.[233] Alex Watson demonstrates the gendered nature of annotations, by comparing Maria Edgeworth and Sydney Owenson's ways of using annotations to utter 'a female voice in the margins' in negotiation with 'the masculine narrative within the centered text'.[234] Leask, Labbe and Waston have illustrated how annotation occupies an interstitial space, allowing writers to communicate their ideas and engage in discourse, dialogues or conversations with others in a covert manner. Following this line of thought, Owenson's extensive use of annotations to some extent reflects her marginal position as a woman writer within the male-dominated Orientalist discourse. At the same time, she also makes use of annotations to articulate alternative or subaltern perspectives that have not been provided in the text.

The annotation in the episode of Horatio coming across the Irish peasant's cabin in Letter II serves as a heterotopia, where the narrative in the margins both complements and questions Horatio's heroic account of saving the crying boy in the cabin. Horatio sees and knows the Irish cabin through images of the fantastic taken from colonial literature such as 'the magic palace of Chaucer' and the House of Pride in Spenser's *Faerie Queen*, in a construction of the irrational Other that reflects Saidean Western cultural constructions of the East. He assumes the aperture in the roof 'thinly thatched with straw' to be the possible cause of the cabin's wretched air condition—inhabitants live in 'a constant fumigation'.[235] He sees the cabin as 'an object of compassion and disgust' in terms of its disordered interior spatial planning in comparison with that in England'.[236] Catching sight of a little crying boy sitting within it, Horatio assumes the role of a hero to liberate the child who is described as stuck in 'his captivity' with a large sow as a companion of 'his

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[232] Nigel Leask, '"Wandering through Eblis"; absorption and containment in Romantic exoticism', in *Romanticism and Colonialism: Writing and Empire, 1780—1830*, ed. by Tim Fulford and Peter J. Kitson (Cambridge: CUP, 1998), pp.165-188 (p.168).

[233] Jacqueline Labbe, '"Transplanted into a More Congenial Soil": Footnoting the Self in the Poetry of Charlotte Smith', in *Ma(r)king the Text: The Presentation of Meaning on the Literary Page*, ed. by Joe Bray, Miriam Handley, Anne C. Henry (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp.71–86 (p.73).

[234] Watson, p.50.

[235] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.20.

[236] Ibid., p.20.

imprisonment'.[237] In the annotations, a different view of the Irish cabin contests Horatio's perceptions in the main text. According to the annotator, 'the cabin is rationally divided into two apartments, the one littered with straw and coarse rugs, (…) serves as a dormitory not only to the family of both sexes, but in general to any animal they are so fortunate as to possess; the other chamber answers for every purpose of domesticity(…)'[238] This account suggests that the cabin is not disordered space, but space ordered for the purposes of its inhabitants. The annotation further directs attention away from the residents' poverty to their enduring 'spirit of urbanity' and 'genius of hospitality', as the narrator recounts a personal experience of being warmly entertained by a respectable family of the O'H—s in the country of Sligo in 1804.[239] As the narrator comments, this Irish family shows manners of 'a court' instead of 'a cabin'.[240] This observation of courtly manners among the Irish people implicitly satirizes Horatio who conceives himself to be a well-educated Englishman, but actually intrudes into the cabin. Horatio's literary imaginations make this Irish cabin a heterotopic space invested with mutable fantasies, whilst retaining a ring of realism. The annotation provides another version of reality that challenges Horatio's imperialist rhetoric of English civilization versus Irish backwardness.

While the heterotopic nature of annotations is manifest in the writerly commentary on the margin which contests, negotiates and reconstructs the central and dominant discourse, it is further demonstrated in detailed complementary explanations to Horatio's translations of Irish poetry. The annotations contain Miss Brooks' words in her early versions of the works of some of the Irish Bards. Miss Brooks refers to Miss Charlotte Brooke, a poet, dramatist, and pioneer who has introduced Irish culture to the English reader. She endorses the Irish language as most suitable for lyric poetry, remarking on 'the smoothness and harmony of its numbers', and its possessing features of 'a refined delicacy, a descriptive power, and an exquisite tender simplicity of expression'.[241] Horatio's annotated transcript of Glorvina's poetic performance is loaded with information that helps convey the thematic ideas of Irish poetry, yet at the same time destroys the charms of oral poetry by its very notation, diverting readers' attention from the main text to the margins. According

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[237] Ibid., pp.19-20.

[238] Ibid., p.20.

[239] Ibid., p.20.

[240] Ibid., p.20.

[241] Ibid., p.89.

to Lloyd, the shift from orality to literacy in the progress of mankind follows 'a deeply historicist norm', generating a more complicated spatial divisions of labour inherent in modernity, and inducing 'individuation and interiorization'.[242] Lloyd argues that the otherness of Irish material and cultural space lies in its affective performance and emotional intensity that violate the 'rigorously demarcated compartmentalization of affective display'.[243] Horatio's attempt to transform Glorvina's oral performance of Irish poems and songs into written texts in English is to contain and subdue its otherness through the rationalization of textual space. In articulating the peculiarities of the Irish language, the annotation undermines the emotional appeal of poetry in its native oral form. Under the term 'the King of Saxons, or Cathbein Nolan', the annotator adds that 'The King of England is still called by the common Irish, Riagh Sasseanach', a piece of information that makes the poem less abstruse to English readers.[244] Yet the added information while making the poem more explicable, disrupts the 'tender simplicity' of its expression.[245] Glorvina points out the untranslatability of Irish poems, claiming that Horatio's translated version cannot convey 'the peculiar construction of the Irish language, the felicity of its epithets, and force of its expressions'.[246] Thus the annotations of Horatio's translation become a form of heterotopia where a rational thematic and character analysis actually disturbs the reading flow and reduces the original charms of oral expression.

The annotation space is never neutral, but inscribed with certain discourses and potentials. Katie Trumpener also points out that efforts are made in *The Wild Irish Girl* to build up cultural legitimacy by finding similarities among aspects of Irish national culture, Mediterranean cultural 'prototypes' and more distant oriental cultures.[247] As discussed above, Joseph Lennon suggests that Anglo-centric intellectuals in the nineteenth century find in Irish culture 'a Celtic heritage' in order to confirm Ireland's 'ancient Scythian barbarity'.[248] Lennon also highlights the ambivalent role of

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[242] Lloyd, p.5.

[243] Ibid., p.7.

[244] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl*, p.89.

[245] Ibid., p.89.

[246] Ibid., p.92.

[247] Katie Trumpener, 'National Character, Nationalist Plots: National Tale and Historical Novel in the Age of Waverley, 1806-1830', *ELH*, 60.3 (1993), 685-731 (p.699).

[248] Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008), p.9.

Irish Orientalism as both 'collusive and subversive representations of Empire'.[249] Patrick R. O'Malley argues that antiquarian academic work in *The Wild Irish Girl* shows a tendency to accept a generalized depiction of paganism in place of specific details of Catholicism, which ultimately uproots Irish modes, customs, cultures, and re-establishes them as products of some other place.[250] I would like to highlight how Owenson uses annotations as heterotopias, opening a possible paradigm that counters British narratives of cultural superiority. A number of annotations in this novel provide information concerning various aspects about the alleged Eastern origins of Irish culture, such as traditional attire, music, mythology, dyeing technique, customs and so on. For instance, while Horatio is confounded by the local inhabitants' dress for vespers, an extract from a historical essay by Walker about the ancient Irish dress in the annotation states that Irish women's head dress is preserved from 'the modes of Egypt'.[251] Similarly, while Horatio describes the general costume of the Princess of Inismore in plain language, the annotation delineates the history of the 'veil of point lace' for Irish ladies with its origin 'probably merely oriental'.[252] The Princess Glorvina speaks of Irish national music with pride and enthusiasm, claiming that 'for in music only, do you English allow us poor Irish any superiority'.[253] Yet Horatio is suspicious of her claims, confessing in the internal monologue that 'we thought as little of the music of her country, as of every thing else that related to it'.[254] Then he feels the same strong emotions with her, as she murmurs Campbell's poem 'Exile of Erin' while playing the Irish lyre, an act aiming to demonstrate that traditional Irish music had a profound influence on other cultures. The annotations here incorporate antiquarian studies which support Glorvina's nationalist claims about Irish music. For example, Joseph C. Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* suggests that 'the Irish devised all the instruments, tunes, and measure, in use among the Welsh'.[255] References to antiquarian research in the annotations further enrich this narrative that supports the inherent superiority of Irish music, tracing it back to its supposed 'Oriental' origins. Dr Beauford's essay on the 'clarseach', or

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[249] Ibid., p.123.

[250] Patrick R. O'Malley, *Liffey and Lethe: Paramnesiac History in Nineteenth-Century Anglo-Ireland* (Oxford: OUP, 2017), p.65.

[251] Owenson, *The Wild Irish Girl,* p.45.

[252] Ibid., p.48.

[253] Ibid., p.72.

[254] Ibid., p.72.

[255] Ibid., p.73.

Irish harp, for instance, confirms its origin ‘in remote periods of antiquity’, with its name ‘more in unison with the cithera of the Greeks, and even the chinor of the Hebrew, than the Anglo-Saxon harp’.[256] These annotations reveal a strikingly different spatial arrangement that foregrounds the heterotopic nature of the Irish past, expanding and challenging Anglo-centric understandings of history which tend to neglect and undervalue Irish culture.

Furthermore, the annotations can be regarded as heterotopias, where historical records provide an understanding of the ‘Eastern origin’ of Irish culture that both reproduces and deviates from a dominant, imperial perspective. In the annotation, the reference to well-preserved names and titles provides testimony to the hereditary order of Irish knighthood long before the birth of Christ, such as ‘the Knights of the Red Branch’, ‘the White Knights of Kerry’ and ‘the Knights of Glynn’.[257] In order to strengthen this point, the narrator also cites Jean Froissart’s prose history in the annotations, affirming the analogy between the German ‘Ritter, or knight’ and the Irish ‘riddaire’.[258] Irish oral tradition manifesting itself in the names and titles preserved from ancient times, is an integral part of Irish national identity. These ‘old names and events’ endow James Macpherson’s alleged translations of Ossian’s poems with ‘an higher antiquity than they really possess’.[259] But the Irish origin of Ossian is indicated by the allusions in the poems to those Milesian fables, romances, and Fingal’s heroes familiar to the Irish from their infancy. Geoffrey Keating’s historical study that has been cited in the annotation, lends authority to Ossian’s identity as one of ‘rebellious chiefs’ in the Irish militia against ‘the orders of Cairbre Liffechair, the then monarch’.[260] The Irish folk song lyrics in the annotation, recording ‘the whole genealogy of Macpherson’s hero’, further provide a unique body of documentary evidence of their Irish origin.[261] These references to Irish cultural roots reproduce the imperial view of Ireland as an antique country, yet they also bear witness to a rich and long history of Irish culture, suggesting it as far more superior culture to the English one.

These examples of annotations in *The Wild Irish Girl* highlight their heterotopic potential to dissolve the boundaries between the center and the margin. By investigating Romantic-period

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[256] Ibid., p.71.

[257] Ibid., p.104.

[258] Ibid., p.104.

[259] Ibid., p.107.

[260] Ibid., p.107.

[261] Ibid., p.110.

annotative practice, Alex Watson points out how authors take advantage of the interstitial position of these paratexts to perpetuate, complicate or resist Romantic imperial ambitions, thus making the paratext 'a zone of confrontational transactions between different forms of textual and political authority'.[262] Watson further demonstrates how Maria Edgeworth and Owenson utilize annotations to utter their own voice in the margins which 'interrupts, and even disputes, the masculine narrative within the centered text'.[263] Following this line of thought, I argue that annotations in *The Missionary* also operate as a heterotopia for Owenson to subtly criticize colonial discourses and to convey her political concern for Irish nationalism.

The annotations in *The Missionary* similarly serve as heterotopias where Owenson conveys an implicit critique of religious intolerance in Ireland. Contemporary events are not routinely mentioned in the main text, but one footnote contains a reference to the Vellore Mutiny of 1806 when 'the power of the Spanish government in Portugal and its colonies was on the point of extinction' and 'the Indians are ripe for insurrection'.[264] It reads:

> An insurrection of a fatal consequence took place in Vellore so late as 1806, and a mutiny at Nundydrag and Benglore, occurred about the same period: both were supposed to have originated in the religious bigotry of the natives, suddenly kindled by the supposed threatened violation of their faith from the Christian settlers.[265]

Owenson's repeated use of 'supposed', according to Cóilín Parsons, indicates 'her distance from these events', and reflects her sense of 'ignorance and supposition' about the real reason behind such rebellions.[266] Like John Kaye, Owenson suspects the alleged causes of the Vellore Mutiny in 1806, such as 'the introduction of new uniform regulation for sepoys' and the sacrilegious 'salt' contaminated with 'the blood of cows and pigs'.[267] As Parsons suggests, all these prevalent explanations are only part of the possible causes of this 1806 rebellion, reflecting British colonizers'

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[262] Watson, p.3.

[263] Ibid., p.50.

[264] Owenson, *The Missionary*, p.241.

[265] Ibid., p.241.

[266] Cóilín Parsons, '"Greatly Altered": The Life of Sydney Owenson's Indian Novels', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 38.2 (2010), 373-385 (p.376).

[267] Ibid., p.376. Parsons has quoted from the historian John Kaye's presentation of popular accounts of the causes of Vellore Mutiny. More on this point, see John Kaye, *A History of the Sepoy War in India 1857-8*, *Vol.1* (London: W. H. Allen, 1864).

attempt at religious-cultural homogenization in India.[268] Parsons' analysis shows how the popular explanation glosses over the devastating impact of British colonialism by focusing on individual cases of religious conflicts. Owenson's historical references suggest an awareness of the Irish political landscape of her own time while imagining and representing Indian and Portugal rebellions against the Spanish oppression. The remote spatio-temporal setting allows Owenson a certain freedom to criticize the limitations of European rule while indirectly censuring contemporary issues surrounding Catholic Emancipation which commenced from the late eighteenth century, and aimed to remove restrictions on Roman Catholics. Though the Acts of Union constitutionally made Ireland part of the British state, the Protestant minority still occupied a position of economic, cultural, and political dominance. Political parallels here imply that Owenson's wish to resist colonization should be an international effort, and the spirit of Indian nationalism should arouse popular enthusiasm in Irish nationalist movements.

In summary, I suggest that the concept of 'heterotopia' provides a rich analytic framework to analyze Sydney Owenson's *The Wild Irish Girl* and *The Missionary*. In the former, Irish landscapes and places perceived by Horatio during his journey into the hinterland serve as heterotopias where their representations reinforce the prejudices of Irish savagery and wilderness, yet they also display a distinct Irish cultural identity that undermines his imperialist vision. Horatio's close contact with the Irish family brings to the fore the gap between the local reality and his colonial assumptions about the Irish. The castle of Inismore is perceived as a hybrid space containing both ancient artifacts and objects from the modern world, thus making it a heterotopia juxtaposing incompatible elements. Owenson's representations of cross-cultural encounters in this chapter demonstrate her preoccupation with the construction of Irish cultural and national identity in a time when Ireland was subject to English military, colonial interventions. In *The Wild Irish Girl*, the marriage between Horatio and Glorvina symbolizes a political connection between England and Ireland, and their dynamic interactions give rise to destabilizing forces that convey Owenson's doubts about the prospect brought by the Act of Union 1800. In *The Missionary*, by describing how the rigid Christian missionary gradually yields to the Hindu priestess, Owenson demonstrates the power of compassion to establish a heterotopia where the fixity of colonial power is destabilized. The depiction of the fictional setting of India in which religion is instrumentalized as part of a European colonial project echoes the Irish political landscape in the early nineteenth century which Owenson is primarily concerned with. By representing the tragic ending of the romantic relationship between

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[268] Parsons, p.377.

Luxima and Hilarion as a succeeding allegory for national union, Owenson who consistently campaigned for Catholic Emancipation, further conveys her concerns about contemporary issues of religious intolerance in Ireland. By examining nuanced representations of physical and psychic spaces as heterotopias, readers can recognize identity configuration as a significant aspect of Owenson's spatial depictions.

The paradoxical nature of heterotopias will be further explored in the next chapter on Shelley's *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man*. Natural landscapes such as the Arctic and the subterranean caves will be examined as heterotopias, where the oppressed Other including the non-human, women and queer men gain more agency and subjectivity, yet are still subject to an anthropocentric control. Shelley's concerns are broader than Owenson's preoccupation with colonial relations. The next chapter explores how Shelley conveys a critical stance towards a linear historical consciousness associated with Enlightenment ideas of progress and causation.

Chapter Two—Apocalyptic Heterotopia in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man*

This chapter considers how the concept of heterotopias can be applied to explore the intersections of identity, space and place in Mary Shelley's novels *Frankenstein* (1818) and *The Last Man* (1826). Shelley's novels offer a critique of the Enlightenment-inspired dominant discourses on progress and universal compassion. While *Frankenstein* demonstrates how unrestrained scientific pursuit can lead to disastrous consequences, *The Last Man* describes a prophetic vision of the human race being pushed by the plague to the verge of extinction, indicating how the belief in the Enlightenment notion of instrumental reason cannot save humanity from the impending doom. By using the term heterotopia, in this chapter I refer to those natural landscapes such as the Arctic and the ice cavern, where the oppressed and marginalized Other (referring to the non-human, women, and queer men) can have more agency and freedom, yet where such empowerment is transitory and limited. The paradoxical nature of heterotopias determines that the anthropocentric model that has dominated Western culture since the Enlightenment cannot be easily overturned. But the study of heterotopias in this chapter can at least provide a critique of humans' monstrous and destructive treatment of the Other—both their fellow humans and nature.

My analysis of these texts will draw on Carroll's concept of 'atopias' and Julia Kristeva's term 'the abject'. In this chapter, 'atopias' will be applied as a related concept to examine representations of sublime landscapes whose existence often challenges anthropocentric and instrumental perspectives on nature. These 'atopias', according to Carroll, refer to those intangible, inhospitable and inaccessible '"real" natural regions', which cannot be grasped and categorized by humans as 'the locations of affective habitation'.[269] The atopias including the Arctic and the underworld of caverns and caves, demonstrate overlapping features with heterotopias, in that atopias expose the ephemerality and inadequacy of human institutions, infrastructures and bodies, and thus resist forms of anthropocentric domination of nature. Anthropocentrism entails excessive reliance on reason and scientific discoveries during the Age of Enlightenment. French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan identifies the 'mirror stage' as one crucial stage in the process of self-formation, during which an infant develops their sense of 'self' while looking at their reflection in the mirror.[270] While Lacan's

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[269] Siobhan Carroll, *An Empire of Air and Water: Uncolonizable Space in the British Imagination, 1750-1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p.6.

[270] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, trans. by Bruce Fink (New York, London: W. W. Norton &Company, 2006), p.3.

notion of 'the self' can enter into the symbolic order and establish an intersubjective community, the French psychoanalyst Julia Kristeva's idea of the 'abject' or 'the jettisoned object' is radically excluded, lying outside 'where meaning collapses'.[271] The corpse in her account is the ultimate example of abjection, for it displays an encounter scene of 'death infecting life', and forces us to realize our own mortality and the fragility of our structure.[272] Thus, the encounter with the abject operates as a threat, encroaching on the boundaries of the self. The creature in Shelley's *Frankenstein* is an example of the abject whose threatening appearance triggers humanity's anxiety about its own inherent abjection. The Creature whose physical appearance disrupts the categorical boundary between humans and animals, is a typical example of the abject.

This chapter explores Shelley's engagement with the ambivalent consequences of Enlightenment. It is divided into three parts: the first part explores Shelley's non-linear historical consciousness by analyzing the frame narratives in *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man* (e.g. the multi-vocal composition of Frankenstein's story and the fragmented structure of the last man's tale) as literary heterotopias that are constructed by heterogeneous and multidimensional components. The second part calls into question an altruistic ethic of universal compassion propounded by the Enlightenment. Specifically, it examines the De Lacey cottage (Vol.2, Chapter VI,VII) in *Frankenstein* as a heterotopia of illusion which opens up the possibility of incorporating the Creature into human society. The Creature develops his sense of subjectivity through imitating human behaviors and self-cultivated literacy, yet he is disillusioned when he is banished by the De Lacey family, only to find himself in a perpetual state of 'otherness' that cannot be overcome. In *The Last Man*, this chapter considers the hot-air balloon appearing in the sky after the death of Lord Raymond and his wife Perdita Verney (Vol.2, Chapter XV) as a heterotopia of illusion, where a transient panoramic view seemingly challenges the linear anthropocentric perspective of the human eye, but simultaneously reinforces the human-nature divide. The last part investigates sublime landscapes as heterotopias including the Arctic (Vol.3, Chapter VII) in *Frankenstein*, the tomb of Raymond (Vol.2, Chapter XIV) and the ice cavern (Vol.3, Chapter XXVIII) in *The Last Man*, where conventional social norms and regulations are temporarily suspended, and the subordinate Other—women and nature—can enjoy greater freedom while freely exercising agency.

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[271] Julia Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection,* trans, by Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982), p.2.

[272] Ibid., p.4.

2.1 The Frame Narratives and Non-linear Historical Consciousness

This section examines the frame narratives in *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man* which defy a unified, homogeneous interpretation. The multivocal narrative structure echoes Foucault's definition of the disturbing textual heterotopias that shatter in advance the syntax holding things together.[273] The 'frame narrative', according to Dino F. Felluga, differs from an omniscient narrative perspective, in that the storyteller 'becomes an actual character with concomitant shortcomings, limitations, prejudices, and motives'.[274] *Frankenstein* begins with Robert Walton's letter to his sister Mrs. Saville back in England, describing his ongoing expedition to the North Pole. During the journey, Walton encounters and rescues Victor who later explains how he ends up alone on the Arctic ice. Victor's storytelling is often interrupted by Walton's epistolary narratives. Then the point of view switches to the Creature who narrates his story to Victor. Finally, the narration returns to the outer frame and the perspective of Walton who records Victor's death. During this process, Victor directly intervenes to correct and augment Walton's notes concerning his history, 'principally in giving the life and spirit to the conversations he held with his enemy'.[275] According to Foucault, mirrors function as heterotopias, since 'In the mirror I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal space that virtually opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of shadow that gives me my own visibility, that enables me to see myself there were I am absent.'[276] In *Frankenstein*, the shifting narrative voices of Walton, Victor and the Creature reflect and overlap each other. Their retrospective reordering of the past experiences announces their narratives as textual heterotopias, open to imaginative investment and interpretation.

The heterotopic nature of these narratives is transmitted by the open ending of *Frankenstein*. The novel concludes with the Creature's act of throwing himself out of the cabin-window and the death of Victor. As the narrator describes:

> He sprung from the cabin-window, as he said this, upon the ice-raft which lay close to the vessel. He was soon borne away by the waves, and lost in darkness and distance.[277]

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[273] Foucault, *The Order of Things*, p. xix.

[274] Dino F. Felluga, 'Terms Used by Narratology and Film Theory', *Introductory Guide to Critical Theory* (2011), <http://www.purdue.edu/guidetotheory/narratology/terms/> [accessed 11 May 2022]

[275] Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus, ed. by Marilyn Butler (1818; repr.* Oxford: OUP, 1994), p.179.

[276] Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.24.

[277] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.191.

Doubt remains over the fact whether the Creature kills himself in this act. The Creature's lament and suicidal act seem eccentric, considering that he is, according to his own narrative, filled with 'an insatiable thirst for vengeance' against Victor.[278] The perception of darkness conveys a sense of uncertainty, implying the possibility of his finding shelter in 'the most northern extremity of the globe'.[279] So does the perceived distance, which emphasizes how speedily the Creature is carried away by the waves. But the motion of the Creature along the water as a form of existential mobility, portends a good chance of his survival. The whereabouts of Walton also remain in doubt, since this episode is suddenly terminated, without informing whether he has safely come back to England, nor whether his letters have been securely received by Mrs. Saville. The ambiguous ending open to multiple interpretations provides evidence regarding the frame narrative as a potential literary heterotopia.

The frame narrator Walton appropriates all segments of the story and places them within a domestic discourse in the letter. Yet the storyteller tends to drift in and out, now controlling the narrative, now relinquishing control. As I have discussed in Chapter One, one characteristic of the epistolary narrative, according to Joe Bray, is the tension between 'the narrating self' and 'the experiencing self' operating in first-person novels.[280] Following Bray, I posit that Walton's epistolary narrative reveals his space as a heterotopia unsettled by the tension between his calm narrating self and his passionate experiencing self. As Richard J. Dunn argues, 'narrative distance' in *Frankenstein* foregrounds 'the failure of human community', making it structurally different from conventional novels which assume 'communal sharing' both among characters and between narrator and reader.[281] The observed distance between 'intense personal experience and incommunicable narrative recollection' announces Walton's failure to produce more integrated stories.[282] Peter Brooks further argues that the Creature's failed use of language to make himself accepted as part of the Symbolic Order, demonstrates 'language's ultimate lack of transcendent reference'.[283] Despite the limitations of language to 'give direct access to the existential object of

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[278] Ibid., p.188.

[279] Ibid., p.190.

[280] Bray, *The Epistolary Novel*, p.17.

[281] Richard J. Dunn, 'Narrative Distance in "Frankenstein"', *Studies in the Novel*, 6.4 (1974), 408-417 (p.408).

[282] Ibid., p.417.

[283] Peter Brooks, 'Godlike Science/ Unhallowed Arts: Language and Monstrosity in *Frankenstein*', *New Literary History*, 9.3 (1978), 591-605 (p.604).

the Monster's desire, language still contributes to constructing a story within Frankenstein's story that poses a challenge to 'the entire set of relations'.[284] The presence of the Creature represents the disturbing force of otherness and destabilizes Walton's narrative authority.

Walton resembles Victor in utilizing knowledge relating to naval adventure 'to accomplish some great purpose'.[285] For Walton, Victor is an allegorical ideal self who has sacrificed himself for overreaching scientific explorations. The inner workings of Victor's mind have been disturbed by the Creature's narrative which condemns his creator's reckless and selfish experiment, and calls for his parental responsibility. Victor tells Walton to draw lessons from his miseries, and warns about the danger of 'the acquirement of knowledge' and human's aspiration to 'become greater than his nature will allow'.[286] Yet his warnings are articulated in a hesitant manner, admitting that 'I have myself been blasted in these hopes, yet another may succeed'.[287] Similarly, Walton's interior self is subject to disintegration in the face of the self-assertive and eloquent Creature. Walton's unstable mentality is shown in his attitude towards the Creature vacillating between compassion and bewildered disgust, as he confesses that 'Such a monster has then really existence; I cannot doubt it; yet I am lost in surprise and admiration.'[288] The Creature's question concerning the way he has been treated all along—'Am I to be thought the only criminal, when all human kind sinned against me?'—breaks up the apparent progression of events arranged by Walton, and allows a disruptive force of alterity to cast a shadow of doubt on the prevalent assumptions, from which the judgment of characters is being conducted.[289]

The specious totality of Walton's narrative is shattered, as his narrating self cannot always regulate and control intense feelings of his experiencing self. For example, his narration in the last letter is interrupted by the sudden appearance of the Creature, without being followed by reflection and articulation in a clear and consistent manner. In describing the final scene in the letter, the exclamation of 'Great God! What a scene has just taken place!', together with the ensuing emotional expression, suggests a burst of excitement and horror from his experiencing self:

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[284] Ibid., p.597.

