

“Wandering through Bowers Beloved”:

The Wandering Jew and the Woman Poet in Caroline Norton’s *The Undying One*

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<1> Although Caroline Norton is best remembered for her disastrous marriage and her tireless campaign for women’s property and divorce rights, she was also regarded by her contemporaries as a great poet. Norton’s long poem *The Undying One* (1830) merits study for its parallels to Norton’s life and disappointment with marriage, but such a reading is limited in its scope and would ignore more productive interpretations. The poem deserves attention more for its engagement with the Victorian poetess tradition and for its uniquely styled version of the Wandering Jew myth. Norton’s life and works straddle the Romantic and Victorian periods, and study of her works, like those of her contemporaries Felicia Hemans and Letitia Elizabeth Landon, provides valuable insight into the transitional period between these two eras. *The Undying One* is an especially fruitful poem because it blends Romantic hallmarks such as sublime landscapes and the Gothic with Victorian domestic values and sentimentalism.

<2> *The Undying One* uses the figure of the Wandering Jew, a staple of Gothic fiction, to articulate themes of isolation, religious doubt, gender inequality, fallen women, and love. The Wandering Jew is usually employed in two opposing ways. He is an image of pure evil, a blasphemer, and Faustian consorter with devils, or, in the hands of radical writers like William Godwin and Percy Shelley, he is a symbolic martyr for political and religious justice. Like the Wandering Jew, actual Jews in the early nineteenth century were typically regarded with ambivalence. Norton’s poem reproduces this tension in her treatment of the Jewish anti-hero of *The Undying One* who is alternately a pathetic object worthy of the greatest sympathy, and a vile monster who deserves his fate, fails adequately to repent, and perpetrates greater evils in the course of his wanderings. But, although Norton’s depiction of the Wandering Jew bears similarities to other works about Jews and the Wandering Jew, she moves beyond these tropes in order to demonstrate his moral complexity and humanity. At the same time, Norton adapts the Gothic archetype to promote themes that are common to many Victorian women poets: advocacy for the expression of female genius and for women’s visibility in the public sphere.

Norton achieves this by using not a female character, but a Jewish man, who would typically be regarded in the period as effeminate.

<3> *The Undying One* is a narrative poem divided into four cantos totalling roughly 3600 lines. It begins and ends with a third-person account of Isbal the Wandering Jew's present condition. He loves a woman named Linda and is about to recount his whole history to her. The bulk of the poem consists of Isbal's retelling of his past, with each canto focussing primarily on a different love affair. The poem is structured as a melodrama – a mode that, as Elaine Hadley demonstrates, would come to absorb Norton's personal life as well as her writing – in which past sorrows are recounted in anticipation of the final scene where a new and greater tragedy is about to occur (158-159).

<4> The first canto details how Isbal, after rejecting Christ's divinity, is cursed to live as an immortal wanderer. Isbal turns to a life of pleasure but quickly decides that such a life is unfulfilling. He then falls in love with a woman named Edith, but his revelation to her of his cursed status results in her death. In the second canto, Isbal tells the story of his involvement in Rome's republican cause, his disillusion with the material world, his love of the Arab woman Xarifah, his adoption of her son, Abdallah, and the son's eventual rejection of Isbal on the suspicion of his unholy nature. The third canto is the longest and most overtly Gothic. Isbal travels the world, witnessing the misery of other humans whose lives have been shattered by frustrated love affairs or the death of loved ones. In these travels, Isbal rescues a baby girl from being drowned by her destitute mother. When the mother dies, Isbal decides to raise the child, whom he names Miriam. After a period of joy in his relationship with Miriam, Isbal suspects her romantic love for him and recognizes with despair that he will outlive her. Not wishing for her to withdraw in horror from him at the eventual discovery of his unnatural longevity, he kills her to spare her, and himself, that pain. Isbal's crimes are discovered and he is tortured and imprisoned for centuries. No detail is given about his release from captivity or how he comes to meet Linda, but the prison scene itself is a typically Gothic device, as is the presumably *deus ex machina* escape. The last Canto sees Linda confirm her love of Isbal, despite his past, and then recounts her death at sea, partially caused by her brother's efforts to force her to marry another man. Finally, Isbal attempts to drown himself, but fails.

