

# International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies

ISSN: 2308-5460



## Panopticism, Power-Knowledge and Subjectivation in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes*

[PP: 100-113]

Hoda Niknejadferdos

Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch  
Iran

Bakhtiar Sadjadi

(Corresponding author)

Faculty of Language and Literature, University of Kurdistan  
Iran

### ABSTRACT

The present paper aims to closely read Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* (2000), a recent example of successful Persian novelistic discourse, in terms of Foucauldian concepts of power-knowledge, panopticism, and subjectivation. Throughout the text, three different narrations, intermingled with two sub-stories, demonstrate identity alteration in Said and Eghlima, as two major characters of the work. Moreover, the main characters' daily life is dominated by the surveillance of the rabbis which results in Eghlima's murder. It also provides gaining a vaster standpoint for the perception of the novel through illustrating the external panopticism of the rabbi and his men and its effects on Said and Eghlima. The study demonstrates how the instances of panopticism and power-knowledge relations clearly manifest the modes of social and self-control in contemporary Iranian society, while the consequences of internalizing panopticism in major characters extensively function in the procedure of their subjectivation.

**Keywords:** *Persian Novel, Panopticism, Power-Knowledge, Subjectivation, Surveillance*

ARTICLE INFO	The paper received on	Reviewed on	Accepted after revisions on
	17/10/2018	19/11/2018	30/12/2018

#### Suggested citation:

Niknejadferdos, H. & Sadjadi, B. (2018). Panopticism, Power-Knowledge and Subjectivation in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes*. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies*. 6(4). 100-113.

### 1. Introduction

Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* has been considered as a novel containing various features academically debatable and has been thus thoroughly investigated by scholars from varied perspectives. It won Mehregan Prize for the best novel of the year in 2000 and was regarded as one of the ground-breaking and pioneering novels concerning the representation of various aspects of narration, which paved the way for the emergence of more inventive styles in novel writing in Iran. On the other hand, Michel Foucault's innovative conception of power-knowledge, panopticism, and subjectivation revolutionized the common beliefs in the relevant areas of the humanities and inspired numerous scholars to conduct researches in terms of these findings. Utilizing a wide range of mythological archetypes and employing an assortment of Islamic, Jewish, Persian and Buddhist motifs, Aboutorab Khosravi has provided an intertextual ambiance in the novel. Pouran Alizadeh

(2016) asserts that, "Khosravi has pursued several goals by making use of intertextuality among the content of *The Quran*, Islamic Persian classic texts and *The Old Testament*" (p. 127). She makes further comment that "he has spotlighted the significance of recounting the Islamic and Jewish transcriptions and has enhanced the mythological tone of the novel by applying allusions to Buddhism" (p. 128).

*The Books of Scribes* serves as a postmodern novel benefiting from a dialogic atmosphere in which the clash of ideologies presents multi-voicedness and polyphony. Mohsen Nobakht (2012) considers Khosravi's work as one of the first postmodern novels in Iran, and argues that it has made the most of Bakhtinian concept of polyphony. Contending that the unique issue in the novel is "the way the characters' subjectivity is demonstrated in their words," Nobakht states "the presence of the dead characters' point of view is represented via the alive ones, and this style makes it one of

the most outstanding novels in Persian Literature” (p. 85).

Possessing an innovative narrative style and providing the reader with interwoven webs of narrations, *The Books of Scribes* recounts the stories in parallel modes and creates a labyrinth of narrations. Peeling away the narrations, the scholar encounters the narration of Said and Eghlima surveying on an academic project, the account of Ahmad Bashiri in Old Persian language and the narrative of Saint Shadrach, a Jew who was murdered in the ancient era. These narrations consequently amalgamate with two supplementary sub-stories reciting Eghlima’s mother’s memories and Zolfa James’ trek seeking out Saint Shadrach’s lost corpse.

The present paper first provides the plot summary of *The Books of Scribes*. Then, the literature review on the novel under consideration will be presented. The section on methodology and theoretical framework follow next. Subsequently, the core section of the study is presented which includes “Panopticism and Social Control,” “Manifestation of Power-Knowledge Relations,” and “Process of Subjectivation of Characters.” Finally, the findings of the research shall be presented in the concluding section.

## 2. Plot Summary

Aboutorab Khosravi’s *The Books of Scribes* provides three interwoven narratives including those of Said and Eghlima, Said’s father, Ahmad Bashiri and the account of Saint Shadrach. It intermingles two additional sub-stories of Zolfa James, a semi-Saint Jew and Zohreh Carlos, Eghlima’s mother. Whilst attempting to enlighten the effectual role of Saints in society as an academic research project, Said and Eghlima’s passion augments toward each other. Their affection and ultimately their liaison inflames the rabbi and the Jewish community and trigger Eghlima’s mutilation by them.

Said and Eghlima’s survey paves the ground for going over Ahmad Bashiri’s re-narration of *The History of Mansuri* which reveals the amalgamated stories of Sheikh Yahiya Kondori, King Mansur and Ahmad Bashiri. Deeming re-narration of history vital for redemption of people in each era, Ahmad Bashiri recounts *The History of Mansuri* as the reincarnated Sheikh Yahiya Kondori. Destined to transform his presaged fate by Mirahmad Kermani, King Mansur butchers his progenies in order to hinder his anticipated assassination by his offspring.

Nevertheless, King Mansur and a seducing, voluptuous dancer copulate and her obligatory abortion could not be fulfilled due to the presence of an asp which guarded her. Being another king’s bondwoman, the dancer departs King Mansur’s palace and years later their child slays his own father, King Mansur, as Mirahmad Kermani had vaticinated.

As a prestigious Jewish Saint, the account of Saint Shadrach emerges from Said and Eghlima’s investigation and the procedure of Zolfa James’s quest for Saint Shadrach’s dichotomized corpse intertwines with other narratives. Meanwhile, Zohreh Carlos, Eghlima’s mother, endeavors to reunite with her daughter and explicates her long-term absence in multiple letters to Eghlima. In the interim, the narrative of Zolfa James, Eghlima’s grandmother, brings about the sequence of events performed by King Bashir. Eventually, Eghlima’s decease discontinues the narratives and Said assertively elucidates his mission of re-narrating occurrences relating to Eghlima in order that she resurrects.