[285] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.7.

[286] Ibid., p.35.

[287] Ibid., p.186.

[288] Ibid., p.178.

[289] Ibid., p.189.

> […] I am yet dizzy with the remembrance of it. I hardly know whether I shall have the power to detail it; yet the tale which I have recorded would be incomplete without this final and wonderful catastrophe.[290]

The articulation of dizziness and uncertainty about his memory shows a futile attempt to make sense of the past sensations evoked by the final scene. His failure to maintain an attitude of composure and rationality indicates his disintegrated subjectivity. The alternation between the narrating self and the experiencing self in Walton's first-person narration is indicative of his fluctuating sense of autonomy. The Creature's last words create a haunting atmosphere in the final scene of death and destruction: 'But soon […] My spirits will sleep in peace; or if it thinks, it will not surely think thus. Farewell.'[291] His words remain hanging in the air without a response, reflecting how Walton is left in a state of confusion and agitation. All these details bear witness to Walton's heterotopic inner space capable of juxtaposing two incompatible selves.

Having examined how the multi-vocal aspect of *Frankenstein*'s story allows for a nonlinear frame that accommodates not only different viewpoints, but also small stories that altogether comprise a larger story, I then turn to *The Last Man*'s frame narrative as an apocalyptic imagination. The Sibyl's Cave as the opening scene is where the story of the last man is discovered and deciphered from the ancient Sibylline leaves inscribed with writings in various ancient and modern languages such as 'ancient Chaldee, and Egyptian hieroglyphics'.[292] The Cave can be regarded as a heterotopia which is grounded in reality and at the same time suffused with versatile fantasies. These ancient leaves record a story happening in a newly republican England, encapsulating some aspect of what Foucault calls 'heterochronisms', which enact 'a sort of absolute break with their traditional time'.[293] The anonymous narrator's account of an adventure to the cavern of the Cumaean Sibyl combines Shelley's own travel experience at Baiae with imaginative associations of mystic figures and classical scenes. Percy Bysshe Shelley in his *Letters from Abroad* for the same date, 8 December 1818, records a visit to the site of Baiae, an ancient seaside resort near Naples, 'We then coasted the bay of Baiae to the left, in which we saw many picturesque and interesting ruins; but I have to remark that we never disembarked but we were disappointed—while from the

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[290] Ibid., p.186.

[291] Ibid., p.191.

[292] Ibid., p.3.

[293] Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.26.

boat the effect of the scenery was inexpressibly delightful'.[294] Before arriving at the Sibyl's Cave, the narrator perceives 'fragments of old Roma villas' submerged under 'the translucent and shining waters of the calm sea', which instantly conjure up Galatea, a sea-maiden in Greek mythology, and Cleopatra, a historical powerful woman.[295] In addition, names of places such as 'Elysian Fields and Avernus' evoke a posthumous world inhabited by those favored by the gods, and the underworld in Virgil's *Aeneid*.[296] These allusions to legendary figures help evoke a mythical atmosphere, adding credence to the Sibylline prophecy. The hybrid of fiction and reality in the narrative of adventure makes this Cave a heterotopic site with an alternative spatial arrangement that actively questions the idea of reality encoded deep within the material landscape.

The heterotopic potential of the Sibyl's Cave lies not only in its malleable fantasy environment, but also in the destabilizing literary space of fragmentary writings discovered in the Sibylline pages. The fragmented narrative structure in *The Last Man* reflects Shelley's unconventional view of time. In deciphering the story, the narrator produces a personal narrative 'to add links, and model the work into a consistent form'.[297] Concurrently, the narrator admits that the main substance consists of 'the truth contained in these poetic rhapsodies, and the divine intuition which the Cumaean damsel obtained from heaven', a mystical source open to multiple interpretations.[298] Thus the narrative is presented as neither solely the Sibyl's prophecy, nor the tale of the protagonist Lionel at the end of twenty-first century, but as one edited and constructed by a frame narrator. The nameless and genderless narrator further underscores the arbitrariness and contingency of the story.

The fragmentary narrative structure of *The Last Man* demonstrates how storytelling is best understood as a process influenced by individually related and contingent factors rather than as a self-sustained, autonomous entity. The story of the last man is so endlessly rearranged in order to resist the notion of history as a linear, finite process. Shelley's text echoes Foucault's genealogical method of history, a methodology of suspicion and critique that opposes an insertion of a transcendental subject into a universal explanatory scheme. According to Foucault, 'Genealogy' is:

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[294] Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations and Fragments in Two Volumes, Vol.II,* ed. by Mrs. Shelley (London: Edward Moxon, 1852), p.141.

[295] Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *The Last Man*, ed. by Anne McWhir (1826; repr. Hadleigh: Broadview, 1996), p.1.

[296] Ibid., p.1.

[297] Ibid., p.4.

[298] Ibid., p.4.

> A form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledge, discourses, domains of objects, etc., without having to take reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout the course of history.[299]

Foucault's idea of genealogy denies a single, ever-lasting notion of truth, or a single purpose origin or principle. Genealogy is not the construction of a linear development. Such a tendency to reject claims to cognitive authority can also be found in Shelley's life writings. In the preface to *Rambles*, Shelley emphasizes that her travelogue offers a fragmented rather than the whole picture of Italy, trying not to over-generalize the nationality of this country. She claims that her representations of Italians, natural landscapes and cityscapes tend to 'induce some among [her] countrymen to regard with greater attention, and to sympathize in the struggles of a country, the most illustrious and the most unfortunate in the world'.[300] Her attempt to highlight Italy as a multidimensional country seeks to deconstruct the artificial unity on the image of the nation imposed by language, power and discourse.

The heterotopic feature of the Sibyl's Cave lies in a collapse of categories denoting past and present occasioned from the interactions of multi-layered space-times. This story produced from numerous modifications leaves much room for the reader's imagination. For the nineteenth-century readers, the story of the last man alludes to their contemporary life, despite being obscured by its authorship as belonging neither to the ancient past nor the distant future. Shelley projects her reflections of English society into the ancient world of romance. Such temporal perspective merging past, present and future also occurs in her short stories. 'Roger Dodsworth: The Reanimated Englishman' is based on a widespread hoax about a cryogenic young man who is buried under an avalanche in the Alps in 1660, and then unearthed and reanimated in 1826.[301] Shelley depicts the protagonist's amazement at a series of social changes occurring after his falling into a frozen state, such as the restoration of English monarchy and industrialization.[302] Her fascination with the idea of a reawakened historical figure is also seen in another short story

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[299] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977,* ed. by Colin Gordon, trans. by Colin Gordon, Leo Marshal, John Mepham and Kate Sober (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p.117.

[300] Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Rambles in Germany and Italy in 1840,1842, and 1843* (London: Edward Moxon, 1844), p.xvi.

[301] Charles E. Robinson, 'Mary Shelley and the Roger Dodsworth Hoax', *Keats-Shelley Journal*, 24 (1975), 20-28 (p.20).

[302] See Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, 'Roger Dodsworth: The Reanimated Englishman', in *Mary Shelley: Collected Tales and Stories with Original Engravings*, ed. by Charles E. Robinson (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp.43-50.

'Valerius: The Reanimated Roman'.[303] When the first-person narrator Valerius visits the tombs of Romans, he perceives the altered appearance of Elysian fields along with its retained name against the background of the timeless blue Mediterranean sea. Changes here occur in a process akin to Hegel's concept of 'sublation': 'the process by which the conflict between two opposed or contrasting things or ideas is resolved by the emergence of a new idea, which both preserves and transcends them'.[304] This scene presents sublated moments of time—a process of both 'coming to be' and 'passing away'.[305] Sophie Thomas argues that Shelley's fragmentary prefatory narrative suggests a possibility that the past can be folded into the future and then 'resurge', or the future can otherwise be rediscovered in the past.[306] Thomas' arguments shed light on the correlation between a fragmentary narrative structure and a non-linear historical approach. The structural indeterminacy as a remarkable narrative feature of *The Last Man* reflects Shelley's view of history as a cyclical repetition, in opposition to the Enlightenment view of history as a linear advancement of mankind to a perfect society.

The cyclical view of history, as is presented by the heterotopic Sibyl's Cave, expresses anxieties of Shelley's time over social contradictions occasioned by emerging technologies, innovations and political changes. While technological advances contribute to the Enlightenment ideal of progress, Shelley also exposes the danger of uncontrolled scientific development. The danger is personified in the Creature as the product of Frankenstein's unregulated passion for science. Likewise, political changes do not necessarily bring social progress. As Daisy Hay argues, the monstrosity of the Creature serves as a metaphor for Revolutionaries, implying 'first the potential and then the vainglorious corruption of Revolutionary ambition'.[307] In *The Last Man*, the episode of electing Ryland who is a leader of the popular democratic party as the new Protector of England alludes to the contemporary debate about 'the question of the abolition of hereditary rank, and other feudal relics'.[308] The narrator makes reference to Burkean conservatism in a monologue,

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[303] See Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, 'Valerius: The Reanimated Roman', in *Mary Shelley: Collected Tales and Stories with Original Engravings*, ed. by Charles E. Robinson (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp.332-344.

[304] 'Sublation, n.' in *OED* [online], <www.oed.com/view/Entry/192740> [Accessed 19 June 2022].

[305] *The Hegel Reader,* ed. by Stephen Houlgate (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), p.266.

[306] Sophie Thomas, *Romanticism and Visuality: Fragments, History, Spectacle* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), p.77.

[307] Daisy Hay, *The Making of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (Oxford: The Bodleian Library, 2019), p.26.

[308] Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.174.

emphasizing the importance of 'a perpetual succession of the high-born and lordly'.[309] Yet the narrator does not idealize the past as some sort of golden age, but regards political evolution as a process of historical contingency, sensitive to unpredictable changes.

While these doubts and uncertainties about social changes can be readily rationalized within the cyclical view of time and history, the end of one cycle also marks the beginning of a new era. As Anne McWhir points out, Mary Shelley herself proposed a subtitle of *The Last Man*—'a romance'—though it was never published on the title-page.[310] This is confirmed in her letter to Charles Ollier who worked for Colburn, Shelley's publisher on 15 November 1825: 'The title of my book is to be simply 'The Last Man, a Romance, by the Author of Frankenstein'.[311] Despite some allusions to seventeenth-century republicanism, the story of the last man evokes a picture of a chivalric world full of early nineteenth-century romances. Scholars have associated romance with the creation of ideal illusions. For example, Gillian Beer makes a distinction between romance and novel: while the former is concerned with 'fulfillment of desires', directing attention to the unveiling of underground world visions; the latter focuses more on representation and interpretation of a known world.[312] Northrop Frye argues that the popular appeal of romance lies in offering a 'recreation of the possible or future or ideal'.[313] Following their line of thought, I argue that the core elements of romance in *The Last Man* lie in an obsession with building a paradise, which manifests itself in the word 'paradise' being mentioned seventeen times. For instance, Adrian claims a vision of earthly paradise realized in their idyllic dwelling in Windsor 'near the inland murmur of streams, and the gracious waving of trees, the beauteous vesture of earth, and sublime pageantry of the skies'.[314] The astronomer Merrival indulges himself in another 'joyful prospect of an earthly paradise after a hundred thousand years'.[315] Although the onslaught of the plague has made all these prospects illusory, this recurring vision of an earthly paradise throughout the novel reflects a belief

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[309] Ibid., p.174.

[310] Anne McWhir, 'Introduction', in Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *The Last Man,* ed. by Anne McWhir (1826; repr. Hadleigh: Broadview, 1996), pp.xiii-xli (p.xvi).

[311] Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Vol.1, 'A Part of the Elect'*, ed. by Betty T. Bennett (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p.504.

[312] Gillian Beer, *The Romance* (London: Methuen, 1970), p.12.

[313] Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), p.179.

[314] Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.171.

[315] Ibid., p.173.

in humanity's regenerative powers to restore an idyllic state.

This sense of optimism is best shown in the open ending of *The Last Man*, where Lionel's proposed journey around the world opens up a space for imagining the future. According to Foucault, the ship is the heterotopia 'that is closed in on itself and at the same time is given over to the infinity of the sea […]'.[316] Lionel's boat in the final scene serves as a heterotopia par excellence that takes him out of 'the settled home' and 'monotonous days', and allows freedom of movement.[317] Shelley does not give a sense of closure, but leaves the boat as a space of imaginative possibility. Fiona J. Stafford argues that Shelley's novel deviates from the apocalyptic tradition, by emphasizing the importance of 'sympathy and imagination' as essential qualities of the human spirit.[318] Following Stafford's argument illustrating the essentially optimistic tone of the ending, I argue that this open ending spawns infinite possibilities that celebrate the power of imagination. In Lionel's plan, he will sail from Rome with a few selected books, provisions and a dog, travel along the Mediterranean coast, then head for the shores of Africa, and ultimately moor his boat in a creek in the far Indian ocean. As the narrative goes:

> Thus around the shores of deserted earth, while the sun is high, and the moon waxes or wanes, angels, the spirits of the dead, and the ever-open eye of the Supreme, will behold the tiny bark, freighted with Verney—the Last Man.[319]

While the post-apocalyptic world presents grim consequences of humanity's vainglorious dominion over nature, the open ending articulates a defense of imagination in shaping forms and spaces into exciting future possibilities for human beings. As the first-person point of view shifts to the third-person omniscient, Lionel becomes the object of the gaze of otherworldly beings such as 'angels', 'the spirits of the dead', and 'the Supreme'. In zooming out for a wider view of the world, the narrator highlights non-human subjectivity while presenting Lionel's boat as 'the tiny bark'. Such spatial juxtaposition of images emphasizes the existence of a larger eco-centric social order in opposition to a distinctively anthropocentric view. The visual tininess of the boat possibly satirizes Lionel's mortal vulnerability in contrast to the elements of nature, and thus implies his failure to carry out the plan. Yet this boat also gives him greater mobility, the prerequisite for reaching his

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316 Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.27.

317 Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.367.

318 Fiona J. Stafford, *The Last of the Race: The Growth of a Myth from Milton to Darwin* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p.228.

319 Ibid., p.367.

destination and fulfilling his wish to find 'a companion'.[320] Shelley's view of history as an eternal cycle of destruction and regeneration is presented at the end of the text where Lionel as the titular last man departs for distant shores. The boat he takes functions as the heterotopia par excellence that opens up new possibilities.

Shelley conveys a sense of optimism about humanity even at a time when she goes through a hopeless situation. Current critical consensus is that the main characters in *The Last Man*, Lionel Verney, Adrian, and Lord Raymond are modeled on Mary Shelley, Percy Shelley, and Byron respectively.[321] Like Percy Shelley, Adrian has an upper-class background and supports republicanism. Lord Raymond resembles Byron as a charismatic womanizer whose romantic love is overwhelmed by political aspirations. After Percy Shelley's death in 1822, Shelley writes in her journal that 'Now I am alone! Oh, how alone!'.[322] Then her loneliness intensifies after she receives the news of Byron's death. As she writes, 'The Last man! Yes I may well describe that solitary being's feelings, feeling myself as the last relic of a beloved race, my companions, extinct before me—'.[323] These losses, together with the death of all but one of her children, weigh heavily on her. As a tribute to her deceased friends, the novel explores her intense poignancy of being left behind and living with the shadows of vanquished ardent ideals. Yet this novel also reflects an authorial endorsement of writing as an effective way to build human connections. In the text, Lionel finds writing materials on a table in an author's study when rambling alone in Rome. He decides to write down the history of the last man. Writing for him is a way of reconnecting with friends, as he claims that 'They have been with me during the fulfillment of my task'.[324]

As I contend above, Lionel's boat in the final scene as a heterotopia opens up new possibilities of hope. This promising vision subscribes to Shelley's cyclical view of history in which regeneration and decay alternate. Another ship metaphor occurs in the opening narration, in which England resembles 'a vast and well-manned ship' in Lionel's dreams, recalling an imperialist image

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[320] Ibid., p.366.

[321] See, for example, *Literary Representations of Pandemics, Epidemics and Pestilence,* ed. by Nishi Pulugurtha (New Delhi: Routledge India, 2023).

[322] Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *The Journals of Mary Shelley 1814-1844,* ed. by Paula R. Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p.429.

[323] Ibid., pp.476-477.

[324] Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.364.

of an aggressive mobile force.[325] I argue that while Lionel's hopeful travel plan is a promise of regeneration, his dream of England as the huge ship marks the beginning of decay. Lionel's opening narration introducing his native land articulates a purely anthropocentric approach to the world around him:

> I am the native of a sea-surrounded nook, a cloud-enshadowed land, which, when the surface of the globe, with its shoreless ocean and trackless continents, presents itself to my mind, appears only as an inconsiderable speck in the immense whole; and yet, when balanced in the scale of mental power, far outweighed countries of larger extent and more numerous population. So true it is, that man's mind alone was the creator of all that was good or great to man, and that Nature herself was only his first minister.[326]

Lionel, who has been enlightened by Adrian's intellectual education, emphasizes the dominance of human mind over nature as 'the creator of all that was good or great to man'. His native land which in reality appears as 'an inconsiderable speck in the immense whole' is magnified by his imagination to be a great country with a large population. England is regarded by Lionel as 'the universe', 'the earth's very center', though he acknowledges that geographically it is located at the margins, 'seated far north in the turbid sea'.[327] The idea of England as 'a sea-surrounded nook, a cloud-enshadowed land' echoes John of Gaunt's 'sceptred Isle' speech in *Richard II* in which England is depicted as a majestic, beautiful, divinely favoured country.[328] The Shakespearean image of England as a 'fortress built by Nature' emphasizes the Englishman's sense of privilege and exclusion, living in blissful isolation and ignorance from the rest of the world.[329] Such an anthropocentric and Anglocentric viewpoint is consequently challenged by the wide-spread and destructive plague. Scholars have argued that the plague represents a driving force in social equalization and strengthens the global connection though in a desponding way. For example, Alan Bewell argues that the plague that questions 'the idea of British insularity' reflects Shelley's more pessimistic attitude towards 'the ability of Western civilization and technology to control nature and

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[325] Ibid., p.7.

[326] Ibid., p.7.

[327] Ibid., p.7.

[328] Ibid., p.7.

[329] As is described, 'This fortresse built by Nature for her selfe,/ Against infection, and the hand of warre'. William Shakespeare, *Richard II*, ed. by Anthony B. Dawson and Paul Yachnin (1595; repr. New York; Oxford: OUP, 2011), p.170.

the epidemiological consequences of colonial contact'.[330] Filiz Turhan contends that the deadly plague spreading throughout the world bridges the gap between the British Empire and the Ottoman Other, as it contaminates both 'the commercial and political segments of British society' and 'the inviolable domestic space'.[331] The plague not only makes indistinct the prevalent socio-spatial boundaries between home and away, local and global, West and East, but also brings to the fore the dark side of the Enlightenment with its emphasis on the old dichotomy of Self and Other.

In this section, I have analyzed the frame narratives of *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man* as literary heterotopias which emphasize contingent rearrangements and alternative orderings of the past. The boat and the Sibyl's Cave also function as heterotopias, providing evidence in support of Shelley's discontinuous, nonlinear vision of history. Shelley's critique of the anthropocentrism found in Enlightenment thinking is further illustrated in the following section, which contends that the De Lacey cottage and the hot-air balloon function as heterotopias of illusion, where the oppressed Other is allowed a fleeting moment of liberation and freedom.

2.2 The De Lacey Cottage and the Hot-air Balloon

This section examines the De Lacey cottage as a heterotopia of illusion, where the Creature is hopefully able to be accepted by human society after receiving an enlightened education by means of clandestine observation, showing up a process of normalization in real life that ensures him as the abject Other, marginalized and excluded. After being condemned by the French authorities to 'a perpetual exile from their native country', the De Lacey family retreats into the cottage in Germany as an asylum.[332] Similarly, after being driven out of the village, the Creature finds the adjacent hovel in the open country as 'an agreeable asylum from the snow and rain'.[333] Thus the close geographic proximity of their dwellings corresponds to their equally marginal social positions—the fugitives and the monster—as the embodiments of 'otherness'. The Creature is able to peek into a small room of the adjacent cottage through 'a small and almost imperceptible chink' in one of the

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[330] Alan Bewell, *Romanticism and Colonial Disease* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p.303.

[331] Filiz Turhan, *The Other Empire: British Romantic Writings about the Ottoman Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2003), p.106.

[332] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.101.

[333] Ibid., p.83.

wood-filled window panes.[334] His secretive observations of the family expose him to multi-sensory experiences—sight, smell, taste, sound and feeling—to extend his knowledge by using all his senses.

The De Lacey cottage located close to the Creature's hovel can be regarded as a heterotopian site in which the image of the family serves as a mirror, reflecting and shaping the aspirations of the Creature. The mirror is a preeminent example of Foucault's concept of heterotopias. As he explains that:

> From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there. Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back toward myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am.[335]

The mirror serves as a self-reflexive space, where the viewing subject engages in the process of self-objectification and alienation as a major step for self-reconstruction. The De Lacey family presents positive values of family life such as benevolence, reciprocity and solidarity. Even though they live in poverty, suffering 'the pangs of hunger very poignantly', the younger cottagers still reserve food for the old man.[336] This household filled with love and affection represents the ideal family unity which the Creature is willing to join. The history of the family has also given the Creature hope for humanity: the old man De Lacey and his children Agatha and Felix used to be well-respected members of the community, and they are stripped of wealth and exiled from France, entirely due to Felix's altruistic act to help Safie's father, a Turkish merchant. The virtues displayed in Felix's heroic acts raise the possibility for the Creature to be accepted by the family. Yet the Creature is also aware of their difference, claiming that 'I had admired the perfect forms of my cottagers—their grace, beauty, and delicate complexions: but how was I terrified, when I viewed myself in a transparent pool!'.[337] Thus for the Creature, to imitate human behaviors is a means to bridge the gap and increase the possibility for him to be accommodated in human society. He becomes enlightened by reading books. Reading the *Sorrows of Werter* inspires him to come up with self-reflective questions like 'Who was I? What was I? Whence did I come? What was my

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[334] Ibid., p.85.

[335] Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.24.

[336] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.88.

[337] Ibid., p.90.

destination'.[338] And he begins to make sense of the world after learning about foundational knowledge of modern society through reading the volume of *Plutarch's Lives*.[339] On the other hand, knowledge also heightens his painful awareness of his otherness, as someone with 'no money, no friends, no kind of property', 'not even of the same nature as man'.[340] At first, the Creature's genuine talk temporarily wins the trust of the blind old De Lacey who considers him as 'a human creature'.[341] Yet he is still abhorred and banished as soon as the other family members behold his appearance, thus dispelling his illusion of building up a social network.

The De Lacey cottage being a potential heterotopia for accommodating the Creature is effectively an endorsement of Enlightenment education and its contribution to establishing a bond of union between heterogeneous entities. But the Creature's ultimate exclusion from the De Lacey family reflects the limitations embedded in Enlightenment values. As I have discussed in Chapter One, Bhabha argues that hybridity becomes 'a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention'.[342] Bhabha's theory demonstrates that mimicry can be empowering, and hybridity serves as a means of subversion whereby subaltern groups challenge various forms of oppression. In the case of the Creature, mimicry cannot dissolve the boundaries between human 'Self' and bestial 'Other', but only to reinforce his feelings of inferiority. The Enlightenment progress cannot completely remove prejudices against the Creature whose appearance deviates from what is considered the norm.

While the Creature's interaction with the De Lacey family points to limitations inherent in the very Enlightenment values of universalism and egalitarianism, Shelley's simultaneous critique of an anthropocentric approach of nature and environment can be seen in her representation of hot-air balloons in *The Last Man*. Barbara M. Benedict argues that the balloons manifest 'a new, ambiguous ideal of curiosity as transgression itself'.[343] Michael R. Lynn argues that balloons as the emblem of the age of Enlightenment open up the possibility for humans to defy gravity, to fly from

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[338] Ibid., p.104.

[339] Ibid., p.104.

[340] Ibid., p.96.

[341] Ibid., p.109.

[342] Bhabha, p.112.

[343] Barbara M. Benedict, *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Inquiry* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001), p.205.

the earth, and to wander about the heavens.[344] Both Benedict and Lynn illuminate how the hot-air balloon can be regarded as a symbol of freedom and transcendence, satisfying human desires and ambition to exercise broad dominion and control over the air space.

The balloon acts as a heterotopia of illusion, where a panoramic view of the land seemingly opposes the linear anthropocentric perspective of the human eye, yet actually reinforces the sense of control and dominion of humans over nature. Lionel takes a balloon with the orphan Clara from Greece to England in order to avoid the sight of the dreaded sea which reminds him of Perdita's suicide. The balloon offers them a temporary space to escape from the tragic realities of sufferings and death. Richard Holmes points out that the allure of ballooning lies in its provision of an extraordinary vision of the earth that encompasses 'the secrets of the world beneath'.[345] The balloon not only provides them with a shelter from 'death-bearing waves', but also a panoramic view of Italy which reveals a degree of equality among different components, animate and inanimate, human and non-human, within the frame:

> Beneath are the plains of Italy, or the vast undulations of the wave-like Apennines: fertility reposes in their many folds, and woods crown the summits. The free and happy peasant, unshackled by the Austrian, bears the double harvest to the garner; and the refined citizens rear without dread the long blighted tree of knowledge in this garden of the world.[346]

The sight of the free peasant evokes by contrast the plight of the oppressed. The narrator presents an alternative spatial ordering which places emphasis on peace and harmony amongst people. The representations of fertile lands, wooded summits and unshackled peasants evoke a prelapsarian, paradisal state of existence, an ideal arrangement of space that suspends the ongoing colonial rule in the rest of society. Italy was split into small states largely under the rule of the Austrian Empire in Mary Shelley's day. It was not until 1848 that Italian revolutionaries were motivated by the desire to secure their independence from foreign rule, and thus staged revolution to drive out the Austrians. Here the narrator's description of an ideal society hints at sympathies towards the Italian peasants. This illusory vision reflects their desires for stability in a changing world, where industrialization, colonialism and republicanism threaten to disturb the political and social order. Yet this panoramic view also implies their emotional detachment from the reality. The balloon's vertical motion against the forces of gravity develops an inflated sense of human power over nature, as Lionel claims to

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[344] Michael R. Lynn, *Popular Science and Public Opinion in Eighteenth-century France* (Manchester: MUP, 2006), p.123.

[345] Richard Holmes, *The Age of Wonder* (London: Harper Press, 2009), p.160.

[346] Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.170.

have gained the long-sought-after 'power of man over the elements' when taking an unimpeded flight from England to Scotland.[347] But this feeling of superior power over nature is delusory and transient. One immediate example is that Lionel and Clara's balloon flight is interrupted at Dieppe, since 'a heavy rain made this mode of travelling now incommodious'.[348]

The cases of the De Lacey cottage and the hot-air balloon demonstrate the ambivalent consequences of Enlightenment progress thinking. While these heterotopias of illusion create an ideal vision of democratic principles and universal sympathy, they also reinforce a dualistic, binary worldview that reinforce the categories of Self and Other. The next section will analyze the sublime landscapes including the Arctic, the tomb of Raymond and the ice cavern as heterotopias, where the oppressed Other can enjoy greater agency to undermine anthropocentric assumptions.