<5> *The Undying One* has received very little critical attention. Randall Craig's recent study, a rare book-length work on Norton that engages in sustained criticism of her poetry and fiction, mentions the poem in passing as an example of her contemporaries' critical reception of her early work (2). Alan Chedzoy's 1992 biography of Norton provides a partially incorrect summary(1) of the poem and a brief biographical interpretation, which mostly involves reading the tale of the adulterous woman in the third canto as a barb directed at Norton's ineffectual husband George (70).

<6> Although this essay treats *The Undying One* as a meditation on oppression generally, and of women specifically, it is necessary to first discuss how Norton handles Romantic discourse about Jews before demonstrating how Isbal's experiences relate to, and even stand in for, the plight of women in contemporary England. The entire poem seems inspired by a few lines from *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* where Harold compares his "gloom" to that which "The fabled Hebrew Wanderer bore" (1.899). Norton, who was often compared to Byron by her contemporaries (as were many other female poets), fleshes out Byron's offhand reference to the Wandering Jew and imagines what his experiences might be, and whether they would look anything like the experiences of the Byronic Hero. If Norton did in fact have *Childe Harold* in mind when writing about Isbal, and it seems likely given that the first epigraph for her poem is also taken from *Childe Harold*, then she clearly rejects Byron's comparison on the grounds that the Jewish wanderer is not merely disillusioned by the world, but persecuted by it as well, thereby making him more comparable to oppressed women than to the errant knight.

<7> *The Undying One* shares one of the greatest shortcomings of positive Romantic-era portrayals of Jews by failing to make links between the mythologized or literary Jew and lived Jewish experience. Judith Page identifies this flaw in Wordsworth's poem, "A Jewish Family" (1835), which describes the physical features of a Jewish mother, her son, and two daughters. Wordsworth begins the poem by invoking the "Genius of Raphael!" before describing the beautiful family (1). He then laments that they come from a downcast people "Nor yet released from scorn", and rhapsodizes on the proud history of Israel (40). Page argues that Wordsworth appropriates Jewishness by converting his real life encounter with a Jewish family into a portrait that fails to take into account the reality of his subjects. Thus, Wordsworth idealizes and decontextualizes the Jewish Family, mythologizing his subjects and inserting them into the categorical type of oppressed vagrant. He shows interest in and sympathy for the family's alien status, "but as is typical of his poetry, Wordsworth does not directly confront the political implications of this homelessness . . . Thus, his poem both commemorates rootlessness and distances it from the circumstances of the world" (Page 170).

<8> Norton's poem performs a similar elision of contemporary Jewishness. Isbal's Jewishness becomes relevant in several instances in the poem, but he remains distinct from other Jews as a result of his supernatural state and because the bulk of his story takes place centuries in the past. Although Norton successfully develops the mythical wanderer's depth as a character, Isbal's supernatural identity undercuts his universal appeals for love and acceptance. He remains unrealistic, if sympathetic. By distancing the character from actual Jews, Norton limits the poem's ability to deliver any particular message about the status of Jews in her contemporary England. Nevertheless, Norton briefly makes her poem relevant to discussions about Jews in European history.

<9>There are two moments in the poem which contain directed statements about Judaism. The first is during Isbal's early wanderings when he encounters people of various faiths and compares his own obstinacy in mocking Christ to their commitment to their beliefs, wrong though they may be. In these comparisons, he observes that "the incredulous Jew, yet unforgiven, / Still vainly waits the crucified of Heaven" (1.378-379). The passage leaves it unclear whether this waiting is in vain, or a vain rejection of Christ, or both, but the connotation is clearly to condemn of the errors of Jewish faith.