## 3. Literature Review

Aboutorab Khosravi’s *The Books of Scribes* (2000) has been the subject of research of a number of articles and books; however, their concentration is on various aspects of the novel rather than employing a Foucauldian approach that beings into consideration the concepts of power-knowledge, panopticism, and subjectivation. One of the recent examples of the literature available on the novel is a research conducted by Afsaneh Hassanzadeh-Dastjerdi (2014). Demonstrating the post-modern features of the novel, she argues that “the novel took the advantage of possessing the elements of postmodern novels including multi-narrations, chaotic non-chronological time, the death of the author, vicious circle in narratives, eclecticism, juxtaposition of the new and old narratives, and employing various genres in the novel” (p. 57). Likewise, Mohsen Nobakht (2012) makes use of Bakhtinian perspectives and scrutinizes Aboutorab Khosravi’s *The Books of Scribes* through the notions of polyphony, heteroglossia, and dialogism. He elucidates the affinity between discourse and multi-voicedness in the novel and utters that the embedded focalization in narration augments the effect of polyphony in the text. Elaborating the postmodern aspects of the novel, Mohsen Nobakht (2012) explicates that:



The existence of uncertainty in the text and particularly in the characters that appear to reincarnate into each other, creates a relative and pluralistic ambience which is the representation of the postmodern sphere of the novel. The conflict among ideologies and creeds reinforces the heteroglot atmosphere in *The Books of Scribes* and underpins the postmodern foundation of the novel (p.118).

In addition, Poursan Alizadeh (2016) contends that the act of scripting narratives leads to the creation of “an immortal body” that provides a realm for recounting one’s consciousness. She illuminates that developing the narrative via mythological archetypes buttresses the eternal and never-ending motif of writing and demonstrates the unification arisen from plural archetypes. Alizadeh (2016) further goes on to conclude that “the novel’s embedded narratives and entrenched narrations present non-linear psychological time and the uncommon combination of five narrative levels in the novel provokes a timeless realm. The intertextuality in the novel and the recurrent references to hypertext and hypotext have crafted a mythological impression in the novel” (p. 149).

Narjes Sangi (2009) explores the manifold focalizations in the novel and surveys the plot, time and the ambiguity the novel is wrapped in. She arrives at this conclusion that “the narrative techniques and the style of writing in the novel have overcome the typical theme and plot of the text” (p. 2). She states:

evaluating the plot discloses that the weightiness of multi-narrations, the interference of the narratives, rewriting the sequence of the events, suspense, redundancy, aporia and the gap of information have constructed an innovative and postmodern context. The concepts of transfiguration, reincarnation of the characters, resurrection of words and commitment to inscription have dedicated blurriness to the novel (Sangi, 2009, p. 3).

As for comparative readings, Akram Bahramiyan (2011) has studied Aboutorab Khosravi’s novel with references to three plays of Mohammad Charmshir, and asserts that, “these heteroglot texts recreate meaning and conceptualizations and the intertextuality among the narrations reproduces new-fangled narratives.” She argues that “the postmodern constituents and features including metafiction, metalinguistic narratives, parody and lack of a central narration in the texts have originated a dialogic panorama of the stories” (p. 13). On the other hand,

employing a post-structural approach to scrutinizing the novel, Alireza Hosseinabadi (2004) articulates that “monitoring the novel through Derridean Perspective, the deconstruction of narrations and language is observable. Narratives serve as autonomous, self-reflexive and self-referential entities; they appear as fluid and decentralized cluster of words” (p. 2). Hosseinabadi (2004) declares that Aboutorab Khosravi has demonstrated the necessity of the vital awareness of the reader in the realm of the novel structured by the narrators. Hosseinabadi (2004) accentuates the production of meaning in the process of reading and avers that according to Roland Barthes the texts similar to *The Books of Scribes* are the manifestations of plurality of interpretations.

Maryam Sharifnassab (2015) proclaims that Khosravi’s works and among them *The Books of Scribes* acquired profundity due to the existence of archetypes and motifs. She expresses that the impression of immortality is comprehensible through the archetypes. She argues that “the archetypes of snake and the moon are omnipresent in Aboutorab Khosravi’s novels, specifically in *The Books of Scribes*.” She concludes that “it is of immense value that these archetypes, which stand for Old Persian symbols, could also embrace universal designation” (p.21).

Mostafa Sharifi (2016) contends that the author could be regarded as a postmodern novelist considering several elements in his novels. He provides explanation that “the concepts of the death of the author, ontological standpoint, metafiction, meta-narrative and meta-history in his novels are the manifestation of postmodern narration” (p. 67). Likewise, Mohsen Lotfi (2013) explores Khosravi’s novels and expounds that postmodernism and deconstructionism have close affinity with each other. He annotates that “exploiting short circuit in narration, intertextuality, vicious circle of the outcomes, invalidating history, disparaging the notion of time and heterogeneous narratives situate *The Books of Scribes* among postmodern texts” (Lotfi, 2013, p.17). He reasons why Khosravi could be considered as an author of huge credit among writers and apposes him with other Iranian authors.

M. R. Idrem (2015) adduces several factors such as an intention to narrate, a desire for declaring nightmares, and the

narrative techniques of minstrelsy. He commentates on the occurrences of the novel and indicates that “*The Books of Scribes* is Aboutorab Khosravi’s manifesto and he utilizes minstrelsy narrative techniques to avoid any closure in the novel which Arab Scholars call it ‘Soja’at Alarabiya’ and it is named ‘Eltefaat’ in Iranian minstrelsy; it refers to the moment that the narrator leaves the previous story uncompleted” (Idrem, 2015, p. 3).

Mahdi Shaamorshan (2011) accounts for the Barthean concepts of readerly and writerly texts and considers seven Iranian Novels, including *The Books of Scribes*, as good examples of writerly texts in contemporary Persian fiction. Construing that Roland Barthes depicts five codes including the Hermeneutic Code, the Proairetic Code, the Semantic Code, the Symbolic Code, and the Cultural Code, he argues that “*The Books of Scribes* reveals that it possesses the aspects of a writerly text” (Shaamorshan, 2011, 53). He concludes that while a noticeable number of Iranian novels could be categorized within the area of the readerly texts, *The Books of Scribes* could be regarded as an innovative postmodern novel with the features of a writerly text. Moreover, Nayereh Salimi (2009) elaborates the non-linear time and multi-spatial environment of the novel. She carries forward that “in *The Books of Scribes* the main narrative merges with several sub-narratives and ultimately the characters in dissimilar time, experience a sort of transubstantiation with each other” (p. 4). She expresses Islamic and Persian aspects of the novel and acknowledges the rich narration of *The Books of Scribes*.

A more detailed account of the novel has been provided by Saleh Hosseini and Pouya Rofouei (2003), who have accomplished an innovative analysis of the narrative. They argue that in, throughout the novel, “each character narrates his/her own nightmare and obtains the chance of intertwining his/her narrative with others’ by the process of scribing it” (p.7). They also throw light upon the affiliation among the narrations and declare that:

We tend to evaluate the novel as a tile installer who requires a fundamental pattern of the whole project; therefore, allusions and chiefly religious ones serve as the pattern of the novel. The role of motifs is akin to the glue and the interlacement of the allusions and motifs constructs a web of analogical metaphors implying that life and reality attain their signification through the

system of words (Hosseini & Rofouei, 2003, p. 5).