2.3 The Heterotopic Potential of the Sublime

The image of the Arctic recurs throughout *Frankenstein*, serving both as the setting where Victor chases after his creature and the ultimate destination of Walton's search for the North Pole. I contend that the Arctic here constitutes a heterotopia where the dominant social order of anthropocentrism is temporarily suspended, and the mobile queer pair Victor and the Creature are able to construct a homoerotic union. The mysteries of the Arctic arouse Walton's imagination, as 'a land surpassing in wonders and in beauty every region hitherto discovered on the habitable globe'.[349] Yet in reality, the Arctic ice encroaches on the vessel's mobility and disrupts his dream of polar exploration. The Arctic voyages in *Frankenstein* are of topical significance in the time of Shelley's writing. The Arctic played an important role in the spatial construction of masculinity and British national identity. For example, Chauncey C. Loomis argues that 'national prestige' had gradually replaced commercial interests in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century as the goal of the British navy's Arctic expedition, especially after the Napoleonic wars when 'British manhood and British power' were associated with the continued search for a passage in the untraversed Arctic region.[350] Jen Hill argues that the Arctic was perceived by the public as 'an extraterritorial space',

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[347] Ibid., p.55.

[348] Ibid., p.170.

[349] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.5.

[350] Chauncey C. Loomis, 'The Arctic Sublime', in *Nature and the Victorian Imagination*, ed. by U. C. Knoepflmacher and G. B. Tennyson, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp.95-112 (p.95).

where masculinity was constructed as the basis of a national identity and a justification for imperialism.[351] On the other hand, many scholars also point out that the Arctic can pose challenges to humanity ambition to bring wild nature under control. For example, Carroll argues that the tremendous shaping force of the polar ice in the late eighteenth century was often cast in imperial terms, as 'a spreading dominion of cold or as an empire of ice that constituted a natural check on European ambitions'.[352] David Higgins suggests that ice in *Frankenstein* represents a force of resistance against imperialism in the form of 'writing the landscape as possession'.[353] In combining these ideas, I argue that the Arctic represents both a promising prospect and an anti-imperial visual counterpoint, displaying paradoxical effects ascribed to the sublime.

Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant's elaborations on the aesthetics of the sublime and the beautiful shed light on the shaping force of the natural environment on individuals' psychology and identities. Burke argues that the sublime springs from 'whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror'.[354] The beautiful, according to Burke, is associated with 'some qualities, which direct and heighten the appetite which humanity has in common with all other animals'.[355] Kant distinguishes the sublime from the beautiful based on their scope, magnitude and intensity of emotion called forth in beholders, arguing that 'The sublime touches, the beautiful charms'.[356] In light of their aesthetic insights, I posit that the sublime landscapes in Shelley's works have the heterotypic potential to accommodate the oppressed Other which is otherwise excluded from the prevailing social system. Mary Poovey argues that both nature and imagination are distrusted in *Frankenstein*, for instead of curbing the imagination, nature furthers imaginative projection.[357] Following Poovey's argument, I argue that the heterotopic potential of the sublime lies in its ability to enlarge and aggrandize the sphere of

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[351] Jen Hill, *White Horizon: The Arctic in the Nineteenth-Century British Imagination* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), p.54.

[352] Siobhan Carroll, 'Crusades Against Frost: Frankenstein, Polar Ice, and Climate Change in 1818', *European Romantic Re*view, 24.2 (2013), 211-230 (p.213).

[353] David Higgins, *British Romanticism, Climate Change, and the Anthropocene: Writing Tambora* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p.73.

[354] Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, p.39.

[355] Ibid., p.91.

[356] Immanuel Kant, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime and Other Writings*, ed. by Patrick Frierson (Cambridge: CUP, 2011), p.16.

[357] Mary Poovey, '"My Hideous Progeny" The Lady and the Monster', *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p.126.

imagination and allow the subordinate Other to gain a growing sense of transcendence—a sense of connection to something beyond social and cultural constraints.

The Arctic is where the Creature schemes against Frankenstein—to induce the latter to vainly pursue him among the everlasting ices of the north. While the revenging and cruel Arctic environment commands respect and terror, it also hasthe potential to become a heterotopia which temporarily subverts the dominant social order of anthropocentrism, and opens up possibilities for rethinking and reconstructing the human Self in relation to the Other. Victor's plan of catching the Creature is thrown completely into disarray by unexpected occurrences such as the progress of 'a ground sea' and 'the mighty shock of an earthquake' in the Arctic environment.[358] He is eventually left 'drifting on a scattered piece of ice' and becomes separate from the Creature with 'a tumultuous sea' in-between.[359] The Arctic is inherently dynamic and powerful, asserting itself as an autonomous subject rather than the object of Victor's aesthetic aspirations. Victor is threatened to be destroyed by the 'immense and rugged mountains of ice' and the 'thunder of the ground sea'.[360] Yet at the same time, 'the frost' which 'made the paths of the sea secure' opens up possibilities for him to achieve freedom beyond the boundaries of established norms. As Philip Shaw argues, the sublime experience registers 'the limits of reason and expression' along with a feeling which might go beyond these limits.[361] Here the sublime Arctic provides him with opportunities to explore his alternative aspects of himself and to act beyond the limits of prevailing conventions.

The Arctic not only provides a shelter for the Creature away from human disturbance, but also function as a heterotopia generating possibilities for enacting the same-sex desires in the public sphere. Scholarship has recognized the queer elements in the relationship between the Creature and Frankenstein. According to the *OED*, 'queer' refers to 'A person having a sexual or gender identity that does not correspond to, or that challenges, traditional (esp. heteronormative) ideas of sexuality or gender'.[362] George E. Haggerty, for example, delineates a set of features that characterize the queerness of the novel: 'masculine birth, lurid devotion between males, sexual aggression, and

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[358] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.177.

[359] Ibid., p.177.

[360] Ibid., p.176.

[361] Philip Shaw, *The Sublime,* 2nd edn (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p.2.

[362] 'Queer, n.2.' in *OED* [online], <www.oed.com/view/Entry/156235> [accessed 25 January 2023].

finally a completely obsessive relation between a scientist and the violent other he has created'.[363] Haggerty further identifies some 'contemptuous intimacies' between the Creature and his creator, in which the former is the latter's overpowering masculine Other.[364] In light of this queer perspective, I would argue that the Arctic space where Victor and the Creature coexist serves as a heterotopia where they can be free from social restraint to form a homoerotic union. It seems that Victor and the Creature are concerned to keep each other in sight. According to Victor, the Creature 'who feared that if I lost all trace I should despair and die, often left some mark to guide me'.[365] Whenever Victor regains the visual track of the Creature, he cannot help expressing his excitement. For example, when he catches a sight of 'a dark speck upon the dusky plain' which turns out to be the Creature on a sledge, he bursts into an exclamation that 'Oh! with what a burning gush did hope revisit my heart!'[366] Their preoccupation with physical affinity within the same space indicates their desire for a shared space of queer intimacy. Although Victor is frustrated by this hopeless yet perpetual pursuit, claiming that 'I was cursed by some devil, and carried about with me my eternal hell', he seems to enjoy doing so, believing that 'a spirit of good followed and directed [his] steps'.[367] The unvaried expanse of ice is oppressive in its barren monotony and stillness. Yet it also constitutes 'the dusky plain' marked by its flat surface and pure color, which makes it easier for Victor to find any trace of the Creature.[368] Sometimes 'some ice rock' disrupts Victor's vision, concealing the sight of the Creature's sledge 'with its intervening crags'.[369] But most of time they are mutually visible through continuous movements. While these visual obstacles symbolize the expectations and constraints of heteronormative society, mobility enables them to free from them, and pursue homoerotic desires in an open space exclusively belonging to them. As the Creature warns, the journey among 'the everlasting ices of the north' will bring Victor 'misery of the cold and frost' while he is 'impassive'.[370] It is possible to read the Creature as socially disruptive in his

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[363] George E. Haggerty, 'What is Queer about *Frankenstein*?', in *The Cambridge Companion to Frankenstein*, ed. by Andrew Smith (Cambridge: CUP, 2016), pp.116-127 (p.117).

[364] Ibid., p.119.

[365] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.172.

[366] Ibid., p.176.

[367] Ibid., p.174.

[368] Ibid., p.176.

[369] Ibid., p.176.

[370] Ibid., p.174.

ability to evoke a prohibited male homoerotic desire which acts a destabilizing force, both on the level of the desiring individual Victor's psyche, and in a wider system of social regulation based on the suppression of subversive male bonds. In this shared space of mutual attraction, they symbolically merge with each other, stepping outside the Self/Other binary. Victor is discovered by Walton travelling with a sledge, in the same fashion as the Creature. His conspicuous physical deformation, with limbs 'nearly frozen' and body 'dreadfully emaciated by fatigue and suffering', suggests his own abnormality, similar to the Creature's monstrosity.[371] As Carroll argues, the Arctic was in Shelley's time associated with Buffon's vision of a post-human world, in which certain 'beings exist that are capable of resisting the fatal temperature of a freezing globe'.[372] Before attending university, Victor admits that 'I still read Pliny and Buffon with delight, authors, in my estimation, of nearly equal'.[373] Victor's rejection of the Creature's request for a female companion is probably based on a great deal of apprehension of her reproductive capability that might bring 'a race of devils' threatening the existence of human beings.[374] Thus, the Arctic is a distant, marginal space endowed with all kinds of future possibilities. Considering its future-oriented aspect, the Arctic where this queer pair achieve a form of homoerotic union may offer a prospect of an affirmative queer future, even if that possibility is eventually ruled out by Victor's death and the Creature's disappearance in the final scene of *Frankenstein*.

Following this line of thought, the recurring appearance of the Creature in the Arctic symbolizes Victor's dynamic eruption of repressed homoerotic desires. The Creature suddenly appears soon after Victor's two encounters with the Alpine sublime. One of these encounters, as is examined below, tends to produce in Victor mixed feelings of exultation and terror, triumph and defeat. These dynamic, unstable feelings bear witness to his fragmented and unstable subjectivity. I intend to argue that the sublime landscapes facilitate an examination of the viewer's psychic space as a heterotopia capable of juxtaposing contradictory selves. On the way back to Geneva after hearing of his brother William's death, Victor is astonished by a huge storm with flashes of lightning at Secheron, a village near the Alps.

> […] The storm, as is often the case in Switzerland, appeared at once in various parts of the

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[371] Ibid., p.13.

[372] 'aurait-il un seul des eˆtres actuels capable de resister a` cette chaleur mortelle', translated by Siobhan Carroll. Georges Louis Leclerc Buffon, *Comte de. Les Époques de la Nature* (1778; repr. Paris: Éditions rationalistes, 1971), p.149. Buffon's idea is translated and quoted in Carroll, 'Crusades Against Frost', p.221.

[373] Shelley, *Frankenstein*, p.25.

[374] Ibid., p.138.

> heavens. The most violent storm hung exactly north of the town, over that part of the lake which lies between the promontory of Belrive and the village of Copet. Another storm enlightened Jura with faint flashes; and another darkened and sometimes disclosed the Mole, a peaked mountain to the east of the lake.
>
> While I watched the storm, so beautiful yet terrific, I wandered on with a hasty step. This noble war in the sky elevates my spirits; I clasped my hands, and exclaimed aloud, 'William, dear angel! this is thy funeral, this thy dirge!'[375]

Frankenstein feels elevated yet in the meantime overcome by the glorified thunderstorm. On one hand, the sublime stormy scene invokes in him a sense of merging with the greater whole. He feels elevated and overcome by the glorified 'noble war in the sky' visually and aurally. The tempest boosts his vainglory to apotheosize his dead brother. In his imagination, William is exalted to the position of an angel, and the whole aerial landscape serves as his 'funeral' and 'dirge'. This imagined funeral ceremony creates an opportunity to express his deep grief over William's death. On the other hand, this tempest makes Frankenstein realize his own trivial mortality to contend against larger forces. He associates the mightiness and magnificence of nature with the violence and blood he breeds, and hence generates a sense of culpability and grave misgivings about the future. Frankenstein's grief and fear are drastically heightened as the 'darkness and storm increase every minute', and 'the thunder bursts with a terrific crash' in the proximity just over his head.[376] He is overwhelmed by the violence of the storm, and overmastered by the immensity of it, ranging from the north of the town to the peaked mountain, stretching to the east of the lake. Therefore, all these raw, lugubrious objects in the narrator's composition of the scenery not only signify his moribund melancholy, but also portend apocalyptic furies and retribution.

My analysis of Victor's encounter with the Alpine sublime landscape thus suggests a possible reading of his unconscious wishes and deep-seated feelings of guilt. His sight of the Creature, the abject Other, after this sublime experience, metaphorically represents his burgeoning homoerotic desires. Thus the sublime landscape plays an important role in allowing Victor to realize his long-subdued sexuality, to re-embody his same-sex desires, and to reclaim his suppressed subjectivity. All these intense feelings and newly bourgeoning self-consciousness demonstrate Victor's inner world as a heterotopia, containing both spirits of rebellion and conformity to social norms.

If the Arctic is to be considered a queer landscape heterotopia, the novel also contains a

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[375] Ibid., p.56.

[376] Ibid., p.56.

different kind of landscape centering on heterosexual relationship—the rock recess at Athens, the tomb of Raymond. It is where his wife who has long been neglected and subjugated has an opportunity to achieve symbolic union with her husband, albeit through suicide. This burial ground can be considered a heterotopia, where Raymond's wife Perdita reclaims her subjectivity by going beyond her confining domestic sphere without rejecting her female identity.

Before examining how Perdita makes use of the space to establish her own agency, I would discuss another female character, Raymond's secret lover, the Greek princess Evadne, who presents herself as an aggressive, sexually liberated woman in contradiction to traditional gender norms. When Raymond pays secret visits to her, she presents her 'passionate and unrequited love'.[377] Her image is evocative of the contemporary debate about the role of women in Regency Britain. Caroline Franklin argues that Byron's representation of women, while it centers liberal ideology by prioritizing romantic love and liberated female sexuality, still emphasizes patriarchal constraints on women's role.[378] Here Evadne seemingly accords with the images of Byron's heroines, but her unexpected appearance in the battlefield in the guise of a soldier challenges gender stereotypes, reflecting other strands of contemporary thought, such as Wollstonecraft's proto-feminist thoughts in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), which appeal for women's inclusion in the public sphere. Her apocalyptic prophecy about 'Fire, and war, and plague' before death makes an explicit claim for revenge, which accurately predicts Raymond's death in the bombing and fire of the city of Constantinople, and also the devastating plague spreading all over the world.[379] Unlike Evadne whose vengeance presents an open and violent attack on patriarchal oppression, Perdita breaches the gender norms in a more subtle and implicit way. Her arrangement of Raymond's tomb seemingly conforms to the prevalent cultural expectation of male dominance and female subordination, yet actually highlights her subjectivity.

Perdita's design of Raymond's tomb makes this place a heterotopia, where she acts and behaves beyond the limits imposed by gender stereotypes. Raymond is 'a man of the world', extolling man's unfettered passions.[380] As the leader of the Greek army, he intrudes into the plague-stricken city of Constantinople alone and achieves the final victory. The city of Constantinople for Raymond is a place to fulfill his ambitions as a triumphant hero, even at the cost of life and love, as he claims that

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[377] Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.93.

[378] Caroline Franklin, *Byron's Heroines* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p.2.

[379] Shelley, *The Last Man*, p.142.

[380] Ibid., p.35.

‘I am about to die! […] Such is the will of fate!’[381] His fervor for military heroism reinforces the gender-based spatial segregation by which men occupy public spaces while women are confined to private spaces. Raymond’s long and unannounced absence at home creates great suffering for his wife Perdita who describes herself as someone ‘chained’ to ‘a solitary rock’ in the midst of ‘a barren desert’.[382] After Raymond’s death, it is Perdita who proposes and designs Raymond’s tomb at a rocky recess at Athens, a site where ‘he would wish to repose’.[383] Perdita carries out a series of changes to the tomb of Raymond, and builds ‘the cynosure of Greece’ to commemorate his glory and sacrifices:

> […] the tomb was at our right-hand, the whole ravine, and plain, and azure sea immediately before us; the dark rocks received a glow from the descending sun, which glanced along the cultivated valley, and dyed in purple and orange the placid waves; we sat on a rocky elevation, and I gazed with rapture on the beauteous panorama of living and changeful colors, which varied and enhanced the graces of earth and ocean.[384]

The tomb is placed in a privileged position which affords a vantage view of ‘the whole ravine, the plain, and azure sea’. The central position signifies Raymond’s masculine power and authority. The sight of ‘living and changeful colors’ shows how the whole burial scene is imbued with the life-giving power of the sun, which creates and perpetuates the illusion of Raymond’s spiritual presence. Perdita’s intention to stay in the newly built cottage beside his grave illustrates her longing for reunion with her lover. Her romantic scheme conforms to stereotypical notions of femininity which are organized as an adaptation to men’s power, and emphasize conventional feminine virtues of compliance and empathy. She is supposed to return to England and assume the mother’s role, yet she commits suicide in order to be ‘a part of this scene’ while forsaking their child.[385] Such an act can be considered as a transgression of the socially prescribed boundaries for women. In Perdita’s design, the tomb of Raymond not only functions to commemorate his sacrifices for the freedom of the Greeks, but also satisfies her personal wish for reunion with her husband. Both as a designer and a participant in this funeral scene, Perdita flouts the patriarchal rules for women’s occupation of

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[381] Ibid., p.153.

[382] Ibid., p.104.

[383] Ibid., p.163.

[384] Ibid., p.164.

[385] Ibid., p.166.

space. Her engagement with the natural environment activates the heterotypic potential of the natural burial site, where the oppressed and neglected women reclaims her agency, albeit a limited and confined one.

The heterotopic nature of Raymond's tomb site is manifest in its potential to empower the woman and also to highlight the independent agency of nature. I argue the natural site of Raymond's tomb acts as a heterotopia, where the organic rhythms of the landscape advocate an eco-centric understanding of the world. The narrator's representation emphasizes an immersive natural environment in which human's sensorial bodies are attuned to a variable landscape. As the narrator describes the various natural organisms that inhabit the site where Raymond's bodily remains are deposited:

> […] The chasm, deep, black, and hoary, swept from the summit to the base; in the fissures of the rock myrtle underwood grew and wild thyme, the food of many nations of bees; enormous crags protruded into the cleft, some beetling over, others rising perpendicularly from it. At the foot of this sublime chasm, a fertile laughing valley reached from sea to sea, and beyond was spread the blue Aegean, sprinkled with islands, the light waves glancing beneath the sun.[386]

The profound chasm and towering crags seemingly convey an overwhelming sense of greatness and sublime that emphasizes the fundamental 'otherness' of the landscape. Then the narrative shifts from a reductive, scientific depiction of the environment to the dynamic energies inherent in the interstitial spaces as natural habitats of plants and insects such as 'wild thyme' and 'bees'. They form an autonomous ecosystem in a constant flow of energy, emphasizing nature as a non-human agent. The sights of 'enormous crags', 'a fertile laughing valley', and the shining 'blue Aegean' mark the immensity of the landscape and easily stimulate the bodily senses of viewers. The stimulation of bodily senses might subsequently obscure vision, and leave viewers a feeling of being transcended beyond their control. The narrator's representation foregrounds the volatile natural forces which disrupt stable anthropocentric ontology and challenge a general human tendency to reduce the natural environment to geographical coordinates. In juxtaposing two modes of perceiving the natural environment, Shelley demonstrates the limitations of human-centered perception and experience, fluctuating between moments of Enlightenment in which the individual is able to clearly observe and classify the environment, and moments of disorientation in which they cannot decipher the minute details of the landscape. Having examined the natural site of Raymond's

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[386] Ibid., p.164.

tomb as a heterotopia that challenges an anthropocentric view of the world, I will further examine the ice cavern in which Lionel and Adrian bury the last victim of the plague as another heterotopia where nature is reconceptualized as an active agent rather than a passive object.

The ice cavern can be regarded as a heterotopia, where an eco-centric understanding of the world is presented through a reciprocal relation between the sensorial body and tactile elements in the natural surroundings. It is located near the towering Alps, the sublime landscape. According to Lionel, the survivors of the plague try to find the sublime landscape, believing that 'sublime grandeur of outward objects' can sooth their 'hapless hearts'.[387] This sense of being connected to the natural world is akin to a Romantic view of nature which regards nature as a spiritual source of renewal and inspiration. William Wordsworth, for example, views nature as a purer expression of the divine on earth. He recognizes the existence of a power far greater than humanity in the contemplation of nature near Tintern Abbey, as he describes that 'A motion and a spirit, that impels/ All thinking things, all objects of all thought,/And rolls through all things'.[388] The uplifting effect of the Alpine landscape highlights the agency of nature. Shelley's attention to the potential of secluded, marginal spaces permeates her works. For example, the cavern in her novel *Valperga* (1823) provides a safe and empowering setting for the heretic, the outcast and the oppressed women. The allegory of the cavern symbolizes a rebirth of the female character Euthanasia from the cave-womb within Mother Nature. The marginal space as a potential site that empowers subordinate social forces and contests the dominant social order is also seen in *The Last Man.* Lionel's representation of the ice cavern creates an eco-centric vision of a harmonious, sustainable underground environment completed by those who inhabit and experience it.

The sublime ice cavern functions as a heterotopia, where nature inspires the viewers to imagine and establish a more sustainable and organic link between humans and the natural world. It provides a safe dwelling for the dead body, which is placed on 'a bier of ice' and instantly covered by 'vast blocks of ice' falling from the roof.[389] Lionel and Adrian, standing on the rocky platform, observe the entire underground environment:

> […] The snowy mountains and blue glaciers shone in their own right. The rugged and abrupt ravine, which formed one side of Mont Anvert, was opposite to us, the glacier at our side; at our feet Arveiron, white and foaming, dashed over the pointed rocks that jutted into it, and,

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[387] Ibid., p.331.

[388] William Wordsworth, *The Major Works: Including The Prelude,* ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford: OUP, 2008), p.134.

[389] Shelley, *The Last Man,* p.331.

> with whirring spray and ceaseless roar, disturbed the stilly night. Yellow lightnings played around the vast dome of Mont Blanc, silent as the snow-clad rock they illuminated; all was bare, wild, and sublime, while the singing of the pines in melodious murmurings added a gentle interest to the rough magnificence […][390]

The rocky platform is open towards the outside, where the viewers can perceive the underground cavern and experience the dramatic changes in light, color and sound directly. The ravine formed by the action of the running water breaks the oppressive stillness of the night, and intermittent yellow lightnings gradually brighten to present spaces of the snow-clad rock that are concealed in darkness. The perception of the shift from stillness to motion, from darkness to light, implies a change of viewers' emotional responses from fear to pleasure. While the confined appearance of the ice cavern coheres with the gloomy stillness of death, the viewers' experience of a continuous open space suggests a potential for natural regeneration. Apart from visual fluidity, the narrator also captures the overwhelming aural sensations at every unexpected sound, such as 'the singing of the pines', 'the riving and fall of icy rocks' and 'the thunder of the avalanche'. All these visual and aural perceptions converge to create a profoundly reverential and meditative space capable of arousing a solemn feeling of awe. These sensory effects of the cavern foreground the agency of nature in terms of being self-generating and self-sustaining, as is shown in the snowy mountains and blue glaciers shining 'in their own right'. The respect for nature's autonomy emphasizes a mutually reciprocal rather than antagonistic interaction between nature and humans, which contributes to the creation of a heterotopic space.

My analyses of the Arctic, the tomb of Raymond and the ice cavern set out to demonstrate the heterotopic potentials of sublime landscapes to enlarge the sphere of imagination and temporarily suspend the dominant social order. The overwhelming yet simultaneously uplifting sublime landscape elicit an exploration into the viewer's alternative selves. The examination of the organic rhythms of the landscape emphasizes a decentering of the human and an eco-centric understanding of the world which regards nature as an independent agent rather than an object to be used. In presenting how humans are disoriented when engaging in reciprocal interaction with the natural landscape, Shelley suggests the limitations of an anthropocentric view which relies on human consciousness as the source for knowledge.

In summary, Foucault's concept of heterotopia has served in this chapter as a conceptual tool to investigate representations of space and spatial practices in *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man*. Shelley

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[390] Ibid., p.331.

criticizes the hubris of Enlightenment attempts to conquer and master nature, but she also maintains an enduring faith in humanity, leaving open the possibility of building a compassionate society in harmony with nature. As I have suggested throughout the analysis, she reveals in this way a non-linear perspective that sees historical change as a cycle in which degeneration from an idyllic past moves into the restoration of social order and continuity with past ideals. My examination of the representations of natural landscapes such as the Arctic, Raymond's burial ground at the rock recess and the ice cavern, also suggests that the function of heterotopias is more than the assumed roles as counter-sites. These heterotopias can create spaces for the experience of otherness in relation to the neighboring social spaces in society, where the subordinate Others including the Creature, the queer pair and the female character are allowed freedom and agency to dismantle the Self-Other dichotomy deeply entrenched in Western thought.

Unlike Mary Shelley who presents her extraordinary imagination in the depictions of a world lying between reality and fiction, Jane Austen sets her fictions in the English country house, a place where the intersection between gender and class politics is enacted and understood. The next chapter examines domestic spaces as heterotopias of illusion in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park.* These are potentially resistive spaces against the arbitrary proceedings of the patriarchal order, where female characters are allowed to exercise agency despite being still subject to and complicit in many of the pressures of patriarchal society. The paradoxical nature of heterotopias implies the compromised, difficult position in which the female character finds themselves, caught between an inclination to obey conventional expectations of women and an impulse to rebel against social hierarchies.

Chapter Three—Embodied Heterotopia in Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* and *Pride and Prejudice*

This chapter focuses on heterotopias in dialogue with the politics of gender and class in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Mansfield Park* (1814). These two novels exhibit the protagonists' identity as a fluid construct, shaped through a dynamic process of interactions taking place in ideologically loaded spaces. I investigate domestic spaces such as Pemberley and the East Room as heterotopias, where embodied experiences facilitate human connectedness, yet simultaneously heighten consciousness of class and social inequality. Austen's heroines Elizabeth Bennet and Fanny Price occupy multiple, conflicting subject positions both as independent female agents and objects of male desire. These apparently contradictory positions highlight the dilemma facing heroines: they implicitly support the system of patriarchy which maintain male supremacy and the oppression of women.

Foucault's sixth principle of heterotopia describes a tension between heterotopias of illusion and heterotopias of compensation that is of importance to my argument about the way in which Austen's spaces engage with the construction of social identity. Heterotopias of illusion can 'create a space of illusion that exposes every real space, all the sites inside of which human life is partitioned, as still more illusory'.[391] Heterotopias of compensation, by contrast, can 'create space that is other, another real space, as perfect, as meticulous, as well arranged as ours is messy, ill constructed, and jumbled'.[392] This dualism of imaginative disorder and compensatory order is particularly relevant to analysis of places and spaces in Austen's novels.