<10> The second instance of commentary on Judaism curiously displaces the duplicity and greed stereotypically associated with Jews onto their persecutors. This occurs when Isbal gives his firsthand account of the York Massacre of 1190:

She [Miriam] stood by me and fear'd not, in that place
When the sacred remnant of my wretched race
Gave England's Richard gifts, to let them be
All unmolested in their misery:
And while their jewels sparkled on his hand,
His traitor lips gave forth the dark command . . .
Bade strong arms strike, where none their force withstood,
And woman's wail be quench'd in woman's blood
She stood by me and fear'd not when again, . . .
Brother laid brother low, a prostrate corpse,
Rather than yield their bodies up to those,
In word, in act, and in religion --- foes. (3.721-736)

Although Norton implies an irreconcilable difference between Jews and Christians in both passages, she nevertheless rejects the notion of Jews as instigators of religious violence or as figures of extreme avarice – such is often the equivocating case presented in Romantic writings about Jews, as in *Ivanhoe* (1819) where Isaac the Jew may be good and more sinned against than sinning, yet is nevertheless unnaturally obsessed with maintaining his wealth. When Norton contradicts these kinds of popular conceptions about Jewish greed in her depiction of the York Massacre, she puts the argument into the mouth of Isbal himself, a Jewish character that has every interest in presenting the Jewish side of the story in a positive light. Nevertheless, despite his dubious status as the Wandering Jew cum Byronic Hero, Isbal delivers the assessment of this and other more common social injustices with apparent earnestness and no hint of self-implicating irony.

<11> This is an unusual way of presenting a Jewish character at this time. Jews in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fiction are often defined by their resistance to plain and honest expression. Daniel Itzkovitz relates the duplicity of Jewish characters to fears about the

indefinite character of the Jewish people: “the Jew, by virtue of an unconventional relation to race, nation, and culture, occupies a position of fundamental instability . . . which hid inside the seeming stability of the Jews` proximate whiteness, [and] fed fantasies of dangerous secrets behind the eyes of the suspect Jew” (185). Itzkovitz situates this notion of a secretive Jewish identity within a twentieth-century American context, but parallels exists in Britain during the Romantic era when the increasingly noticeable presence and integration of Jews produced fears about the threatening similarity between Jew and Christian. In Georgian England, “passing for a Jew . . . became the means of expressing a deepening anxiety over the increasingly fluid border between Jew and Gentile, and the location of Englishness in relation to Jewishness” (Ragussis 41). Thus, within the British context of toleration, writers were inclined to highlight the humanity of Jews, while still maintaining an insurmountable difference between “us” and “them” which lies just under the surface. When virtuous Jews do appear in print or on the stage, their virtue often lies in turning the other cheek, marking them out as Christians in disguise, or ripe for conversion (Rosenberg 267).

<12>Anxieties about Jewish difference accumulate in depictions of the Wandering Jew as a figure defined by his mysterious and apparently sinister character. An early version of the Wandering Jew myth describes an incident in which a thirteenth-century Archbishop delivers an oral account of the figure while visiting a monastery. This iteration has almost no bearing on actual Jews as the immortal man, Cartaphilus, is probably an Armenian, but certainly not Jewish. He recovers his youth every 100 years, behaves with monkish solemnity and obsesses over his folly in mocking Christ at the crucifixion(2) (Rosenberg 190-191). The legend was revived in a 1602 German pamphlet, *Volksbuch*. This time, the character is a Jewish cobbler named Ahaseurus who reacts with strong emotion when he hears a sermon about the crucifixion. He explains his response by saying he was there and was cursed after he refused to allow Jesus . . . rest against him. As punishment, the Wandering Jew is driven by a perpetual impulse to travel, never himself being allowed to rest. (192-193).

<13> These significant changes to the original create a richer symbolic potential for the figure of the Wandering Jew, a potential which may explain both its enduring popularity and adaptability. R. Endelman suggests that the *Volksbuch* pamphlet and related oral stories concretized otherwise abstract ideas about how and why the Jews suffer, such as through their proverbial homelessness that was long interpreted as divinely mandated, and that the tale provided mass audiences with a readily-available narrative that justified anti-Semitism (9). Matthew Biberman posits that an equation was made between the Wandering Jew and Jewish effeminacy indicated by the Wandering Jew’s usually pathetic, passive, and ultimately doomed role (171). Biberman thus characterizes the Wandering Jew in Romantic fiction and poetry as an iteration of Jewish marginalization and disempowerment.