Concerning the stylistics of the novel, Mahmoud Khoshnoud (2012) enquires into the specific prose and texts by which Khosravi has been influenced. He unfolds that “while Aboutorab Khosravi has been affected by Khorasani Prose Style and *The Old Testament*, Mahmoud Dowlatabadi’s novels tend to demonstrate the impressibility of *Tarikh-i Bayhaqi* writing style” (p. 7). He brings it to conclusion that Dowlatabadi’s frequent utilization of archaic words and vernacular language promoted his texts and has brought him credence as an adept author. Conversely, Khosravi has deliberately made a succinct and laconic use of archaic lexemes to enable the reader to distinguish between the narrations of multifarious eras in the novel.

#### 4. Methodology: Objectives and the Approach

Considering the Foucauldian triplet concepts of panopticism, power-knowledge relations, and subjectivation as a major critical tool box in the analysis of characterization and identity construction, the present paper contends that the exploration of this critical approach provides a highly comprehensive account of the process of subjectivity formation and representation throughout the novel under consideration. The objectives of the present research are twofold. First, it brings a famous example of Aboutorab Khosravi’s novels, *The Book of the Scribes*, to the state of practice which examines the ways the represented subjects in the novel are positioned in power-knowledge equations. Secondly, it aims to focus on the role of panopticism in the mechanism behind the process of subjectivation. It demonstrates that the application of the panopticism model to reviewing a literary work is illuminating in providing a better understanding of the subjectivation in the characters. Therefore, the goal of the present research could be categorized as an exploratory study that structures and identifies new problems in the area of literary criticism.

The method which is going to be employed first includes a close reading of the novel, and, then, the novel’s representation of panopticism shall be explored. In addition, it will be investigated that how gaining knowledge about such tabooed issues, which most of the time are considered as the personal secrets of the



characters, could arouse power and domination for the knowing subject of such pieces of knowledge, and how one is going to make use of this knowledge in order to abuse it in one's own direction. Finally, attention is mostly paid to the ways in which the characters unconsciously go through the process of subjectivation.

The present study compatibly provides an elaborate analysis which consists of the selection and discussion of theoretical and descriptive material as well as a detailed comparison of theories in terms of their applicability. The research method of the existing paper is thus qualitative and categorized as theoretical study; correspondingly, the current survey will be entirely literature-based in that, in the academic library research, the conclusions are built on the analysis of the data referring to a particular area. A case study, the present research includes a close and in-depth examination of the novel in terms of the Foucauldian theory of the subject.

## **5.Theoretical Framework: Critical Concepts**

### **5.1. Panopticism**

Michel Foucault used the term panopticon in order to further investigate into the qualities of power systems and to elaborate his theories on the question of discipline. Originally employed by Jeremy Bentham the early nineteenth century, panopticon, in Foucault's work, was not reduced only to prison. In his idea, any hierarchical structures including schools, army, and hospitals have progressed through history according to the concept of panopticism. Foucault referred in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) to the effects of panopticism that "the major effect of the Panopticon is to induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power"(p. 201).

Panopticon could be considered as a functional and enduring structure which allows power to operate as correctly and efficiently as planned. Somewhere else in the same book Foucault demonstrated that "the efficiency of power, its constraining force has, in a sense, passed over to the other side – to the side of its surface of application. He, who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power" (Foucault, 1977, pp. 202-3). It can be clearly observed that, the more sophisticated societies have become, the more need has

been felt toward control and observation of the subjects.

### **5.2. Power-knowledge**

Foucault was exceptionally interested in more institutionalized and anonymous patterns of knowledge-production, rather than known facts during particular periods. He was concerned with the process of the way we regard matters as true or fact. In *Discipline and Punish* (1977) Foucault sought to explore "what the mode of existence of discourses must have been in Europe since the 17th century, in order that the knowledge which is ours today could come to exist, and more particularly, that knowledge which has taken as its domain this curious object which is man" (p.70). He focused on the way knowledge is produced and comes into being and he became interested in the human sciences which during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries made a shift from the physical examination of natural world to the study of man.

Foucault defined knowledge as a link between power relations and a searching for information which he names as 'power-knowledge'. He stated: "it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power" (Foucault, 1977, p. 52). Foucault, by forming the compound 'power-knowledge', attempted to demonstrate their influence on each other. Consequently, there will be a production of knowledge as a result of an imbalance of power between subjects or between distinct institutions.

Rather than considering individual thinkers as developers of knowledge, Foucault believed it is the power-knowledge force which develops what will be known. In *Discipline and Punish* (1977) Foucault stated that "it is not the activity of the subject of knowledge that produces a corpus of knowledge, useful or resistant to power, but power-knowledge, the processes and struggles that traverse it, and of which it is made up, that determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge" (pp. 27-28). Foucault argued that, knowledge instead of being a mere search after truth, is being affected by power relations and is transformed into what might be labeled as 'fact'. A piece of knowledge, in order to be considered as a fact, has to go through processes of approvals by those in positions of power.

Foucault was indeed concerned with analyzing the procedures which make

distinctions between true and false, not with making up the notion of truth against false ideas. Foucault believed descriptions and representations are but fictional and constructed. He argued “it’s not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time” (Foucault, 1977, p. 133). He argued that, counter information and knowledge, which could act as a form of critique, should be produced as contrastive forces against widespread believed knowledge. Foucault’s conception of power-knowledge relations questions the historical processes that are considered as influential in the construction of subjects’ knowledge about the past. It is through a critical investigation into the past we are able to question our knowledge about the present. As Sara Mills (2003) in *Michel Foucault* maintains:

Perhaps, what Foucault’s form of analysis teaches us is that in some senses the present is unanalysable since it seems as if it is too complex to see clearly what is happening, and because it is too familiar. However, if we are to analyse it at all, and this does seem to be Foucault’s aim, to analyse the present by discussing the past, then we must begin by treating it as if it were more like the past, in all its strangeness (p. 79).

Foucault believed in the interconnectedness of power and knowledge. What he attempted to carry away was to demonstrate that knowledge was not merely a production of scholarly study. Knowledge, however, is produced and endured through a number of distinct institutions. He did not consider knowledge as objective and neutral, but frequently under the process of changing as a result of the interests of particular groups.