This chapter will examine, in *Pride and Prejudice,* Mr. Bennet's library (Vol.1, Chapter XV) as a heterotopia of compensation that is perfect and well arranged, making the rest of domestic space around it appear alarmingly messy and chaotic. It will aim to show how the picturesque park at Pemberley (Vol.3, Chapter I) acts as a leisured heterotopia of illusion imbued with a certain imaginative potential to allow the inclusion of various social classes. At the same time, it is also part of Darcy's estate. Pemberley House (Vol.3, Chapter I) acts as a heterotopia of compensation, a well-constructed and ordered site that displays Darcy's extraordinary wealth and refined taste. The second part of the chapter will argue that in *Mansfield Park*, Fanny Price's East Room (Vol.1,

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[391] Ibid., p.27.

[392] Ibid., p.27.

Chapter XVI) functions as a heterotopia of illusion that promotes female agency yet at the same time serves to reinforce hegemonic power relations. The upstairs room of the Price's house (Vol.3, Chapter IX) can be seen as another heterotopia of illusion that fulfills Fanny's psychological needs of power and control. My argument will concentrate on the politics of gender and class and on their relations to spatial heterogeneity. My aim is to shed light on the spatial dynamic between heterotopias of compensation and illusion, and to illuminate the active agency of space in creating social relations and (re)constructing individual identities.

In this chapter, I aim to uncover how emotional expressions are embedded in the socio-economic structure by looking at characters' embodied experience of space and motion. Before embarking on textual analysis, I would like to place Austen's writings within the larger eighteenth-century framework of sensibility, with its emphasis on feelings. My idea to explore Austen's engagement with the discourse of sensibility is informed by Marilyn Butler who situates Austen in her intellectual and ideological contexts and demonstrates how 'the crucial action of her novels is in itself expressive of the conservative side in an active war of ideas'.[393] 'Sensibility', according to Janet Todd, denotes 'the faculty of feeling, the capacity for extremely refined emotion and a quickness to display compassion for suffering', i.e. the capacity for sentiment.[394] John Mullan demonstrates how sensibility opens up the possibility of exploring alternative human experience and relations that transcend the utilitarian, addressing 'a sociability not explicable in terms of political or material necessity'.[395] However, sensibility was never without its critics. G. J. Barker-Benfield argues that the culture of sensibility fails to contest gender inequality, but rather maintains crucial aspects of 'male authority' and 'female subordination'.[396] Markman Ellis points out the limitations of sentimental writers in promoting anti-slavery campaigns, for their sentimental approach did not pose a fundamental challenge to slavery and the slave trade.[397] Both Benfield and Ellis illustrate how sensibility fails to address inequality and systematic discrimination based on gender, race and ethnicity. The problem of sensibility also concerns Austen who, as I argue, employs conventions of the sentimental novel in an ironic way, in order to criticize what James

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[393] Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p.294.

[394] Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986), p.7.

[395] John Mullan, *Sentiment and sociability: The language of feeling in the eighteenth century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p.30.

[396] G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-century Britain* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p.251.

[397] Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p.86.

Baldwin calls 'the ostentatious parading of excessive and spurious emotion'.[398]

I set out to argue that Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* assimilate the novel of sensibility's characteristic optimism, showing how their protagonists Elizabeth and Fanny Price successfully achieve an upward mobility through marriage. Another common feature is Austen's representation of characters' consciousness and emotional states. One shared sentiment recurring throughout both texts is gratitude. Elizabeth articulates gratitude for Darcy's consistent love which is not shaken by her 'rejection' and 'unjust accusations'.[399] Her gratitude implies her recognition and appreciation of Darcy's high class standing. Fanny is taught to show an 'extraordinary degree of gratitude and good behavior' the first day she moves to the Bertram family.[400] Fanny's gratitude indicates that she implicitly submits to the Bertram family and perpetuates the patriarchal order. The ironic statement in the beginning of *Pride and Prejudice*—'it is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife'—may appear to be a truism.[401] Just as the narrator explains in the following sentence that 'the feelings or views of such a man' are 'little known'—nobody really cares what the wealthy man himself thinks he needs.[402] Austen's irony calls attention to the contemporary institution of marriage in which material assets are given priority over feelings. Austen's argument about economic and social conditions underlying emotional expressions sheds light on the workings of heterotopia to expose the existing tensions and inequalities related to gender and class. This chapter aims to reveal how female characters are allowed freedom of emotional expression in the heterotopias which will be elaborated further in the following sections, yet they do not gain adequate power to reverse their oppressed position while remaining compliant with patriarchal power structures.

This chapter is divided into three sections based on the reciprocal influences between a place and its inhabitants. The first section looks at Mr. Bennet's library as a heterotopia of compensation amid the tempestuous domestic battles, which signifies and reinforces his feelings of superiority. The second section focuses on Pemberley Park as a heterotopia of illusion that opens up the possibility of an alternative democratic social order, and Pemberley House as a heterotopia of

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[398] James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), p.27.

[399] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813; repr. Oxford: OUP, 2004), p.201.

[400] Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (1814; repr. Oxford: OUP, 2003), p.11.

[401] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice,* p.1.

[402] Ibid., p.1.

compensation that highlights Darcy's wealth and social influence. The last section investigates Fanny's East room as a heterotopia of illusion that empowers Fanny's sense of agency and paradoxically enhances herown awareness of her marginal social standing.

3.1 Mr. Bennet's library

Most of Jane Austen's novels including *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* are set in country estates situated in fictional English villages and provincial towns. Alistair M. Duckworth argues that country estates in Austen's novels are not neutral settings of action, but laden with ideological content, indexing 'the character and social responsibility of their owners'.[403] Following Duckworth's argument, this chapter explores various kinds of spaces within the country estates that index particular values and social orders. This section examines Mr. Bennet's library, the domestic library, where valuable records and expensive books are stored. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Clarke's circulating library functions both as a public space for reading and lending books and as a social center within the community. In contrast, Mr. Bennet's library serves as a heterotopia of compensation, where his detachment from a hectic social milieu of class distinctions and social climbing reinforces his privileged position. It is a ground-floor room containing a writing table, at least two chairs, and a certain quantity of books. Usually he goes there after breakfast, and spends most of his day there, except to take dinner and tea, while the rest of the family concentrate on noisy and boisterous activities such as reading aloud, playing music, and having overlapping and indecipherable conversations. We are told that '[w]ith a book he was regardless of time'.[404] Susan Fraiman argues that Mr. Bennet on the surface represents the benevolent father advocated by John Locke—'apparently benign to the point of irresponsibility', yet he actually exerts 'the covert power of the Lockean patriarch'.[405] Fraiman thus calls attention to the gender and class politics hidden behind his benevolence, which I will further explore in his specific way of utilizing the library.

Contained within the larger domestic space, Mr. Bennet's library is a personalized space that functions as a heterotopia of compensation, a reassuring space of 'leisure and tranquility', free from

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[403] Alistair M. Duckworth, *The Improvement of the Estate: A Study of Jane Austen's Novels* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p.38.

[404] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.8.

[405] Susan Fraiman, *Unbecoming Women: British Women Writers and the Novel of Development* (New York: New Columbia University Press, 1933), p.69.

'folly and conceit' that contains and tames the messiness of space all round it.[406] The act of retreating to his library symbolizes the loosening of patriarchal grip in the family. Mr. Bennet embodies Locke's idea of fatherhood which, as David Foster summarizes, rejects the traditional patriarchal view, and advocates the primacy of 'the individual desire of self-preservation' over 'the family'.[407] His marriage to Mrs. Bennet, whose middle-class background is in contrast to his gentry status, was based on her physical attraction. However, as Hazel Jones comments, after over twenty years of marriage, 'Mr. Bennet has no respect for his wife, having been initially dazzled by her youth, vivacity and beauty, but very soon made painfully aware of her lack of sense and intelligence'.[408] As the hope of having a son vanishes, it becomes urgent for the Bennet sisters to get married well. Mrs. Bennet, a woman 'of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper', has made it 'the business of her life' to 'get her daughters married'.[409] On the contrary, Mr. Bennet adopts a detached, cynical attitude towards family matters. He oftentimes makes sarcastic remarks about Mrs. Bennet's matchmaking scheme, claiming that she should 'live to see many young men of four thousand a year come into the neighbourhood'.[410] Yet his wife takes his sarcastic words seriously, which suggests that their marriage is of unequal minds. Their different degrees of involvement in family matters correspond to their distinct conceptions regarding the spatial configuration of the home. For Mrs. Bennet, their home, presided over by a benevolent patriarch, is potentially a homogeneous space where a traditional, hierarchical structure is temporarily suspended, as she is allowed to intrude everywhere. However, she essentially cannot transcend the patriarchal system that controls all decisions and actions. When she enters the library without permission and asks him to persuade Elizabeth to accept Mr. Collins' proposal, Mr. Bennet reacts in a detached way, as is indicated in his eyes 'with a calm unconcern which was not in the least altered by her communication'.[411] He then lays claim to authority by requesting 'the free use of [his] understanding on the present occasion' and 'of [his] room'.[412] Mr. Bennet in his aloofness and

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[406] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, pp.53-54.

[407] David Foster, 'Taming the Father: John Locke's Critique of Patriarchal Fatherhood', *The Review of Politics*, 56.4 (1994), 641-670 (p.650).

[408] Hazel Jones, *Jane Austen and Marriage* (London: Continuum, 2009), p.147.

[409] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.3.

[410] Ibid., p.3.

[411] Ibid., p.85.

[412] Ibid., p.86.

imperturbability signifies his library as a privileged space of peace and stability.

Having examined how Mr. Bennet uses his own library as a place of retreat from his duties as a father, I will now turn to consider the significance of the domestic library as a storage space for treasured and expensive books, which is highlighted in Miss Bingley and Mr. Darcy's conversation. As the narrator records:

> 'I am astonished,' said Miss Bingley, 'that my father should have left so small a collection of books.—What a delightful library you have at Pemberley, Mr. Darcy!'
>
> 'It ought to be good,' he replied, 'it has been the work of many generations.'
>
> 'And then you have added so much to it yourself, you are always buying books.'
>
> 'I cannot comprehend the neglect of a family library in such days as these.'[413]

Miss Bingley's astonishment at her family's small collection of books highlights the importance of the domestic library as a measure of wealth and social regard. The limited number of books in the Bingley family's library indicate their relatively recent wealth and their transient status (i.e. Mr. Bingley rents rather than owns his house). In contrast, most of Darcy's books are inherited from previous generations thanks to his family's permanent occupation of Pemberley. Darcy's emphasis on the value of a family library displays not only his economic capacity and a refined taste to appreciate these books, but also an inclination to respect the tradition of inheritance that underpins the collection. Thus the domestic library bespeaks wealth and elegance in the owner. While the domestic library reflects valuable insights about the inhabitant's identity, it can also operate as a heterotopic space regarding its role in identity formation and in allowing the inhabitant to seek an alternative experience from everyday life.

Mr. Bennet's library is represented as a perfected heterotopia of compensation, separate and away from the undisciplined person (i.e. Lydia Bennet) and the uncontrolled space (i.e. the circulating library). Its heterotopic qualities lie in its compensatory order that emphasizes not only his psychological detachment from his family, but also his social and intellectual superiority. His sense of superiority manifests itself in his contemptuous comment on Catherine and Lydia who are obsessed with military officers as 'uncommonly foolish'.[414] These officers as a remarkably mobile group represent an unstable social force of moral flippancy. Colonel Forster and Captain Carter, for example, are observed 'very often standing in Clarke's library', a circulating library where they

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[413] Ibid., p.27.

[414] Ibid., p.21.

meet and flirt with plenty of young women.[415] In Austen's age, there was an ambivalent attitude toward circulating libraries. Lee Erickson argues that subscribing to circulating libraries could be a way to intellectually liberate women of small means.[416] On the other hand, Erickson suggests that reading distracted women from their proper social concerns.[417] According to Ana Vogrinčič, readers of novels were disparaged as negligent and careless, subject to romantic unreal life scenarios.[418] Here Clarke's library is a place that potentially witnesses an unconstrained flow of emotions and sexual desires. Mr. Bennet has done nothing to prevent his daughters from approaching and even participating in such a disordered sphere. Later he agrees to let Lydia go to Brighton with Mrs. Foster, claiming that 'We shall have no peace at Longbourn if Lydia does not go to Brighton.[419] Instead of trying to correct Lydia's 'unguarded and imprudent manner', he merely regards her as a disturbing factor against his peace of mind.[420] So his failure to shoulder parental responsibility is related to a self-serving tendency to ensure peace and order in his own space.

Mr. Bennet's library becomes an imaginative extension of himself, his social status and respectability, his world view and belief. Access to his library is regarded as a prerogative of the few, as can be seen in Mary Bennet's eager petition for 'the use of the library at Netherfield' when Jane is engaged to Mr. Bingley.[421] Mary who has 'neither genius nor taste' yet behaves with 'a pedantic air and conceited manner', is not welcome in Mr. Bennet's library.[422] Instead, his favorite child Elizabeth who has a similarly acerbic disposition to his father's and 'something more of quickness than her sisters', is welcome to talk with him in the library.[423] His propensity to share the library with Elizabeth metaphorically represents a willingness to share a mental space. In the library, Mr. Bennet warns her not to accept Mr. Collins' proposal—'Your mother will never see you

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[415] Ibid., p.21.

[416] Lee Erickson, 'The Economy of Novel Reading: Jane Austen and the Circulating Library', *Studies in English Literature,1500-1900*, 30.4, (1990), 573-590 (p.577).

[417] Ibid., p.584.

[418] Ana Vogrinčič, 'The Novel-Reading Panic in 18th Century in England: An Outline of an Early Moral Media Panic', *Medij. Istraž*, 14.2 (2008), 103-124 (p.111).

[419] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.177.

[420] Ibid., p.176.

[421] Ibid., p.266.

[422] Ibid., p.17.

[423] Ibid., p.2.

again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you do'.[424] Later when Elizabeth accepts Darcy's second proposal, her father also questions the sincerity of 'her attachment to Mr. Darcy'.[425] In doing so, he seeks an agreement with her upon the view of marriage based on a solid emotional foundation rather than shallow physical attraction and economic benefits. While Mr. Bennet's romantic view of marriage distinguishes himself from the other family members, restricted access to his library further highlights his difference. The ways in which personal space mirrors a character's psychology can be found throughout *Pride and Prejudice*. Like Mr. Bennet's library, Hunsford Parsonage, Mr. Collins and Charlotte Lucas' dwelling after marriage, is imbued with Charlotte's thoughts and desires for privacy. She prefers to stay inside Hunsford Parsonage and keep the house organized 'with a neatness and consistency', while encouraging Mr. Collins to attend the cultivation of the garden outside.[426] Their spatial separation manifests her desire to maintain her personal space, preferences, and identity within her marriage. As Elizabeth observes, 'a great air of comfort' arises once 'Mr. Collins could be forgotten'.[427] Charlotte who believes that 'Happiness in marriage is entirely a matter of chance', seems reluctant both to stay together with Mr. Collins in the same physical space and to build emotional intimacy.[428] Yet Charlotte certainly cannot claim a room of her own as Mr. Bennet does. The difference in their ability to control space is inextricably linked with gender and class inequalities.

Moving from the discussion of Mr. Bennet's library to the discussion of Darcy's country estate Pemberley, I will now explore how class and gender hierarchies are embedded in the very spatial organization of houses, and entangled with affective and aesthetic experiences. Pemberley can be considered as a heterotopia of illusion, where its alternative spatial arrangements decenter the rigid social order. Elizabeth's visit to Pemberley marks a turning point in her relationship with Darcy. As Elizabeth herself confesses to Jane, her love towards Darcy starts from '[her] first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley'.[429] Jones argues that their union, notwithstanding socioeconomic disparities, seems to conform to Austen's ideal marriage whose core tenets are 'affection, friendship

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[424] Ibid., p.85.

[425] Ibid., p.288.

[426] Ibid., p.121.

[427] Ibid., p.121.

[428] Ibid., p.16.

[429] Ibid., p.286.

and respect'.[430] According to June Sturrock, *Pride and Prejudice* foregrounds Austen's vision of a happy marriage based on 'intellectual equality or similarity', 'esteem' and 'respect'.[431] Austen's treatment of marriage in her work, as Lloyd W. Brown argues, shares similarities with Mary Wollstonecraft's beliefs and the feminist tradition in questioning 'the conventional assumption about marriage, insofar as those assumptions are rooted in a restrictive view of the woman's identity'.[432] But such an unconventional vision of marriage is suspicious in a pragmatic world where women marry primarily to secure certain material benefits from men. Elizabeth is not indifferent to the trappings of a more affluent lifestyle, as she is immediately attracted by the conversation endorsing Pemberley as 'a kind of model' country estate with 'a delightful library'.[433] I argue that the romantic union between Darcy and Elizabeth, despite challenging the broader social hierarchy and its underpinnings, is ultimately confined within the conservative notions of marriage. Darcy might repeat Mr. Bennet's mistake of being blindly attracted to Elizabeth's appearance, since she obviously does not fit his ideal of 'an accomplished woman'.[434] Darcy's admiration for 'the beautiful expression of [Elizabeth's] dark eyes' is articulated in several places.[435] Alice Chandler argues that the reference to her eyes is evident of Darcy's attraction to Elizabeth—'a sense of her vitality, of a freedom and ultimately of a sexual energy unknown in his formal and insipid circles that entices him against his judgement'.[436] All these covert signs of attraction identified by Chandler emphasize Elizabeth's physical-sexual charms. Elizabeth with her sexual attractiveness becomes the object of male desire in a patriarchal society. As Fraiman argues, their marriage 'betrays the tie between father and daughter in favor of ties among men with agendas of their own'.[437] Following Fraiman, I would further explore the dynamics of gender and class hierarchies behind Elizabeth and Darcy's romantic union, by examining her perceptions on a visit to Pemberley.

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[430] Jones, p.5.

[431] June Sturrock, *Jane Austen's Families* (London: Anthem Press, 2013), p.24.

[432] Lloyd W. Brown, 'Jane Austen and the Feminist Tradition', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 28.3 (1974), 321-338 (p.336).

[433] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, pp.27-28.

[434] Ibid., p.29.

[435] Ibid., p.16. See also, Darcy admits to Miss Bingley that 'I have been meditating on the very great pleasure which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow' (p.19); and Darcy says that Elizabeth's fine eyes 'were brightened by the exercise' in reply to Miss Bingley's sarcasm about her solitary walk for three miles (p.26).

[436] Alice Chandler, '"A Pair of Fine Eyes": Jane Austen's Treatment of Sex', *Studies in the Novel*, 7.1(1975), 88-103 (p.96).

[437] Fraiman, p.73.

The next section examines Pemberley as a heterotopia ridden with contradictory power relations. This country estate shapes Elizabeth's subject position in a patriarchal environment: she is allowed to enjoy the prospect view and reclaim her agency through an immersive experience of the Park, yet she is still subject to a complete set of temporal, spatial and behavioral constraints.

3.2 Pemberley

This section investigates Pemberley which consists of the park and the house, serves as a site of contradictory spatial modes: while the picturesque park exists as a heterotopia of illusion, where visitors are provided with a sense of freedom and spontaneity; the enormous size of the estate and the landscape design highlight the socio-economic privileges of the property owner Darcy. Margaret Doody argues that Elizabeth's move to Derbyshire, which was at the turn of the nineteenth century 'the center of the new manufacturing industry', symbolizes her integration into both 'the traditions of agricultural and rural Pemberley' and 'the nineteenth century's future'.[438] Following Doody, I argue that Pemberley reflects Austen's reflection upon the social reconfigurations that take place when new and traditional notions of domestic order come into contact and tension with each other. The owner of Pemberley welcomes visitors of different social backgrounds, yet simultaneously displays his wealth, power and refined taste. This ambivalence highlights the heterotopic potential of Pemberley—a site of mixing classes and value systems that sustains the traditional model of the English social hierarchy while allowing for change and renewal. William Gilpin in *An Essay on Prints* (1781) defines 'picturesque' as a 'peculiar kind of beauty, which is agreeable in a picture'.[439] He identifies 'roughness' as an essential characteristic of the picturesque, distinguished from the beautiful whose properties essentially arise from 'the idea of neat and smooth'.[440] The park 'for which nature had done more, or where natural beauty had been so little counteracted by an awkward taste', contains a variegated scene in accordance with the aesthetic dictates of the picturesque.[441] The perception of 'great variety of ground' during Elizabeth's and the Gardiners' trip opens up a

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[438] Margaret Doody, *Jane Austen's Names: Riddles, Persons, Places* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2016), p.305.

[439] William Gilpin, *An Essay on Prints,* 3rd edn (London: New Bond Street, 1781), p.xii.

[440] William Gilpin, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and On Sketching Landscape: to Which is Added a Poem, on Landscape Painting* (London: Printed for R. Blamire, 1792), p.6.

[441] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.185.

wide range of possibilities for imagination, and at the same time builds up their surprise at the sudden appearance of Pemberley House.[442] The stream in front of the house provides further depth by connecting the foreground, midground and background where it 'was swelled into greater', while its banks 'neither formal, nor falsely adorned' act as coulisses to draw viewers' attention to the center.[443] Pemberley House is described as 'a large, handsome, stone building, standing well on rising ground, and backed by a ridge of high woody hills'.[444] It is an emblem of vertical, masculine rectitude, onto which Elizabeth and the Gardiners project their admiration and reverence for Darcy's patriarchal authority. As is evident in Elizabeth's feeling that 'to be mistress of Pemberley might be something', this picturesque view of Pemberley House has enhanced her awareness of the material benefits from her marriage to Darcy.[445] The house taking on human characteristics indicates its function as an extension of the owner himself. Thus a guided tour inside Pemberley House offers a chance to get a more comprehensive understanding of Darcy. The more Elizabeth learns about the house, the more she is aware of its owner's good breeding, social standing and superior taste.

Pemberley House functions as a heterotopia of compensation, where its meticulous spatial arrangement reflects Darcy as a benevolent patriarchal authority at home. Its window views, furniture and portrait serve as indicators of the owner's wealth and power, and reinforces Elizabeth's class consciousness. The window at the dining-parlour affords a prospect view of the landscape below:

> The hill, crowned with wood, from which they had descended, receiving increased abruptness from the distance, was a beautiful object. Every disposition of the ground was good; and she looked on the whole scene, the river, the trees scattered on its banks, and the winding of the valley, as far as she could trace it, with delight. As they passed into other rooms, these objects were taking different positions; but from every window there were beauties to be seen.[446]

Elizabeth's pleasure lies in accessing the prospective view which, according to Tim Fulford, should

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[442] Ibid., p.185.

[443] Ibid., p.185.

[444] Ibid., p.185.

[445] Ibid., p.185.

[446] Ibid., pp.185-186.

belong to ‘the propertied classes’ who are able to have a disinterested aesthetic judgment of the landscape.[447] The scenes outside the windows including the hill, the river, the trees and the winding valley are arranged in an encompassing view, which highlights the power of the property owner to control the disposition of landscape elements. Darcy’s social privilege and refined taste are further manifest in the interior design of the room. Lady Catherine de Bourgh displays her vulgar taste and exercises extravagance in adorning Rosings with ‘the chimney-piece’ which ‘alone had cost eight hundred pounds’.[448] By comparison, the furniture of Darcy’s house is observed as ‘neither gaudy nor uselessly fine; with less of splendor, and more real elegance’.[449] The difference between Pemberley and Rosings in terms of interior design accords with the distinct characters of their owners. Lady Catherine represents a haughty and overbearing aristocrat. Her self-claimed musical excellence, for example, is based on nothing but a pompous presumption of her own authority: she does not play, yet offers advice to young ladies that ‘no excellence in music is to be acquired, without constant practice’.[450] Darcy, in contrast, presents himself as a benevolent patriarch at home, an image that takes shape in Elizabeth’s mind when viewing the miniatures and family portraits.

The miniatures and portraits play a key role in constructing an image of family life. The pictures of Mr. Wickham, Miss Darcy and Mr. Darcy as visual narratives suggest a benevolent domestic environment. Despite the fact that Mr. Wickham comes from a lower social status background as ‘the son of her late master’s steward’, who is said to have turned out ‘very wild’, his miniature is well preserved and displayed in a prominent place ‘amongst several other miniatures, over the mantlepiece’.[451] Wickham’s miniature reflects a congenial home environment in which every individual is treated with an impartial kindness and tolerance. This is further shown by the housekeeper’s gratitude and praise of Darcy as ‘the sweetest-tempered, most generous-hearted, boy in the world’.[452] Darcy’s brotherly affection toward his sister is evident in the pretty sitting-room, which is ‘lately fitted up with greater elegance and lightness than the apartments below’ in order to

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[447] Tim Fulford, *Landscape, Liberty and Authority: Poetry, Criticism and Politics from Thomson to Wordsworth* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p.3.

[448] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.84.

[449] Ibid., p.186.

[450] Ibid., p.133.

[451] Ibid., p.186.

[452] Ibid., p.188.

‘give pleasure to Miss Darcy’.[453] All these associations suggest Darcy to be a good-natured authority.

These positive opinions of Darcy make Elizabeth feel the appeal of his power, the appeal of being the mistress of Pemberley. The free indirect discourse reveals Elizabeth’s keen consciousness of Darcy’s power and status ‘as a brother, a landlord, a master’ who can bestow much ‘pleasure or pain’, ‘good or evil’ to many people.[454] The appearance of Darcy in the portrait ‘with such a smile over the face’ brings to mind his constant and affectionate attention paid to her, and produces in her ‘a deeper sentiment of gratitude’.[455] In remembering the ‘warmth’ of his fixed gaze on her while softening ‘its impropriety of expression’, she expresses a willingness to be the object of his desire.[456] Darcy’s sudden appearance with ‘perfect civility’ further confirms his image as a benevolent and beloved patriarch, and propels her to reflect upon ‘the impropriety of her being found there’.[457] A long paragraph of her inner thoughts is rendered in the free indirect style, revealing how ‘[s]he is overpowered by shame and vexation’.[458] Elizabeth’s shame indicates her realization of previous misjudgment of Darcy. Pemberley House acts as a heterotopia of compensation that increases Elizabeth’s awareness of Darcy’s high social and economic status, and counteracts the freedom and disorder played out in the picturesque Park.

Contained within the larger space of the country estate, the Park is akin to a heterotopia of illusion, where Elizabeth and the Gardiners’ multisensory exploratory walk opens up new possibilities for building an intimate connection between humanity and nature. The Park has the appearance of an uncontrolled and wild natural landscape, but it is in fact highly designed. The significance of the picturesque aesthetics is embedded in the immersive interactive experience it offers in contrast to the rest of the traditionally male-controlled space. The Park’s design and its juxtaposed spaces provide Elizabeth with an opportunity to develop an alternative self in more engagement with nature. Her walk, according to Solnit, gives her ‘physical and mental freedom’ to

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[453] Ibid., p.189.

[454] Ibid., p.189.

[455] Ibid., p.189.

[456] Ibid., p.189.

[457] Ibid., p.190.

[458] Ibid., p.191.

escape temporarily from social constraints.[459] As Lesley Instone argues, walking in the spirit of wayfinding, offers an 'open and creative mode of being-in-the-world that embraces the twin entanglement of movement and being moved'.[460] Instone's view of a curiosity-driven way of walking as capable of uniting multiple sense modalities into one perceptual experience, giving rise to more dynamic perceptions of the environment, can be applied to Elizabeth and the Gardiners' leisurely walk through the Park.