<14> Matthew Lewis's influential novel, *The Monk* (1796), is the first of the English Gothic novels to include the Wandering Jew. Lewis's Jew draws on the myth, but leaves many details about the Wandering Jew's past unexplained, and introduces some darker elements borrowed in part from German Wandering Jew tales. Lewis drops the Wandering Jew's proselytism, and instead has the Jew lament his undeserved victimhood while expressing a desire for oblivion: "Fain would I lay down my miserable life, for I envy those who enjoy the quiet of the Grave: But Death eludes me, and flies from my embrace. . . . The hungry Tiger shudders at my approach, and the Alligator flies from a Monster more horrible than itself. God has set his seal upon me, and all his Creatures respect this fatal mark!" (169). Despite the hero Raymond's horrified first impressions of the Wandering Jew, the Jew acts entirely toward Raymond's benefit by providing information on how to exorcise the ghost that follows him. This brief episode in *The Monk* is a precursor to markedly more complex portrayals, such as Norton's.

<15> Although Lewis's Wandering Jew does speak about his own feelings and history, his words are conveyed by way of a second-hand account, and his experiences are referred to only in vague terms. As well, his motivation for his initial act of apostasy remains unclear. Indeed, the act itself is not explicitly mentioned and the reader is only told, via a third party and after the Jew has left the scene, that the mysterious stranger is "the celebrated Character known universally by the name of '*the wandering Jew*'" (177). Norton's Wandering Jew Isbal, on the other hand, insists on sharing his story. Though Linda stops him from repeating the fatal words that led to his curse, presumably "vade Jesu citius, vade, quid moraris?" (3) (qtd. in Rosenberg 190), he provides an unusually detailed account of what it means to live life as an immortal *and* as a Jew.

<16> When read alongside Norton's earlier poem, *The Sorrows of Rosalie, the Undying One* takes on clearer signification as a melodrama and a tale about victims of oppression, since the loneliness that plagues Isbal is similar to Rosalie's. Rosalie laments that "I am left alone" and the narrator of *The Undying One* echoes this sentiment in the final line of the poem when "The Undying One is left *alone*" (*Sorrows* 1.3.27, *Undying One* 4.617). If Rosalie is sympathetic as a seduced and abandoned woman, cut off from all earthly ties, including her father, her lover, and her son. Isbal is sympathetic as a more extreme sufferer from the same kind of tragedies, having been cut off from multiple lovers and children. In the end, Isbal achieves the sympathy he craves when Linda reaffirms her commitment to him after hearing his history. But this is short-lived.

<17> Isbal and Linda sail away together, pursued by her brother and her suitor, whose boat is wrecked in a storm, drowning them. Linda realizes that her love for Isbal is the cause and "Feels her brain and bosom burn" to know that

For whose love she broke her plighted troth,
With strong and ruthless hand prepared the doom,
Which sickens her to dream upon --- for both" (4.291-296)

Linda's story reveals her lack of agency in the choice of a husband since her brother exerts his patriarchal right to choose for her. The man she chooses instead, Isbal, is both cursed and a curse to his loved ones, reinforcing the double bind of women under the power of masculine authority. Linda can accept her brother's decision and be unhappy, or she may abscond with her true love and be doomed to a life of social isolation and an early death. The dilemma parallels that of Isbal, who could have either accepted Christ and abandoned his Jewish faith, or reject Him and live for eternity as an outcast. Likewise, the consequences of this choice last even when Isbal has felt remorse for his crimes, and this aligns him once again with the fallen woman whose repentance is never adequate to reinstate her into respectable society.