### 5.3. Subjectivation

Michel Foucault argues that in the existentialist tradition the subject is both part of and automatically detached from the world. The subject is not considered as merely an ontological being related to sensations or cognitive reason; s/he is constantly in a situation and a component of the conditions of the world. Considering the process of subjectivation as influenced by power-knowledge, Foucault in *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings* (1972) asserted that “we are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except

through the production of truth” (p. 93). Elucidating on the point that subjectivation is relativistic since it occurs in the domain of power-knowledge, Foucault in *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the College de France* (2003) contended that “even the person in charge of a disciplinary system is caught up in a broader system in which he is supervised in turn, and at the heart of which he is himself subject to discipline” (p. 55).

Subjectivation, for Foucault, is not an end in itself. It is rather a course of action in which the subject is being repeatedly produced. Judith Butler in *The Psychic Life of Power* (1997) states that the produced subject is not in its totality and clarifies that Foucault’s subjectivation benefits from a clear political dynamism. She declares that:

For Foucault, the subject who is produced through subjection is not produced at an instant in its totality. Instead, it is in the process of being produced, it is repeatedly produced (which is not the same as being produced again and again). It is precisely the possibility of repetition which does not consolidate the dissociated unity, the subject, but which proliferates effects which undermine the force of normalization (p. 93).

Donald E. Hall (2004), too, points that subjectivity, for Foucault, is not delineated as a precise and new form of self-knowledge; nonetheless, it could be manifested as the possibilities for various forms. He emphasizes that Foucault “calls for critically examining old templates and proliferating the possibilities for different forms and manifestation of subjectivity in the future” (p. 94).

Rejecting the old theory of knowledge and emphasizing on historically-specific façade of subjectivation, Foucault in *The Birth of Clinic* (1963) enlightens that “this is surely a project on history, an old theory of knowledge whose effects and misdeeds have long been known” (p. 137). He argues that a more precise historical analysis could spotlight a diverse principle of adjustment which discloses the subject as “a subject of legitimate knowledge” (Foucault, 1963, p. 138). In *Archeology of Knowledge* (1969) he provided an illuminating analysis of the true condition of the subject as follows:

Continuous history is the indispensable correlative of the founding function of the subject: the guarantee that everything that has eluded him may be restored to him; the certainty that time will disperse nothing without restoring it in are constituted unity; the



promise that one day the subject – in the form of historical consciousness – will once again be able to appropriate, to bring back under his sway, all those things that are kept at a distance by difference and find in them what might be called his abode (Foucault, 1969, p. 12).

It could be thus elaborated that Foucauldian perception of subjectivation happens to be in close affinity with the other concepts of discipline and power-knowledge relations. It presents itself as relativistic, historically specific, and a time-bound agenda. The subject will never entirely experience the transcendental moment of self-knowledge or self-empowerment and s/he is entrapped in the ever-altering selfhood in the disciplinary system of society.

## **6. Investigating The Books of Scribes: A Foucauldian Reading**

### ***6.1. Panopticism and Social Control***

The present section aims to critically investigate Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* in terms of Foucauldian concept of panopticism ; it endeavors to address those instances in which the ever-present shadow of surveillance of the old women and rabbi's men, as examples of social control in contemporary Iranian society, of penetrates into the characters' life. Due to the panopticism in the novel, the characters tend to become more introvert and conservative to the extent that they are unable to be fully aware of what they intend to have or to do in their lives as a result of internalizing panopticism. Afterward, the unobtrusive supervision of religion and spiritual ceremonies and their impacts on Eghlima and Said would be elaborated. Hence, the internalized panopticon in main characters, particularly Eghlima and the King, will be closely scrutinized and the ambiance in which the characters live would be scrupulously explored. In due course, an analogy between the established panopticism in the Jewish community and the inner fixated panopticon in the characters will be explicitly thrown light upon from Foucauldian perspective.

The novel frequently portrays the atmosphere in which several old women in shabby and ragged clothes are whispering incomprehensible sentences while sitting on the platforms in front of the old houses. When Said encounters them for the first time, he immediately becomes aware of their inspection and declares that, "they must have spoken about me, a stranger who was passing in search of Eghlima's house" (BS,

p. 22) and "they never looked away from me. I could hear them murmuring in Hebrew. I should tell Eghlima that I am scared of the way they are looking at me" (BS, p.49). At the end of the novel, the blurring sense of observation by the old women is replaced by the definite and obvious control by the Jewish men who pursue and stalk Eghlima and Said. The examples are: "Eghlima put her cup on the table and stated that two men were following her" (BS, p.103), "she had observed one of the men who was tailgating her on the bus" (BS, p. 104), "she kept looking back to check if they were chasing her" (BS, p.105), and "Eghlima got used to being pursued and she knew I was under their close-watch, as well" (BS, p.147).

Aboutorab Khosravi in *The Books of Scribes* has masterfully inserted the story between two types of inspection, the vague sense of being under scrutiny without any obvious reason in the opening stage of the novel and the one firmly affirmed by the narrator and the characters at the end of the narrative. Not only do the characters undergo superintendence all the time, but they are also subjected to being threatened and assaulted. Said is harassed and bullied by the rabbi's men and Eghlima is mutilated and murdered by them while she was analyzing the role of Saints through history as an academic research project. The characters are haunted by the sense of being permanently spied and whilst they are unable to recognize the source of surveillance, they blame the Jewish heritage of menace.

In *The Books of Scribes* the old women in the opening phase of the novel and the rabbi's men, in the end, stand for the manifestation of public panopticon. It could be commented that by utilizing a public panopticon or a public servant the disciplinary mechanism of observation is de-centered and the function of power is guaranteed. Correspondingly, by individualizing the subjects and locating them in a state of constant visibility, the efficiency of the power and the Jewish community in the novel is maximized. The more the systematic ordering occurs via subtle, discreet and unobservable forces, the more the authoritative figure obtains the quality to penetrate men's behavior. It could be construed that the camouflaged and unverifiable elements of controlling and observance had a vaster effect on Said and

Eghlima and led them act as agents of surveillance toward themselves.

Eghlima and Said's relationship as university students is under her relatives' detection and thus unendurable for them. When Said raises the question that "perhaps there is a misunderstanding for your relatives about my frequent visits to your house" (*BS* p.58) Eghlima responds "there definitely is" (*BS* p. 58). Eghlima narrates her life story in which she recurrently describes herself under the shadowing of her uncle, a rabbi; she inquires Said, "do you think I am crying since the rabbis meddle in my life?" (*BS*, p.59) and "I could not bear living with my aunt and uncle who never talked to each other and kept praying all day. I was not allowed to invite my friends over or accept their invitations; I was obliged to attend the synagogue, as my uncle insisted on it" (*BS*, p.71). Furthermore, she persists that "I should tell them that I do not require their counsel; in fact, I left their house in order to be able not to ask for their permission in all my affairs" (*BS*, p. 56). She even confesses to Said that, "I am not courageous enough to invite my friends over, particularly men" (*BS*. p. 24) and Said wonders it is due to her religion and her gender, as the Jews "were always threatened" (*BS*, p. 25).