The walk enables them to immerse themselves in the natural environment, which somehow narrows the conceptual distance between humanity and nature. These walkers' perceptions of shifting, localized landscape views challenge the configuration of landscape elements mediated through the eyes that seek to exert a symbolic domination over nature. Elizabeth, who is initially absorbed in her own thoughts, cannot gain any impression of the scenery along their walk by the side of the water. She can hear 'the repeated appeals' from her uncle and aunt, and see 'such objects' by way of the light that reaches her eyes, yet she cannot gain knowledge of the scenery based on these scattered sensations.[461] Her failure to perceive the landscape around her demonstrates a tendency, as Tim Ingold criticizes, to regard different sensory modalities as separate entities.[462] Such walk in an absent-minded manner is soon replaced by an immersive experience. As the narrator describes:

> They entered the woods, and bidding adieu to the river for a while, ascended some of the higher grounds; whence, in spots where the opening of the trees gave the eye power to wander, were many charming views of the valley, the opposite hills, with the long range of woods overspreading many, and occasionally part of the stream […] They crossed it by a simple bridge, in character with the general air of the scene; it was a spot less adorned than any they had yet visited; and the valley, here contracted into a glen, allowed room only for the stream, and a narrow walk amidst the rough coppice-wood which bordered it.[463]

While the static observations from 'some of the higher grounds' give primacy to visual perception over other sensory information, walking offers an opportunity to place the body within the

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[459] Solnit, p.100.

[460] Lesley Instone, 'Walking as Respectful Wayfinding in an Uncertain Age', in *Manifesto for Living in the Anthropocene*, ed. by Gibson, K., Rose, D. B., & Fincher, R. (New York: Punctum Books, 2015), pp.133-138 (p.135).

[461] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.191.

[462] Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.244.

[463] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, pp.191-192.

landscape, integrating vision with haptic (tactile and kinesthetic) senses. From the opening 'many charming views', the valley is now viewed in the near distance as 'contracted into a glen', allowing only 'a narrow walk amidst the rough coppice-wood'. Their slow and difficult march owning to the narrowness and roughness of the path, strikes a contrast with their initial visual enjoyment of an idyllic picture of the countryside and nature. These shifting perceptions as they move, pose a threat to human superiority and bounded fixity.

The openness in their mode of walking makes it possible for them to encounter things that are never intended. Every unexpected encounter brings out their continuous reconstruction of the environment. The winding path is designed to help them navigate the Park in a smooth manner without a complicated decision-making process, while also offering chances of interesting and unexpected encounters. The speed, the rhythm, the postures and the pauses of these walkers bring together their bodies and the landscape. On their way back to the house, their pace is slowed down by Mr. Gardiner's engagement in distracting activities—'watching the occasional appearance of some trout in the water, and talking to the man about them'.[464] His visual and auditory senses are combined to produce a total immersion in the environment, in which his thoughts of trout fishing are allowed to roam. In building connections with nature, they are given a sense of spaciousness and stillness even in the midst of physical and emotional intensity, since just a while ago, Mrs. Gardiner is too tired to continue the walk, '[thinking] only of returning to the carriage as quickly as possible'.[465] The sheltered, winding path provides them with enough physical and mental space to get ready for meeting the approaching Darcy, as Elizabeth feels 'more prepared for an interview than before'.[466]

The aesthetics of the picturesque have fundamentally ambivalent effects on visitors. Their movements are relatively free and spontaneous, but they are still contained within the very boundaries of the site and the allocated time. Pemberley Park which is separated from the neighbouring valley, as Tom Williamson and Liz Bellamy suggest, serves as 'an aesthetic adornment to the country house', showing off 'the taste and wealth of the owner'.[467] The long-distance walking route—'ten miles round'—suggests the owner's privilege of having ample space

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[464] Ibid., p.192.

[465] Ibid., p.192.

[466] Ibid., p.192.

[467] Tom Williamson and Liz Bellamy, *Property and Landscape: A Social History of Land Ownership and the English Countryside* (London: George Philip, 1987), p.136.

for leisure activities.[468] While their walk provides them with moments of physical and mental freedom, it inevitably increases their awareness of class difference and economic disparity. According to Humphry Repton, the picturesque imbued with an inherently proprietary outlook reinforces social hierarchy. He uses the word 'appropriation' to emphasize the ability of the property owner to order and control the land, 'not so much for the purposes of gain as pleasure and convenience'.[469] Following Repton, the picturesque Park highlights the privileged position of Darcy. Elizabeth, who is surprised at Darcy's constant display of 'recent civility', tries to bridge the class divide by imitating his politeness.[470] Yet her awkward way of mimicking his manner of speech —admiring the place by using words no more than 'delightful' and 'charming'—increases her awareness of an insurmountable social class inequality between them.[471] Her subsequent feelings of shame and guilt generated by 'some unlucky recollections' and her 'praise of Pemberley', betray both a submission to Darcy's authority and an unconscious desire to be punished.[472] Her vigilant awareness of socio-economic differences is evident in the way she introduces the middle-class Gardiners to Darcy, with 'a stroke of civility for which she was quite unprepared'.[473] Elizabeth who expects 'his decamping as fast as he could from such disgraceful companions', is relieved to see Darcy's tolerant and welcoming attitude towards them, and satisfied with her uncle whose expression manifests 'his intelligence, his taste, or his good manner'.[474] Thus the Park as the visual marker of Darcy's refined tastes and extraordinary wealth, strengthens the visitors' class consciousness. While their reception of the winding path and natural landscape is favorable; their experience fits smoothly into the dominant male discourses of control and power. In that sense, the picturesque aesthetics are ideological.

My analysis on Mr. Bennet's library and Pemberley demonstrates heterotopia as an essentially ambivalent concept which can function as either a space of illusion or as space of compensation. Whether the space is used to reinforce or to change the existing power relations depends largely on

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[468] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.192.

[469] Humphry Repton, *Landscape Gardening and Landscape Architecture* (London: Longman, 1840), pp.222-223.

[470] Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, p.192.

[471] Ibid., p.192.

[472] Ibid., p.192.

[473] Ibid., p.193.

[474] Ibid., p.193.

the inhabitants' needs. Heterotopias can therefore serve as important means to reconstruct and reformulate individual identities in the network of social relations. In the next section, I will examine the East Room in *Mansfield Park* as a heterotopia of illusion, where its spatial arrangement temporarily suspends hierarchical social relations and promotes Fanny's sense of autonomy.

3.3 The East Room

The East Room serves as a heterotopia of illusion, where Fanny's growing collection of things empowers her individual agency, yet at the same time evokes her dependent status as a woman deprived of subjectivity. The East Room is a former school room which Fanny occupies and transforms into a 'nest of comforts', where '[s]he could go there after any thing unpleasant below, and find immediate consolation in some pursuit, or some train of thought at hand'.[475] Her own bedroom, the little white attic, is too small to accommodate her personal belongings such as 'her plants, her books', 'her writing-desk, and her works of charity and ingenuity', and she is glad to keep them in the East Room.[476] By arranging the room in her own way, Fanny presents herself as an active subject in contrast to her passive dependent position in everyday life. Before her niece's arrival, Sir Thomas is adamant that she should 'remember that she is not a Miss Bertram', and that her sense of inferiority to his daughters in terms of 'rank, fortunes, rights, and expectations' should always be maintained.[477] Once she has arrived at Mansfield Park, Fanny is overwhelmed by 'the grandeur of the house', perceiving it 'too large for her to move in with ease'.[478] This seeming paradox reflects her lack of a sense of belonging to her surrounding environment. For instance, Mrs. Norris refuses to adopt Fanny based on the reason that she 'must keep a spare room for a friend', yet in fact she never hosts guests.[479] Fanny is frequently asked to run errands for her, though she has 'six hundred a year', a comfortable income that enables her to 'employ three servants to help with the running of the White house'.[480] Since 'six hundred a year' in Austen's day is 'a comfortable

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[475] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.120; Ibid., p.119.

[476] Ibid., p.119.

[477] Ibid., p.9.

[478] Ibid., p.12.

[479] Ibid., p.24.

[480] Ibid., p.24.

income for someone who is careful with their money', Austen is implying that Mrs. Norris's request for help manifests her mean and cruel exploitation of Fanny.[481] As time goes by, Fanny sees deprivation of liberty as a natural part of her life. Despite being often mortified by Maria's and Julia's treatment, 'she thought too lowly of her own claims to feel injured by it'.[482] She has accepted the reality that her cousins have control over their lives and claims to happiness that she cannot share. Her idea of their inequality as normal is evident in her reaction to staying home with her aunt Bertram most of the winter after Sir Thomas' departure. 'Fanny had no share in the festivities of the season', not because she had no interest in any form of entertainment, but because she was not invited, thinking 'too lowly of her own situation to imagine that she should ever be admitted' to them.[483] Instead, she 'enjoyed being avowedly useful as her aunt Bertram's companion', not due to an inclination to indolence, but out of a desire to achieve 'tranquility' and 'security' in 'such a tete-a-tete from any sound of unkindness'.[484] The East Room regarded as 'useless', 'quite deserted', in contrast to the 'superiority' of the Miss Bertrams' apartments, is in accordance with Fanny's powerless, marginal position in the household.[485]

This room as an accumulating archive of selective memories of the past recalls Foucault's fourth principle describing heterochronisms as different 'slices in time' within heterotopias.[486] This space presents an experimental, alternative ordering of the past, emphasizing her sense of personal control and efficacy to glorify sufferings in a direction that enhances her self-esteem and optimistic view of the present. These objects remain indissolubly associated with interesting remembrances:

> —Every thing was a friend, or bore her thoughts to a friend; and though there had been sometimes much of suffering to her—though her motives had been often misunderstood, her feelings disregarded, and her comprehension under-valued; though she had known the pains of tyranny, of ridicule, and neglect, yet almost every recurrence of either had led to something consolatory; her aunt Bertram had spoken for her, or Miss Lee had been encouraging, or what was yet more frequent or more dear—Edmund had been her champion

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[481] Ibid., p.396.

[482] Ibid., p.16.

[483] Ibid., p.28.

[484] Ibid., p.28.

[485] Ibid., pp.118-119.

[486] Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec, p.26.

> and her friend;--he had supported her cause, or explained her meaning, he had told her not to cry, or had given her some proof of affection which made her tears delightful—and the whole was now so blended together, so harmonized by distance, that every former affliction had its charm.[487]

The positive memories evoked by the objects such as Lady Bertram's good words, Miss Lee's encouragement, and Edmund's friendship, create an illusion of a united and harmonious family where Fanny is not isolated, but surrounded by trustful tenderness and abundant affection. Fanny's reconfiguration shows up a difference between the reality of this room as a deserted space which 'nobody else wanted' and her perception of it as 'the best room in the house'.[488] By manipulating a collection of objects to call forth a network of family ties, she asserts a sense of agency and establishes a feeling of belonging. Anna Battigelle demonstrates how domestic spaces in Austen's fiction serve as spaces of consciousness where female characters use art as a form of their cognitive expression to communicate their complex interiority.[489] In light of this, I would argue that the East Room furnished with cast-off amateur art symbolizes a psychic space, a territory imbued with Fanny's distinct values and individual desires.

The East Room becomes a heterotopia of illusion, where Fanny has the luxury and leisure to indulge herself in the pleasures of imagination, and immerse herself in paintings and books. Her intricate interior arrangement highlights the use of art as a means to broaden her view of the world and explore a sense of connection to nature, rather than an artistic effort to create the feeling of lofty moral pretension. Battigelle argues that Austen's ironic use of art and artifacts reveal the owner's 'moral decline and manipulative calculation', as is evident in Mary Crawford's display of artistry masking 'moral relativism'.[490] Unlike Mary Crawford who uses art merely to attract public attention, Fanny sees art as capable of psychologically liberating herself from physical and geographical constraints, and helping establish a sense of belonging. The three 'transparencies' left on the windows of the room, 'where Tintern Abbey held its station between a cave in Italy, and a moonlight lake in Cumberland', reflect her admiration for nature in line with the canonical

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[487] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.119.

[488] Ibid., p.119.

[489] Anna Battigelle, *Art and Artifact in Austen* (Charlottesville: University of Delaware Press, 2020), p.15.

[490] Ibid., p.12.

Romantic poets, and her desire for quiet and seclusion.[491] The 'small sketch of a ship' sent from the Mediterranean by William pinned against the wall conveys both her emotional attachment to her brother and her longing to explore the world.[492] The 'geraniums she might inhale a breeze of mental strength herself', native to southern Africa, shows her interest in the wider world beyond her little universe.[493] Such curiosity about the world is further shown in her reading materials. When Edmund visits her room, he finds out the books she is reading: Lord Macartney's travel narrative to China, Crabbe's *Tales*, and Samuel Johnson's *The Idler*.[494] These travelling narratives give her a chance to learn about the world through others' eyes. Thus the East Room emerges as a heterotopia of illusion set against normative everyday spaces, in which Fanny in her solitude and domestic confinement establishes invisible bonds with families, nature and the wider world.

While the East Room is meant as a space of spiritual empowerment that facilitates Fanny's imagination and self-enhancement; paradoxically it also reinforces her subordinate and dependent status. Fanny's self-effacing disposition impels her to reject Tom's request that she play the role of Cottager's wife:

> 'Me!' cried Fanny, sitting down again with a most frightened look. 'Indeed you must excuse me. I could not act any thing if you were to give me the world. No, indeed, I cannot act.'
> '[…] It is not that I am afraid of learning by heart,' said Fanny, shocked to find herself at that moment the only speaker in the room, and to feel that almost every eye was upon her; 'but I really cannot act.'[495]

Fanny tries to rationalize rejection by pointing out her inability to act, rather than stating a moral judgment that she should not act. Not daring to speak out or ask questions about any ethical concerns she may have regarding the play, Fanny's assertion—'It would be absolutely impossible for me'—shows her dread of self-exposure.[496] Her desire for obscurity and fear of attention are also evident in her 'shocked' discovery of herself being 'the only speaker in the room', as the object of gaze and judgment. She refuses to participate in the play, also for fear of Sir Thomas. By making

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[491] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.120.

[492] Ibid., p.120.

[493] Ibid., p.120.

[494] Ibid., p.123.

[495] Ibid., p.115.

[496] Ibid., p.115.

clear, to herself at least, how much she disapproves of *Lovers' Vows*—so 'improper' a play 'could be proposed and accepted in a private theatre'—Fanny behaves in a morally righteous way, without challenging or disobeying the authority of Sir Thomas.[497] Acutely conscious of her subordinate position, she keeps silent, and instead wishes to have her cousins 'roused as soon as possible by the remonstrance which Edmund would certainly make'.[498] Overwhelmed by Tom's persistent request, which hints at 'the dependence of her situation', Fanny retreats to the East Room, where she can contemplate how to stand up to 'all the authoritative urgency that Tom and Maria [are] capable of'.[499] 'Edmund's profile', probably placed in the prominent position among the collection of family profiles, represents an image of a trustworthy, authoritative figure who can calm down her 'agitated, doubting spirit'.[500] Fanny remains the only person who refuses to take part in the play on grounds of propriety. Thus, this room can be seen as a therapeutic space conducive to the maintenance of Fanny's well-being. However, personal memories embedded in and evoked by these objects that emphasize Fanny's intimate relationship with the Bertram family cannot be perceived as an authentic and unmediated 'truth'. These objects also elicit a sense of moral obligation to conform her conduct to all of her internalized ethical values of the Bertram family.

The East Room as a contradictory heterotopic site reflects the multiple selves of Fanny. On one hand, she attempts to assert independence and agency by claiming ownership of the room. On the other hand, she has internalized most, if not all, of the oppressive values of her oppressors. Her tacit submission to patriarchy can be seen in the 'dead silence' after her question about 'the slave trade'.[501] George E. Boulukos argues that this scene reveals a historical context in which 'a politics of amelioration' prominent in the discourse of the early nineteenth century was considered to be 'morally redeemable and potentially even heroic pursuits' for men like Sir Thomas.[502]As Fanny confesses, she hopes her question 'would be followed up by others', which 'would have pleased [Sir Thomas] to be inquired of further'.[503] Thus it is conjectured that Fanny's inquiry into the slave

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[497] Ibid., p.108.

[498] Ibid., p.108.

[499] Ibid., p.118.

[500] Ibid., p.120.

[501] Ibid., p.155.

[502] George E. Boulukos, 'The Politics of Silence: "Mansfield Park" and the Amelioration of Slavery', *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, 39.3 (2006), 361-383 (p.362).

[503] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.155.

trade does not confront her uncle as a slave owner, but congratulates him for his benevolent care to the slaves he owns. Edward Said's contrapuntal reading of *Mansfield Park* brings to the fore the exploitative contexts of empire and colonialism fundamental to the novel, arguing that 'what assures the domestic tranquility and attractive harmony of [Mansfield Park] is the productivity and regulated discipline of the [imperial estate]'.[504] Said demonstrates how colonial exploitation provides a necessary material basis for the economic fabric and social order of the English estate.[505] Scholars have pointed out the parallel between women subjugated at home and African-Caribbean slaves oppressed abroad in *Mansfield Park*. For instance, Moira Ferguson points out a structural parallel that 'power relations within the community of Mansfield Park reenact and refashion plantocratic paradigms' abroad.[506] Susan Fraiman argues that Sir Thomas' paternal practice of objectifying women in the marriage market is analogous to the barbarity of slavery in the West Indies in Austen's mind.[507] Boulukos traces the highly emotive trope of 'the grateful slave', which 'seems to call attention to the suffering and humanity of slaves, but it nonetheless works to imagine the problem of slavery solved by showing African slaves as capable of becoming devoted to their masters and even as embracing their condition.'[508] Boulukos' study illustrates how sentiment functions to help bolster the existing racial hierarchy under the guise of protecting human rights. Similar to the grateful slave, Fanny who lives in a patriarchal power structure, is instilled with sentiments of obedience and humility. Mrs. Norris, one representative of Fanny's social superiors, successfully impresses upon her a constant feeling of inferiority and unworthiness compared to her cousins, by cruelly burdening her with gratitude. She is even not allowed complete freedom of emotional expression, as Mrs. Norris inculcates in her 'the extraordinary degree of gratitude and good behavior which it ought to produce' on the way from Northampton, thinking it 'a wicked thing for her not be happy'.[509] When Fanny refuses Tom's demand, Mrs. Norris uses this moment as an opportunity to humiliate her in front of her cousins and their friends, claiming that 'I shall think her a very obstinate, ungrateful girl, if she does not do what her aunt and cousins wish her—very

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[504] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), p.104.

[505] Ibid., p.94.

[506] Moira Ferguson, 'Mansfield Park: Slavery, Colonialism, and Gender', *Oxford Literary Review*, 13.1-2 (1991), 118-139 (p.121).

[507] Susan Fraiman, 'Jane Austen and Edward Said: Gender, Culture, and Imperialism', *Critical Inquiry*, 21.4 (1995), 805-821(p.812).

[508] George E. Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-century British and American Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), pp.14-15.

[509] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.11.

ungrateful indeed, considering who and what she is'.[510] Apart from Mrs. Norris' abusive words, Fanny's own collection of objects in the East Room serve as visible reminders of the Bertram family's generosity and hence the importance of gratitude.

Fanny's expanding collection of objects signifies her growing emotional attachment to the Bertram family. Yet at the same time, these objects are also endowed with moral teachings that demand her submission to authority. The charity of her cousins associated with their presents clearly demonstrates their wealth and power, and claims for moral superiority, imposing on Fanny a duty to be thankful (obedient). 'The sight of present upon present' produces an increasing debt of gratitude that makes her 'bewildered' and 'suspect the truth and purity of her own scruples' against participating in the play.[511] The debt of thanks she owes to them is bound up with personal sacrifice and rigid obedience. Her moral convictions are therefore unsettled by an overwhelming feeling of gratitude and submission. Such intense inner conflict demonstrates how Fanny's internalized oppression—the belief in her own inferiority—has undermined her self-esteem. The East Room is a contradictory space: despite allowing Fanny to experience a degree of self-empowerment, it inevitably keeps her in a marginal and subordinate position.

The erosion of her autonomy and her feelings of powerlessness highlight the East Room as a heterotopic space, where absolute divisions are dissolved between inside and outside, power and powerlessness, possession and dispossession. It serves as a place for Fanny to contemplate the acting scheme as an independent moral agent. But her autonomous agency is deconstructed by the inflections of her social position and other such nuances. While Fanny is psychologically torn between obedience to Sir Thomas and obligations to her cousins, Edmund, hitherto her mentor, now comes to ask for her advice regarding the acting scheme. His declaration to participate in the play driven by 'the force of selfish inclinations', makes him '[descend] from that moral elevation which he had maintained before'.[512] His morally degraded behavior has disturbed her peace of mind, as is indicated in the free indirect discourse: 'To be acting! After all his objections—objections so just and so public!'[513] Ironically, she has no alternatives but to give him approbation. His decision deprives her of moral support, and soon makes her realize her powerlessness and sense the potential

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[510] Ibid., p.116.

[511] Ibid., p.120.

[512] Ibid., p.124.

[513] Ibid., p.99.

danger of isolation: ‘She alone was sad and insignificant’.[514] Unlike Mr. Bennet who has the privilege to decide who can access his library, Fanny cannot prevent the intrusion of others into the East Room. This, in turn, signals and reinforces her dependent and exploited status. Miss Crawford and Edmund use the East Room as a rehearsal site without Fanny’s permission, even though she ‘endeavour[s] to show herself mistress of the room by her civilities’.[515] During the rehearsal, Fanny is requested to ‘prompt and observe them’, and to read the part of Dr. Grant’s lines.[516] Her expression of unwillingness cannot save her from ‘yield[ing]’ to their requests, ‘left to the tremors of a most palpitating heart’.[517] The East Room as a liminal space between the public and private spheres, sheds light on the internal space of Fanny’s mind—open to the struggle between control and subversion.

The East Room can be considered an ideologically loaded space, illuminating the fluidity and contingency of identity. Fanny’s subject position is continually redefined and reconstructed through social interactions and practices that are based in power relations. By contrast with her passivity in Mansfield Park, Fanny takes a more active role as the elder sister at her childhood home of Portsmouth, ‘contributing her help to its comforts’.[518] Susan whose disposition to distinguish the ‘wrong at home’ and ‘set it right’, is admired and regarded by Fanny as ‘an object of mingled compassion and respect’.[519] Fanny then takes on the role of a mentor in guiding and informing Susan of ‘her good opinion’, as Edmund had done before.[520] She helps Susan by buying Betsey a new silver knife, though ‘it took some time to determine that it would not be unbecoming in her to make such a present’.[521] In feeling herself ‘useful to a mind so much in need of help, and so much deserving it’, Fanny again places herself in a relationship of affection and trust.[522] This supportive relationship is reinforced in ‘the confined and scantily-furnished chamber’, a shared space where

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[514] Ibid., p.125.

[515] Ibid., p.132.

[516] Ibid., p.133.

[517] Ibid., p.135.

[518] Ibid., p.307.

[519] Ibid., p.311.

[520] Ibid., p.312.

[521] Ibid., pp.311-312.

[522] Ibid., p.312.

Fanny and Susan can avoid disturbance in the house.[523]

The upstairs room of the Price house without a fire resembles the East Room as a heterotopia of illusion, where Fanny's agency is respected and empowered through interactions with Susan. She does not own material possessions in this room as she does in the East Room, yet the lack of 'all her books and boxes, and various comforts' also implies that she does not have to bear moral obligations and endure emotional burdens here.[524] Without these moral constraints, she can revel in the appropriation of things to the highest degree, as the free indirect discourse reveals her excitement of subscribing to the circulating library—'amazed at being any thing in propria persona, amazed at her own doings in every way; to be a renter, a chuser of books!'[525] The circulating library offers an alternative to the domestic library, and provides abundant book resources satisfying her desire for new material. Fanny is also endowed with a sense of control over Susan's life—'to be having any one's improvement in view in her choice!'[526] She establishes her identity as a mentor, by inspiring Susan with 'a taste for the biography and poetry which she delighted in herself'.[527] Thus this sanctuary of sisterly intimacy has heightened Fanny's awareness of self and her position as an authority worth obeying.

The upstairs room of the Price house can be regarded as an experimental heterotopia of illusion, where Fanny declares her powerful subjectivity under no debt of gratitude to her superiors. However, her exercise of active agency is still constrained by the larger patriarchal structure. Her visit to the Price family can be seen as an engagement in the process of revealing and sharing the dominant beliefs, practices and values she has internalized in the Mansfield Park. After Fanny's rejection of Mr. Crawford's proposal, she is sent by Sir Thomas back to Portsmouth, which is intended to cure her of 'offensive and disgusting' '[…] independence of spirit'.[528] The shabby and poor image of the Prices' house shatters her perfect fantasy about her old home, and indeed teaches her 'the value of a good income'.[529] Fanny, who now regards herself as one of the Bertrams,

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[523] Ibid., p.304.

[524] Ibid., p.313.

[525] Ibid., p.313.

[526] Ibid., p.313.

[527] Ibid., p.313.

[528] Ibid., p.249.

[529] Ibid., p.289.

detaches herself from her home circle. Her detached attitude makes herself disliked by the local community, as the young ladies accuse her of putting on 'airs'.[530] Her sense of superiority is evident in her partial description of the Price family home as 'the abode of noise, disorder, and impropriety'.[531] This disordered image of the Prices' house strikes a contrast with her description of Mansfield Park:

> At Mansfield, no sounds of contention, no raised voice, no abrupt bursts, no tread of violence was ever heard; all proceeded in a regular course of cheerful orderliness; every body had their due importance; every body's feelings were consulted. If tenderness could ever be supposed wanting, good sense ad good breeding supplied its place; and as to the little irritations, sometimes introduced by aunt Norris, they were short, they were trifling, they were as a drop of water to the ocean, compared with the ceaseless tumult of her present abode.[532]

Fanny's memory of Mansfield Park is inaccurate, as there is a great deal of similarity between these two households. Mansfield Park is not as peaceful and orderly as she describes. The Bertram children and their guests commit a rebellious act to construct a theatre in the billiard-room and use the study for a green-room, when their father, Sir Thomas is in the middle of a hazardous sea voyage. The play *Lovers' Vows* they plan to put on, which centers around extra-marital sex and seduction, is used as a vehicle for flirting and producing 'dangerous intimacy'.[533] The characters and plots in the play indeed mirror the drama unfolding between the Bertrams and the Crawfords.[534] Their play rehearsal converts the country house, which under the government of Sir Thomas Bertram is full of 'sameness and gloom', into a site of unrestrained sexual expression and moral disorder.[535] It is, for example, 'a reverie of sweet remembrance' for Mary in which Anhalt, the role played by Edmund satisfies all her romantic fantasy about her partner.[536] Maria and Henry, who openly flirt with each other in front of her fiancé Mr. Rushworth back in Sotherton Court, are now

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[530] Ibid., p.310.

[531] Ibid., p.305.

[532] Ibid., p.308.

[533] Ibid., p.363.

[534] More on parallels between Austen's characters and the parts they take, see Appendix A in Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.374.

[535] Ibid., p.153.