<18>The incident of Linda's false choice is only the last example of gender inequalities in the poem. When Isbal searches out the misery of man in the second canto, several of his stories involve fallen or abandoned women. The first tale regards a seduced woman whose lover abandons her, and she voices a complaint against the sexual double standard:

Fear not --- the specious tongue whose well-feign'd tale
Hath lured the dove to leave her native vale,
May use its art some other to beguile:
And the approving world --- will only smile.
But she who sins, and suffers for that sin,
Who throws the dangerous die, and doth not win ---
Loves once --- and loves no more! (3.129-135)

The woman exposes the hypocrisy of a system that condemns women who are duped by false lovers but winks at the men who seduce them. Such arguments were common among nineteenth-century women writers, and the sexual double standard affected Norton herself several years after *The Undying One* was published when her husband accused her of adultery.

<19>In light of this concern with sexual politics, we can read Isbal less as a Jewish figure and more as an example of a victim of social injustice. Jewish characters are generally feminized. The Jew's inferior physical stature is an often discussed theme in anti-Semitic literature, and the Jewish nose is linked to sexual inadequacy. Combined, these deformities mark the Jewish male as defective, an inferior example of manhood (Itzkovitz 191). Additionally, Mathew Biberman argues that "the Wandering Jew is emblematic of the Jew-Sissy" because of his usually pathetic, passive and ultimately doomed role, and the "the Wandering Jew's ascendancy in the cultural imagination tracks with the rise of the Jew-sissy" (171). Isbal is, of course, no exception.

Although he is not described as physically deformed or inadequate, he nevertheless expresses himself in terms reminiscent of the man of feeling, distinguishing him again as an effeminate male. All his projects and romances fail, revealing his powerlessness. In the hands of a female poet, then, this feminized Wandering Jew reads as code for female isolation and oppression, themes that were the major focus of Norton's career throughout her life.

<20> Reading Isbal's experience as a way of understanding female experience aligns with Isobel Armstrong's theory that in the nineteenth century, "the doubleness of women's poetry comes from its ostensible adoption of an affective mode, often simple The simpler the surface of the poem, the more likely it is that a second and more difficult poem will exist beneath it" (251). Furthermore, women poets adopt voices not their own in order to give weight to their arguments. "The adoption of the mask", Armstrong argues, "appears to involve a displacement of feminine subjectivity, almost a travesty of femininity, in order that it can be made an object of investigation" (253). Norton accomplishes her "travesty of femininity" in *The Undying One* by narrating as the feminized and outcast Jew.

<21> Isbal's liminal status, as a Jew, an emasculate male, and a psychologically vulnerable superhuman, allows him to deliver unique perspectives on various social injustices, especially those relating to women. Norton adopts the Gothic mode in order to illustrate these abuses. The Gothic is often deployed as a means of displacing present injustices onto foreign settings, and although the sense of this is limited in *The Undying One*, Isbal undergoes a classic scene of oppression when he is imprisoned and tortured. Isbal's captors, however, are not associated with any particular political or religious body, as they would be in most Gothic works. Where the hero of William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, for example, suffers persecution and imprisonment that indicate the corruption of traditional institutions, Isbal's story demonstrates no overarching evil of power and, as a result, lacks resonance as a politically motivated text. This is not to say that Norton has no aim for her poem besides entertainment and evoking readers' sentiment. The depiction of Isbal's suffering in fact accords with Norton's political philosophy in her prose, especially in her "Letter to the Queen on Lord Chancellor Cranworth's Marriage and Divorce Bill" (1855) that advocates for women's divorce rights.

<22> In her analysis of the "Letter to the Queen", Elaine Hadley points to Norton's conservative goals in arguing not for equal rights under the law, but rather for a return to deferential relationships where the downtrodden, including wronged women, could ask for direct support from their betters. Norton favours familial rule, where justice is dealt out on a case by case basis and mercy is the ideal, as opposed to contractual law which rather distances subjects from sovereign authority and beneficence (165). In this light, the evils done to Isbal reflect his distant relationship from God, the main locus of power in the poem. But far from being an anti-religious poem that, as the use of Gothic themes might suggest, condemns God as a tyrant, *The*

Undying One in fact demonstrates the need for ongoing communication between parties in an hierarchical relationship. Isbal becomes cursed not merely for mocking Christ in his suffering, as in the source myth, but for refusing to worship Christ and therefore refusing to accept the proper role of servant to God, displacing himself from the purview of divine mercy.