Eghlima's uncle's malicious deeds and his interference with her life enhance in intruding himself in her family life and preventing Eghlima from reuniting with her mother. Owing to his strict surveillance, Eghlima never ascertains her mother's affection for her and after several years of separation, a letter by Eghlima's mother lights the truth. Zohreh Carlos, Eghlima's mother, inscribes that "Uncle Rabbi is not pleased with our communication. I intended to live with you; however, they did not allow me, they manipulated the truth and accused me of forsaking you" (*BS*, p.61). Even after living by her own, Eghlima's uncle pries into her personal life and in a letter reports her friendship with Said to her mother that "according to one of the pious men in the synagogue, Eghlima is in relationship with a non-Jew. Not believing him, I spied her and in my opinion their relationship is against Jehovah's will" (*BS*, p.109). Gradually the constraints by Eghlima's uncle alter into the dominant staking out by the ever-present Jehovah who seeks to punish the disobeyers. At the closing section of the novel, the time Said enters Eghlima's room, he faces a note on the wall inscribed by the rabbi's men

who had exterminated Eghlima, "everything is in the authority of the heaven, even the fear of the heaven and we spread our holy fear by our voice and hands" (*BS*, p.186).

Before slaying Eghlima, her uncle had interpreted that a rabbi, and himself in particular, is the representative of Jehovah; therefore, his deeds are identical to Jehovah's and in accordance with the Cause. In a letter to Eghlima, her uncle intimidates her and brings it up that, "Eghlima, you are drowned into vice and if you intend to defy Jehovah, you will be castigated by His almighty hands. "We will appear as Jehovah in disguise and keep our vow" (*BS*, p.112). The Rabbi continually browbeats Eghlima and frightens her into submission by reciting her "Doomsday verses" (*BS*, p. 113) and "the pervasive, mysterious and disgusting smell of a burnt bird as a sacrifice to Jehovah" (*BS*, p. 22) reverberates the existence of the omnipresent panopticon in the novel that is in close association with their subjectivity. The presence of an undetectable eye is widespread to the degree that Ahmad Bashiri advises Rafat, his wife, to wrap their murdered daughter's corpse up so that "the heaven will not catch a glimpse of her" (*BS*, p. 21).

The novel progressively provides a superior form of panopticon and generates the notion of panopticism as a sharp-eyed and ever-observant agent. The rabbis claim to be the delegates of Jehovah and since Eghlima is Zolfa James's granddaughter, she deserves death in case of defiance. Being a semi-Saint, Zolfa James is prestigious among Jews and the rabbis do not endure Eghlima's non-conformist action. Another reason for the rabbis' extreme reaction toward Eghlima could be associated with her cousin; as a free spirit, Eghlima's cousin quits the Jewish community in order to marry a non-Jewish man and her non-compliant life has abated the rabbis' authority.

The gaze of Jehovah implemented in Eghlima's consciousness is dominant to the extent that she finds herself agonized and anxious due to an unidentified Argus-eyed agent even at home. Said recurrently expresses his astonishment at Eghlima's illogical and unexplainable fear at home. He seeks for the reason of Eghlima's terror and enunciates that "Eghlima was petrified; perhaps she felt that someone is hearing her. I was incapable of understanding her and I let her spot every single room at home, even the cellar" (*BS*, p.143). The internalization of the panopticon exercised by religion and



specifically by her uncle, the rabbi, has had tremendous impact on her life. Considering the fact that panopticon is an event in the history of the human mind, panopticism is a process by which one internalizes the presence of a gaze over him/herself and ultimately acts as her/his own overseer. As in Eghlima's case, her aunt and uncle grasp the role of the overseers, despite the fact that they are supposed to act as her confidants. Consequently, Eghlima takes up a series of self-destructive behavior and deprives herself from paying a visit to Said and greeting him in public. At the end of the novel, when she apprehends that not only is she vigilant but she is acting as an overseer on herself, she acts in an incompatible manner.

Aboutorab Khosravi in *The Books of Scribes* has embedded the extreme quintessence of the internalized panopticon in King Mansur, who frantically struggles to veer his fate foreseen by Mirahmad Kermani bestowed the title of Kaashef-ul-Asrar (the Revealer of Divine Secrets). Having been aware of his assassination by one of his children in future, King Mansur massacres his offspring and slaughters them in the presence of their mothers. In spite of abandoning his wives, King Mansur traces the penumbra of a woman and respires her scent in the palace and bawls "there should be a woman somewhere in the palace, a woman who is the Angel of Death" (BS, p. 115). The King articulates that "there is an invisible woman in the palace whose aroma divulges her race, complexion and figure" (BS, p. 116) and affirms that "the concealed woman in palace is weaving the threads of my fate in the air" (BS, p. 115).

King Mansur is the epitome of an under-surveillance agent whose omnipotence has not hindered the process of internalizing panopticism. Apparently, King Mansur is obsessed with seeking the out-of-sight woman in the palace to the point that he is oblivious of altering his terror beyond recognition and into a ubiquitous panopticon. Eventually, he sentiently reaches to the conclusion that the silhouette of the woman is the outstretched wings of his doomed destiny and death which ultimately grasps his life. The internalized panopticon and the veiled panopticism aggravated by mistrust are the mere apparatus of power, superior to the absolute supremacy of the King. As a result, the combination of an inner-panopticon and

mistrust conquers the King's dominion and collapses his sovereignty.

It could be concluded that Aboutorab Khosravi endows the external panopticon as well as the process of self-monitoring in *The Books of Scribes* as examples of both social in contemporary Iranian society and self-control in the Iranian subjects. He has laid bare the issue of surveillance into three categories. The all-present old women as the broad-spectrum of eyeing the strangers askance as well as the rabbi's men appointed to impede Eghlima and Said's relationship, fit into the first realm. The actualization of Jehovah through the rabbi's attendance and the corporality of the unearthly nature of panopticism through the repulsive stink of animal sacrifice have been illuminated a spiritual demeanor of panopticon. Thereupon, internalizing panopticon has ensued traceable in Eghlima and King Mansur's deportment.

### *6.2 The Manifestation of Power-Knowledge Relations*

The present section seeks to closely represent the interwoven power-knowledge affinity in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* and to demonstrate the process in which power, based on knowledge, utilizes and reproduces knowledge by shaping it in accordance with its anonymous intentions. The recreation of power's fields of exercise through knowledge in the novel will be illustrated and the notions of power and knowledge as decentralized, relativistic, all-pervading and dynamic phenomena would be spotlighted. Emphasizing on the inevitable mutual inherent in power-knowledge, micro-relations between the characters and events would be ultimately argued.