[536] Ibid., p.280.

keen on practicing their tender reunion scene as 'indefatigable rehearsers', obviously for romantic pleasure.[537] Engagement for Maria is not as a restraint, but as a thing that '[raises] her so much more above restraint'.[538] Mrs. Norris with 'a spirit of activity', does not really make efforts to maintain the order of the house in Sir Thomas's absence.[539] Before the earliest intelligence of Sir Thomas and Tom's safe arrival in Antigua is received, she has already imagined a story of 'fatal catastrophe' and 'arranged the manner of breaking it to all the others'.[540] She supports the performance of *Lovers' Vows,* as she is busy 'contriving and directing the general little matters of the company, superintending their various dresses with economical expedient'.[541] She is also 'vexed by the manner of [Sir Thomas'] return', for it brings the play to a halt, and leaves her nothing but 'tranquility and silence' again.[542] Far from being a nurturing, virtuous and astute mother, Lady Bertram refuses to parent at all and abandons her maternal obligations to others. She resists attending social activities and makes no efforts to find appropriate suitors for her daughters—'too indolent even to accept a mother's gratification in witnessing their success and enjoyment at the expense of any personal trouble'.[543] Confined herself to the space of a sofa, both Lady Bertram and her lapdog counterpart serve as decorative objects in the family. Mrs. Price bears resemblance to Lady Bertram as 'a partial, ill-judging parent, a dawdle, a slattern', with 'neither leisure nor affection to bestow on Fanny'.[544] Not every family member in Mansfield Park is respected. Fanny is the object of the penetrative male gaze in both houses: Sir Thomas sees Fanny as a pretty woman ready to enter the marriage market, and Mr. Price observes her as a woman 'wanting a husband soon'.[545] Conflicts between siblings also exist in both houses: while the grown-up Bertram sisters Maria and Julia compete for Henry Crawford's love and attention; the little girls Susan and Betsey in the Price family fight over a silver knife. Regardless of these similarities, Fanny judges the Price

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[537] Ibid., p.132.

[538] Ibid., p.102.

[539] Ibid., p.4.

[540] Ibid., p.27.

[541] Ibid., p.102.

[542] Ibid., pp.140-141.

[543] Ibid., p.28.

[544] Ibid., p.306.

[545] Ibid., p.299.

house based on a comparison to a fictional ideal image of Mansfield Park. In explicitly expressing her preference for the latter, she shows a tendency to subsume herself under the authoritative narrative of the Bertram family values.

The upstairs room is also a contradictory heterotopic site. It has a form of agency to enhance the bond between the sister and develop their capabilities as an active mentor and an effective learner. Yet paradoxically, it also reflects their adherence to the norms of patriarchal family. They organize this room as a perfect space for quiet contemplation, studying and reading in contrast to the remaining space as irrational and disorganized. All these 'proper opinions' Fanny inculcates in Susan are those patriarchal values she has internalized. At the end of the novel, we are told that Susan establishes herself in Mansfield as a substitute for Fanny:

> —Susan became the stationary niece—delighted to be so!—and equally well adapted for it by a readiness of mind, and an inclination for usefulness, as Fanny had been by sweetness of temper, and strong feelings of gratitude. Susan could never be spared. First as a comfort to Fanny, then as an auxiliary, and last as her substitute, she was established at Mansfield, with every appearance of equal permanency.[546]

Both Susan and Fanny are marked by a readiness to obey authority and sacrifice themselves for the advantage of other members of the Bertram family. Their equally pliant tempers and docile dispositions suggest that Susan has learnt from Fanny how to behave according to a set of normative rules in daily life. Susan's establishment in Mansfield Park 'with every appearance of equal permanency' implicitly reinitiates the cycle of growth. This replicable pattern of development undermines women's subjectivity and emphasizes their pre-determined role in maintaining the patriarchal order in the family. Their similar trajectories illuminate how virtues are directed at enhancing and sustaining the existing patriarchal order.

Considering the connection between ethical principles and power politics, an ideal image of Mansfield Park provided at the end of the novel indicates the reimposition of patriarchal domination in the domestic sphere. Sir Thomas restores Mansfield Park into a regulated and homogenized space, by removing aberrant elements that threaten its tranquility and order. For example, Maria who 'had destroyed her own character', is placed away in an 'remote and private' establishment in another country.[547] Mrs. Norris who 'had been regularly losing ground in [Sir Thomas'] esteem', is

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[546] Ibid., p.371.

[547] Ibid., p.365.

also removed from Mansfield to live with Maria.[548] Fanny's marriage to Edmund fits into Sir Thomas' picture of domestic felicity. As the narrator describes:

> —Equally formed for domestic life, and attached to country pleasures, their home was the home of affection and comfort; and to complete the picture of good, the acquisition of Mansfield living by the death of Dr. Grant, occurred just after they had been married long enough to begin to want an increase of income, and feel their distance from the paternal abode an inconvenience.[549]

The contingency of the happy ending is highlighted in the narrator's self-referential statement, suggesting that it is the narrator 'I' who quits the subjects of 'guilt' and 'misery' and hastens to 'restore every body, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest'.[550] Far from constructing a satisfying love story, Edmund's brotherly affection for Fanny begins to change into romantic love, only after he ceases to care about Miss Crawford: '—And being always with her, and always talking confidentially, and his feelings exactly in that favorable state which a recent disappointment gives (…)'.[551] While highlighting that Fanny is Edmund's second choice, the narrator also proposes the possibility of Fanny's acceptance of Mr. Crawford, suggesting that she is not one of those 'unconquerable young ladies of eighteen as are never to be persuaded into love against their judgment by all that talent, manner, attention, and flattery can do'.[552] The timely death of Dr. Grant that enables them to move back to the Mansfield Park parsonage, further makes this picture too good to be true.

Rather than a mere coincidence in real life, I would consider their spatial movement as signifying their contribution to restore the patriarchal symbolic order of the country estate. Fanny is useful and wanted in Mansfield, especially when the Bertram family falls into a moral quagmire created by the scandalous elopement and extra-marital affair. She has the disposition of 'self-denial and humility' which Sir Thomas finds deficient in her daughters, and 'the sterling good of principle and temper' that he regards as helpful to secure all remained 'domestic felicity'.[553] She has become

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[548] Ibid., p.365.

[549] Ibid., p.372.

[550] Ibid., p.362.

[551] Ibid., p.370.

[552] Ibid., p.181.

[553] Ibid., p.364; Ibid., p.370.

'the daughter that [Sir Thomas] wanted', and her standards set an ongoing example of virtuous behaviors, demonstrating 'the advantages of early hardship and discipline, and the consciousness of being born to struggle and endure'.[554] This combination of moral agency and self-denying disposition makes Fanny a controversial figure. She is not a widely loved heroine in Jane Austen's fictions. As Lionel Trilling declares, 'Nobody, I believe, has ever found it possible to like the heroine of Mansfield Park'.[555] On the other hand, there are views in defense of Fanny. For example, Joyce Kerr Tarpley argues that Austen represents in Fanny 'the growth and development of a Christian mind', one that develops by contending with secular minds like Mary Crawford's.[556] Marija Reiff argues that Fanny is 'Austen's experiment in creating an Enlightenment feminist', since her education and body exercises fit ideals outlined in Wollstonecraft's Enlightenment feminist doctrines.[557] This morally good and obedient female figure is an indispensable part of the picture of good. As the last paragraph with the shifting narrative voice goes:

> On that event they removed to Mansfield, and the parsonage there, which under each of its two former owners, Fanny had never been able to approach but with some painful sensation of restraint or alarm, soon grew as dear to her heart, and as thoroughly perfect in her eyes, as every thing else, within the view and patronage of Mansfield Park, had long been.[558]

This paragraph describes Fanny's altered attitude to the parsonage, changing from previous 'painful sensation of restraint or alarm' to more positive feelings and terms of endearment as 'thoroughly perfect in her eyes'. In identifying her happy state of mind, the narrator calls attention to Fanny's growing sense of subjectivity, with all her miseries and anxieties dispelled. This emphasis on the perfect view through 'her eyes' suggests that Fanny is no longer the timid, meek girl who came to Mansfield Park at the age of ten, but instead is an ambitious and confident young woman who has established herself in the community. Then the narrator shifts to a wider perspective—'the view and patronage of Mansfield Park'—ascribing some form of agency to the country estate. It reminds readers that in Mansfield Park, assertion of female agency is still contained within the domestic sphere. A continuing ambiguity concerning Fanny's subject position, as can be seen in the previous

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[554] Ibid., p.371; Ibid., p.372.

[555] Lionel Trilling, *The Opposing Self: Nine Essays in Criticism* Compass Books edn (New York: Viking Press, 1959), p.212.

[556] Joyce Kerr Tarpley, *Constancy and The Ethics of Jane Austen's Mansfield Park* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2010), p.18.

[557] Marija Reiff, 'The "Fanny Price Wars": Jane Austen's Enlightenment Feminist and Mary Wollstonecraft', *Women's Studies*, 45.3 (2016), 275-290 (p.276).

[558] Austen, *Mansfield Park*, p.372.

analysis of the East Room as heterotopia of illusion, demonstrates how her moral agency and freedom is instrumentalized to preserve traditional family values and social hierarchies. The paradoxical functions performed by the same space implies inevitable constraints on Fanny's individuality that being a member of the Bertram family entails. From a patriarchal point of view, Fanny represents the ideal woman of the house, finding a compromise between individual agency and external constraints. Unlike Lady Bertram who regards 'beauty' and 'wealth' as the only things that 'excited her respect', Fanny tends to act upon what she believes to be right.[559] Her rebellious refusal of Henry Crawford's proposal shows herself as an independent moral agent. But her rebellion does not go so far as to subvert imposed social boundaries.

To summarize, this chapter has explored the mutual construction of space and identity through the lens of heterotopia in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park*. Firstly, Mr. Bennet's library in *Pride and Prejudice* can provide insights into how the domestic library as an imaginative extension of the owner, both marks and reinforces his sense of social, economic and intellectual superiority. By contrast, the circulating library where unrestrained emotional display serves as a foil for his regulatory enforcement and spatial control. In regularly retreating to his library, Mr. Bennet displays a psychological detachment from his disordered and erratic family environment. In contrast, this chapter argues that Pemberly is a contradictory site, functioning as a heterotopia of illusion, where Austen's characters' desire for individual freedom and subjective autonomy is, however partially and temporarily, achieved through spatial experiences. Elizabeth's visit to Pemberley enables her to learn about Darcy's true character, refined taste and socio-economic privileges, thus exerting a profound influence on their relationship. The paradoxical functions performed by the heterotopia are, as this chapter argues, also evident in the East Room in *Mansfield Park*, where Fanny exercises her right to organize her collection of things, yet finding her nascent agency constrained by moral obligations and social expectations. Fanny also finds the upstairs room of the Price house a potential heterotopia of illusion, where she has greater freedom to exercise her agency especially as a personal tutor of Susan, with no objects reminding her of her moral obligations. Yet contradictorily, this room contributes to establishing traditional patriarchal order out of chaos. Lucy's instructions given to Susan are actually subsumed in the dominant patriarchal discourse. The paradoxical nature of heterotopias analyzed in the chapter demonstrates how moral commitments and emotional expressions are intimately associated with the politics of gender and class.

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[559] Ibid., p.260.

The next chapter will examine Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*. It will argue that one important feature that distinguishes Brontë's novel is her attention to the interior self of the first-person narrator Lucy Snowe and her struggle to retain personal integrity. Lucy's psychic space examined as a heterotopia not only paves the way for the development of her complex identity, but also unveils the stifling restrictions imposed on female identity in the Victorian society. Brontë's particular attention to the nuanced contour of the psychic space can be seen in her critical comments on Austen's novels. In a letter to G. H. Lewes written in 1848, Brontë points out what she considers the imperfection of Austen's writing style, describing it as 'an accurate daguerreotyped portrait of a common-place face' with 'no glance of a bright vivid physiognomy'.[560] In another letter to W. S. Williams, Brontë again speaks of the inadequate attention Austen gives to the human heart. According to Brontë, 'Jane Austen was a complete and most sensible lady, but a very incomplete, and rather insensible (not senseless) woman'.[561] Brontë's comments on Austen's writing reflect her preference for exploring the intangible realm of the human mind. While she accepts Lewes' writing advice 'not to stray far from the ground of experience', she also recognizes the limitedness of individuals' lived experience. She raises a question that 'if a writer dwells upon that solely or principally is he not in danger of repeating himself, and also of becoming an egotist?'.[562] In other words, Brontë perceives that human experience contains both a material reality and a psychological reality involving the self-haunted imagination 'which claims to be heard and exercised'.[563] The next chapter will continue to explore the paradoxical functions performed by the heterotopia, but my focus will be what happens in the inner space. I argue that Lucy's affective experiences shed light on the heterotopic potential of her inner space capable of juxtaposing heterogeneous elements of self.

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[560] Brontë, *Selected Letters,* p.99.

[561] Ibid., p.162.

[562] Ibid., p.90.

[563] Ibid., p.91.

Chapter Four—Psychic Heterotopia in Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*

This chapter explores how Foucault's concept of heterotopia might provide an effective theoretical framework to examine the interior self of the protagonist Lucy in Brontë's *Villette* (1853). This chapter focuses on the ways that her identity is formed through the affective layers of her lived experiences. 'Affect', according to the *OED*, refers to 'A feeling or subjective experience accompanying a thought or action or occurring in response to a stimulus; an emotion, a mood'.[564] Kathleen Stewart emphasizes how affect casts fresh insight into the previously ignored that 'give everyday life the quality of a continual motion of relations, scenes, contingencies, and emergences'.[565] A long list of critical thinkers have contributed to the role of affect in identity construction. For example, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick points out the structural potential of affect in making identity, arguing that shame in Henry James's fiction and literary theory is 'both peculiarly contagious and peculiarly individuating'.[566] Margaret Wetherall argues that affect manifests itself as 'untamed and inassimilable, always in the process of becoming', opening up possibilities for 'connections and ways of being'.[567] Wetherell has cited William W. Reddy's concept of 'emotives' and 'emotional regime' to further illustrate the affective meaning-making process.[568] I draw on affect theory to show how Lucy's affective and haptic engagement with the surrounding environment contributes to the formation of her subjectivity. This chapter aims to demonstrate the ways in which Lucy, an Anglican Protestant woman in a continental country, struggles against all forms of oppression, though she cannot transcend the power structures within which she finds herself entrapped. I will pose Lucy's inner space as a heterotopia, which is imbued with imaginative potential for her to assert agency and to resist the dominant patriarchal structures that construct women as naturally subordinate and inferior.

Twenty-first century debate on the nature of selfhood provides ample grounds for my analysis. Scholars who investigate the self from a phenomenological point of view, have identified two forms of selfhood: the 'minimal self' and the 'narrative self'. According to Dan Zahavi, the 'minimal self'

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564 'Affect, n.' in *The Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <www.oed.com/view/Entry/3321> [Accessed 14 August 2022].

565 Kathleen Stewart, *Ordinary Affects* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), pp.1-2.

566 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy Performativity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), p.36.

567 Margaret Wetherell, *Affect and Emotion: A New Social Science Understanding* (London: SAGE, 2012), p.59.

568 Ibid., pp.67-74. Further on Reddy's arguments, see William W. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feelings: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001).

is a fundamental sense of self-presence, which exists 'whenever there is a self-awareness'.[569] The 'narrative self', on the other hand, is defined by Shaun Gallagher as a self which possesses an 'individual identity' and continuity across time, and is constituted through various personal and interpersonal narrative accounts of themselves.[570] Miriam Kyselo in her review essay of *Self and Other: Exploring Subjectivity, Empathy, and Shame* points out that the minimal self is not an exhaustive self-concept, and this view on human existence can be viewed as 'separate and solipsistic'.[571] Although the general account of these two forms of selfhood still needs revision, it nevertheless illuminates how personal selfhood is associated with the conflict between the inner and outer worlds.

This chapter first examines a selection of Brontë's surviving letters to demonstrate that she occupied a nebulous subject position, where her literary aspirations clashed with her gender role. The style of her letters reflects her self-consciousness as someone who perceives (the minimal self) and who is perceived by others (the social self). I then explore two scenes depicting Lucy's dealing with letters in *Villette*, which develops a dual sense of selfhood, firstly in the garret (Chapter 22) where she receives and responds to Graham's letters, and then in the garden (Chapter 26) where she buries them.[572] Next I investigate how Lucy asserts her subjectivity through an extraordinary confession at the Catholic church (Chapter 15) and how the portrait of Cleopatra (Chapter 19) exerts an uncanny effect on male viewers, potentially unsettling their mental stability. The recurring images of death and expressions of the death drive are examined as signs of Lucy's haunted mind, disturbed by Paul's death at sea which is implied in the open ending (Finis). By investigating how Lucy's first-person narrative is filled with tensions between the minimal self and the social self, I aim to demonstrate that her identity is realized in an inherently unstable space of difference, a heterotopia, where her individual ambitions conflict with social obligations. The fluid, ongoing process of Lucy's identity construction points to the difficulties in the orphan heroine's path to sustain an independent position.

In this chapter, I follow Shuttleworth's discussion of Victorian psychology, especially Victorian conceptions of the self, and apply them to my analysis of *Villette*. Shuttleworth points out that the

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[569] Dan Zahavi, *Subjectivity and Selfhood: Investigating the First-Person Perspective* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2005), p.146.

[570] Shaun Gallagher, 'Philosophical Conceptions of the Self: Implications for Cognitive Science', *Trends in Cognitive Science*, 4.1 (2000), 14-21(p.18).

[571] Miriam Kyselo, 'The Minimal Self Needs a Social Update', *Philosophical Psychology*, 29.7 (2016), 1057-1065 (p.1057).

[572] In *Villette*, Dr. John and Graham are the same character. The two names may be used interchangeably in this chapter.

influential psychologist J.E.D. Esquirol's formulation of selfhood relies on 'having something to conceal: it is the very disjunction between inner and outer form which creates the self'.[573] This conception of selfhood is dependent upon the existence of the interstitial space between a hidden, inner self and an outer, social self that is presented to the external world. Shuttleworth argues that Dr John's verdict on the spectral nun recalls the prevalent nineteenth-century rhetoric of 'unveiling and penetrating truth' as an expression of men's objective social power over women.[574] This chapter is to show how Lucy's selfhood emerges through a constant negotiation with the outside world, in opposition to objectified images of women subjected to the male gaze. Lucy's psychic space functions as a heterotopia that potentially provides a zone of resistance to affirm her difference and celebrate her individuality.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first part looks at Brontë's surviving letters to explore how her selfhood is formed through a difficult negotiation between her social role and individual consciousness. It then aims to show how Lucy's psychic realm functions as a heterotopia that is capable of juxtaposing different forms of selfhood. The second part investigates the affective dimensions of Lucy's embodied experiences, with the aim of showing how her subjectivity is not a fixed entity, but developed and reconfigured through a consistent resistance to her socially constructed subordinate position. The last part aims to examine the recurring image of imminent shipwreck or peril at sea as manifestations of her chaotic, fragmented inner world.

4.1 Letters and Female Interior Self

This section examines Brontë's subtle manner of letter-writing in some of her surviving correspondence, including her letters to Robert Southey, Hartley Coleridge, Ellen Nussey and Constantin Héger. I argue that these letters help shed light on her multifaceted identity that is constantly in the process of 'becoming' through the various discursive practices in which she participates. I posit that Brontë's inner space functions as a heterotopia of illusion capable of containing a complicated inner self that is detached from social constraints and expectations. Elizabeth Gaskell's *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* portrays Brontë as a passionless, self-controlled person, conforming to the Victorian 'angel in the house' ideal. In order to make her friend's genius

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[573] Sally Shuttleworth, *Charlotte Brontë and Victorian Psychology* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p.38.

[574] Ibid., p.220.

respectable and acceptable, Gaskell deliberately suppresses the passionate part of Brontë's personality, especially details concerning her unrequited love for a married Belgian schoolmaster. As Winifred Gerin points out, Gaskell uses 'the systematic antedating of Branwell's decline and fall' to supply an alternative reason for Brontë's despondency at Brussels.[575] It is clear that Gaskell's way of unifying the divergent strands of Brontë's experience reflects social constraints on Victorian femininity. Unlike Gaskell, modern biographers draw attention to some other aspects of Brontë—her tender, romantic features—constituting one that is more in tune with the preoccupations of modern biographers and their audiences. Lyndall Gordon points to the double voices of Brontë: she assumes a bold and determined aspect when asking her aunt for financial help in order to study at Brussels as her 'promised land', while she presents herself as the 'dutiful daughter of a clergyman' in a smooth, calm tone in the letter to Southey.[576] Brontë's passionate selfhood is evident when she 'dares to put herself in the position of her father', writing to her aunt that 'When he left Ireland to go to Cambridge University, he was as ambitious as I am now'.[577] Whilst Gordon gives primacy to Brontë's personal, passionate experiences, Claire Harman elaborates on her frustrated romance with Constantin Héger, arguing that 'the underlying feelings, the loveless condition from which Lucy emerges and lapses back into' gave *Villette* 'its grim power'.[578] Biographical readings show that Brontë is not unified around a coherent socially expected 'self' but instead occupies a versatile subject position.

In her correspondence, Brontë's psychic space plays an important role in the formation of an autonomous selfhood. It becomes a heterotopia of illusion, where her inner self can be kept intact and detached from her exterior self. Brenda Glascott identifies 'interior' as a battleground where nineteenth-century women try to reclaim rhetorical agency by resisting the conventional letter-writing rhetoric constructed by manuals.[579] Following Glascott's point, I would argue that Brontë asserts her subjectivity in her letters through resistance to conventional expectations of female authorship. Unfortunately, not all Brontë's letters have survived. For example, her longtime friend and correspondent Mary Taylor destroyed all but one of Brontë's letters to her. Her husband Arthur

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[575] Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (London: Dent, 1971), p.xii.

[576] Lyndall Gordon, *Charlotte Brontë: A Passionate Life* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1994), p.66; Ibid., p.92.

[577] Ibid., p.93.

[578] Claire Harman, *Charlotte Brontë: A Fiery Heart* (New York, Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf, 2016), p.334.

[579] Brenda Glascott, 'Revising Letters and Reclaiming Space: The Case for Expanding the Search for Nineteenth-Century Women's Letter-Writing Rhetoric into Imaginative Literature', *College English*, 78.2 (2015), 162-182 (p.162).

Bell Nicholls was cautious not to publish anything that might undermine Brontë's reputation. He had once warned Ellen Nussey to burn any letter she received from Brontë, but Ellen did not listen, and preserved almost four hundred letters.[580] While a number of Brontë's letters were destroyed, lost or censored, those that survive provide insights into her inner world. At the same time, they were not neutral witnesses but documents whose contents were shaped by her relationships with her correspondents. By looking at the different rhetoric she employed in response to Robert Southey and Hartley Coleridge's assessments of her writing, I will explore how these letters defined and redefined Brontë's subject position. On 29th December 1836, ten years before the publication of *Jane Eyre*, Brontë wrote a letter to Robert Southey, the biographer, essayist, editor and Poet Laureate, and asked his opinion of the verses enclosed in the letter. In his reply on 12 March 1837, Southey discouraged her from pursuing a writing career. As he wrote:

> Literature cannot be the business of a woman's life, and it ought not to be. The more she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure will she have for it even as an accomplishment and a recreation.[581]

Brontë was aware that her pursuit of writing contradicted expectations women faced regarding a career. She replied in a polite and humble manner, making it clear that she was not 'the idle, dreaming being', writing neither 'for the sake of imaginative pleasures', nor 'for the love of fame and for the selfish excitement of emulation'.[582] She continued to explain that as the eldest child in a clergyman's family, she was well educated, following a clear career path to 'become a Governess'.[583] She tried to alleviate his doubts by assuring him that 'I have endeavored not only attentively to observe all the duties a woman ought to fulfill, but to feel deeply interested in them', though it was hard to do so.[584] At the end of the letter, she expressed gratitude for Southey's advice, even though she had already done so in the beginning, praising his reply as 'considerate in its tone' and 'noble in its spirit'.[585] For Brontë, Southey's autograph was a treasure and his letter a

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[580] Janet Gezari, 'Introduction', in *Selected Letters of Charlotte Brontë*, ed. by Margaret Smith (Oxford: OUP, 2007), pp. xxv-xxxv (pp. xxv-xxvi).

[581] Robert Southey, 'Letter from Robert Southey to Charlotte Brontë, 12 March 1837' in *British Library* <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/letter-from-robert-southey-to-charlotte-bronte-12-march-1837> [accessed 13 September 2021].

[582] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.9.

[583] Ibid., p.9.

[584] Ibid., p.9.

[585] Ibid., p.9.

'consecrated' object in memory of her correspondence with such a well-known writer.[586] Brontë's letters to her respectable, better-known contemporary portray herself as a woman writer yielding to the denigrating stereotype. Yet this self-belittling image of Brontë crafted in her correspondence with Southey is nuanced differently in her letter to Hartley Coleridge, the eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, also a writer and journalist.

These surviving letters highlight the versatile and nebulous subject position of Brontë which was highly influenced by a wide range of factors. Branwell Brontë once struck up correspondence with Coleridge, and received a warm letter inviting him to visit Nab Cottage at Ambleside.[587] Branwell's previous friendly contacts probably had encouraged her to send Coleridge the opening chapter of a novel in 1840 for his opinion. I have not managed to trace Coleridge's letter, so his views are inferred from Brontë's reply. Compared with her letters to Southey, Brontë wrote to Coleridge in a more assertive almost aggressive tone. As she wrote:

> I was almost as much pleased to get your letter as if it has been one from Professor Wilson containing a passport of admission to Blackwood—You do not certainly flatter me very much nor suggest very brilliant hopes to my imagination—but on the whole I can perceive that you write like an honest man and a gentleman—and I am very much obliged to you both for the candor and civility of your reply.[588]

Brontë was indicating Coleridge's harsh criticism by comparing his letter to that from Professor Wilson, a powerful critic in the nineteenth-century literary world, whose writing, as Robert Morrison argues, is known for 'reckless cruelty and shameless muckraking' and simultaneously 'insightfulness and sympathy'.[589] In response to Coleridge's negative feedback, Brontë communicated her dissatisfaction in a sarcastic way, suggesting that her fictional characters Messrs Percy and West 'are not gentlemen likely to make an impression upon the heart of any Editor in Christendom'.[590] Using a gender-neutral pseudonym 'C. Brontë', she soon found this enigma effective to reveal that Coleridge structured his comments around his speculative identification of the writer's identity and sex. The writer's gender, thus played an important role in shaping

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[586] Ibid., p.9.

[587] Juliet Barker, *The Brontës* (London: Phoenix Press, 1995), p.333.

[588] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.25.

[589] Robert Morrison, '*Blackwood*'s Berserker: John Wilson and the Language of Extremity', *Romanticism on the Net,* no.20 (2000), 0-0 <https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/ron/1900-v1-n1-ron432/005951ar/> [accessed 22 February 2023].

[590] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.25.