<23> Isbal never reconciles with God and instead attempts to achieve fulfillment through romantic and filial love as substitutes for divine love. Without the divine, however, Isbal's search is futile and he comes to refute the existence of true love at all.

Oh! Love --- *real* love! Intoxicating dream
Of beauty and of happiness! How vain
Are our aspirings after thee, which seem
To bring thee near us! --- doubt and causeless pain,
And jealousies, and most unconstant sighs
For something fairer than this world supplies: (4. 33-38)

Norton here suggests that human love is no substitute for the divine, if human love is even possible at all. The poet also reflects on the painful, self-effacing nature of women's love which supports the man even when he abandons her, so that

If he, inconstant doth a new one prove;
To love all round him as a part of him . . .
With the affection of true hearts, to see
His happiness which does not hang on thee: ---
Oh! This is woman's love --- its joy --- its pain; (4. 76-77, 81-84)

Throughout the poem, Norton excoriates the inequalities of love, especially for women. This sentiment reflects Norton's own experience, since her marriage was unhappy from the start. But, as a woman of talent and skill, she depended on the legitimacy that marriage could offer a public female artist. Norton's unhappy marriage reinforces the notion that the female poet's genius is incompatible with a happy love life.

<24>This bargain of success at the cost of happiness is a presupposition of the Sapphic tradition, as lived and rhapsodized by Madame de Stael, Felicia Hemans, and Letitia Elizabeth Landon, among others. These artists and their poems about Sappho draw on the myth of Sappho's last song in which the Greek poet Sappho, before throwing herself off a cliff, mourns the fact that fame and love are incompatible in a woman. De Stael's modernized version of Sappho, *Corinne* (1807) developed the prototype for later poetesses: "de Stael's Corinne/Sappho, glorious in her intellectual achievements but, as a consequence, thwarted in love and condemned to melancholy self-destruction, soon became the marker for the destiny of the woman poet" (Reynolds 279).

<25> Norton's "The Picture of Sappho" (1840) draws ambivalently on this theme. Yopie Prins argues that Norton there reveals the Sapphic story as both a fiction and as an apt description of a woman's fame (216-220). But in *The Undying One*, Norton still struggles with the question of what it means to be a female poet, using Isbal to stand in for the isolated figure whose love cannot coexist with his eccentricity. In the reflections on love, Norton denies the possibility of success in love for such a being, implicitly aligning him with the Sapphic poet. Through Isbal's ruminations on love and the several anecdotes of broken hearts, Norton reconciles the woman poet to her fate by rejecting the possibility of real or enduring love, instead being satisfied with expressions of genius which are more concrete and within her power. Norton did, after all, choose to remain a poet. The conciliatory power of this resolution is limited as Isbal never actually accomplishes anything and Norton would go on to produce volumes of poetry and fiction while the profits would belong to her estranged and abusive husband.

<26> However, in *The Undying One*, Norton proposes an alternative to the Sapphic model of the female poet by introducing Isbal's adopted daughter into the story. The depiction of Miriam allows Norton to imagine a variety of female roles drawn from the Bible. Although Isbal, the authoritative figure in this instance, names his daughter Miriam, he also compares her to Jephthah's daughter(4) and to Eve before the fall. Isbal would see her as the self-sacrificing, dutiful daughter, or as the innocent Eve, but her true name aligns her not only with an outspoken woman, but with an artist. Miriam even engages in song, as her namesake does in the wilderness. Her first song is

A strange, and wild, but lovely melody:
Half grief --- half gladness --- but the sadness still
Hanging like shadows on a summer rill" (3.696-698)

And so, Miriam acts out the Sapphic song of art born from sorrow. But later, Miriam sings a more spontaneous and joyful song that celebrates nature and life, but not romantic love:

The world! The Sunny world! I love
To roam untired, till evening throws
Sweet shadows through the pleasant grove,
And bees are murmuring on the rose (3. 835-838)

The second song suggests the possibility of female artists moving beyond the confines of the Sapphic model and living, rather than dying, on the strength of their creative output. Miriam's joyful song recalls the Biblical Miriam's song, reminding readers that there is a poetess in western literature who predates even Sappho, and who writes celebratory and religious poetry.