The novel commences with narrating Ahmad Bashiri's prophetic dream accentuating the point that knowledge, which equals the act of scribing, is akin to power. He accounts Sheikh Yahiya Kondori's prophecy to him and reveals that "the act of reading forms a resurrection in an undersized scale and you are supposed to re-narrate the incidents in *The History of Mansuri* which enables you to observe your lost destiny" (BS, p. 9). Gaining the information about the past, Ahmad Bashiri turns out to be capable of scrutinizing the events and characters in person. In other words, *The History of Mansuri* which is well-known as *Masadiq-ul-Asar* (the Examples of Occurrences) not only does provide Ahmad Bashiri with knowledge, it

also empowers him to supervise the character's deeds and their consequences. Sheikh Yahiya Kondori draws Ahmad Bashiri's attention to the striking issue that "Prophet Muhammad was commanded to read by God; the fact that discloses the veiled presence of the book" (BS, p. 10). He comments further that "the process of reading actualizes and creates things" (BS, p. 11) and mentions that "this is being transferred to people through knowledge and is a proof for the great resurrection" (BS, p. 12).

It has been currently stated in the novel that "we inscribe the embryos of the events which will be born via people's act of reading in the years ahead" (BS, p. 13). Furthermore, the divination foretells that "the seeds of words, detailing every occasion, will alter into an enormous whirlwind by means of reading and will drown born and unborn creatures" (BS, p. 14). On the other hand, the power of narrating reformulates knowledge in a manner that every narrator affixes further information of his life, personality and destiny to the manuscript and appends his point of view, as well. Ahmad Bashiri utters that "I am not Ahmad Bashiri now; I am the resurrected Sheikh Yahiya Kondori in order to re-inscribe the incomplete book of *The History of Mansuri* in the current era" (BS, p. 11). Said elaborates that his father, Ahmad Bashiri's version of the book is "drastically diverse" (p. 12) from the original one written out by Sheikh Yahiya Kondori.

Apparently, through this perspective, power is not an institution or a structure; however, it could be regarded as the process of complicated strategic relations. The act of inscribing has been lime lighted parallel to creation and valued as "a path to redemption" (BS, p. 13). The intermingled concept of power-knowledge embedded in the procedure of scribing has been pellucidly claimed by Ahmad Bashiri that "words carry and transmit the identical happenings; they duplicate and materialize the incidents whilst they are being narrated" (BS, p. 14). According to Said, power and knowledge are permanently in the course of alteration into each other and knowledge is constantly reproduced by power.

Eghlima and Said's academic research project innately divulges the progression of power-knowledge through history. Their professor lays emphasis on the constant opposition of the knowledge of the Saints and the power of the Kings; therefore,

he declares that they ought to "elaborate the outcome of this opposition" (BS, p. 16). The blended conceptualization of power-knowledge comes into sight by juxtaposition of King Mansur and Mirahmad Kermani or Kaashef-ul-Asrar (the Revealer of Divine Secrets). While the King issues a decree to be informed of his fate by Mirahmad Kermani, the ambiance in which power-knowledge cyclically transform into one another materializes. Having been obliged by the King to confess (a form of power), Mirahmad Kermani is incited to tell the truth (i. e. producing knowledge) about the future. In the course of the confessions, the idea of the King's identity at the core of the self and his fate come into existence (once more, a form of knowledge), the identity and fate which have to be monitored, cultivated, and frequently restricted (yet again, reverse to power). Despite the fact that Mirahmd Kermani insists on not exposing the King's fate, the King persists on developing into a sober and aware man by the knowledge obtained. As King Mansur monitors the constructive features of power-knowledge and asserts "knowing my fate will reinforce my authority" (BS, p. 79), Mirahmad Kermani observes the destructive facades of it and replies "knowing your fate will drown you into a nightmare" (BS, p. 80).

It could be contended that people do not implicitly possess authority; on the contrary, power is a technique or action in which individuals engage. As power is exercised and its omnipresence is harmonious with and reliant on knowledge, their synthesis would be resistance. The King's endeavor to revolutionize his fate brings about slaying his offspring and avoiding and abandoning women from the palace. Nevertheless, the King encounters his predicted fate and it proves the correspondence between power and knowledge. Eghlima forthrightly articulates that "the history is filled with the events alike and the upshots have always been catastrophic. Knowing one's fate empowers him to struggle for transforming it for the better and it is crystal clear that, if one is able to adjust fate, it could not be named fate" (BS, p. 82). The disastrous consequence of being aware of his fate does not merely annihilate the King; it extinguishes the Saint and illuminates the similitude between power-knowledge and their reciprocal impact on one another, as well. While the King undergoes slaughtering his brood and eventually experiences his murder as unerringly anticipated, the Saint,



blaming himself of the massacre, self-immolates. “He pours oil on himself and commands the fire to conflagrate” (BS, p. 83). Thus, power and knowledge could not be reflected as independent entities; they are inextricably interrelated and knowledge is constantly an exercise of power whereas power would be observed as continuously a function of knowledge.

The embodiment of power-knowledge could be represented in the rabbi; a person who has acquired his power and position by his knowledge of Judaism and strictly speaking, his power is his knowledge. He stands for the omnipotent figure of instruction and action as he identifies himself with Jehovah’s almighty hand on Earth. The time the rabbi’s men abduct and threaten Said, he affirms that they were firm about “protecting their pure blood from filthy and devilish people’s” (BS, p. 159) and Eghlima confirms that “the rabbi considers himself the purest and most honored Jew” (BS, p. 160). In this case, passing through their claim of “being selected and preferred” (BS, p. 161) (knowledge), allows them to be in command of the Jews’ most private life style and marriage (power).

The concluding instance of the amalgamated impression of power/knowledge has been laid bare in the modus operandi of re-narrating. After Eghlima’s murder by the rabbi’s men, Said decisively opines that “Eghlima’s body of words should be inscribed in order to convey her consciousness into those who read it” (BS, p. 189). He even cites the astonishing point that “her consciousness ought to be perused” (BS, p. 190) and expresses the way power produces and constrains the epistemology. It could be verbalized that the significant point perceived about power-knowledge is that it functions as both productive and constraining. Power-knowledge not only does restrain our performance, but it also opens up innovative routes of acting and contemplating about ourselves.

It could be concluded that the existence of power/ knowledge in Aboutorab Khosravi’s *The Books of Scribes* has been manifested through narrating and re-narrating. The agents of power continually pore over their fate augured by Mirahmad Kondori while the interaction of power remodels knowledge. The mutual interface of power-knowledge produces an ambiance in which the constant transformation of power-knowledge into each other flaunts the

dynamic, non-absolute, permeating and widespread essence of power. It could be ultimately supposed that in *The Books of Scribes*, every scene sheds light on the power relations among the characters by whom power circulates in disguise of knowledge and incessantly reproduces it.