Coleridge's judgement of her work. As she wrote:

> […] I will venture purposely to withhold it now—as to my handwriting, or the ladylike tricks you mention in my style and imagery—you must not draw any conclusion from these —Several young gentlemen curl their hair and wear corsets—Richardson and Rousseau—often write exactly like old women—and Bulwer and Cooper and Dickens and Warren like boarding-school misses.[591]

In a bantering tone, she cast doubt on the assumption of a distinctively feminine style of writing marked by the 'ladylike' handwriting, style and imagery. The outright statement that 'you must not draw any conclusion from these' showed Brontë's overt disapproval of Coleridge's reviewing her work which was affected by his own imagination of the author. The vivid images of Richardson and Rousseau with curly hair and tight corsets, as well as Bulwer and Cooper and Dickens and Warren who were compared to 'boarding-school misses', offered compelling counter examples to break down gender stereotypes. While in her letter to Southey, Brontë presented herself in compliance with social and literary expectations, here the pseudonym showed her sense of autonomous self. Brontë's different ways of responding to Southey and Coleridge indicate her authorial identity to be a versatile construct. Such a fluid, and heterogeneous representation of the subject is also evident in her letters to Ellen Nussey, her closest friend for almost 24 years and those to Héger, her former teacher in Brussels.

Brontë's equivocal subject position indicate a compromised, difficult situation in which she finds herself, caught between an inclination to obey conventional expectations and an impulse to rebel against the constrictive social norms. Considering that Ellen is not well-read, Brontë barely reveals to her any literary plans or success in becoming an author, but fills the letters with secret thoughts, feelings and gossip. In her letters to Nussey, Brontë conveys a homosocial desire to develop an unconventional female friendship as an alternative to marriage, as she expresses a willingness to remain 'an old maid', a fate to which 'I made up my mind […] ever since I was twelve years old'.[592] After consecutively rejecting proposals of marriage from Henry Nussey and David Pryce, Brontë also warned Nussey against 'romantic folly' and advised her to stick to 'mediocrity in sensations'.[593] Brontë's acceptance of Arthur Bell Nichols' proposal came as a

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[591] Ibid., p.27.

[592] Ibid., p.15. Sedgwick defines homosociality as the 'social bonds between persons of the same sex; it is a neologism, obviously formed by analogy with 'homosexual', and just as obviously meant to be distinguished from 'homosexual'. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p.1.

[593] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.23.

surprise and outraged Nussey, for she was, according to Janet Gezari, jealousy of Nichols who had 'usurped her privileged first place in Charlotte's affection'.[594] Brontë's husband intervened in their communication, and asked Nussey to burn Brontë's letters. Charlotte wrote to Nussey in 1854 that Nichols 'will read every line I write and elect himself censor of our correspondence'.[595] Thus their letters witness an extreme form of female friendship, a strong but socially unacceptable bond between two women, challenging the idea of patriarchal marriage as a satisfying end to a woman's life.

A more daring, romantic aspect of Brontë is constructed in her letters to Héger in French, a language that created an illusion that she could maintain an exclusive and close bond with her married correspondent. The linguistic freedom of a foreign language enabled her to break out of restraints of English respectability. As Lyndall Gordon and Sara Dudley Edwards point out, 'writing in a foreign language allowed Brontë the license to express feelings that she mightn't have voiced in her native English'.[596] As Brontë admitted in the first surviving letter to Héger, 'when I pronounce the French words I seem to be chatting with you'.[597] Yet Brontë's words were not always infused with unbridled passion, as she also tried to maintain her composure, when faced with the emotional blow brought by the cessation of his replies. Though confessing that 'sadness was wringing my heart', she tried not to let her feelings get the better of her, ascribing Héger's long silence to his 'working too hard' and his subsequent deteriorating health.[598] She also took heed of the etiquette of letter-writing, remembering to convey her greetings to Madam (Héger's wife), his children, the teachers and the pupils. Her efforts of emotional control point toward a social self rather than a passionate mind. Brontë's identity as a multifaceted construct suggests the inner space as a discursive site for further contemplation and repudiation.

Having examined a selection of Brontë's surviving letters to demonstrate how her personal identity is constructed through a continual dialogue between internal and external voices, I will now turn to examine the way Lucy receives and responds to Graham's letters first in the garret, and then in the garden. Lucy's inner space, where the 'minimal self' is contained, functions as a heterotopia

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[594] Gezari, p. xvii.

[595] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.239.

[596] Charlotte Brontë, 'Letters from Charlotte Brontë to Prof. Constantin Héger' in British Library <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/letters-from-charlotte-bront-to-prof-constantin-heger> [accessed 10 August 2022].

[597] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.51.

[598] Ibid., p.51.

of illusion which promises to maintain the complexity of her interior self. Her 'narrative self' does not manage to retain control over the emotions that threaten to overwhelm her all the time. The interplay between two contradictory forms of self—the 'narrative self' and the 'minimal self'—exists throughout her embodied experience of reading and responding to the letter. In articulating her 'minimal self' in tension with the outer world, Lucy achieves her subjective autonomy, though partially and temporarily.

Lucy's account is dominated by the voice of the 'narrative self' which endorses her success in avoiding the penetrating gaze and finding a secure place to read the letter from Graham. This invites the prying eye of the public into her privacy. Madame Beck's school is regulated by surveillance, as Lucy notes that '"Surveillance", "espionage"—these were her watchwords'.[599] The headmistress' regular noiseless, spectral presence is undetected but persistently felt, as she moves 'ghost-like through the house, watching and spying everywhere'.[600] Lucy once encounters Madame Beck blatantly searching her work-box, and discovers that 'Not an article' of its 'contents but was lifted and unfolded, not a paper but was glanced over, not a little box but was unlidded'.[601] This omnipresent secret gaze recalls Michel Foucault's argument about the regulatory power of the Panopticon which induces in the inmate 'a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power'.[602] Lucy who is under panoptic surveillance, receives Graham's letter from Dr. John after a difficult and circuitous process. The letter initially arrives in the hands of Rosine, the portress, and then Paul, who 'with his unwarrantably interfering habits, had taken from the portress, and now delivered it himself'.[603] Lucy's account of reading Graham's letter, as I elaborate below, exposes a tension between the reminiscing narrative self and the experiencing minimal self.

Lucy's account is initially dominated by the voice of the 'narrative self', as she withdraws from the classes, 'bent as resolutely as ever on finding solitude somewhere'.[604] Yet her account is also subject to the disruption of a pre-reflective, 'minimal self' who reclaims agency against the

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[599] Brontë, *Villette*, p.69.

[600] Ibid., p.70.

[601] Ibid., p.109.

[602] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), p.201.

[603] Brontë, *Villette*, p.216.

[604] Ibid., p.220.

constraints imposed by social and self-surveillance. This recalcitrant tendency of the 'minimal self' is manifest in her affective experience of finding a secure place in the garret. As the narrator describes, step by step, with a succession of short sentences:

> Taking a key whereof I knew the repository, I mounted three staircases in succession, reached a dark, narrow, silent landing, opened a worm-eaten door, and dived into the deep, black, cold garret. Here none would follow me, none interrupt—not madame herself. I shut the garret door; I placed my light on a doddered and mouldy chest of drawers; I put on a shawl, for the air was ice-cold; I took my letter, trembling with sweet impatience; I broke its seal.[605]

This series of steps demonstrate the difficulties of having private space in the pensionnat. She lives with a haunting sense of horror and fear that there is always someone who would 'follow' and 'interrupt' her. As she later complains to Dr John, 'I could not find another spot where it was possible to have it to myself'.[606] On the other hand, these sentences in active voice beginning with 'I' emphasize a pre-reflective self-consciousness, a primitive form of self-reference. The sequence of moves including getting the key, lightening up the room and putting on a shawl, expresses her determination and desire to create her own cozy, private space. Thus Lucy's inner space emerges as a heterotopia of illusion set against the existing surveillance system that denies women any claim to privacy or personal autonomy.

Lucy's inner space can be regarded as a site of empowerment that facilitates her assertion of subjectivity; yet it can be contested from outside as well as from within, further complicating her rhetorical agency. Such intense inner conflict demonstrates how Lucy's internalized oppression—the belief in her own inferiority—has undermined her self-esteem. The tension between two forms of selfhood is also exteriorized by her two different responses to Graham, 'one for [her] own relief, the other for Graham's perusal'.[607] When reading the letter from Graham, Lucy's monologue reveals a complicated mind filled with joy and doubt: while she feels surprisingly happy about the letter with kind words which exceed her 'checked, bridled, disciplined expectation'; she still states that 'happiness of such shallow origin could be but brief'.[608] Her affection towards Dr John is cautiously concealed, tempered by awareness of the socio-economic gap between them. Brontë

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[605] Ibid., p.220.

[606] Ibid., p.223.

[607] Ibid., p.229.

[608] Ibid., p.221.

once gave an explanation in a letter to G. Smith that 'Lucy must not marry Dr John; he is far too youthful, handsome, bright-spirited, and sweet-tempered […] If Lucy marries anybody, it must be the Professor—a man in whom there is much to forgive, much to "put up with"'.[609] These two different replies bear witness to her complicated inner struggles. The letter with an emotionally controlled content emerges as a manifestation of Lucy's self-surveillance. Yet simultaneously, the second letter written with the language of 'a strongly-adherent affection, a rooted and active gratitude', articulates her strong desire to form an intimate bond with Graham.[610]

Lucy's inner space is akin to a contradictory heterotopic site that reflects her multiple facets. On the one hand, she attempts to assert agency by putting her affection and desire into words. On the other hand, she has internalized mainstream conventions toward partnering. The letters between Dr John and Lucy display her precarious subjectivity. When describing her experience of reading the letter in the garret, Lucy's narrative self becomes objectively dominant, yet her individual autonomy is gaining ground through the multi-sensory perception of the nun:

> Something in that vast solitary garret sounded strangely. Most surely and certainly I heard, as it seemed, a stealthy foot on that floor, a sort of gliding out from the direction of the black recess haunted by the malefactor cloaks. I turned. My light was dim, the room was long; but, as I live, I saw in the middle of that ghostly chamber a figure all black or white; the skirts straight, narrow, black; the head bandaged, veiled, white. [611]

Her description of this horrible scene is characterized by an extreme profusion of details that obscure the nun's appearance, 'a figure all black or white'. Her account lacks a single vantage point from which the nun can be grasped as an aesthetic whole, owing to the ever-changing phantasmagoric effects produced by the assemblage of sounds and visions. There is no final fusion of the contradictory elements in her perceptions in order to render the nun a concrete and stable entity, which indicates her inconsistent sense of self. After the termination of their correspondence, Lucy decides to bury the letters from Graham to prevent Madame Beck from voyeuristically peeping into her private inner world. In her representation of the burial process, the symptoms of her affective disorders serve as indicators of her heterotopic psychic space.

Lucy's burial of the letters reveals her inner space to be a heterotopic site that enables her to occupy a complicated subject position both as a member of patriarchal society dedicating herself to

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[609] Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (London: Dent, 1971), p.365.

[610] Brontë, *Villette*, p.229.

[611] Ibid., p.221.

others and as a woman capable of protecting her mental integrity. While norms of femininity make it impossible for a woman to express her affection openly, Lucy's act of wrapping the letters in numerous layers of materials articulates her longing to escape the social constraints placed on her. As the narrator describes：

> I then made a little roll of my letter, wrapped them in oiled silk, bound them with twine, and, having put them in the bottle, got the old Jew broker to stopper, seal, and make it air-tight.[612]

and then she places them in an insulated container—'a thick glass jar' bought from the broker's shop. Lucy further thrusts the jar into the hole, and covers it with more layers of stuff:

> I fetched thence a slate and some mortar, put the slate on the hollow, secured it with cement, covered the whole with black mould, and finally, replaced the ivy.[613]

The multi-layered packaging reproduces the difficulty for her to keep any secret under the disembodied gaze of an omnipresent eye in the school. She finds herself not only under constant watch of Madame Beck, but also of others. When she is sitting near the stove, immersed in a tearful sentiment, Paul is watching her through the window, whose fixed gaze 'hit right against [her] own glance'.[614] Lucy's burial of her precious letters is meant to 'bury a grief'.[615] Her goal to inter the grief runs in parallel with Dr John's advice for Lucy to 'cultivate happiness', in that both are based on the assumption that emotions can be controlled by reason and will, an idea that she is able to remove the threat of instability to the ego.[616] However, it turns out that repressed emotion remains outside the sphere of control—her attempts to hide her grief has been as futile as Dr John's suggestion has been wrong. The very act of enclosing the letters in several layers of packaging itself indicates how hard it is to contain her sense of loss. In trying to preserve the letters as a truly private space, Lucy implicitly shows a rebellious desire to establish personal connection to others outside the sphere of social regulation.

Though Lucy presents her public, social self—shaped by instrumental rationality—her unstable affective state alternating between mania and melancholia disrupts a sense of coherence and continuity in her identity. Her inability to experience herself as self-assured and emotionally stable

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612 Ibid., p.267.

613 Ibid., p.268.

614 Ibid., p.209.

615 Ibid., p.268.

616 Ibid., p.226.

brings to the fore the heterotopic quality of her inner space. She explicitly expresses melancholy moods, while preoccupied with the problem of how to keep the letters in their entirety. For example, when she purchases the sealed bottle from the broker, she 'had a dreary something—not pleasure, but a sad, lonely satisfaction'.[617] Foucault identifies melancholia and madness as two separate yet related 'manifestations of the same disease', and recognizes the clinical phenomenon established in the eighteenth century: 'Virtually all the physicians of the eighteenth century acknowledged the proximity of mania and melancholia'.[618] Mania is regarded as the opposite of melancholia: while the former is characterized by 'a perpetual flux of impetuous thoughts'; the latter is featured by a deadening depression with 'imagination [remaining] at leisure and in repose'.[619] The narrator does not mention the word 'mania', yet several times alludes to its symptoms. As Lucy admits, she acts under the direction of impulse, the same controlling mood 'which had induced [her] to visit the confessional'.[620] The impulse to bury the letters serves as a sign of her mania. The alternation between mania and melancholia indicates Lucy's disorganized psychic space.

The affective shift between melancholia and mania in Lucy is soon succeeded by a prolonged melancholic phase after burying the letters. She explicitly expresses that '[she] felt not happy—far otherwise—but strong with reinforced strength', and then immerses herself in a mediation:

> If life be a war, it seemed my destiny to conduct it single-handed. I pondered now how to break up my winter-quarters—to leave an encampment where food and forage failed. Perhaps, to effect this change, another pitched battle must be fought with fortune; if so, I had a mind to the encounter. Too poor to lose, God might destine me to gain. But what road was open? what plan available?[621]

Lucy's metaphorical description articulates her sense of isolation and loneliness, as she has to conduct life 'single-handed'. She is determined to change her current situation in search for a better future, as she ponders how to 'break up [her] winter-quarters'. Yet without a fortune to support her, Lucy falls into confusion, asking her the haunting and unresolvable questions: 'what road was open? what plan available?' Her pre-reflective expression of bewilderment and melancholy

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[617] Ibid., p.267.

[618] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (1961; repr. London: Routledge, 2001), p.72.

[619] Ibid., p.72.

[620] Brontë, *Villette*, p.267.

[621] Ibid., p.268.

meditation attests to a fragmented, incoherent sense of self. The erosion of her autonomy and her melancholic feeling highlight the psychic space as a contradictory heterotopia. It serves as a space for Lucy to contemplate the whole plan of burying the letters as an independent moral agent. But her autonomous agency is deconstructed by the inflections of her social position and other such nuances. Sigmund Freud distinguishes melancholia from the normal affect of mourning, arguing that 'melancholia is in some way related to an unconscious loss of a love-object'.[622] In melancholia, when the pain of loss cannot be processed by the conscious mind, it becomes directed towards the self—'an extraordinary fall in his self-esteem, an impoverishment of his ego a grand scale'.[623] Although Lucy compares herself 'leaning against the tree' to 'any other mourner, besides a newly-sodded grave', what she experiences is melancholia rather than mourning, in that she is unable to verbalize and articulate specifically her painful emotions.[624] There is a sense of resonance between her obscure painful feelings and the mystical phenomenon produced by the still night air 'dim with a peculiar mist' and 'the luminous haze' of moonlight.[625] The analogy with mourning leads readers to recognize that she suffers a loss in regard to an object; yet actually it points to a diminution in her self-regard.

The representation of her past in England triggered by the moonlight scene provides an insight into Lucy's sophisticated interior self. As she describes:

> […] when the aurora borealis was streaming and sweeping round heaven, when, belated in lonely fields, I had paused to watch that mustering of any army with banners, that quivering of serried lances, that swift ascent of messengers from below the north star to the dark, high keystone of heaven's arch. I felt not happy—far otherwise—but strong with the reinforced strength.[626]

The immense image of the aurora borealis evokes Lucy's vivid imagination of a scene wherein armies are mobilized, a great throng of warriors is mustered and the march begins. This imagined scene shows an overwhelming force of nature in contrast with Lucy's loneliness and helplessness. Her ambiguous feelings alternating between the states of being 'not happy', and 'strong with the

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[622] Sigmund Freud, 'Mourning and Melancholia', in *Collected Papers, Volume IV: Papers on Metapsychology & Papers on Applied Psycho-Analysis*, ed. by Ernest Jones, trans. by Joan Riviere (London: Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1925), pp.152-170 (p.155).

[623] Ibid., p.155.

[624] Brontë, *Villette*, p.268.

[625] Ibid., p.268.

[626] Ibid., p.268.

reinforced strength', exemplify the fluidity of her subjectivity. One part of herself seems reconciled to accept her destiny to fight the battle of life 'singlehanded'.[627] However, another part of herself finds comfort and power in the beauty of the natural scenery, desiring to 'break up [her] winter quarters' and to make connections with others.[628] This memory then leads to an inner consumption of self-doubt, as her monologue ends with rhetorical questions that articulate her anxiety and perplexity: 'Too poor to lose, God might destine me to gain. But what road was open? What plan available?'[629] These questions left unanswered suggest that there are thoughts and feelings she cannot deal with at a conscious level.

Lucy's account of the nun's reemergence further reinforces the notion of a split self. Her detailed auditory and visual perceptions of the nun again provide compelling evidence relevant to the substantiality of its existence. As she describes:

> She stood mute. She had no face, no features. All below her brow was masked with a white cloth; but she had eyes, and they viewed me.[630]

The nun who is obscurely seen and gazing upon Lucy evokes an overbearing sense of horror, parallel to the feeling under omnipresent surveillance. Yet this time with no one around, she presents an alternative form of selfhood, in trying to touch and communicate with the nun. Desperation and courage propel her to disclose the minimal self—determined and assertive—different from her previous display of the narrative self, who is subordinate to the trained eye of the medical authority.

Lucy's inability to maintain a coherent self-narrative reveals her multifarious, contested subject position—while part of her conforms to a set of spatial and behavioral constraints, another part of her exhibits her rebellious desires for independence and power. The tension between narrative and minimal forms of self-awareness in Lucy's narratives demonstrates her inner space as a contradictory heterotopic site, where she can articulate feelings that cannot be consciously contained. However, her exercise of active agency is still constrained by the larger patriarchal structure, subjected to an outside gaze.

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627 Ibid., p.268.

628 Ibid., p.268.

629 Ibid., p.268.

630 Ibid., p.269.

4.2 Female Embodied Experience of Empowerment

Moving from the discussion of Lucy's reading and burying the letters, I will now explore how the spatial arrangement of the inner space is entangled with affective experiences. Charlotte Mathieson argues that Lucy's urban walking provides the model of the flâneuse as an alternative to the traditionally masculine one, displaying both 'the possibilities and perils of women's mobility'.[631] Mathieson's study sheds light on the material body as an important archive of affective experience and an ontological locus of selfhood. Following Mathieson, I argue that the inner space can be regarded as an ideologically loaded space, illuminating the fluidity and contingency of identity. Lucy's subject position is continually redefined and reconstructed through social interactions and practices that are based in power relations. Her body remains passive and immobile while looking after Miss Marchmont and confined to 'two hot, close rooms'.[632] In contrast, she takes a more active role as a solo walker in London, as someone 'who never yet truly lived, were at last about to taste life'.[633] She in her 'plain country garb' is initially treated with scorn by the chambermaid, but her efforts of 'maintaining a very quiet manner' finally earn the respect of the maid and the waiter.[634] On the next morning, she even strikes up an acquaintance with one of the waiters who remembers her two uncles. This newly established social connection is a sign of her increasing willingness to incorporate herself into the public sphere which entails complicated class relations. A series of actions reflect her desire to build an ideal selfhood with easy access to diverse dimensions of public life. For example, she buys a little book at a bookseller's shop near Paternoster Row, even though it is 'a piece of extravagance [she] could ill afford'.[635] She ascends the dome of St Paul's and sees a magnificent panoramic view of London. Apart from assuming the role of a distant spectator, she also actively participates in the urban environment, '[mixing] with the life passing along' and '[daring] the perils of crossing'.[636] All her bodily movements demonstrate a process of empowerment, shifting from a passive state where she accepts predicament and relate to the world

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631 Charlotte Mathieson, '"A Still Ecstasy of Freedom and Enjoyment": Walking the City in Charlotte Brontë's Villette', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 22.4 (2017), 521–535 (p.522).

632 Brontë, *Villette*, p.39.

633 Ibid., p.47.

634 Ibid., p.46.

635 Ibid., p.48.

636 Ibid., p.48.

around as recipients of welfare and charity, to one where she becomes an active agent in her own transformation.

Lucy's conscious assumption of an active role in the public sphere is also manifest in her extraordinary confession at the Catholic church, which challenges the gendered power relations intrinsic to the traditional penitential regime. Lucy is left alone in Madame Beck's girls' school during the long vacation. Chronic loneliness impels her to go out to seek psychological comfort. Out of curiosity, she enters a Catholic church and follows the other penitents to approach the confessional. As she perceives:

> […] After a space, breathless and spent in prayer, a penitent approached the confessional. I watched. She whispered her avowal. Her shrift was whispered back; she returned consoled. Another went, and another.[637]

The repeated and explicit references to the penitent's sex indicate that traditional cultural constructions of gender—male domination and female subordination—are embedded in this closed space of confession. As Foucault argues, '[t]he exercise of power perpetually creates knowledge and, conversely, knowledge constantly induces effects of power'.[638] Foucault's fundamental concepts of power and knowledge as inextricably linked is illuminating to understand the power structure of confession. Foucault argues that 'confession' as 'a ritual of discourse' inevitably 'unfolds within a power relationship', which presumes a narrative authority who is able to control and intervene in order to decide how to treat the penitent.[639] The gendered arrangement of power correlates the hierarchical structure between (female) confessant and (male) confessor. While the confessing subject is coerced to narrate a story of transgression, power is granted to the authorized confessor who decides on the speaker's absolution, treatment or punishment.

Not only gender, but also religion functions to shape and frame Lucy's sense of selfhood. Diana Peschier has explored Charlotte Brontë's use of Victorian anti-Catholic tropes in her fictions so as to articulate 'an underlying discourse of alienation, repression and desire' for her heroines.[640] Peschier points out that Lucy treats the confessional more as 'a psychiatrist's couch than as a

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[637] Ibid., p.147.

[638] Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*, p.52.

[639] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1:An Introduction*, trans. by Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1976), p.58.

[640] Diana Peschier, *Nineteenth-Century Anti-Catholic Discourses* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p.9.

channel for the forgiveness of her sins'.[641] Placing *Villette* within a context of anti-Catholicism, Peshier sheds light on Lucy's inclination to criticize the rigidity and monotony of Catholic confession and a penchant for an alternative relationship with the priest. I argue that Lucy asserts her agency through a multi-sensory experience in the confession.

Lucy's experimental confession opens up possibilities for a genuine self-revelation in opposition to the rigid ritual. Her account features repetitive references to the pronoun 'I' contributing to a heightened sense of self. She starts confessing with a strong feeling of preparedness and confidence, as she admits to herself that 'I know what I was about; my mind had run over the intent with lightning speed'.[642] This sentence shows that she is not a mechanical being merely to follow a preordained procedure but is intrinsically motivated to perform this activity. Her subjectivity is also foregrounded in her untypical synaesthetic perception of the church, merging the sense of color with touch: 'its pervading gloom not gilded but purpled by light shed through stained glass'.[643] This multi-sensory description implies her brain not as a passive receptor of external stimuli, but rather an active manipulator processing and filtering the external information in her idiosyncratic way. She then opens with an intriguing confession of her Protestant identity. Instead of confessing 'a sin', or 'a crime', she complains and describes the circumstances of her affliction to the priest, while waiting for 'a word of advice or an account of comfort'.[644] The unusual content of her confession arouses his interest to inquire for more information. Consequently, she takes a leading role in directing the conversation, while the priest is effectively transformed from an authoritarian figure to a bewildered listener.

Lucy's inner space acts as a heterotopia of illusion which empowers her with freedom and agency, and further dismantles the Self-Other dichotomy. Here the priest who is prepared to go through the confession 'with the phlegm of custom', is 'hardly furnished with counsel fitting the circumstances'.[645] He regards her as a disturbing presence 'out of the common order of things', threatening to undermine patriarchal dominance.[646] His frenetic confusion, different from his initial

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[641] Ibid., p.158.

[642] Brontë, *Villette*, p.148.

[643] Ibid., p.147.

[644] Ibid., p.148.

[645] Ibid., p.148.

[646] Ibid., p.149.

phlegmatic reaction, indicates how Lucy's active female subjectivity challenges the traditional gender relations. The 'normal' relation of male dominance and female subordination is called into question, with the priest occupying a passive position, being unsettled by the vision of her subjectivity. He is thus eager to convert her, claiming that 'You were made for our faith'.[647] His desire to convert her is essentially a longing to reinforce the established patriarchal norms. The challenge posed to male power in this episode is also evident—with the further unsettling elements of an active role consciously assumed by women—in the next scene of the gallery.

The picture gallery is one of Lucy's most frequently visited public places, where she encounters the artistic rendition of the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, which is thought appropriate for men and married women only to view. Lucy in this gallery assumes male privilege of looking, yet she is also conscious of herself as someone else's spectacle. Mulvey identifies a binary pattern of visual pleasure: 'In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female.[648] Mulvey points out how women are traditionally represented to be 'looked at and displayed', while the visual pleasure is commonly thought to belong to men.[649] Lucy asserts female agency without accessing power through conventional masculine means. This is evident in the theatrical play, in which she retains her own 'woman's garb without the slightest retrenchment' to play the male suitor of Ginevra Fanshaw.[650] Her visual joy here differs from male voyeuristic pleasure. Rather, her pleasure comes from taking on a role of art critic, as she claims that 'I was happy; happy, not always in admiring, but in examining, questioning, and forming conclusions'.[651] Thus her spectatorship provides a perspective of an outsider, which is important to consider the unconscious cause of the portrait's disturbing effect.

The complexity involved in Lucy's spectatorship stems from the influence of diverse social factors. As Reina Lewis discusses, Lucy reframes femininity within 'the shifting relational differences of class, gender, nationality and race'.[652] The description of the 'huge, dark-complexioned gypsy-queen' evokes the cultural invention of the 'Other' woman of empire in

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[647] Ibid., p.149.

[648] Mulvey, p.837.

[649] Ibid., p.837.

[650] Brontë, *Villette*, p.128.

[651] Ibid., p.180.

[652] Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.40.

English narratives.[653] Nussbaum argues that the invention of the 'Other' woman of empire consolidates 'the cult of domesticity in England', while associating dangerous or uncontrollable sexuality with 'the exotic or "savage" non-European woman'.[654] She explains that this idea is formed out of the need to control women's 'sexuality and fecundity' in eighteenth-century England, as the 'demands of trade and colonization' require an increasingly larger, able-bodied population.[655] Though her study focuses on the eighteenth-century notion of transgressive female sexuality, these arguments are still relevant to the nineteenth-century society depicted in Brontë's novel. The image of Cleopatra as a visual art object is created from the vantage point of male gaze. She is an erotic embodiment of otherness with a dangerous seductive power.