<27> Norton's use of the Wandering Jew to address more personal concerns such as female agency is predictable as it falls in line with the way oppressed Jewish characters are employed

by other major artists. Although the poem displays an awareness of, or at least interest in, Jewish perspectives, *The Undying One* looks at historical and Biblical incidents and not contemporary Jewish life. In this early poem, Norton's reputation as a Byron-like poetess seems apt since *The Undying One* shares its blind spots with Byron's *Hebrew Melodies*, a collection of poems that also uses Biblical Jews to articulate personal interests (of liberty, patriotism, sentimentalism and exoticism) rather than wider contexts of Jewish life and experience. To say that Norton's appropriation of the Wandering Jew and Jewish themes is self-serving is not to criticize, but to demonstrate that Norton follows from a tradition of Jewish portrayals that, while sensitive to Jewish problems in Britain and Europe, nevertheless cannot come to terms with contemporary Judaism. Historical or mythologized Jews can be sanitized for public sympathy, but stories representing modern Jews' actual concerns (integration, equal rights, homeland, religious reform) still figure rarely in English writings of the nineteenth century. *The Undying One* is therefore best understood as an insight into Norton's understanding of her role as a female poet, and as an argument about sympathy.

Endnotes

(1)Chedzoy fails to mention that Miriam is more a daughter than a lover to Isbal. He also says that Isbal attempts to drown himself in order to join Miriam in death, rather than to join Linda (70-71).[\(△\)](#)

(2)Rosenberg's summary of the Wandering Jew story reads as follows:

In the year 1228 an Armenian Archbishop visited the monastery at St. Albans and regaled his hosts with fabulous Oriental stories. . . . Most particularly did the holy brothers want to know whether the Archbishop had heard anything concerning a certain Joseph who had supposedly talked to Christ shortly before the Crucifixion, and whose name had lately come to attract a good deal of attention. The Archbishop replied that he knew the man very well. He had dined with him shortly before setting out for England. The man's name, the Archbishop reported, had originally been Cartaphilus. A Roman by birth, he had been Pilate's doorkeeper at the time of Christ's conviction. When Jesus was being led from the hall of judgement, Cartaphilus had struck Him on the neck, and driven Him from the gate with the words "Vade Jesu citius, vade, quid moraris?" "I will go" Christ answered, "but as for thee, thou shalt tarry until I return": "Ego vado, et tu expectabis me, donec redeam." Cartaphilus has been waiting ever since. Overcome by remorse, he entered the Church shortly after the Crucifixion. For twelve centuries he has been living the life of a devout Christian in Armenia and the countries around Armenia. Every hundred years he is seized by a trance and on recovering from it he finds himself remitted to the age of thirty, the age at which he had insulted Christ. In all other respects, his manners are

laudable. He eats little and speaks only when he is spoken to. He refuses gifts from anyone. He never laughs, but occasionally he has been seen to burst into tears. On the rare occasions when he does speak, his subject is obsessively the same: Christ's Passion and Crucifixion. He still hopes for salvation because he sinned ignorantly and is fond of applying to himself the words of Christ uttered on the Cross: "forgive them, for they know not what they do." His conduct is, to all intents, that of a holy man. (190-191)([^](#))

(3)This statement translates to "Walk swiftly, Jesus, walk, why tarry?" In the original story, Cartophilus says this and is cursed with the ironic punishment of having to wander the Earth until Christ's return.([^](#))

(4)In *Judges* 11-12, Jephthah hastily promises to sacrifice the first object that leaves his home if he is successful in battle. When he returns from the victory, his daughter greets him and he is forced to sacrifice her.([^](#))

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