### 6.3 *The Process of the Subjectivation of Characters*

The presented section endeavors to attentively explore the process of subjectivation in the novel and widely illuminate the issue that the subject is the product of his/her interactions with other subjects and the immediate milieu. Considering the subject as a mundane entity, the main characters’ process of subjectivation will be spotlighted and subjectivity would be demonstrated contrasting transcendental, universal and meta-cultural contentions. Meanwhile, margins of resistance by the main characters of the novel would be lime lighted to illustrate the indefinite and incomplete procedure of subjectivation by power-knowledge and discipline.

*The Books of Scribes* commences with the revelation of the fact that the subject is a fluid and svelte essence formed by the environment and various intercommunication. Ahmad Bashiri in his vision mentions that “Sheikh Yahiya Kondori has revisited the earthly world through my body in order to re-narrate *The History of Mansuri* via my perspective” (BS, p. 10). Blurring the boundaries of selfhood, Ahmad Bashiri asserts that the consequence of Sheikh Yahiya Kondori’s re-narrating by me “is to encounter Ahmad Bashiri whose remained parts of him may be discovered in me” (BS, p. 11). During the time of narration, Ahmad Bashiri elucidates the point that he is neither Ahmad Bashiri nor Sheikh Yahiya Kondori and at the same time of recounting the narrative he is both Ahmad Bashiri and Sheikh Yahiya Kondori. “I am not Ahmad Bashiri who I previously was; rather, I am Sheikh Yahiya Kondori who has been resurrected” (BS, p. 10).

He states that the process of re-narrating equals the procedure of his subjectivation from the specific standpoint that his bodily functions of observing, perceiving sound and inscribing belong to Ahmad Bashiri’s physique; nevertheless, the consciousness beyond the physical facade is possessed by both Sheikh Yahiya Kondori and Ahmad Bashiri. “Apparently, the eyes which monitor, ears which hear and hands

by which I scribe are Ahmad Bashiri's and it is a proof of uncovering his lost existence. It is an attempt to unveil Ahmad Bashiri, Sheikh Yahiya Kondori or whoever I am, I was or I became" (BS, p. 11).

It could be elaborated that subjectivation is the formation of the procedure in which the subject is guided to observe, analyze and recognize himself/herself. The ultimate subject is a domain of probable and promising knowledge which is relativistic and ever-altering. In other words, the subject experiences himself/herself in a game of relative-truth and perceives his/her entity through historically specific categories of truth, propriety and normality.

An additional scene in which Ahmad Bashiri's subjectivity is vague and intermingled with the King's is when King Mansur has an affair with the seducing dancer who alters into Rifaatmaah, Ahmad Bashiri's wife. It turns out that the King and the dancer's act of sex has been echoed in time as Ahmad Bashiri and Rifaatmaah's. "The King in disguise of a word puts his head on Rifaatmaah's shoulder and embraces her...it is not clear whether Rifaatmaah is laughing or crying in his arms" (BS, p. 152). Said confesses that his father believed that "her mother has been raped by a nightmare" (BS, p. 95) and Said is an illegitimate child. Moreover, he states that his father "has clearly written that I was and am not his offspring; I am an embryo of a nightmare my mother has experienced. I am a word which as the King has had an affair with Rifaatmaah" (BS, p. 121). Whilst the King faces the gorgeous dancer for the first time, Ahmad Bashiri emphasizes on the point that the appealing figure of the dancer fits into Rifaatmaah's body while dancing. Ahmad Bashiri argues that the dancer and Rifaatmaah are one and "Rifaatmaah's angelic face appears as the dancer's and their coquettish bodies unite" (BS, p. 144).

The parallel mirrors of re-narrating *The History of Mansuri* by Sheikh Yahiya Kondori, Ahmad Bashiri and ultimately Said reflect the interwoven identities of Ahmad Bashiri, Sheikh Yahiya Kondori and the King. Considering the point that a subject could be defined in a situation, the affiliation of the subject and the circumstances is relentlessly erratic and volatile. Moreover, Sheikh Yahiya Kondori's foresight dominates the time and he maintains that "I used to be soil desperately praying to be altered and God the Almighty commanded, 'to be' and I became what I did not have any

clue of" (BS, p. 38). He adds that "I had an epiphany of what my identity is and in each era I possess particular traits; once, I was Saint Shadrach and once Bukhtanasar who enjoined his soldiers to incinerate Saint Shadrach" (BS, p. 39).

Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* interchangeably maneuvers from a precise new form of subjectivity of the characters to the utopian moment of full self-knowledge or the empowerment over oneself. However, the incarnation of the characters into each other manifests that the subject is not instantly produced through subjectation, yet in its totality, the subject is in the process of being repeatedly produced. It could be interpreted that the subject is never wholly constituted in subjectation and there will permanently exist confrontation and rebellion against social imposed constraints.

The frequent alteration of the female characters' subjectivity into each other blurs the bounds of selfhood, as well. For instance, the time King Mansur enquires about Sheikh Yahiya Kondori's wife, he orders her to "appear from the sky seated on a throne" (BS, p. 35) and claims that "she is Solomon's wife, Balqis; however, in that specific era she could be considered as his wife" (BS, p. 36). Having heard a man's declaration in astonishment that "she is a whore he has come across in Lahore" (BS, p. 39) Sheikh Yahiya Kondori replies that "whoever she is, the significant issue is that she is a floating consciousness in this earthly world and I am married to her mortal body" (BS, p. 40). Being furious by Sheikh Yahiya Kondori's response, the King challenges him to terminate his "wife's earthly body so that her consciousness revives her once more" (BS, p. 41). The scene in which Balqis is mutilated and resuscitated by her husband paves the path for questioning the notions of subject and subjectivation. Sheikh Yahiya Kondori concludes that "This is my religion. My beloved's body will not be disfigured and she is able to survive thousands of deaths" (BS, p. 42). He includes that he himself is "a flow of God's consciousness that will numerously materialize in this world" (BS, p. 44) in his eternal form even if his entire existence has been reduced to a word scribed on paper.

The final indistinct subject in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* could refer to Said and King Bashir, King Mansur and the dancer's offspring who is at the same time the anticipated foe who will assassinate King Mansur. The ultimate paragraph of the novel dimly exhibits Said



as King Bashir and Said settles on pursuing King Bashir's deeds and destiny. Noting "as my father deemed I am the secreted word in King Mansur's being who is ambulating in his inscribed palace" (BS, p. 189), Said confirms that his task of scribing ought to be executed. He firmly asserts that "I must be King Mansur's Angel of Death as prognosticated by Sheikh Yahiya Kondori and I am on the verge of noting Saint Shadrach's bifurcated body down on the banks of the ever-flowing river in the narrative" (BS, p. 190). He illuminates that as "King Bashir divaricated Saint Shadrach's corpse" (BS, p. 184), he is destined to narrate and re-narrate it which is equivalent to performing the act of bisecting the Saint.