Lucy's spectatorship here offers an insight into the heterotopic potential of the inner space that empowers the woman, and calls into question the androcentric views of female body. The female perspective brings into question the male-dominated power structures which define female otherness, as can be seen from her unfavorable judgment on the painting of Cleopatra which represents a male fantasy of female sexuality:

> It represented a woman, considerably larger, I thought, than the life. I calculated that this lady, put into a scale of magnitude suitable for the reception of a commodity of bulk, would infallibly turn from fourteen to sixteen stone. She was, indeed, extremely well fed […] She lay half-reclined on a couch—why, it would be difficult to say; broad daylight blaze around her […] She ought to have been standing, or at least sitting bolt upright […] She ought likewise to have worn decent garments—a gown covering her properly, which was not the case […] Then for the wretched untidiness surrounding her there could be no excuse.[656]

From Lucy's perspective, while the art-object becomes a fetish, considered as 'the queen of the collection', Cleopatra as the female model is reduced to an object, 'a commodity of bulk'.[657] This objectification process reproduces patriarchal ideologies and the oppression of women. These explicit critiques of the extraordinary size of the visual image as 'considerably larger […] than the life' and 'extremely well fed', indicate how the male painter indulges himself in the fantasy while

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653 Brontë, *Villette*, p.182.

654 Nussbaum, p.1.

655 Ibid., p.1.

656 Brontë, *Villette*, p.181.

657 Ibid., p.181.

failing to convey reality. As Lucy previously complains, the paintings in the gallery are 'not a whit like nature', but merely parading 'several very well executed and complacent-looking fat women' as the so-called goddesses.[658] The subsequent two sentences containing the word 'ought' suggest her disagreement with the painter's deliberate degradation and perversion of the Egyptian woman. This version of Cleopatra characterized by 'unnatural' idleness, lassitude and untidiness, only evokes her condemnation of it as 'an enormous piece of claptrap'.[659]

Lucy's art criticism is essentially a critique of the existing social construction of female roles. The four pictures of a woman's life recommended by Paul, which portray the progression of a young woman into a predestined social role, provoke Lucy's equally strong criticism. For her, the women portrayed in the four pictures bear resemblance to Cleopatra in the void of subjectivity, as she frustratingly laments that 'What women to live with!—insincere, ill-humored, bloodless, brainless nonentities!'[660] These words reflect how she repudiates the male construction of two ideal types of subjugated women respectively represented in these two paintings. While Paul is criticizing her act of viewing the erotic female image, Lucy confesses that 'But I have looked at her a great many times while monsieur has been talking'.[661] Her subconscious peeps at the painting indicate her defiance against his dogmatic tutelage of the feminine ideal.

Polly, the distant relative of the Brettons who comes to visit during Lucy's stay at the house, embodies the ideal of domestic femininity and resembles one of the pictures—'the image of a most villainous little precocious she-hypocrite'.[662] The following discussion of Polly's character aims to elaborate the norms of femininity and social expectations of women, to which Lucy's new model of independent female selfhood runs counter. When Polly first arrives at the Bretton household, Lucy perceives her as an 'exceedingly tiny', 'doll' like figure, an amorphous 'shawled bundle' in the arms of a servant.[663] Beverley Gordon identifies a concept prevalent in the industrial age that women's 'body and interior space were often seen and treated as if they were the same things'.[664] Thad Logan

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[658] Ibid., p.180-1.

[659] Ibid., p.182.

[660] Ibid., p.183.

[661] Ibid., p.185.

[662] Ibid., p.183.

[663] Ibid., p.13.

[664] Beverly Gordon, 'Woman's Domestic Body: The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age', *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31.4 (1996), 281-301 (p.281).

argues that Victorian women were 'responsible for ornamenting the home in that they were charged with the acquisition and arrangement of decorative objects', while they themselves were 'expected to be ornamental'.[665] The depiction of Polly's little, doll-like body indicates her existence to be deprived of active subjectivity. She always maintains an adult-like sense of emotional control in order to please her father and other patriarchal figures, although glimmers of feelings can be perceived in all the subtle changes of her countenance. For example, 'a sudden eagerness, an intense expectancy' to see her father is manifest in the 'startling transfiguration' of her iris and pupil, her trembling, glittering gaze, her clearing brow, and lit-up features.[666] When she appears in front of her father, she makes little noise, becoming the quiet, well-behaved 'papa's little Polly'.[667] Polly's self-constraint fulfills what Nancy Armstrong suggests the expectation of the ideal domestic woman to be so inconspicuous that she 'disappear[ed] into the woodwork' of the household.[668]

Having examined Polly as an embodiment of male fantasy, I will now return to the analysis of the portrait of Cleopatra. I will argue that Cleopatra's physical signs of erotic desire suggest her as an emergent entity capable of exercising her autonomy, which contests the stereotype of her as an artist object. Lucy is accused by Paul of looking at this picture with 'astounding insular audacity', which indicates his worry about possible negative effects of a shameful, sexual display on her.[669] Freud suggests that a girl is inevitably inculcated with the idea of female passivity after undergoing a process, during which the active elements of her sexuality visible in the pre-Oedipal phase will be repressed in the Oedipal stage.[670] 'The uncanny ["the unhomely"]' is defined by Freud as 'something familiar ["homely", "homey"]' that resurfaces from where it has been repressed.[671] What symbolically returns to life in the portrait is female sexuality. The dread toward the active role women reassume continues to invade male consciousness. Freud identifies 'a generalized dread of women' among primitive peoples, underpinning the practice conducted in diverse cultures of

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665 Thad Logan, *The Victorian Parlour* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001), p.89-90.

666 Brontë, *Villette*, p.17.

667 Ibid., p.18.

668 Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of The Novel* (Oxford & New York: OUP, 1987), p.80.

669 Brontë, *Villette*, p.182.

670 Sigmund Freud, 'Female Sexuality', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, *Volume XXI,1927-1931: The Future of an Illusion, Civilization and its Discontents, and Other Works*, ed. by James Strachey, Anna Freud, Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson (London: the Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1961), pp. 221-244 (pp.227-235).

671 Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, trans. by David McLintock (1973; repr. London: Penguin, 2003), p.152.

assigning the 'defloration' of brides to someone other than the husband.[672] Freud argues that the taboo of virginity established by men shows their fear of some physical danger.[673] It is believed that the first experience of intercourse may ventilate women's latent aggression: defloration not only ties the woman permanently to the man, but also 'unleashes an archaic reaction hostility towards him'.[674] In *Villette*, the portrait of Cleopatra with reemerging active femininity tends to evoke castration anxiety in male viewers. This is best exemplified in Dr. Bretton's display of repulsion, claiming that 'my mother is a better-looking woman', and that '"Le Voluptueux" is little to my liking'.[675] The uncanny effect of Cleopatra on male viewers symbolizes the return of her active femininity.

Cleopatra in the picture exists in her ambivalent subject positions as an independent active agent and simultaneously an erotic object for male audience. The different subject positions that women can occupy reveal the heterotopic potential of their inner spaces, where their subjectivities are respected and empowered through interactions with external world. Another male viewer Colonel de Hamal whose body channels his homoerotic desire into affective manifestations, exemplifies how active female subjectivity can potentially cause the dissolution of a fixed subject-object dichotomy. As Lucy describes his looks and movements:

> What a very finished, highly polished little pate it is! What a figure, so trim and natty! What womanish feet and hands! How daintily he held a glass to one of his optics; with what admiration he gazed upon the Cleopatra; and then how engagingly he tittered and whispered a friend at his elbow! O the man of sense! O the refined gentleman of superior taste and tact![676]

By consciously placing himself in an emotionally and bodily masochistic position in order to express his homoerotic desire, De Hamal yields himself in utter passivity to the spiritual influence of the female portrait. The surface of his body including his 'very fined, highly polished little pate' and 'trim and natty' figure, serves as a site where his sexual desire and male identity are enacted and performed under the constraints of social norms. His 'womanish feet and hands' are perceived

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672 Sigmund Freud, 'The Taboo of Virginity', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XI,1910: Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis Leonardo da Vinci and Other Works*, ed. by James Strachey, Anna Freud, Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson (London: the Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1957), pp.193-208 (pp.194-195, p.198).

673 Freud, 'The Taboo of Virginity', p.200.

674 Ibid., p.208.

675 Brontë, *Villette*, p.187.

676 Ibid., p.186.

as the threshold that marks the border between his chaotic inner self and highly organized, disciplined exterior of the body. His male subjectivity is proved to be a fluid, destabilized entity, fluctuating between the surface and the inside mess. The disturbing effects of the portrait of Cleopatra and the destabilization of masculine identity experienced by De Hamal demonstrate that the binary relationship between Self and Other is not fixed, but a contextual, fluid construction.

4.3 The Haunted Mind

Lucy's assumption of an active subject through immersive and embodied experiences of environment and place demonstrates the potential of her inner space as an individual space of freedom, which helps open her heart, and consequently facilitates intersubjectivity. For example, her epistolary communications with Paul Emanuel while they are physically separated embrace what Steve Earnshaw has described as 'an ontology of letters' that foregrounds 'the primacy of writing' as a 'potential bridge between souls'.[677] Lucy's use of the epistolary medium to strengthen a spiritual connection with Paul demonstrates the role of her inner space in facilitating intersubjective understanding and empathy. Although her inner space functions to liberate herself from external constraints, her agency is inevitably compromised by her internalized social norms. In this section, I continue my exploration of the function of the interior space as a heterotopia, where Lucy can assert herself as a free and powerful individual and develop her capacity for intersubjective linking, though this kind of female subjectivity seems limited and transient. I argue that the recurring images of being adrift, of shipwreck, of being on a voyage fraught with peril towards an uncertain destination in Lucy's narrative, not only imply Paul's probable death, but also externalize her internal unrest and suicidal impulses. Thus, Lucy's inner space functions as a heterotopia where she deconstructs her social self in search of liberty, yet the haunting sense of death indicates her difficulty in preserving the independence and integrity of self in an oppressive patriarchal environment.

The open ending reveals Lucy's inner space as a heterotopia unsettled by the tension between her social 'narrative self' and her hidden 'minimal self'. The ongoing interaction between these conflicting selves echoes what David Lodge describes as the negotiation between expectations of

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[677] Steve Earnshaw, 'Charlotte Brontë's Fictional Epistles', *Brontë Studies*, 40.3 (2015), 201-214 (p.201).

the reading public and the authorial version of reality.[678] The narrating self apparently allows the reader to 'picture union and a happy succeeding life' in the final scene.[679] She sets up a school with his financial support. We are told in the last paragraph that Madame Beck and Pere Silas have prospered 'all the days' of their lives, and Madame Walravens lives to the age of ninety.[680] Despite all these certainties, Lucy does not unequivocally declare Paul's return and their happy reunion. The 'minimal self' associated with her self-consciousness as an immediate subject of experience resists indulging in a joyful mood. Claiming that the three years of his absence are 'the happiest years' of her life, the narrator seems to deny a happy state at present.[681] A dreadful storm is described roaring for seven days until 'the destroying angel of tempest had achieved his perfect work', which implies a seriously hazardous situation for Paul:

> Here pause: pause at once. There is enough said. Trouble no quiet, kind heart; leave sunny imaginations hope. Let it be theirs to conceive the delight of joy born again fresh out of great terror, the rapture of rescue from peril, the wondrous reprieve from dread, the fruition of return.[682]

The words 'trouble', 'terror', 'peril' and 'dread' imply the possibility of an alternative fact contesting the 'happy' ending. When Brontë is asked about Paul's fate, she replies in the letter to George Smith that 'it was designed that every reader should settle the catastrophe for himself, according to the quality of his disposition, the tender or remorseless impulse of his nature'.[683] The author's comment highlights the contingency of the happy ending, suggesting that it depends on the reader's imagination to 'settle the catastrophe' and to conceive 'the delight of joy'. The deliberate suspension of the outcome implies the possibility of an alternative reality.

Lucy's inner space functions as a heterotopia capable of juxtaposing the 'narrative self' and the 'minimal self' which are always implicated in an ongoing struggle. I posit Lucy's interior self as haunted by the death of Paul throughout her memoir. The specious totality of Lucy's narrative is shattered, as her 'narrative' self cannot always regulate and control intense feelings of her 'minimal

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[678] David Lodge, *Working with Structuralism: Essays and Reviews on Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century Literature* (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), pp.143-155 (pp.151-153).

[679] Brontë, *Villette*, p.443.

[680] Ibid., p.443.

[681] Ibid., p.441.

[682] Ibid., p.443.

[683] Brontë, *Selected Letters*, p.217.

self'. *Villette* starts with Lucy describing her experience of living in her godmother's residence in the town of Bretton without providing background information about her family. After quitting Bretton, she describes herself at home as a resident of a ship, 'idle, basking, plump, and happy'.[684] But such a happy time is soon replaced by 'a long time—of cold, of danger, of contention'.[685] The explicit references to '[falling] overboard' and 'wreck' in her description signify a life-threatening situation she falls into. Her memory of 'a heavy tempest' and the final hopeless scene—'the ship was lost, the crew perished'—implies her death-like state as the only survivor of the shipwreck. Her perception and mood are interwoven in a synesthetic experience that cannot be processed and controlled—'To this hour, when I have the nightmare, it repeats the rush and saltness of briny waves in my throat, and their icy pressure on my lungs.[686] The overabundance of senses including taste, vision, hearing and touch produces a sense of aesthetic profusion, and tends in its very richness to disrupt her calm control of the narrative. Cathy Caruth notes a paradox in trauma: 'the greatest confrontation with reality may also occur as an absolute numbing to it, that immediacy, paradoxically enough, may take the form of belatedness'.[687] In other words, the victim may not remember the experience at the very traumatic moment, but suffers from the haunting memory of it. These images describing Lucy's alienation, and metaphors of shipwreck, suffocation, reclusion, submersion and others, are all ideas of being buried alive. The feelings surrounded by death and a lingering sense of impending doom suggest that her present self is haunted by the traumatic past. These feelings emerging after so many years attest to the heterotopic nature of Lucy's psychic space which functions to keep her core being intact against external demands.

By using the metaphors of storm and ship, Lucy reveals her contested inner space in comparison with Mrs. Bretton's stable state of mind. The heterotopic potential of her inner space lies in accommodating her protean self that deviates from the dominant norms of femininity. While she considers Mrs. Bretton's way of living as similar to 'the stately ship cruising safe on smooth seas, with its full complement of crew, a captain gay and brave, and venturous and provident', she is indicating that Mrs. Bretton embodies the Victorian image of femininity characterized by

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684 Brontë, *Villette*, p.37.

685 Ibid., p.37.

686 Ibid., p.37.

687 *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), p.6.

domestication and dependance on men.[688] In contrast, she compares her existence to

> […] the lifeboat, which most days of the year lies dry and solitary in an old, dark boat-house, only putting to sea when the billows run high in rough weather, when cloud encounters water, when danger and death divide between them the rule of the great deep.[689]

The solitary lifeboat which is ready to be maneuvered away from the boat-house under adverse weather conditions, is analogous to her independent mode of living that challenges the prevailing gender norms. Unlike Mrs. Bretton's sedentary lifestyle, her mobility constantly exposes herself to potential hazards. This sense of irritable stasis places her in an unfixed position between rebellion and conformity, freedom and domestication. The boat thus serves as a symbol of self, marking her as a subject-in-process. Her liminal position both as a woman subordinate to patriarchal power and as an independent individual demonstrates her inner world as a heterotopia capable of juxtaposing discordant dimensions of identity.

Having examined how Paul's shipwreck activates the heterotopic potential of Lucy's psychic realm, I will now explore her extraordinary opium-induced walk through Villette, which presents her embodied self that secures a precarious space between social factors and her inner world. During this walk, her auditory and visual hallucinations reveal her distorted perceptions of reality and bring to light her latent self-destructive tendency. Tormented by Paul's impending trip without knowing any details about it, Lucy is shocked and frustrated by Madam Beck's attempts to prevent her final meeting with Paul. Since the 'strong opiate' is explicitly referenced, her perceptions may be read as entirely unreliable as drug-produced illusions.[690] During her opium-induced wanderings on the night of Villette's grand fête, the narrator textually admits to her own psychic disorientation, explicitly expressing confusion about her location—'where was I?'[691] During this process, imagination imposes on reality, as indicated by her observation that 'On this whole scene was impressed a dream-like character; every shape was wavering, every movement floating, every voice echo-like—half mocking, half uncertain'.[692] These sensitive observations and subtle feelings that cannot be controlled and regulated by Lucy's 'narrative self' indicate her inner space as a

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[688] Brontë, *Villette*, p.164.

[689] Ibid., p.164.

[690] Ibid., p.403.

[691] Ibid., p.406.

[692] Ibid., p.406.

heterotopia that protects and sustains her multifaceted interior self.

The heterotopic feature of Lucy's psychic space resides in its potential to bring out certain aspects of herself that need to be repressed or disguised by conventional standards. I argue that Lucy's narrative of the opium-induced walk shows her psychic symptom of a compulsion to repeat which is also an indicator of suicidal impulses. Her account contains an image of endless repetition, which highlights her circular movements as a woman of the crowd:

> In this outer rank I took my place. I rather like to find myself the silent, unknown, consequently unaccosted neighbour of the short petticoat and the sabot, and only the distant gazer at the silk robe, the velvet mantle, and the plumed chapeau. Amidst so much life and joy, too, it suited me to be alone—quite alone. Having neither wish nor power to force my way through a mass so close-packed, my station was on the farthest confines, where, indeed, I might hear, but could see little.[693]

The narrator seems stuck in a repetitive pattern of always placing herself at the margin and remaining aloof from the crowd. She keeps doing so, regardless of the fact that she finds herself the 'silent', 'unknown', 'alone', having a vague vision of the whole scene. Always placing herself 'on the farthest confines', she seems trapped in a loop repeating the same string of thoughts. Freud links the compulsion to repeat with the death drive, arguing that it represents 'something that would seem more primitive, more elementary, more instinctual than the pleasure principle which it overrides'.[694] Thus her repetitive compulsion reflects how she is unconsciously beset by a propensity to suicide, which can be further seen in her illusory restoration of Justine Marie.

Lucy's self-destructive tendency illustrates the contradictory position that she finds herself obliged to occupy by circumstance and misfortune. The protean nature of her subject position rejects the notion of a unified interior self, and instead indicates its heterotopic nature. When Madame Walravens calls out for Justine Marie, Lucy initially recalls the dead nun, the reanimation of the corpse, but this Justine turns out to be Paul's 18-year-old ward, who is named after her aunt. However, Lucy's suspicion of Paul's love object continues to grow, and she convinces herself that Paul will marry his ward when he returns from the journey. Her emotional states fluctuate across intense feelings—horror, excitement, skepticism and dread—following a repeated cycle of revivals and relapses. Freud argues that the compulsion to repeat a traumatic event, though painful, can also bring pleasure, for it grows out of 'an urge inherent in organic life to restore to an earlier state of

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693 Ibid., p.408.

694 Sigmund Freud, *Beyond The Pleasure Principle* (1920; repr. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1961), p.17.

things'.[695] She continuously reenacts the traumatic situation which anticipates a marriage between Paul and his wealthy ward, claiming that 'I hastened to accept the whole plan'.[696] Her sadistic attempt to accept this self-imposed fantasy as 'truth' aims to 'restore' herself to a complete of 'freedom'.[697] Destructive of both Self and Other, her insistence on this compulsion to repeat shows her haunted state of mind hovering between life and death. Although her inner space can function as a heterotropia of illusion to allow her to exercise agency, she is not strong enough to shatter or subvert any kinds of hegemonic power relations.

In summary, I have aimed to show that Foucault's concept of heterotopia provides an effective theoretical construct to examine the private inner world as a space of contradiction and disintegration manifested in Charlotte Brontë's surviving letters and *Villette*. Firstly, Brontë's surviving letters provide insights into how she constructs diverse aspects of herself through her subtle rhetoric, negotiating with letter-writing conventions. Letters also serve as an important locus to explore the multiplicity of consciousness in *Villette*. Lucy's affective experiences in both the garret and the garden where she reads and buries Graham's letters provide evidence of her fragmented and unstable selfhood, shifting between the narrative self and the minimal self. Then I have turned my attention from affective experience as manifestations of the interior self to its potential to empower women. Lucy's multi-sensory perceptions at the Catholic church both help her reclaim agency and pose a threat to the traditional hierarchical priest-penitent relationship. The image of Cleopatra at the gallery occupies an ambiguous position, both as an object of male desire and fantasy, and as a potentially active subject, exerts an uncanny effect on male viewers. Its disturbing impact demonstrates how the power of female aggression can reject the notion of a unified male subject. In the last section, I have examined the repetitive allusions to the image of death and shipwreck in the unreliable first-person narration. These affective symptoms which cannot be controlled and articulated at the level of consciousness, not only reinforce the ambiguity of the ending, but also highlight the heterotopic nature of the inner world.

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[695] Ibid., p.30.

[696] Brontë, *Villette*, p.419.

[697] Ibid., p.419.

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have concentrated on a selection of works by female writers in the early nineteenth-century, including Sydney Owenson, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Charlotte Brontë. I have argued both that these female writers were compromised and constrained by society's expectations of women and of authorship, and that space and spatiality substantially contribute to the development of the plot while enriching the theme in their texts. I have used Foucault's concept of heterotopia as a primary conceptual tool to trace and examine spaces of alternative ordering in the novels that open up the possibility to accommodate the experience of otherness and tentatively suspend the social norms. They therefore modify space by drawing out latent possibilities. Yet unlike utopias that do not exist, heterotopias must exist in the real world, and thus cannot transcend it. By presenting how heterotopias function deictically, I have argued that these women writers' texts provide a perennial spatial paradigm to recognize the potential of certain physical spaces to create alternative orders and to destabilize spatially encoded normative social and cultural relations. These real spaces of otherness also call into question the binary oppositions on which the dominant discourses rely, such as male and female, Self and Other, center and margin.

This thesis has focused on descriptions of space and the effect of spatial arrangements on individual behaviors and social relations. In Chapter 1, cross-cultural encounters set in Ireland and India reflect Owenson's concerns with the construction of Irish identity in a time when the Act of Union 1800 did not resolve the existing problems of English dominance over Ireland. This chapter has examined the way in which individuals attempt to reshape their self-images through imaginative investment in their living environment. The spatial arrangements and decorations of the Prince's hall and Glorvina's boudoir in *The Wild Irish Girl* reflect their tendency to construct a distinct Irish cultural identity that advocates their Eastern origins, and at the same time keeps an open mind toward the world and acquires new ideas and knowledge. I have examined the contact zones such as the barn in *The Wild Irish Girl* where the elite protagonist Horatio withdraws into silence when faced with the Irish girls performing a traditional ritual. The Irish oral culture performed in the barn represents what Lloyd calls pre-modern forms of consciousness that resist literacy-induced historical consciousness of progress and development.[698] This Irish oral space that defies historicist logic, is akin to a heterotopia, where the native Irish linguistic and cultural inheritance undermines

[698] Lloyd, p.5.

the English traveler's assumed sense of superiority. Owenson's national tales reveal spaces of otherness as a potential disruption to the dominant colonial order, as representations of Irish and Indian physical spaces demonstrate the ambivalence of colonial discourse and consequently subverts the Self/Other binary. Authorial annotations have also been examined as heterotopias to further disrupt the binary opposition between center and margin, where an alternative understanding of Irish cultural history with an emphasis on its Eastern origins that challenges the Anglocentric account of the Irish past.

The experimental and fragmented texts *Frankenstein* and *The Last Man* have been explored in Chapter 2. I have aimed to trace how unsettling narrative structures preclude the possibility of totalized meaning and interpretation with Shelley's texts resembling Foucault's description of textual heterotopias that destroy syntax in advance. The frame narratives constituted by heterogeneous and multidimensional components convey a non-linear perspective that contests Enlightenment ideas of progress and causation. Owenson's representations of natural landscapes which emphasize the agency of nature and an alternative eco-centric world view reveals how heterotopias can open up a space for the experience of the Other in relation to the surrounding social space.

The emotionally charged and ideologically loaded home space was the focus of Chapter 3. Jane Austen's representations of Pemberley Park in *Pride and Prejudice* and the East Room in *Mansfield Park* are examined as heterotopias of illusion, where female characters are allowed to claim certain freedoms on their own account, although they are still constrained by the dominant social order. The examination of Mr. Bennet's library as a heterotopia of compensation to reinforce his sense of superiority illuminates an alternative function of heterotopias that aims to compensate for the failings of actual reality. The tension between heterotopias of illusion and heterotopias of compensation described in Foucault's sixth and final principle has been central to my arguments about the way in which Austen's spaces engage with the conflicting subject positions occupied by women in her time. While they are allowed to develop and express subjectivity, they are still subject to patriarchal oppression. The difficult and compromised situation of female characters reveals the paradox of heterotopias as spaces that are semi-detached from all other spaces. Austen's writing encourages readers to see into the depths of things, exploring the power structures underlying emotions and bodily affects.

The heterotopic potential of the psychic realm to open up a space of possibility for a multifaceted otherness was explored in Chapter 4. The examination of Brontë's surviving letters

aims to shed light on the heterotopic potential of the inner space to facilitate the construction of her multiple identity. In *Villette*, Brontë explores how an immersive, embodied experience of space and motion can help female characters regain a sense of personal autonomy and self-ownership. Such a heterotopic experience provides a resource for individual construction, which is especially meaningful to women like Lucy Snowe who are struggling to establish a firm and separate sense of self, as they are subject to the objectifying force of the external gaze.

Cumulatively, my thesis has aimed to reveal space as a primary concern for my selection of early-nineteenth century female writers, who all attempt to engage with a wide range of spatial possibilities, extending from the cross-cultural contact zone down to the private realm of the interior self. Recognizing the capability of spaces to encode realities and shape subjectivities, my thesis has investigated how these female writers convey their political, cultural and historical concerns through spatial dimensions. I have aimed to show their novels, though set in different contexts, reveal how heterotopic spaces invested with imaginative potential can function as either a space of 'illusion' or as a space of 'compensation', depending entirely on the inhabitants' needs. Thus heterotopias can therefore serve as important means to negotiate and redefine the ontological boundaries of selfhood. The spatiality encoded in these novelists' writings also opens a series of heterotopias which interrogate the syntax holding the textual space together, subverting the notion of a unified, stable self able to coherently tell its own story. The heterotopias examined in my chosen texts offer no simple utopic promises for the subordinate Other to subvert the dominant social order and their underlying ideologies. Heterotopias are spaces of paradox, juxtaposing different incongruous and incompatible sites, but at least they call attention to imagination as a way of transcending reality, as is exemplified in Lionel's boat sailing beyond the end of *The Last Man,* offering hope for the regeneration of human beings. Ultimately, by attending to both the potentials and limitations of heterotopic representations, this study of spatial dimensions in these novels has sought to promote awareness of issues relating to agency of the female and the subaltern subjects and to bring possible glimpses of breakthrough beyond it.

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