It could be uttered that the transformation of the characters into one another is the manifestation of the vague boundaries of subjectivity and identity in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes*. The entire female characters seem to represent one; however, their appearances are various owing to the diverse time and era they live in. They undergo the semi-same destiny meanwhile their main activities and roles could be regarded as alike. Apparently, their bodies are invested by power relations while they are both productive and subjected bodies. Individuals are situated in the boundaries of time and condition which mutely legislate the enforced routes of manners and contemplation.

It could be concluded that, albeit culture and intercommunication entangle the subject, they do not absolutely constitute it. Subjectivation is a time-bound issue which is historically precise and at the same time pervasive and vague. The characters' subjectivity both denotes their social constructs and their consciousness of identity which is apparently not a flat, one-dimensional concept. Each character enlightens his/her social and personal being that flourishes in negotiation with vast cultural and historical issues. Eventually, the imperfect awareness of the characters obtains higher level of signification while they are informed of one another via re-narrating history.

## 7. Conclusion

The present study demonstrated that the notions of panopticism and social control, power-knowledge relations, and subjectivation of characters are dramatically represented in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes*. The representation of the

palpable surveillance of the old women, the rabbi and his men of synagogue lays the first stone of internalizing supervision in main characters. The agents of power are victimized by the internalized observation framed by power-knowledge, as well. King Mansur, in futile strives for altering his fate, is subdued by the supremacy of his own self-inspection and is executed. Eghlima's iconoclastic reaction is likewise conquered by her terror of being permanently under superintendence. The ambiance of the novel, in which the disciplinary power individualizes, occurs by utilizing panopticism to modify the characters' behavior. Therefore, instances of panopticism represented in the novel demonstrate both social control and self-control in contemporary Iranian society and among the subjects.

The reciprocal bondage of power-knowledge generates the uninterrupted conversion of power-knowledge into each other. The characters are continually authorized and invalidated in power relations as Mirahmad Kermani's gift of prophecy serves as a double-edged sword. It primarily smoothes the path and empowers him, yet his knowledge dooms him to self-immolation at the end of the narrative. Re-narrating *The History of Mansuri* by Ahmad Bashiri enlightens the production and reproduction of knowledge by power. The socially-constructed subjects by forms of knowledge and techniques of power have been portrayed in the main characters. The process of subjectivation of characters is thus represented throughout the novel. For instance, having obtained knowledge and information via re-re-narrating *The History of Mansuri*, Said undergoes alteration and identifies himself with King Bashir. His former hesitant character vanishes and he develops into a self-assured man who single-handedly determines to confront the rabbi and his men. Eghlima, as well, abandons her timidity and faintheartedness and appears as a courageous researcher who unmasks the bigoted nature of the rabbi and absconds to Said's house in spite of the fact that she is fully aware of its lethal peril.

## References

- Alizadeh, P., Adelzadeh, P. and Pashaei-Fakhri, K. (2016). Mythological Archetypes in *The Books of Scribes*. *Literary Criticism and Stylistics Studies*, 3(25), 127-150.
- Bahramiyan, A. (2011). Bakhtinian Heteroglossia in Mohammad Charmshir's Three Plays and Aboutorab Khosravi's

- The Books of Scribes. Fine Arts*, 1(44), 13-24.
- Butler, J. (1997). *The Psychic Life of Power*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997.
- Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. Smith, Sheridan. New York: Vintage.
- . (1972). *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. Gordon, Colin. New York: Pantheon Books.
- . (2003). *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the College de France, 1973-74*. Ttans. Burchell, Graham. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- . (1969). *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Trans. Smith, Sheridan. New York: Vintage.
- . (1963). *The Birth of the Clinic*. Trans. Smith, Sheridan. New York: Vintage.
- Hall, D. E. (2004). *Subjectivity*. New York: Routledge.
- Hassanzadeh-Dastjerdi, A. (2014). Analyzing Modern and Postmodern Elements in *The Books of Scribes*. *Literary Criticism and Rhetoric Journal*, 3(2), 57-76.
- Hosseinabadi, A. (2004). *The Books of Scribes and Deconstructing Language*. <http://www.yeklivandastan.blogfa.com/post-79.aspx>
- Hosseini, S., Rofouei, P. (2003) *Tiling the Palace of the Scribes*. Tehran: Niloufar Publication.
- Idrem, M. R. (2015). Eastern Narration from the Window of *The Books of Scribes. Sefid*. Tehran: Peydayesh Publication. <http://3feed.ir/اسفارکتابان>
- Khoshnoud, M. (2012). *Archaism in Aboutorab Khosravi and Mahmoud Dowlatabadi's Novels*. Mashhad: Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Unpublished Dissertation.
- Khosravi, A. (2000). *The Books of Scribes*. Tehran: Goman Publication.
- Lotfi, M. (2013). *Postmodernism in Aboutorab Khosravi's Works*. Hamedan: Bu-Ali Sina University, Unpublished Disserration.
- Nobakht, M. (2012). Polyphony and Split Personality in Iranian Postmodern Novel *The Books of Scribes*. *Zabanshenakht*, 3(2), 85-120.
- Rebughini, P. (2014). Subject, Subjectivity, Subjectivation. *Sociopedia.isa*, 1-11. <http://www.sagepub.net/isa/resources/pdf/2nd%20Coll%20Subject,subjectivity.pdf>
- Salimi, N. (2009). *Thematic Criticism of Aboutorab Khosravi's Works*. Tehran: Institute of Humanities and Cultural Studies, Unpublished Dissertation.
- Sangi, N. (2009). *Narrative Techniques and Multiplicity of Genres in The Books of Scribes*. Mahshhad: Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Unpublished MA Dissertation.
- Shaamroshan, M. (2011). *Narrative Techniques in Iranian Contemporary Novels: Linguistic Analysis through Roland Barthes Codes*. Tehran: Tarbiat Modares University, Unpublished Dissertation.
- Sharifi, M. (2016). Postmodern Elements in Aboutorab Khosravi's *The Books of Scribes* and Rabi Jaber's *Alfarasha Alzargha*. *The Comparative Studies of Nations Language and Literature*, 1(4), 67-74.
- Sharifnassab, M., Salimi, N. (2015). Analyzing Several Archetypes in Aboutorab Khosravi's Works. *Contemporary Persian Literature*, 6(1), 21-42.